



INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

Former political prisoner Dhondup Dorjee dies

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August 27, 2021

Dhondup Dorjee, a former political prisoner who spent years in prison for standing up for the rights of the Tibetan people, passed away in Lhasa on Aug. 25, 2021. He was 74 and resided in the part of Lhasa known to Tibetans as Lhalu. His cause of death is unknown although one source said he had some problems with his legs.

Dhondup was a graduate of the Nationalities Institute (now known as Minzu University of China) in Beijing and was given a post in the Lhasa Meteorological Bureau in 1989. In 1991, he was promoted to deputy head of the Meteorological Bureau in Nagchu (Chinese: Naqu).

Even though he was a member of the Chinese Communist Party and worked for the Chinese government, Dhondup was outspoken on the rights of the Tibetan people. Sources said he called for respect for human rights and religious freedom in Tibet, which the Chinese government has brutally occupied for more than 60 years.

A source with knowledge of Dhondup's life and work said he was first detained in September 1971 for being involved with political issues. He was said to have been sentenced to 10 years then.

On May 19, 1992, Dhondup was detained along with another Tibetan and accused of counterrevolutionary activities and formally charged on July 23, 1992. He was sentenced to four years of imprisonment with the deprivation of his political rights for two years thereafter. However, after being held in Gutsa and Sitru detention centers in Lhasa for two years and eight months, he was released on Jan. 18, 1995.

Following his release, he tried different ways to reclaim his job, but he was told that he could only get a temporary job as a gardener. Another source said that in the beginning of 1996, the authorities ordered Dhondup's dismissal even from this temporary work because of his past record. Thereafter, he started working as a construction laborer.

Dhondup is survived by his wife and one daughter in Tibet. Another daughter has resettled in Australia under the Central Tibetan Administration's program to resettle former political prisoners and their family members there.



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