

NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child  
**Database of NGO Reports presented to the UN Committee on  
the Rights of the Child.**

---

**Document Title:**  
**Violation of Child Rights in Tibet**

**Region:**  
Central Asia, Asia

**Country:**  
**China**

**Issued by:**  
Tibet Bureau

**Date of publication of NGO Report:**  
11/95

**Date of presentation to presessional working group:**  
02/96

**CRC Session**  
(at which related national state party report was submitted):  
12th Session : May - June 96

**Language:**  
English

---

**Document Text**

[Link to related state party report at UNHCHR in English](#)  
[Link to related state party report at UNHCHR in French](#)  
[Link to related state party report at UNHCHR in Spanish](#)

**THE TIBET BUREAU**

Office of the Representative of H.H. the Dalai Lama  
(United Nations Affairs)

**Submitted by the Human Rights Desk, Department of Information & International  
Relations, Tibetan Government in Exile, India.**

**to**

**The Committee on the Rights of the Child, United Nations Geneva.**

**November 1995**

**Forwarded by Tibet Bureau, Geneva.**

**Ref: CRC/C/11/Add.7**

The Office of Tibet  
241 East 32nd Street  
New York, NY 10016 U.S.A.  
Telephone 212 213 5010  
Telefax 212 779 9245

The Tibet Bureau  
rue de l'Ancien Port 13/3  
1201 Geneva, Switzerland  
Telephone 022 738 79 40  
Telefax 022 738 49 41

## **CONTENTS**

### **Executive summary**

### **Introduction**

#### Part A: The Rights of the Child to a Healthy Family Environment in Tibet Violated

1. The Rights of Parents to Determine the Future and Well Being, of their Children (Art 27(1) CRC).

- (i) The Imprisonment of Tibetan Parents: What About the Child ? (Art 3(1) CRC).
- (ii) Tibetan Parents Limited Access to Housing: What About the Child ? (Art 27 CRC).
- (iii) Tibetan Parents Discriminated Against in the Area of Employment: What about the Child?
- (iv) The Rights of Parents to Choose the Kind of Education That Shall be Given to their Children Violated.
- (v) The Rights of Tibetan Parents to Provide their Children with Religious Direction severely Restricted

#### Part B: Tibetan Childrens' Rights Directly Violated

1. Tibetan Childrens Right to Life Violated ( Art 6(1) CRC )

- i) Tibetan Women Discriminated Against in Birth Control Policies
- ii) The Medical Abuse of Pregnant Women

2. Tibetan Children Discriminated Against and Punished for Exercising their Fundamental Right to Freedom of Expression & Assembly ( Art 2(2); 13 & 15 CRC ).

- i) Tibetan Children as Prisoners of Conscience in Chinese Prisons.
- ii) Tibetan Children are being Subjected to Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment and Punishment in Chinese Prisons. (Art 37(a) CRC).
- iii) Deaths in Custody of Tibetan Children Prisoners of Conscience

### 3. Tibetan Children's Right to Freedom of Religion Violated

- a) Overview of the Situation before Occupation
- b) The Current Situation
  - i) The Restriction on the Number of Monks and Nuns in the Monasteries and Nunneries in Tibet
  - ii) The Expulsion of Novice Nuns and Monks by the Chinese Authorities from Nunneries and Monasteries in Tibet.
- c) Violation of the Rights of Child Religious Leaders
  - i) The Panchen Lama, a 6 year old Tibetan boy's Disappearance
  - ii) The 17th Karmapa - an 11 Year Old Tibetan Boy

### 4. The Rights of Tibetan Children to a Free and Universal Education (Art 28 (1) (c) CRC).

- i) Tibetan Children Escaping Tibet in Search of a Proper Education in Exile.

### 5. The Rights of Tibetan Children to an Adequate Health Care System

#### Part C: Tibetan Children as Refugees

- 1. The Journey and its Consequences on the Health and Development of Tibetan Children
- 2. The Right of Tibetan Refugee Children to Personal Contact and Family Reunification Severely restricted.

#### Part D: Recommendations to the Committee.

#### Appendix:

A. The Case of the 11th Panchen Lama ( a 6 year old Tibetan boy named Gedliun Choekyi Nyima) and his disappearance. He was born 25 April 1989. His Holiness the Dalai Lama has named the 6 year old boy, Tenzin Gedhun Yeshe Thinley Phuntsok Pal Sangpo.

B. Press Statement of 4 November, 1995 on Panchen Lama

#### **Executive Summary**

The Department of Information and International Relations of the Central Tibetan Administration (Tibetan Government in Exile), has been monitoring the situation in Tibet for the past 36. Its Human Rights Desk, gathers and disseminates information pertaining to the human rights situation in Tibet to the international community, including the United Nations. The desk also, in preparing this report aims to defend the rights of the six million Tibetans living in Tibet. To prepare this report on the rights of the child, besides conducting our own independent investigations and research, we have also referred to the Tibet Information Network (based in London) and Amnesty International (London) both of whom have been closely monitoring the human rights situation in Tibet.

This report focuses on how Tibetan children are denied their fundamental rights and freedoms that are set out in the Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 (hereinafter referred to as "CRC"). Part A of our report deals with the rights of Tibetan children to a healthy family environment which guarantees the steady growth and development of the Child. It attempts to highlight the problems that Tibetan parents face under Chinese occupation such as imprisonment, limited access to housing & employment and the limited choices they have in determining their child's future and education. Overall, this section will emphasise that Chinese

policy, in its treatment of Tibetan parents, is in total disregard for the interests of the child which they are obliged to take into account having, ratified the convention.

Part B focuses on the rights of Tibetan children that are being directly violated, where Tibetan children have been and are victims of repressive Chinese policies. This part outlines specific rights of the child that are being violated in Tibet, such as Tibetan childrens' right to life, to freedom of expression and opinion, to be free from torture and physical bodily harm, to have access to universal and free education and to practice Buddhism free from interference by the state. Chinese birth control policies in Tibet and the violation of the rights of child religious leaders, particularly the Panchen Lama (a six year old boy who has disappeared) have been particularly highlighted. The imprisonment of child prisoners of conscience is also highlighted, with statistics being given on the number of child prisoners of conscience in Chinese prisons in Tibet.

Part C focuses on the problems associated with Tibetan refugee children. It will be noted that in the past 5 years over 5000 or 44% of all new refugees, who have come from Tibet, have been between the ages of 14-25 years old and a further 2000 of 17% have been 13 years old or younger. It will be proven that Tibetan refugee children suffer in many ways as a consequence of leaving Tibet, their families and their familiar environments. The journey itself, the walk across the Himalayas into Nepal, has many serious physical and psychological side effects. These children not only have to cope with family separation but also are restricted from communicating with their families in Tibet due to the violation of the right to receive and impart information by the Chinese government. In addition to these hardships some of these children in 1994 faced prospects of being pulled out of their schools in India to be sent back to Tibet and indeed 74 children were forcibly removed from Tibetan schools in India by parents in Tibet who had been ordered to take such action or else they would face dire consequences.

