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A prisoner of conscience remained held throughout the year. At least 150 possible prisoners of conscience were detained, many of them incommunicado, without charge or trial. Many were reportedly tortured or ill-treated by law enforcement officers. A Buddhist monk died in custody in disputed circumstances.

The Druk National Congress (DNC), a political organization set up in exile in Nepal, organized sit-ins, demonstrations and other campaigning activities, particularly in October, demanding a democratic system of government and greater protection of and respect for human rights.

In May a new extradition agreement with India, effectively providing for, among other things, extradition of anyone requested by either country, entered into force.

In July the National Assembly adopted a resolution authorizing the forcible retirement from civil service of relatives of people living in refugee camps in eastern Nepal.

A meeting of the foreign secretaries of Bhutan and Nepal was held in Thimphu in July to prepare for the eighth round of talks between the two governments on the fate of more than 90,000 people _ mostly Nepali-speaking people from southern Bhutan _ living in refugee camps in eastern Nepal (see previous *Amnesty International Reports*). No date had been fixed for the talks by the end of the year.

Tek Nath Rizal, a prisoner of conscience, spent his eighth year in prison (see *Amnesty International Report 1994*).

In April Rongthong Kunley Dorji, a Bhutanese national and leader of the DNC and of the United Front for Democracy (UFD), another political organization set up in exile in Nepal, was detained in India. He remained held at the end of the year awaiting the outcome of extradition proceedings to Bhutan. The charges featured in the arrest warrants issued by the Bhutanese authorities _ the basis of the extradition request _ appeared to be politically motivated. Rongthong Kunley Dorji had left Bhutan in 1991, shortly after being pardoned by King Jigme Dorji Wangchuck. He had been detained on treason charges and tortured by members of the Royal Bhutan Bodyguards.

At least 150 possible prisoners of conscience were detained. The arrests appeared to be part of a crack-down by the authorities on suspected DNC and UFD sympathizers. Many of those arrested were held in incommunicado detention without charge or trial. In October, in the immediate aftermath of a nationwide pro-democracy poster campaign, scores of suspected government opponents were arrested, mainly in eastern Bhutan, and held in incommunicado detention without charge or trial. A large majority of those detained were members of the Sarchop community. Among them were dozens of Buddhist monks and religious teachers. Kinzang Chozom, who was pregnant, was among those arrested and was not allowed to see her children. Other women were arrested, apparently in an attempt to force their husbands to give themselves up to the authorities. Many of those detained on suspicion of being DNC and UFD sympathizers were reportedly tortured or ill-treated. In February, four DNC members _ Taw Tshering, Tshampa Wangchuck, Tshampa Ngawang Tenzin and Chhipon Samten Lhendup _ were held naked for one week in very low temperatures while in detention at Tashi Yangtshi prison in eastern Bhutan. In September Dorji Norbu, Kunga, Dorji Tshewang and Namkha Dorji were held in shackles and flogged daily at Pema Gatsel police station.

Gomchhen Karma, a Buddhist monk from Gomdar, Samdrup Jonkhar district, died in disputed circumstances at Korila, Mongar district, while in police custody in October. The government admitted he had been shot dead by the district administrator, but claimed that it had been an accident. However, an eye-witness alleged that the administrator shot Gomchhen Karma deliberately three times in the head.

Amnesty International continued to appeal for the immediate and unconditional release of Tek Nath Rizal; for pro-democracy supporters held in incommunicado detention to be released unless promptly charged with a recognizably criminal offence; and for fair trials for political prisoners. The organization also appealed for an immediate end to torture and ill-treatment by law enforcement officers. Amnesty International called on the authorities to guarantee immediate access to adequate medical care to Kinzang Chozom, in view of her pregnancy. The organization expressed its fears that, if returned to Bhutan, Rongthong Kunley Dorji might again be tortured.