



Free Tibet Campaign's *Stop the Torture in Tibet* initiative will highlight persistent torture and maltreatment in Tibet's prisons, detention centres and labour camps. Since 2002 China has released at least 14 political prisoners early as a result of pressure from governments and individuals worldwide, thereby demonstrating sensitivity to international criticism of its human rights record. By highlighting individual political prisoners who have experienced torture, we aim to both contribute to their early release from prison and to bring to an end the practice of torture in Tibet.

Jigme Gyatso

Jigme Gyatso, 44, was born in Kersul district in Amdo. In 1985 he travelled to India to seek a blessing from the Dalai Lama. Jigme stayed in Gomang Dratsang for a year and then returned to Tibet where he joined Ganden monastery. In 1991 he became involved in political activities. He was arrested in Lhasa in front of the Tsuglakhang Temple on 30 March 1996 and was sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment in Drapchi Prison.

According to eyewitness reports, in October 1997 Gyatso was taken for questioning in Lhasa by four security personnel from Gansu Province. The officers gained permission from the prison authorities stating that "they needed to acquire further information from Jigme regarding a political incident". They took him to a place in Lhasa where he was detained and interrogated for nine days. The investigation was in connection with an incident during which pro-independence posters were pasted up in Gansu prior to Gyatso's arrest.

According to testimonies from fellow prisoners, the officers tied Gyatso's hands behind his back and struck him with electric shocks over his entire body and forced him to 'confess to the alleged crime.' Gyatso refused to comply, claiming that at the time of the incident he was in Lhasa with a friend. Despite producing an alibi, Gyatso was detained for five days during which time he was not given any food or water and beaten and tortured repeatedly. At the time of his return to Drapchi Prison, inmates saw him barely able to walk on his own and his body displayed evidence of severe beatings and ill-treatment.

Jigme Gyatso later took part in the May 1998 protests in Drapchi Prison, just prior the visit of a troika of European Union Ambassadors. These protests were

brutally suppressed and resulted in the death of eight prisoners and sentence extensions for at least 27 prisoners. It is believed that the two year extension to Jigme Gyatso's sentence, reported by former political prisoners, relates to this incident.

In February 2005 China gave the EU the following information concerning Jigme Gyatso, which gives his sentence as 15 years and his location as Drapchi Prison (unconfirmed reports suggest that he may have been moved to a prison in southern Tibet.): "Male, born in 1961. Primary School graduate. Small business owner in Xiahe County, Gansu Province. Charged with crimes threatening national security by the Lhasa City People's Intermediate Court on 25th November 1996 and condemned to a 15-year prison sentence and deprived of all civil rights for a period of five years. Currently serving his sentence at the Tibet Autonomous Region Prison. [Drapchi]"

Name:	Jigme Gyatso
Age:	44
Arrested:	30 March 1996
Reason:	"Crimes threatening national security"
Sentence:	15 years, believed to be extended to 17 years
Expected release:	30 March 2011 (or 2013)
Prison:	Drapchi Prison (unconfirmed reports suggest Jigme Gyatso has been moved to a prison in southern Tibet).

(Sources: Tibet Information Network, Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy, Gu-Chu-Sum, Free Tibet Campaign, Jamyang Tsultrin.)



ActionActionActionActionAction

Write to the Chinese authorities listed, requesting:

- The immediate release of Jigme Gyatso.
- A commitment that the torture and maltreatment of all prisoners arrested for "counter-revolutionary" offences or "endangering state security" in Tibet will cease. (China does not recognise the expression "political prisoners".)
- An independent investigation into prison conditions in Drapchi and into reports that prisoners have been tortured in detention, with the investigation's findings to be made public.
- Unconditional access for the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture to all prisons run by the Chinese authorities.

Addresses

1. Governor of Drapchi Prison

Name: Jianyuzhuang
Address:
 Xizang Zizhiqu Di Yi Jianyu
 Lasashi 850003
 People's Republic of China
Salutation: Dear Governor

2. Minister of Justice

Name: Zhang Fusen Buzhang
Address: Sifabu
 10 Chaoyangmen Nandajie
 Chaoyang Qu
 Beijingshi 100020
 People's Republic of China
Email: minister@legalinfo.gov.cn
Fax: + 86 10 6520 5236
 or +86 10 6529 2345 (c/o
 Ministry of Communications)
Salutation: Dear Minister