

TRANSCRIPT:

My Country is Tibet

a BYkids film
THEIR WORLD THEIR FILMS



Namgyal Wangchuk Trichen Lhagyari: My name is Namgyal Wangchuk, a seventeen year old boy. My country is Tibet, but I was born in India as a refugee and I've never seen my motherland. From this movie, I hope the Western people, they can understand the reality of the Tibetan community, and of what we Tibetan people are doing in exile and what is our hope. This movie is my movie and my life.

This is my father, and it's me when I was five years old. My father, Lhagyari Trichen Namgyal Gyatso, was the 17th Lhagyari Trichen and the descendant of Tibetan Dharma Kings. The Chinese invaded Tibet in 1989, and we lost our country and our freedom. After Chinese came to Tibet, my father, he fight with them. For fighting with them, Chinese put him in prisons for twenty years, six months, and eleven days. Our Lhagyari Palace and everything was destroyed. We left with nothing except our name.

After he was released from prison, my father chose to heed His Holiness' suggestion and settled in India. He was chosen as a member of Parliament for 3 consecutive years.

You may be shocked. You hear I am descendant of the kings of Tibet, but still I'm washing my own clothes. You know, right now I'm a refugee boy. I have to do every work by myself. Actually, I love to wash my clothes by myself. The clothes get clean and for me it's like exercising.

My family and I live in a Tibetan settlement in a small city called Dehradun. This settlement is called Dekyiling, meaning a land of happiness.

Tashi: My name is Tashi. The Rajpur Tibetan refugee factory was started around 1963 or 1965 to unite the Tibetans that were scattered around and its primary purpose is to preserve the Tibetan religion and culture and to promote handicraft. The main factory was provided to weave rugs.

Generally, there are a lot of children here. Usually how many kids are here?

Caretaker: Around 8 or 9.

Namgyal: As a Tibetan, I see that this is the condition of the Tibetans. We are all the same. Most of the employees here are women. They come here in the morning and spend time feeding their kids and working. This is their livelihood.

Hi Mom! She Drives very well, very, very well. She learned only two hours... Two hours?

Mother: No, no, five hours!

Namgyal: Five hours, and now she is perfect. Without my mother, everything is not possible. She is the one who I love so much!

In India, there are a variety of Tibetan schools. I am studying at Gopalpur TCV school. In TCV, Tibetan Children's Village, we can learn Tibetan culture. If we are in Indian schools, then we have to speak Hindi or English. So, if we speak Hindi or English everyday then one day we'll forget our culture and our language, our traditions. Over here it's really good for Tibetan students.

Do you have anything to say about Tibetan Children's Village?

Classmate 1: Whether you call it home or place, TCV has become everything. TCV is very important for us. We can get a good education here and also meet new students and friends and gain new experience. In my view, there's no place like TCV.

Classmate 2: [Singing] Do you know? Do you know? Do...

[Laughter]

Wait, wait.

Namgyal: It's okay, just say it.

Classmate 2: [Singing] What it feels like to be the last one to know when life could've gone and changed. How can I love you, how can I love you, how can I love you, how can I love you?

[Beatboxing]

Namgyal: Perfect, perfect!

Classmate 2: Thank you, thank you!

Namgyal: To explain my daily routine at home, I wake up at 5:30 in the morning, then I go out for a jog. When I come back I wash up and I do my prayers and homework. After my mom and sister make breakfast, we sit down to eat. Then, I study for 2 hours and after that I am free. In the afternoon I watch movies. Every evening, I do my prayers again.

Namdol la: It might sound like a cliché, but I think he's the best brother on Earth. And he's very sweet, and one thing my friends always told me is he is already a gentleman, so he's a very nice boy.

Namgyal: She's one of my most unforgettable sisters who always helps me and loves me, and her name is Namdol la.

She used to be strict, like if I didn't study in school, she'd scold me. And during night, she'd like me to read the storybook even though I don't like to read. And after that I had to explain whatever I understood.

Right now, during the history period, we are studying about the history of Tibet like kings, the Dalai Lamas, and the traditions.

These are the three great religious kings of Tibet. And in the center is the king, Songtsen Gampo. He was the one who sent so many scholars into India to learn Buddhism. And these two kings also developed Buddhism in Tibet. They built so many temples. And not only that, these three kings, they made Tibetan words which we don't have before.

We have no land. We don't have anything, but still we have good culture and also religion because of these kings.

Children: [Chanting]

Namgyal: According to Buddhism, gardening and watering plants is good for you and brings you luck. Even my mother loves flowers and wherever we go, if she sees a beautiful flower, she buys it. Similarly, my two sisters like flowers but not as much as my mom.