Permeating all of the above violations of the rights of Tibetan children are Chinese government policies and actions aimed at suppressing the so called "splittists" in Tibet. At present there is major campaign being instituted in Tibet to suppress any claims by the Tibetan people to self determination. A consideration of the rights of Tibetan children can not be separated from the fact of Chinese occupation and the ensuing, Chinese population transfer policy which leads to discrimination of Tibetans in all spheres of economic, social, cultural and political life in Tibet.

### **Introduction**

Tibet, the roof of the world, lies at the center of Asia bordering India, Nepal, Bhutan and Burma in the south; China in the east; and, Eastern Turkestan and Mongolia in the north. The earth's highest mountains, vast arid plateau and great river valleys make up the physical homeland of the six million Tibetans.

Tibet forms a watershed at the heart of Asia from where 90 per cent of the run-off flows out of the region down seven major Asian rivers. These irrigate an area supporting nearly half of the world's population.

According to international law and by its distinct history, culture and national identity, Tibet was an independent country when it was invaded by China in 1949. The Chinese occupation has been characterised by attempted annihilation of Tibetan culture and religion, ruthless exploitation of Tibetan labour and widespread destruction or extraction of the land's living and other natural resources.

By 1979, 1.2 million Tibetans had perished as a direct result of the Chinese occupation while over 6,254 monasteries, nunneries and historical sites had been plundered and razed to the ground. Today, after 46 years of Chinese occupation, Tibet has become a Chinese colony.

When Tibetans refer to Tibet, we refer to the whole country, that is, the three provinces of U-Tsang, Kham and Amdo. China subdivided Tibet into eight Tibetan "autonomous" regions, prefectures and districts in order to break up the country and facilitate control over its population.

One unit comprises most of Amdo province (north-east Tibet), and has been re-named Qinghai. Six are annexed to the Chinese provinces of Gansu, Sichuan and Yunnan. It is only the last, comprising of U-Tsang (central and western Tibet) and parts of western Kham (south-east Tibet), which is officially known as the so-called "Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR)". According to the "1990 census of China", the Tibetan "minority nationality" population was 4.59 million with a growth of 2.1 % between 1982 and 1990.

When the Chinese authorities refer to Tibet they only refer to "TAR". Therefore, there is only a specific reference to the "TAR" under Paragraphs 275 to 281 on pages 54 and 55 in China's Initial Report to the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC/C/11/Add.7). This means that China's submission fails to report about the situation of Tibetan children in Kham and Amdo provinces of Tibet. This significant gap in China's submission, particularly in the case of Tibet must be taken into consideration the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

## **PART A: The Rights of The Child to a Healthy Family Environment**

### **1. The Rights of Parents to Determine the Future and Well Being of their Children: ( Art 27(1) CRC ).**

Tibetan parents are in many ways disadvantaged by the fact of Chinese occupation. These disadvantages disable them to provide adequate care and protection to their children. So although the CRC states in article 27(2), that parents are responsible for the financial and physical well being of their children they are prevented by Chinese government actions and policies from doing, so. As far as providing education, health facilities, recreation etc, these are far out of reach for an ordinary Tibetan family. The Chinese government is also at present taking no steps to assist Tibetan parents to fulfil their responsibilities as parents, as it should under Article 27(3) CRC.

#### **(i) The Imprisonment of Tibetan Parents: What about the Child ? (Art 3(1) CRC).**

As of July 1995, there were more than 634 prisoners of conscience in Tibet. Tibetans are arrested for peaceful expression of their views and for so called "counter revolutionary" activities. In most cases, family and children are denied access to visit their relatives. In some cases family visits are limited to once a month. The loss and separation that children suffer effects their psychological development.

Children whose parents are accused of being "counter-revolutionaries" also suffer in that they also sometimes have to cope with police raids on their homes and are also labelled "counter-revolutionaries" by the mere fact of being related to the prisoner. Therefore, the child is basically "an out-caste" in the eyes of the State. Article 3(1) CRC is therefore being violated as the best interests of the Child are not taken into account in the treatment of prisoners of conscience in Tibet. As one refugee, Nyidon, the daughter of Sholpa Dawa who was arrested in August 1995, in a letter of appeal, written in October this year, stated:

*"As our father has been arrested time and time again, our family has had to go through a lot of difficult at times. For example, my brother Samdup accused of being to close to my father, was detained and trashed on many occasions by the Public Security personnel. Later he was forced to wear the reactionary dunce cap. And if one was accused of being close to our father then the children of that so called "reactionary Tibetan are sure to have a dark and hopeless future." "Ever since the first arrest of my father, Chinese security personnel have conducted numerous raids on our home and searched for items they say we possess." Human Rights Update, Department of Information & International Relations, 24 October 1995.*

#### **(ii) Tibetan Parents Access to Housing: What about the Child ? (Art 27 CRC).**

The population transfer of Chinese settlers from China into Tibet has had a marked impact upon the housing sphere and the availability of accessing housing resources, leading in many instances to clear preferential treatment to Chinese settlers over that of

Tibetans, as well as clear patterns of residential segregation. Scott Leckie, "Destination by design" p. 75

On March 30 1990, the Chairman of the so-called "TAR" government admitted that Tibet still had 50,000 poor families without access to sufficient food. Tibetans are required to carry identification cards with them at all times. No housing is available to those without a residence permit as an identity card. Moreover, households seeking public housing and other national services are generally required to belong to a work unit. Since Tibetans who have been evicted (accused of being "counter-revolutionaries") from their homes generally do not belong to a work unit, they are effectively denied access to new housing, periodically expelled from Lhasa, they add considerably to the number of homeless. In addition, regulations introduced by the Chinese regime effectively prevent Tibetans from building their own homes by requiring them to produce evidence of a back payment of more than \$10,000 yuan (\$1,600) as security.

Tibetan children as a result of the above Chinese housing policy in Tibet suffer. They are rendered homeless and denied access to a healthy environment in which to develop and grow for their mental and physical well being.

### **(iii) Tibetan Parents Discriminated against in the Area of Employment: What about the Child?**

Tibetan people are discriminated in employment with no legal protection. Many Tibetans are deprived of employment opportunities because of their lack of proficiency in the Chinese language due to limited access to education. In addition to this, the Chinese settlers are recruited in the skilled jobs as cadres, technicians and scientists. The Chinese government also invites the Chinese to come to Tibet to work on construction sites, in factories, as road workers and so forth. The authorities are therefore actively taking job opportunities from Tibetans. One of the major complaints of Tibetans is of unfair competition on the job market from better educated Chinese settlers and the subsequent unemployment this creates among Tibetans. One Tibetan source in Lhasa stated that:

*"There are already 2,000 youths with basic qualifications who are unemployed, according to official data given by the mayor. I suspect that the real figure might be twice that or even more in Lhasa".* TIN News Update, 1993

The Chinese presence in Lhasa is a source of intense competition of jobs and opportunities. The Chinese come from a background that has provided them with better education, more funds and of course a proficiency in Chinese that Tibetans cannot compete with. Tibet Support group (UK) in their report on population transfer this year concluded that:

*"Our evidence indicates that Tibetans are losing out to the Chinese in several economic spheres, including agriculture and that they are being increasingly marginalised economically, it also indicates that government policies are to a large extent responsible for this economic exclusion of Tibetans in Lhasa."* Tibet Support Group (U.K.). "New Majority: Chinese population transfer into Tibet", London, 1995. p. 123.

