

# URGENT ACTION: TIBETAN POLITICAL PRISONER

**NAME: LHUNDRUB DRAKPA**

**TIBETAN:** ལྷུར་འགྲུབ་གྲགས་པ

**CHINESE:** 楞珠扎巴

**PINJIN:** LENGZHU ZHABA



**AGE ON DETENTION:** 36 on detention

**SUMMARY:** Lhundrub Drakpa, a Tibetan singer, has been sentenced to six years in prison for performing a song that criticised Chinese government repressive policies in Driru County, Nagchu Prefecture, Central Tibet (Ch: Biru, Tibet Autonomous Region).

**PRISON:** Unknown

**STATUS:** Sentenced to six years

Lhundrub Drakpa, a popular Tibetan singer from Driru County in Nagchu, central Tibet, was sentenced to six years in prison in June 2020. He was detained in May 2019 after he released a song about the repression that Tibetans face under China's occupation.

Lhundrub was held for over a year before he was sentenced, was beaten during detention, and denied access to a lawyer of his choice. He is in serious danger of further torture and even death at the hands of Chinese authorities.

Torture of prisoners in Tibet is endemic and is used systemically and routinely by Chinese authorities against Tibetans. Findings show that the level of violence directed at Tibetan political prisoners is frequent, extreme, and results in Tibetans being left with long-term and life-threatening conditions following a period of detention, including paralysis, the loss of limbs, organ damage, and serious psychological trauma.

An alarming number of Tibetans continue to die in custody or shortly after release from detention, and incriminating signs of torture and other clues to the reasons for death raise serious concern.

## PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY TO YOUR ELECTED REPRESENTATIVE AND URGE THEM TO:

Raise Lhundrub Drakpa's case with Chinese counterparts - at the Chinese Embassy in your country and in China - to release him immediately as he has committed no crime. Article 35 of the Constitution of the People's Republic of China guarantees freedom of speech, rights that are also enshrined under international law.

Urge for information regarding Lhundrub Drakpa's location and health status. The lack of information raises the alarm that he is at serious risk of torture or other forms of ill-treatment and that he could also be being denied access to necessary medical treatment.

Press for dates to be agreed for a visit from the High Commissioner for Human Rights to China and Tibet, and issue standing invitation to UN Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council (including Special Rapporteur Against Torture and UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention) with unfettered access to Tibet, as agreed during the UN Universal Periodic Review of China in 2013 and 2018.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Lhundrub Drakpa is known by Tibetans for his devotion to Tibetan cultural and artistic traditions. He is one of the most popular Tibetan singers in the region, his songs overwhelmingly focus on asserting Tibetan national identity and expressing pride in Tibetan culture and traditions as a way of voicing dissent and countering the false propaganda of Chinese authorities.

In 2013 Lhundrub Drakpa he was detained in relation to a song called “Tashi Yardo” that was performed in collaboration with another well-known Tibetan singer, Gonpo Tenzin. Gonpo Tenzin was detained in November 2013 and held for a year and a half before being found guilty of “spittism” - a state security crime often used against Tibetans who protest or express their culture outside of the boundaries tolerated by the ruling Chinese occupation - and sentenced to three and a half years imprisonment. He was released on 1 August 2018.

Lhundrub Drakpa was under intense surveillance by local Chinese authorities in Tibet but continued to post short verses expressing pride in Tibetan culture and traditions and calling out the destruction of Tibet’s environment and the Tibetan language.

His family in exile in India have said they have been unable to contact Lhundrub Drakpa since 2016 because local authorities banned Tibetans from maintaining contact with Tibetan family or friends in India. Those who do maintain such contact face imprisonment, torture and death.