My other sister has come. Come in, come in. Come in. Please, sit. Here's my sister, Namgyal Choesom la. She's right here so I'll talk to her.

We've been together since childhood so what do you have to say about me? What do you have to say? What do you think?

Choesom la: [Speaks Tibetan]

Namgyal: She said I looked like monkey. Usually she used to make fun of me. Don't say bad things.

Choesom la: What should I say?

Namgyal: Okay I think we should interview her later when she's in a better mood. Right now, right now, she's not in a very talkative mood. Thank you. Bye.

Choesom la: Bye

Namgyal: I was coming back from my class and the warden, he said your... your father passed away. At first I feel very sad. And my sisters both are really sad. My mom called us from school to here. Here is where we take our father. This is the place.

My Father was really friendly with everyone not only the elders, also with kids. Whenever he saw kids he used to give candy. At the time I feel very scared and I have to burn him because I'm the boy of the house. I feel he is always with me. He is in my heart. So he's always with me.

?? (15:33): [Singing]

Namgyal: Right after the year of the demise of my beloved father. I was coronated by His Holiness as the 18th Lhagyari Trichen and the descendant of the great Dharma Kings of Tibet. The relationship between His Holiness and me is like a teacher and student. His Holiness is always telling me to study hard. After graduation, me and my family will talk with His Holiness of my next step.

?? (16:16): Back during childhood he was just like me, very very naughty, very sporty and all, but I don't know after he went to tcv and then when he came back it was totally different I couldn't even recognize him. He was very calm type of person, then I realized that he had all the qualities that his father had.

Namgyal: After I got this name I realized myself that I have to do better. Even though we are in exile, even though we are refugees and all, I've still got the name, and the name is still big, even though I don't have anything to show.

Same ?? as (16:16), (17:05): Since Trajan being my friend I would love our country to be led by such persons. I know there's no place for monarchy in a democratic society, but still later if he takes the responsibility in future and does something for the country people would say, see that's trajan, he had carried out his name.

Reporter: The chinese state news agency xinhua reports that 18 people have been confirmed dead in rioting in lasa and neighboring countries on the 14th of march. The actual death toll is suspected to be much higher. Tibetans are arrested simply for trying to leave their own courtyards in many areas of the city and other parts of Tibet, there are still no operating telephone lines or internet connection law enforcement authorities.

Namgyal: I don't know why chinese are doing these things to Tibetans. I don't know why. I don't know what they're thinking of us.

Okay. His name is Labsang Gansit. He's my friend. Most of the time when I talked about politics I used to talk with him. What can you do for your part to help Tibet gain back independence?

Labsang: Whether it's Tibetans in general, or students, we all have our responsibility. As Tibetans, it is our right to gain back independence and our land. As a people, we have our rights. We have a right to live on our own land. For example, the chinese have taken the place where I live in Tibet, but I have a right to take back my place. I haven't stolen or robbed anyone for it. It's my right and I will try to get it back.

Namgyal: Dear my fellow Tibetan in Tibet who are suffering under the Chinese rule, who are denied their basic fundamental rights. A large number of people have died for the sake of country. And my countrymen still continue to give up their precious human lives. They're waiting for the day when His Holiness could return back to Tibet. They still have hope.

? Mother: These are the prisons. This is probably the one your father was in. These are the prisoners' uniforms. Your father's uniform was re-stitched a lot. It's fallen apart now.

Namgyal: I want to help Tibetan people as my ancestors did, but I'm not good in politics. I have to study and to gain knowledge about all things. And later on, after studying these things, I can give the answers.

Today is Sunday, so it's holiday. Right now I'm in Santstora where a holy place for Hindu and here is really beautiful river. This is my favorite place in Dehradun. I used to come here with my father and we used to swim and play here. Sometimes we came with the whole family. My mom, my dad, my sister and me. We used to cook here.

Those people like His Holiness, like my father's friends they always say, "Now you have different responsibility, so you have to do better." I know I can see myself that I am changed because of my father. My mother said I was just exactly like him, but I don't think he was just exactly like me. He was much better than me. Every day, every minute, every second, I miss him. He's the only one who could guide me, who could show me the path I have to go.

Do you want to say anything about me?

Labsang: In the future you have to work for the Tibetan struggle. And in my lifetime, I will support you no matter what if you listen to the Dalai Lama and work for the Tibetan people. This is my request to you. Continue with your studies and in the future, we should all make the dream of the Tibetan struggle come true.

Namgyal: I'm going to sing a really beautiful Tibetan song. Ok, here we go. I forgot the words. Okay.

When I first came home, I missed my parents. Seeing the land and the mountains, I missed my motherland. Today, when I've come to a foreign land, I am thankful to His Holiness. Seeing his face, I became very thankful.

(24:50)