So except for the few privileged, the majority of Tibetans work as manual laborers for the Chinese as construction laborers, road constructors, drivers etc. Tibetan children inside Tibet are being brought up in a way that he/she is disadvantaged by birth. The parents who are poor, are unable to provide for education, health and other needs of the child.

### **(iv) The Rights of Parents to Choose the Kind of Education That Shall be Given to Their Children Violated:**

Article 26(3) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that, *"Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children."*

In order to control the outflux of Tibetans to India who were fleeing Tibet in search for -a proper education, Chinese authorities in September 1994 issued orders to government officials and employees instructing them to recall their children back to Tibet. On 26 June 1994, Tibetan CCP members and cadres were questioned about their intentions for sending their children to India. Many parents send their children to India because of the poor state of education in India and discriminating against Tibetans in the syllabus. Many Tibetans inside Tibet have complained about the poor quality of education provided for their children and the limited access to primary and higher education. Amnesty International in its May 1995 report on Human rights violations in Tibet recorded that "only 60% of school age children attend school in the TAR, according to Chinese press reports."(p.2) Warnings were issued to the effect that those who failed to obey the order would be demoted or possibly expelled from their jobs, that their promotions and pay increments would be withheld and party members would be expelled from the party. The order was not restricted to cadres and government employees alone, for the order issued by the Chinese authorities also stated that school children being presently educated in India would lose their rights to residence permits and entitlement to rations if they did not return to Tibet within a specified time. While the deadline given was 27 December 1994, some of the offices have required their employees to comply with the order as early as 15 November. The order to Tibetan CCP members was issued on 19 September 1994.

Much speculation was made on the origins of this new policy. Some claimed that it emanated from the Third National Work Forum on Tibet held in July 1994 in Beijing. Others claimed that it was a byproduct of the campaign that called for a crackdown on support amongst cadres for His Holiness the Dalai lama. Tibet Information Network (TIN) reported that forms to be filled out by CCP members and cadres on how many children they were educating in India, if any, was distributed in 1993. TIN News review, No.23 March 1995. p.41 These instructions not only violated the right of parents to choose the kind of education that their children should have but also the universal freedom to leave and enter one's own country.

The Tibetan Children's Village (TCV) in India recorded the forcible return of seventy four children as a result of the Chinese orders. Reports from Tibet were also received claiming that some of the children who were educated at TCV school in BIR were being denied access to jobs and that tour guides who had been educated in India were removed from their positions and being replaced by Chinese from China. It was reported in December 1994 that:

*"Since October many young Tibetans, who have returned to Tibet after getting education and are working in different fields, have been indicated that they would be out of their jobs in the near future. Most of these young Tibetans work as tourist guides in the booming tourist industry in Tibet. According to one such tourist guide, who visited India in mid-October, they were told that with the end of the tourist season this year (around November end) the services of guides like himself would not be required. He was told further that they would be replaced by China trained tourist guides, some of whom may be Tibetans from the next season."* Tibetan Bulletin, the official Journal of the Tibetan Administration, November - December 1994, India. P.21

This policy of recalling children from India and threatening their parents with dire consequences in case of failure in complying with the orders directly violates Article 10 (1) of the CRC whereby it states that, "... applications by a child or his or her parents to enter or leave a State Party for the purpose of family reunifications shall be dealt with by States Parties in a positive, humane and expeditious manner..." and Article 10(2) of CRC states that, "states parties shall respect the right of the child and his parents to leave any country, including their own, and to enter their own country."

#### **(v) The Rights of Tibetan Parents to Provide Religious Direction to their Children Restricted.**

The right of Tibetan parents to provide religious direction to their children are restricted in many ways. The essence of Buddhism lies in mental and spiritual development achieved through intensive study with qualified lamas, (spiritual teachers). However, the Chinese authorities have put restrictions on children younger than eighteen years from joining monasteries or nunneries where they can receive religious instructions. Similarly, they implement subtle and insidious

methods of undermining religion and propagating their own communist ideals among the youth. For instance, educating Tibetan youths along Marxist lines with heavy anti-religious overtones. Arresting and torturing those suspected of having independent thoughts, conducting political education and investigation in the monasteries and nunneries by Work Inspection Teams. Imposing a ban on prayers composed by His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

In May 1994, "TAR" officials had instructed all CCP members to remove all religious symbols from their homes, justifying the move via communist atheist ideology but aiming to restrict all Buddhist practices. The justification behind this restriction lies in the ideology of the Communist Party which is fundamentally atheist. The human rights desk reported last year that on 10 Nov a meeting was held in Lhasa and its members were informed that "The concept of freedom of religion which the west propagates is totally different from that of the People's republic of China. The Constitution guarantees freedom of religion, but the code of the Communist party is above the Constitution. If [the party] should put the common interest of all the laboring people as its first priority, and should not allow the religious problem to affect the solidarity of the laboring people." In August 1994, or thereafter, government orders were issued in Tibet banning the display of photo's of the Dalai Lama. These orders were issued in disregard for the parents right to pride their children with religions instruction.

## **PART B: Tibetan Children Rights Directly Violated.**

Tibetan children suffer directly under the repressive and colonial Chinese policies in Tibet aimed at weakening Tibetans claims to regain their independence and excluding Tibetans in the overall economic development of their country.

### **1. Tibetan Children's Right to Life Violated**

Article 6 (1) of the CRC states that, "*State Parties recognize that every child has the inherent right to life.*"

In 1984 the Chinese government in Beijing announced a new policy, restricting the number of children per family to two. Orders were issued for the imposition of fines (ranging from 1,500 to 3,000 yuan or US \$400 to 800) for the birth of a third child.

Extra children were denied ration cards and workers violating the rule had their pay cut to the extent of fifty percent, or withheld altogether for three to six months in some cases. Since then, the Chinese government by implementing this birth control policy have subjected thousands of Tibetan women to forced abortions, sterilizations and committed infanticide where a child was already born. Tibetan children are therefore denied their fundamental right to live and to be born.

In May 1990 the Chinese authorities announced without providing any sources or evidence, that there were 10,000 mentally handicapped people in Tibet. They announced that efforts to improve the quality of population would be implemented. Later, in October 1994, China introduced a national law known as "The Maternal and Infant Health Care Law", to be implemented in China in June 1995, in which the government reserves the right to control marriages and births according, to their perception of the health of the parents and infant, in order to avoid "breeding" of inferior quality. The law specifically mentions that it would use sterilization, abortion and bans on marriage to prevent people from passing on mental disabilities and disease to their children.

