



INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

Imprisoned Tibetan businessman's sister stages brave protest outside Lhasa court

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The sister of a Tibetan businessman who is serving a life sentence as a political prisoner staged a courageous protest outside a courthouse in Tibet's capital this week before being taken away by security guards.

Gonpo Kyi, also known as Gontey (Chinese: Gongde), the elder sister of [Dorjee Tashi](#) (Duoji Zhaxi), staged a peaceful protest in front of the Higher People's Court of the so-called Tibet Autonomous Region in Lhasa on Dec. 19.

Dorjee Tashi is a businessman and philanthropist who has been serving a life sentence since 2010. In the wake of the Chinese government's crackdown on mass Tibetan protests in spring 2008, Dorjee was initially framed as a "secessionist" but subsequently, while political charges were dropped, he was declared guilty of "loan fraud" and sentenced to life imprisonment by the Lhasa Intermediate People's Court on May 17, 2010.

Brave protest

According to reliable information obtained by the International Campaign for Tibet, Gontey stood for around 15 minutes with a placard on which "Dorjee Tashi is innocent" was written in Chinese before security officers removed her from the court gate.

Sources who had seen video recordings of the vigil said Gontey can be seen sitting on a railing cement block with the placard while security officers are on standby. At one stage, the videographer's voice can be heard in Tibetan apparently speaking to another man nearby, "Dorjee Tashi's elder sister is here in front of the court asking for justice for Dorjee Tashi."

At another stage, sources said video recordings showed a security officer trying to remove Gontey, and the videographer saying, "Dorjee Tashi is innocent and his sister is here in front of the court demanding justice for him."

Prior to the [COVID-19 outbreak in Tibet](#) that began in August this year, Gontey had [staged a sit-in in front of the People's Court in June](#). In a public video statement that was subsequently posted on social media, she detailed what ensued between her and the court officials after the sit-in. She argued that her younger brother is innocent and declared that she would not stop coming in front of the court until Dorjee Tashi receives justice.

Now that the COVID crisis rules have been relatively relaxed, Gontey continues to advocate for justice for her brother.

Dorjee Tashi

The International Campaign for Tibet has previously documented the [torture](#) of the famous Tibetan businessman and philanthropist during his pre-trial detention, as well as his [family's advocacy](#) for justice for him.

Dorjee Tashi is currently serving in the Tibet Autonomous Region Prison No 1, colloquially known as Drapchi Prison, where Tibetan prisoners are known to be tortured during their incarceration.

Both the United States and the European Union have raised concerns about the arbitrary detention of Dorjee Tashi. In its [statement](#) during the recently concluded 51st session of the UN Human Rights Council (Sept. 12 to Oct. 7, 2022), the European Union called for the immediate and unconditional release of, among others, Dorjee Tashi. The United States recognized the detention of Dorjee Tashi in its [2021 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices](#).

The International Campaign for Tibet urges the international community to continue to call for Dorjee Tashi's release.



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