

It is a traditional Tibetan belief that the *Chu-Mik Gu-Dril* (Nine Braided 'Water Eyes') has the power to protect you from harm. So wearing the nine 'eyes' in the form of amulets, jewelry or by weaving them onto some item of clothing – becomes a weapon against evil and demonic forces. The design consists of white and black (light and dark) strands interwoven to form 'eyes'. The two colours represent the two state protector-deities of Tibet. Tibetans also believe that wearing a band with the nine 'eyes' on your wrist, where the essential pulse of your body flow, gives you protection from nervous disorders.

Herdsmen in Tibet diligently weave the nine 'eyes' onto their slings. They believe this enhances the power of the sling and makes it a more effective weapon. In fact, such a sling is one of the nine ancient weapons of *Dra-lha* – the War God.

In 1988, led by the late Yulo Dawa Tsering (Ven Yulo Rinpoche), Tibetan political prisoners started

wearing wristbands with the nine 'eyes' for protection from the 'evil' Chinese – seen by Tibetans as not only their oppressors but the enemy of the Dharma. It was also a silent protest against Chinese atrocities in Tibet and a mark of solidarity among themselves. Unaware of this symbol, prison guards also started wearing these bands, perhaps because they saw it as a queer but harmless 'native' custom. However, on realising the significance of wearing the band, prison authorities immediately banned its use. Prisoners caught wearing the band were punished – many were tortured and even had their sentence extended.

Popularly known as the '**Rangzen**' or '**Freedom Band**' – this symbol of resistance against oppression and their undying struggle for freedom – is worn the world over by Tibetans and their supporters. Wearing a '**Rangzen Band**' is one way of showing that you know and that you care about the Tibetan people's struggle for independence.



# Friends of Tibet

I N D I A

PO Box 16674, Bombay 400050  
**Email:** [support@friendsoftibet.org](mailto:support@friendsoftibet.org)  
**Web:** [www.friendsoftibet.org](http://www.friendsoftibet.org)

**Rangzen Band:** Made specially for Friends of Tibet (India) by a Tibetan refugee family living in Himachal Pradesh, India (Rs. 10)