#### **(i) Tibetan Women Discriminated against in Birth Control Policies**

TIN conducted a birth control survey and published its report in 1994 TIN Background Briefing paper 30 march 1994," *Survey of Birth Control Policies in Tiber*", p.2-3.. TIN reported the following:

"The 14 Tibetans, including Doctors and rural women consulted for this survey concurred in finding that a very considerable element of force is applied to women particularly in villages, through the mechanism of fines and administrative sanctions, Particularly where the women are



poor, these threats of fines constitute actual force. The women say that they thus had no option but to agree to undergo an abortion or sterilisation operation. The use of constructive force is important for two reasons. Firstly, in many cases, particularly in Ganze (Tib: Karze), a Tibetan "prefecture" in Sichuan province known to Tibetans as Ganze, it exceeds the written requirements of the law. The law does not specifically demand abortions or the use of surgical controls, confining its formal coercions to fines and other punishments. But the effect of the law in practice is that abortions are compulsory, except where the women or their husbands are wealthy enough to pay the fines. It is thus significant that the amount of the fines has been raised enormously in recent years particularly in areas where the laws are more subtly worded: in Ganze there are reports of fines reaching 7,000 yuan in some cases, about 5 years income for an urban employee and about 8 years income for an average peasant. Areas such as the "TAR" with more aggressive laws have lower fines.

The effect in either case is the same and poorer people are under an effective obligation to submit to surgical controls if they exceed the allowed number of children". "Secondly, the use of fines as a way to force women to accept abortions is a discriminatory weapon, since generally only the poor are susceptible to this. (The Ganze regulations are, unusually, pegged to income, but high income families are still less likely to have experienced the fines as coercion). In Tibetan communities, it seems generally the case that the Tibetans are poorer than the Chinese migrants or residents. In addition Chinese migrants and residents are reportedly more able to use contacts with officials, who are often Chinese, to circumvent regulations. The thresholds at which controls are applied are lower for Chinese than for Tibetans, but in effect, once applied, it seems from these accounts harder for Tibetan women to avoid the demands. Thus the birth control policy seems in effect, through not necessarily in intention, to be discriminatory and to be applied in a way that constitutes force among Tibetans more than among Chinese in the same communities. This would be true also of parallel situations in Chinese villages in China, where in terms of abortions fines would be coercive to the poor but not to the rich". Ibid.

An interview conducted in 1994 of a new arrival served to highlight the harshness of the fine system on women. X (wishes to remain anonymous) at the time of the interview had just arrived from Tibet. X underwent sterilisation after giving birth to her third child. She left Tibet with her husband after being fined for the third child which she couldn't afford. In the interview she said:

*"When the baby [third] was due I went home. About one month after the delivery the officials came to my house again and threatened that they would take away all our possessions and arrest my husband. When we said we would pay the annual fine of 500 yuan until the child was 15 years old, they didn't take our possessions, nor did they arrest my husband."* Tibetan Women's Association (India), "Tears of Silence", 1995 p.39.

## **(ii). The Medical Abuse of Pregnant Women.**

There were several reports in 1994 relating to the medical abuse of pregnant women. One such report was received from the family of Pasang, in Tibet. On August 1994, Pasang, 23, went to the People's hospital in Lhasa to give birth to her child. She was informed that delivery was impossible without surgery because the child was too big and she was too weak. Shortly after the surgery, she died of hypertension. When the family instructed the "Tobdhen" (traditional Tibetan men who dispose of bodies) to find out the cause of death, the report said that the heart, liver and womb of the deceased were missing. On hearing this Pasang's family took the matter to court. To date there has been no report on the judicial fate of this case.

## **2. Tibetan Children Discriminated against and Punished on the Basis of Opinions and Beliefs, for Exercising their Fundamental Right to Freedom of Expression and Assembly ( Art 2(2)& 13 &15 CRC ).**

Under Article 13 of CRC, the right to freedom of expression and opinion is granted to children. However the Chinese government qualifies this right via article 2(b) of CRC. They claim that

Tibetan children expressing their views on Tibetan independence are a threat to national security and therefore belong to the enemy defined as the "splittists". This is not the case. Tibetan children who have been arrested have merely peacefully protested. In the majority of cases a mere walk around the Jokhang temple, with a group of less than 10 people can amount to "threatening national security". The arbitrary nature of these arrests is also a factor to be taken into account.

#### **(i) Tibetan Children as Prisoners of Conscience in Chinese Prisons.**

Amnesty International expressed its concern in a report published in May 1995 on the Human Rights situation in Tibet that some of the prisoners of conscience that were being kept in detention in 1994 were under the age of 18 at the time of their arrest. Amnesty International, "People's Republic of China: Persistent Human Rights Violations in Tibet", May 1995 report. p.18 In its report it expressed its concern, "at reports that juvenile detainees in Tibet have been ill-treated in detention and some subjected to conditions of detention that may amount to cruel or degrading treatment." Amnesty International Report, "People's Republic of China: Persistent Human Rights Violations in Tibet", May 1995, p.19. " Amnesty further reported that at least 34 male and 11 female Tibetan political prisoners who were reportedly still in prison in 1994, were under the age of 18 at the time of their arrest. The **two youngest were aged 12 at the time of arrest**. In December 1994, 26 of them were still under the age of 18 of whom 13 were under the age of 16 including seven girls. The detention of five of the 45 prisoners under the age of 18 at the time of arrest was confirmed by the Chinese Govt in June 1994 in the list of 56 detainees: handed to the U.S state Department." Ibid. p.18. One such child was Sherab Ngawang. At the time of her arrest she was 12 years old.

#### **(ii) Tibetan children are Being Subjected to Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment and Punishment in Chinese Prisons ( Art 37(a) of CRC ).**

The People's Republic of China has ratified the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhumane or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. Article 36 of the Criminal Law of the PRC also stipulates that, "*it is strictly forbidden to extort confession by torture*". In spite of ratifying the convention against torture, China continues to torture and ill-treat prisoners of conscience in Tibet. A refugee from eastern Tibet, who was a member of the Chinese Public Security Bureau (police), described thirty-three methods of torture of prisoners. These methods include setting of guard dogs on prisoners, use of electric batons especially on female prisoners, inflicting cigarette burns, administration of shocks, etc. Tibetan juvenile prisoners are no exception to torture and ill-treatment. In fact, torture is used as a means of extracting confessions and answers. Young prisoners like adults are subjected to beatings, electric shocks, solitary confinement and deprivation of sleep, food or drink as punishment.

#### **(iii) Deaths in Custody of Tibetan Children Prisoners of Conscience.**

Article 6(2) of CRC states that, "*State parties shall ensure to the maximum extent possible the survival and development of the child*".

