

**INSIDE TIBET:**

**ICT Report: Fears for life of Tibetan political prisoner tortured after speaking to U.N. Rapporteur:**

According to a December 30, 2010 news report from the Tibetan Government in Exile, Jigme Gyatso, a Tibetan political prisoner, who was tortured after speaking to the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture during an official prison visit in 2005, is seriously ill in Chushur prison. The report states: “[his] survival is at stake due to his debilitating health condition.” Jigme Gyatso, a former Tibetan Buddhist monk, is serving 18 years in prison for “counter-revolution” and “inciting splittism.” On November 27, 2005, the then UN Special Rapporteur on Torture Dr. Manfred Nowak met Jigme Gyatso during an official visit to Chushur prison near Lhasa. Nowak subsequently called for Jigme Gyatso’s release. ICT is appealing to the new UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, Juan Mendez, to call for his urgent release on medical grounds due to fears for his life following repeated torture since his arrest 15 years ago.

<http://savetibet.org/media-center/ict-news-reports/fears-life-tibetan-political-prisoner-tortured-after-speaking-un-rapporteur>

**Three Tibetan writers sentenced:** Three Tibetan writers have been handed jail terms of three to four years for “inciting activities to split the nation.” The three writers, Jangtse Donkho, Buddha and Kalsang Jinpa were tried on October 28 by the Aba Intermediate People’s Court, but their sentences were not handed down until December 30, 2010. Sources said that none of the writers, nor their lawyers or family members, were allowed to speak in court at the time of verdict, so when the judge ordered the court to rise for the verdict, the three writers remained seated. When the Judge announced that Jangtse Donkho would receive a jail term of four years, he clapped his hands. The other two remained silent. Each of them had pleaded not guilty during the trial in October that lasted half a day. Buddha, speaking in fluent Chinese, accused the authorities of perpetrating “injustice among different nationalities.” He told the court that similar writings have been published by Han Chinese, but that punishment is only handed to them because of their ethnicity. <http://www.rfa.org/english/news/tibet/writers-12312010111557.html>

**UNITED NATIONS:**

**ICT Report: U.N. Special Rapporteur warns of consequences to nomad resettlement:** In a report released on December 23, 2010, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, Olivier De Schutter, said: “... While there is little doubt about the extent of the land degradation problem, the Special Rapporteur would note that herders should not, as a result of the measures adopted under the tuimu huancao (‘removing animals to grow grass’) policy, be put in a situation where they have no other options than to sell their herd and resettle.” Since the beginning of the Western Development Strategy in 1999–2000, the Chinese government has been implementing policies of settlement, land confiscation and fencing of pastoral areas in Tibet, dramatically curtailing nomadic herder’s livelihood. These policies threatening one of the world’s last systems of sustainable pastoralism - scientific evidence shows that these policies are a threat to the survival of the rangelands and Tibet’s biodiversity. And there is an increasing consensus among Chinese, Tibetan and western scholars that the traditional ecosystem knowledge of nomadic pastoralists protects the land and livelihoods and helps restore areas already degraded. <http://www.savetibet.org/media-center/ict-news-reports/un-special-rapporteur-warns-consequences-nomad-settlement>

**NEPAL:**

**Nepal arrests six Tibetan refugees:** Nepalese authorities arrested a group of six Tibetan refugees who escaped into northern Nepal from Tibet on January 2. The Nepalese police said that the four men and two women were travelling without documents and the group was handed over to immigration authorities. This arrest comes less than a fortnight after a set of Wikileaks revealed that the Chinese Government provides “financial incentives to officers who hand over Tibetan trying to exit China.” Each year, thousands of Tibetans refugees cross over snow-clad passes to Nepal, facing grave threats to their lives. Previously, they were given safe passage through Nepal to India, under an informal agreement between Nepalese authorities and the UN refugee agency. However, since 2008, following China’s growing influence, Nepal has hardened its stance on the Tibetan refugees. <http://www.voanews.com/tibetan-english/news/tibet/Nepal-Arrests-6-Fleeing-Tibetans-112866749.html>

**OBITUARY:**

**E. Gene Smith dies at 74:** E. Gene Smith, renowned for his seemingly limitless knowledge of Tibetan literature and his equally limitless fervor for saving it, died on December 16, at his home in Manhattan. He was 74. A Utah native, Mr. Smith, through persistence, ardor and benevolent guile amassed the largest collection of Tibetan books outside Tibet, saving them from isolation and destruction, making them accessible to scholars and Tibetan exiles around the world.

<http://savetibet.org/media-center/tibet-news/e-gene-smith-who-helped-save-tibetan-literary-canon-dies-74>