



TIBET LOBBY DAY

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Priority Political Prisoners

China is holding hundreds of Tibetan political prisoners in detention - arrested and brutally tortured simply for exercising their basic rights. Here are a few of the most urgent cases.



Gedun Choekyi Nyima



Wangdu



Drugdra



Losang Khedrub



Lobsang Gephel

GEDUN CHOEKYI NYIMA, THE 11TH PANCHEN LAMA



On May 14, 1995, the Dalai Lama identified six-year old Gedun Choekyi Nyima as the 11th Panchen Lama. Three days later, the little boy and his parents were 'disappeared.' Denouncing the Dalai Lama's choice as 'illegal and invalid,' Chinese officials soon put forward a hand-chosen, illegitimate 11th Panchen Lama. The whereabouts of Gedun Choekyi Nyima, and his parents Dechen Choedron and Konchog Phuntsok, remain unknown. Foreign delegations have been denied access to him,

despite repeated requests. Historically, the Panchen Lama has been one of Tibet's most highly revered religious figures, with a unique relationship with the Dalai Lama. The current Panchen Lama has not been seen in more than 25 years.

WANGDU



Wangdu was an NGO health worker who worked for an Australian public health NGO. He was sentenced to life imprisonment on charges of "espionage," according to a report published in November 2008 in the Chinese press. Five co-defendants were sentenced from 10 to 15 years for "providing intelligence" to the "Dalai clique." A former monk, Wangdu had previously been sentenced to three years 're-education through labor' having participated in protests in

Lhasa in 1989, although he was then sentenced to a total of eight years imprisonment for signing a petition while in the labor camp insisting Tibet was independent prior to China's invasion.

DRUGDRA, LOBSANG KHEDRUB, AND LOBSANG GEPHEL

Nine Tibetans were given sentences ranging from five to 14 years in prison for celebrating the Dalai Lama's 80th birthday in 2015. Several of them had been imprisoned and tortured before, linked to the protests and self-immolations that have occurred in the Ngaba area since 2008. Three senior monks from Kirti monastery, including a scholar close to the completion of his Geshe degree and the manager of the medical college at the monastery, received the longest sentences of between 12 and 14 years each. They were held incommunicado for months without family or friends knowing their whereabouts, and three of them are still in prison today.



Drugdra, a Kirti monk at the age of 50 at the time of his arrest, was sentenced to 14 years on December 6, 2016. He was arrested from his room at the monastery one night and his whereabouts were unknown for months. Drugdra is a former political prisoner, arrested after 2008 and imprisoned for a year and four months. He is from Soruma, in Ngaba county.



Losang Khedrub, age 44 at the time of arrest, another Kirti monk, was sentenced to 13 years. His whereabouts were similarly unknown for months. According to Tibetan sources, his arrest may have been linked to a voice message about setting up a group to keep a record of Buddhist rituals to be carried out for the Dalai Lama's long life at the time of his 80th birthday. He was previously arrested in 2011 and sentenced to three years, but he became very ill in prison and had to be released early. He is from the Chukle Gabma area of Ngaba county and joined the monastery at a young age. He was near completion of his Geshe degree, the highest level of scholastic achievement for a Buddhist monk.



Lobsang Gephel, age 29 year at the time of arrest, is also a Kirti monk. He was sentenced to 12 years in prison. His disappearance followed an earlier period of imprisonment from May 2011; he had been released a few months early from a three-year sentence at the end of 2013. He is from Village No. 2 in the Me'uruma area of Ngaba county and is the eldest of nine children. He joined the monastery at a young age and before his arrest was a manager of the medical college.