Since 1987, there have been 11 Tibetan prisoners of conscience who have died in police custody. Of these eleven deaths several victims have been juvenile prisoners of conscience. An eighteen-year old girl, Sherap Wangmo, died as a result of severe torture which she received whilst in Drapchi prison. She was imprisoned for three years for taking part in an independence demonstration.

A fifteen-year old nun, Sherap Ngawang, the youngest prisoner in Tibet, died in May 1995, as a result of torture and ill treatment whilst serving a prison sentence for shouting independence slogans. Sherap Ngawang was reported to have been beaten for pulling a face at prison guards. On June 4, 1994 Phuntsog Yangki, a twenty-year old Tibetan nun and prisoner of conscience serving her sentence in Drapchi prison, died in police hospital in Lhasa. She was serving a five year prison sentence for taking part in a brief independence demonstration in February 1990.

She was 16 at the time of her arrest. According to unofficial reports, she was beaten by prison guards after she and other nuns sang nationalist songs on February 11, 1994.

### **3. Tibetan Children's Right to Freedom of Religion Violated**

#### **(a) Overview of Situation before Occupation:**

Buddhism flourished in Tibet in the seventh century. Receiving royal patronage and it spread throughout Tibet. Buddhism permeated the daily lives of the Tibetan people and formed the social fabric connecting them to the land. By 1959 there were more than 6,000 monasteries and nunneries which served as schools and universities, fulfilling Tibet's unique educational needs. In addition there was a sizable network of private and government schools all over Tibet. Drepung Monastery in Lhasa alone had at any given time over 10,000 students.

#### **(b) The Current situation:**

Of the over six thousand traditional institutes of learning, only thirteen survived the Chinese destruction. Today Chinese policy is aimed at bringing about a gradual and natural death of Tibetan culture and religion, thus reducing the Tibetans to an uncultured, superstitious nation, fit only to be ruled and reformed by them.

China today refuses to let the colleges-the functioning units of the monastic universities to continue in the traditional way. The following criteria have been laid down for admission to a monastery: **The candidate should be at least eighteen years old**; should "love" the country and the Communist Party; should have the consent of parents; should obtain formal approval from the monasteries's Democratic Management Committee; should have the consent of local authorities; should have the consent of county or provincial authorities; should obtain clearance from the Public Security Bureau; the candidate and the candidate's parents should have a "good political background"; should have been raised in a certain geographical area (eg, Tibetans from Kham and Amdo may not be admitted to monasteries in Central Tibet); should study Marxism; should be aware that materialism and spirituality are contradictory etc, etc.

#### **(i) The Restriction on the Number of Monks and Nuns in the Monasteries and Nunneries in Tibet.**

The Chinese authorities have placed a ceiling on the number of monks and nuns allowed in each university. Before the Chinese invasion, Sera had 7,997 monks on its roll; it is now permitted to house only about three hundred. Drepung, which used to have 10,000 monks, is now permitted only four hundred; and the Gaden which numbered 5,600 monks is now permitted only one hundred and fifty monks.

In addition, the daily functions of the monasteries are regimented through a maze of state bureaucracies, such as the United Front Work Department, Religious Affairs Bureau, Tibetan Buddhist Association, Democratic Management Committee, Political education and investigation Works Inspection Team, Security organs, etc.

#### **(ii) The Expulsion of Novice (amateur) monks and nuns from the by the Chinese Authorities from the monasteries and nunneries in Tibet.**

In March 1995, Chinese armed police stormed Nalanda Monastery and raided two others as protests were staged by five monasteries and nunneries in the rural area of Phenpo, 25 km north of Lhasa. By the middle of March 1995, political re-education teams had been sent to all monasteries and nunneries in Phenpo Lhundrup county and had issued warnings that monasteries would be closed down in the event of further protests. The Work Team officials at the Nalanda monastery ordered the expulsion of sixty four monks, leaving the monastery, which until the raid had a hundred and forty registered monks and twenty unregistered novices

(amateurs), with about sixty monks. The mass expulsion is the biggest record since at least 1987. Similarly, twenty four unregistered novices (amateurs) were also expelled from Yamure hermitage, 20 km south-east of Terdrom, in line with new regulations enforcing ban on unofficial monks and novices.

### **(c) Violation of the Rights of Child Religious Leaders**

In following with the Tibetan unique religions tradition of reincarnation and their recognition, on May 14, 1995, His Holiness the Dalai Lama announced the discovery of the reincarnation of the Panchen Lama who passed away on January 28, 1989. **Six year old Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, born on April 25, 1989 was proclaimed the reincarnation of Tibet's second most highest spiritual leader.** This proclamation was a purely spiritual matter but the Chinese denounced this proclamation as a political interference therefore hurting the religious sentiments of all Tibetans. This denunciation revealed clearly China's disrespect for the religious beliefs of the Tibetan people.

Whilst the "controversy" was going on, the young six-year old reincarnation was an innocent spectator, unaware of the complications that his recognition had aroused. This is not the first instance that China has tried to interfere in the religious beliefs and practices of the Tibetan people. China was hurting the institution of Tibetan Buddhism. The Chinese authorities accepted the reincarnation of the **17th Karmapa**, a twelve year--old boy, but they use him as a puppet to bolster their own image. Coercing the Young Karmapa to voice pro-Chinese statements the Chinese are violating his freedom of thought and expression.

### **(i) The Panchen Lama's, a Six Year Old Tibetan Boy's Disappearance**

In 1994 the Chinese authorities closely monitored Tibetan attempts to select the reincarnation of the late Panchen lama who died in 1989. On 19th October senior monks from Tashi Lhunpo monastery, the traditional seat of the **Panchen Lama**, held a three day ceremony at Lhamo Latso, Tibet's most important oracle lake in attempt to confirm the location of the reincarnation. The Chinese authorities have published directives which lay down rules and limitations for the selection of a successor, which is currently the most important question in Tibetan politics. The rules created by the Chinese authorities include restrictions over where the successor can be found and give the authorities the right to control the selection process. Ostensibly, the selection process is on the hands of Chadrel Rinpoche, the abbot of Tashi Lhunpo monastery in Shigaste, seat of the Panchen Lama's. There are unofficial reports that he has refused to do so, or has delayed the decision. (TIN background Briefing paper, march 1995 p.18)

On 14 May 1995, His Holiness the Dalai Lama proclaimed 6-year old Gedhun Choekyi Nyima as the reincarnation of the Panchen Lama. Soon after the proclamation, it was reported that the six year old reincarnation and his family had disappeared. The family includes the father, 45-year old Kunchok Phuntsok, a doctor at the Lhari Dzong Hospital in Nagchu (Central Tibet), his wife, 43-year old Dechen Choedon, a nurse at the same hospital and their eldest son, Kunchok Rinchen Thinley Dorie Pel Sangpo, a student at the Drigung Yari Ghang monastery. They have been reported missing since mid-May 1995 with no news of their whereabouts. Their disappearance has greatly distressed the Tibetans and has served to create fear and anxiety in their hearts (refer to appendix A for further details on the case of the Panchen Lama).

The disappearance of the Panchen Lama has resulted in much resentment against the Chinese officials. So far between 50-80 Tibetans, including senior monks have been reported in connection with the abduction of the young reincarnation. The Tibetan Government in Exile has appealed the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearance to locate the young Panchen Lama.

### **(ii) The 17th Karmapa - a. Eleven year old boy.**

In October the 13 year old 17th Karmapa from Tibet, Urgyen Thinley, visited Beijing. He met

with CCP officials and president Jiang Zemin. The 17th Karmapa was discovered by his followers in 1991. Chinese authorities demanded the right to recognise the child and announced that no lama could be recognised without the approval of the Chinese authorities. For Tibetans there was no need for Tibetan lamas to be recognised by Communist Chinese. The followers of the new Karmapa whose exiled base in India is Sikkim, wished to take the child to visit India. The authorities have refused or delayed permission for the child to travel to India. This visit was highly publicised and reported extensively by the media. He was quoted in the media and press reports as having announced that "he loves the CCP" and "prayed for the soul of Mao Tsetung". TIN Background Briefing paper, March 1995 p.19

On October 23, 1995 it was reported in the Indian Express Newspaper that:

*"The chinese government, seeking ways to control the turbulent region of Tibet, had given a luxury car to the designated "Living Buddha" - a 12 year old, who is too young to drive".*

It is clear that the Chinese are exploiting the young Karmapa's spiritual authority over the Tibetan people. A 12-year old who is revered and respected by all Tibetans as a high reincarnation, but who has no idea of what Communism stands for or the ideals of Communism voicing such statements is no doubt being used by the Chinese as a medium of Communist propaganda.

#### **4. The Rights of Tibetan Children to a Free and Universal Education (Art 28(1) of CRC.**

The Chinese government is bound by article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which provides that everyone has right to education. Articles 28 & 29 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child also applies to the protection of the child's right to education. The Constitution of the People's Republic of China also provides for the right to education. (1982): Article 46, Article 19 also states that: "The state develops socialist educational undertakings and works to raise " the scientific and cultural level of the whole nation. The state runs schools of various types, making primary education compulsory and universal, develops secondary, vocational and higher education and promotes pre-school education. The state develops educational facilities of various types in order to wipe out illiteracy and provide political, cultural, scientific, technical and professional education for workers, peasants, state functionaries and other working people. It encourages people to become educated through independent study. The state encourages the collective economic organisations, state enterprises and undertakings and other social forces to set up educational institutions of various types in accordance with the law. The state promotes the nationwide use of Putonghua (Common speech based on Beijing pronunciation). Also the Law of Compulsory Education (1986) attempts to make education accessible to every child over the age of six. It has been stated however that due to practical difficulties arising from the remoteness of some parts of Tibet, the "compulsory" education law allows a grace period for postponing school-attendance up to nine years. SWB (BBC), Beijing Dec 21, 1993.

Education in Tibet today is neither free nor universally available. Overwhelming numbers of Tibetan children are unable to go to schools because there are no schools or, where they are available, parents cannot afford the fees. Education policies inside Tibet today serve to favor Chinese as the medium for teaching. The medium of teaching from Middle School level upwards is Chinese even in an area where the Chinese Government claims by its 1990 census that 95.46 percent of the population is Tibetan. The cost of education is high and many places are reserved for Chinese settlers as part of the incentive package to encourage more Chinese to move into Tibet.

**According to UNICEF, illiteracy rate is seventy three percent in Tibet as against thirty one percent in China.**

In February 1994, one of the largest non-governmental schools, Sil-jong Ke-yig, in Lhasa, was closed down and the Director arrested on suspicion for involvement in "counter-revolutionary activities". With the closure of the school the four hundred students of the school were left to seek admission in other schools or be left out completely.

Tibet Support group (U.K) in its report on population transfer, reported this year that:

*"The new preferential policies designed to attract Chinese to Tibet include promises to provide Chinese settlers with school places for their children. This move further displaces Tibetans from the educational system. Only 19.5% of the children who entered the first grade in the TAR in 1985 were in fifth grade four years later. In neighbourhood meetings in Lhasa in May 1992, "socialist Education" teams were told by Tibetan residents that the influx of Chinese was creating a shortage of school places. (TIN 1993)."*

#### **(i) Tibetan Children Escaping Tibet in Search of a Proper Education in-Exile.**

Since the early 1980s well over 6,000 children have risked everything to journey across the Himalayas to India in the hope that they may receive in exile what they have been denied back home. Many children escaping across the Himalayas are unaccompanied minors. The UNHCR office in Kathmandu registered thirty such minors in the first two months of 1995 alone. These children are lucky; many such minors have been reported missing along the escape route. During their arduous journey many children have suffered frostbite, others have been drowned while trying to negotiate dangerous rivers along the escape route.

#### **5. The Rights of Tibetan Children to an Adequate Health Care System.**

In occupied Tibet, the health service is not only urban-biased but also serves the Chinese colonists and the rich better than the predominantly poor Tibetans. Only ten percent of financial outlay for health goes to rural areas; ninety percent goes to urban centres where the Chinese settlers are concentrated. Even when available, medical facilities are prohibitively expensive for most Tibetans.

The mortality rate for Tibetans is much higher than Chinese is a pointer to the poor health service and the low standards of public hygiene in Tibet. Child mortality rates are high in Tibet: 150 per thousand in Tibet as against forty three for China. The Tuberculosis morbidity rate, according to the World Bank, is 120.2 per 1,000 in "Tibet Autonomous Region" and 647 per 1,000 in the Amdo province of north eastern Tibet.

### **PART C: Tibetan Children as Refugees**

In the past five years over 5000 or 44 per cent of all new refugees who have come from Tibet have been between 14-25 years old. A further 2000 or 17 per cent have been 13 years old or younger. These young children are sent by their parents in Tibet to India in the hope that within the refugee community in India and Nepal they will receive a proper Tibetan education and grow up in a free society.

#### **1. The journey and its Consequences on the Health and Development of Tibetan Children.**

Since the occupation of Tibet by Chinese military forces, thousands of Tibetans have escaped from Tibet and continue to do so each year by travelling over mighty Himalayas and dangerous terrains. For these Tibetans, the journey to freedom is a perilous one and often ends in the loss of lives on the way. Children suffer the most during these difficult journeys.

The Representative Office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama in Nepal recorded six hundred and seventy Tibetan children under eighteen years of age who arrived unaccompanied over the mountains to Nepal in 1994. They constituted 27 per cent of the total 2,500 refugees who arrived in Nepal in that year alone. Many suffer from health problems, both physical and mental

due to poor diet in Tibet, the rigors of a long and arduous escape from Tibet, and the drastic changes in climatic conditions and food habits. Often half way through the journey, the tired travellers find themselves short of food and have to go on for days without food. The most common complaint of all those who escape by road is frostbites. In many cases, frostbites have resulted in amputation of hands and legs thus causing handicaps or scars for life.

The Department of Health of the Central Tibetan Administration has had to establish a programme for providing medical treatment and rehabilitation to those suffering from post-traumatic disorders.

Tibetan children have the right to leave and enter their own country under Art 10(2) of CRC. Despite this legal protection, Tibetan children escaping across the Himalayas "also face harassment from Nepalese police if they are caught in the border regions on there way to Kathmandu, with most arrivals reporting robbery and extortion by police.. In one such case last June, Nepalese opened fire on a group of refugees, injuring or beating seven and killing one. The pass which most Tibetans use in the Nangpa-la, 5, 700 metres (19,000 feet) high, a few kilometers to the west of Everest, and prone to unexpected blizzards which can be lethal". TIN News Update, 29 Juen 1994. Since April 1995, the Nepalese border police have deported over more than two hundred Tibetan refugees in 14 groups, including young children, below the age of eighteen. The refugees are said to have had been handed over to Chinese authorities across the border at Dram (Ch: Zhangmu). The fate and the whereabouts of the extradited still remain unknown. On 17 June 1995, 19 Tibetan asylum seekers were handed over to the Chinese authorities by the Nepalese authorities. The group included, an old man of 70 and six children below the age of eighteen. One of those children was a five year old boy named Dorje Phuntsog of Lhasa. The children deported were:

- (1) Namkha: 18 years old (male) from Markham in Kham
- (2) Michung: 12 years old (female) from Markham in Kham
- (3) Dorje Phuntsog: 5 years old (male) from Lhasa.
- (4) Loten: 10 years old (male) from Lhasa.
- (5) Tenzin: 10 years old (male) from Lhasa
- (6) Mimi: 11 years old (female) from Toelung (near Lhasa).

So not only are these Tibetan children separated from their parents and family when they escape into India for an education, there is also the ever present fear of being deported back to Tibet. The whole process involves great trauma and fear for a young child who is unaccustomed to being separated from his/her parents and family. At a very young age these children are exposed to the harshest of situations and are deprived of parental protection to which they are entitled to.

## **2. The Right of Tibetan Refugee Children to Personal Family Contact and Family Reunification Severely Restricted.**

Art 10 of CRC states that family reunification and personal contact of the child with parents living in different states should be respected and should not entail any adverse consequences on the family. The Chinese authorities call His Holiness the Dalai Lama and his followers "splittists" or the "Dalai Clique" and accuse us of trying to split up the "motherland". In "Golden Bridge to a New Era" the official handbook of the Third National Forum Meeting, of Beijing, published in October 1994, clear instructions to attack the Dalai Lama in person are given. "*As we say, to kill a serpent, we must first chop off its head, and if we don't act accordingly we will not succeed completely in this struggle*" says the handbook. In so implementing their strategies, the Chinese have repeatedly adopted measures to suppress any protests and demonstrations in Tibet. These repressive measures have proved a major obstacle in communication and interchange of news with the Tibetans inside Tibet.

Tibetan children who have escaped into India from Tibet are the victims of this situation where they cannot send news of their condition to their family in Tibet nor receive news from their family. The children lose contact with their parents and the parents lose contact with their

children. Indirectly this leads to separation of families and although these children have parents and families in Tibet, they become "orphans". So a child loses his/her right to personal contact with his/her family. Article 9 (3) of the CRC states that State Parties shall respect the right of the child who is separated from one or both parents to maintain personal and direct contact with both parents on a regular basis, except if it is contrary to the child's best interests. But this is not respected by the People's Republic of China.

China claims that is implementing policies which will increase the number of Tibetans that are being educated in Tibet. These policies however focus on educating Tibetan children in Beijing or in some other parts of China. At present there have been no initiatives by the Chinese government to set up a system of education in Tibet that will benefit Tibetans. Instead, Tibetan children with intellectual aptitude from schools in Tibet and are sent to schools in China. Tibetans rightfully resent this as a policy aimed at undermining their own culture. The Xth Panchen Lama said that sending Tibetan children to China would only have the effect of alienating them from their cultural roots. Catriona Bass, an English teacher in Lhasa in 1985 said:

*"4, 000 Tibetan children were studying in China at this time (1985). Given the still very basic resources in Tibet, it might be an effective way of educating Tibetans, in the short term. But his policy dates from the 1950's. Now instead of reducing the number of children sent to China and investing more in improving facilities in Tibet, the government has announced plans to send as many as ten thousand children by 1993. For many Tibetans we met, this policy poses a serious threat to Tibetan cultural identity. With more and more young adults returning to Tibet ignorant or scornful of Tibetan traditions, some people saw the policy as a conspiracy on the part of the government to erode cultural values within."* Tibetan Government in Exile: white paper "Tibet: proving truth from facts". p.60

#### **PART E: RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COMMITTEE.**

- \* Tibetan Children have suffered immensely under the Chinese occupation for the last 46 years. Many have been forced to flee their country in search for a proper education and a healthy living environment where they are free to practice their culture. We urge that recommendations be adopted by the Committee, which aims to restore Tibetan childrens fundamental human rights.
- \* We urge the Committee to take actions to locate the whereabouts of the Child Panchen Lama who has disappeared so as to ensure his safety and well being.
- \* We urge that actions be considered against China that will prevent them from exploiting young religious leaders such as the 17th Karmapa in Tibet, for their political advantage.
- \* We urge the committee to communicate to the Chinese government that they are violating the Convention of the rights of the Child when they arbitrarily imprison the parents of Tibetan children without concern for the child's welfare.
- \* We demand that the Chinese government release all Juvenile prisoners of conscience and that an inquiry be held into the causes of those child deaths in custody.
- \* We encourage Committee members to pressurise countries such as China to ensure respect for the right of all Tibetan women to control their own fertility and to be protected from involuntary abortions so as to provide the child with the right to life.
- \* We recommend that the committee take into consideration the problems that Tibetan Children face in accessing education in particular a Tibetan education.
- \* We urge the Committee to contact the Nepalese government requesting them to inquire into and report on the deportations and treatment by the Nepalese police of Tibetan refugees, so as to ensure that the rights of Tibetan children can be protected and their health and physical well



being be guaranteed.

#### **Appendix A: The Disappearance of the Panchen Lama: a six year old boy.**

The "dispute" over the selection of the reincarnation of the Panchen Lama, one of Tibet's highest spiritual leaders is of major importance in Tibetan politics. Firstly because the Chinese claim Tibet rests largely on their claim to the right to select Tibetan religious leaders. Secondly, the lama's of Tashi Lhunpo, the seat of the Panchen Lama's who carry out the selection rituals, have chosen to recognise His Holiness, the Dalai Lama's reincarnation. His Holiness the Dalai Lama declared on 14th May 1995, that Gendun Choekyl Nyima, a six year old boy from a semi pastoral family in Lhari, Nagchu prefecture, was the reincarnation of the 11th Panchen Lama.

As a result of the above, the Chinese authorities in Beijing have taken oppressive, retaliatory measures, to undermine the decision of the Tashi Lhunpo monks and His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Two days after the announcement by His Holiness of the new reincarnation of the Panchen Lama, the Chinese authorities launched a major -campaign denouncing the Dalai lama's right to make such a statement, insisting that only Beijing can publicly declare the final candidate. The Chinese authorities then arrested Chadrel Rinpoche, the abbot appointed by Beijing as the head of the Search Committee for the reincarnation. In September this year it was also reported that the Chinese authorities had arrested 48 monks and laypeople for supporting the Dalai Lama's recognition of the Panchen Lama. Out of these 48 were 2 senior lama's and 35 other monks from Tashi Lhunpo monastery.

The whereabouts of the Panchen lama, the six year old boy, is still not known. The Chinese authorities insisted in a statement on 21 August this year that the boy is not in detention and claim that he is still in Tibet. But unofficial sources insist that the child is being held in Beijing, where a Western diplomat said in August that the Child was "under protection".

**We therefore appeal to the committee to inquire into the whereabouts of this child and take necessary action to ensure his safety and well being.**

#### **Appendix B: Tibetan Support for the New Panchen Lama Forces China to make Plans to Set Up a Rival Candidate (Press Statement by Tibetan Government in Exile.)**

##### **THE TIBET BUREAU**

Office of the Representative of H.H. the Dalai Lama  
(United Nations Affairs)

##### **TIBETAN SUPPORT FOR THE NEW PANCHEN LAMA FORCES CHINA TO MAKE PLANS TO SET UP A RIVAL CANDIDATE**

**Dharamsala, 4 November** - The stubborn support of the Tibetan people for the new Panchen Lama recognised by His Holiness the Dalai Lama on 14 May this year is viewed by Beijing as a dangerous erosion of its authority in Tibet. In a counter-move which clearly reflects the bankruptcy of China's religious policy in Tibet, according to reliable sources, the Chinese authorities have summoned all high Tibetan lamas to Beijing this Sunday (5 November) for a meeting in which they will be forced to come up with a rival candidate for the prestigious post.

In a further display of open defiance, many of the lamas ordered to attend the Beijing meeting have feigned illness in order to avoid being forced to recognise a rival candidate to the post of the Panchen Lama.

The latest Chinese move follows a series of meetings held throughout Tibet this summer with the highest religious circles of Tibet who unanimously informed the Chinese authorities that only the candidate recognised by His Holiness the Dalai Lama will be considered legitimate by the Tibetan people and the larger international community. They said that no amount of administrative diktat by the Chinese authorities will make the Tibetan people recognise a

Panchen Lama other than the one chosen by His Holiness the Dalai Lama. They said that the matter of recognising, the Panchen Lama or any other high lama is a question of religious belief of the Tibetan people. Even if the authorities put up a rival candidate to the post of the Panchen Lama, he will not be recognised and accepted by the Tibetan people unless sanctioned and recognised by His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

At one such meeting, one particular lama (name withheld to protect the person) is reported CP as saying: "A lama is a person of religion. Therefore, his recognition should be carried out according to traditional Tibetan religious practices. If this is done, the public will respect him and hold him in high esteem. If this is not done, the people will not acknowledge him. Merely calling a child a reincarnation lama without the good wishes and acknowledgement from the public will not serve the any purpose. In the case of the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama, there is an established tradition of one recognising the other, and this must be respect. No other lama has the right or the spiritual authority to recognise the reincarnation of these two lamas."

Faced with such stubborn resistance to the Chinese attempts at making the religious leaders of Tibet in disowning the new Panchen Lama, the authorities have gone into each individual lama's home and threatening them with dire consequences if in future they openly defied the authorities again.

We believe that the present Chinese move follows the traditional colonial policy of divide and rule. The Chinese authorities had hoped to use the late Panchen Lama to gain some legitimacy for their rule in Tibet. But before his passing away, the last Panchen Lama made

The Office of Tibet The Tibet Bureau  
241 East 32nd Street rue de l'Ancien Port 13/3  
New York, NY 10016 U.S.A. 1201 Geneva, Switzerland  
Telephone 212 213 5010 Telephone 022 738 79 40  
Telefax 212 779 9245 Telefax 022 738 79

a blistering attack on the Chinese policies in Tibet. He said that if someone were to weigh the advantages and disadvantages of the Chinese rule of Tibet, the disadvantages would far outweigh the advantages China brought to Tibet.

The present move also shows that there is no religions freedom in Tibet. If there is genuine religions freedom in Tibet, then China should respect the wishes of the Tibetan people by supporting the Panchen Lama recognised by His Holiness the Dalai Lama, in whom all Tibetans put their faith and trust.

On 14 May, His Holiness the Dalai Lama recognised a six-year-old Gedhun Choekyi Nyima as the reincarnation of the last Panchen Lama who passed away in early 1989 at his traditional monastic seat of Tashi Lhunpo in Shigatse, Tibet's second biggest city.

This announcement forced the Chinese authorities to detain Chadrel Rinpoche, the head of the Beijing-appointed search committee for the new Panchen Lama and 47 other Tibetans, all of whom were accused by Beijing for co-operating with His Holiness the Dalai Lama to enable him to make the announcement of the new Panchen Lama before the Chinese authorities. The new Panchen Lama and his family members were also detained.

According to the London-based Tibet Information Network, the authorities have now ousted Chadrel Rinpoche from the post of the head of the Tashi Lhunpo management committee and from the post of the head of the search committee for the Panchen Lama. He has been replaced by Sengchen Lobsang Gyaltzen, a long-time opponent of the late Panchen Lama, and a person who obediently follows every Chinese official instruction.

Issued by: Department of Information and International Relations  
Central Tibetan Administration

Dharamsala-176215 (HP)  
INDIA

Update on the above release:

This morning (4 November 1995), 75 Tibetan party members and religious personalities from "Tibet Autonomous Region" and other Tibetan areas incorporated into various Chinese provinces received an "invitation" to leave their respective places by 8.40 tomorrow morning for Beijing. The 75 Tibetans have been selected directly from Beijing.

These Tibetans have been informed that nobody could take leave. Even those among the 75 who have been hospitalised have been ordered to leave for Beijing tomorrow. They have been told that attending the meeting in Beijing is a "test of your nationalism and your political stand."

The "invitation" letter stated that the main agenda of the Beijing meeting is to discuss the reincarnation of the Panchen Lama. The meeting will be held at Jinpxi Binguan in the Chinese capital.

- end -

[Home](#)

---

The NGO Reports Database on Children's Rights includes all existing and public reports submitted to the Committee on the Convention of the Rights of the Child by NGOs and NGO Coalitions. The copyright of the reports are retained by the authors and use thereof must be duly acknowledged.

The database is the property of the Liaison Unit of the NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child and is managed by that unit. For further information or other enquiries please contact the Liaison Unit at [dcg-ngo.group@pingnet.ch](mailto:dcg-ngo.group@pingnet.ch).

---