

INSIDE TIBET:

ICT Report: Determination to resist repression continues in ‘combat-ready’ Chamdo, frontline of ‘patriotic education’: This ICT report outlines reports indicative of a continued determination among Tibetans in Jomda county in Eastern Chamdo prefecture in the Tibet Autonomous Region, to resist repressive measures imposed after protests that began in March 2008. The report includes details about the authorities’ new emphasis on ‘security work’ in the region, including the use of ‘vigilante’ squads, the stepping up of military drilling and the imposition on more checkpoints to monitor people arriving and leaving the area. The Chamdo area is now the frontline of the patriotic education campaigns, targeting not only monasteries but ordinary people including schoolchildren and aims for total coverage at grassroots level. The Chinese Government regards Chamdo as ‘a strategic bridge between the Tibet Autonomous Region and the neighboring provinces of Sichuan, Yunnan and Qinghai.’ Chamdo is eastern Tibet’s provincial capital and the Chinese authorities gained control of central Tibet when it fell to the People’s Liberation Army on October 7, 1950. The Chinese authorities will be marking the 60th anniversary of Chamdo’s ‘liberation’ next year but despite the authorities’ harsh repressive measures, confrontations between local people and security forces in the area continue to happen with Tibetans resisting coercion to denounce the Dalai Lama and farmers carrying out ‘farming boycott’ movements. <http://www.savetibet.org/media-center/ict-news-reports/determination-resist-repression-continues-‘combat-ready’-chamdo-frontline-‘patriotic-education’>

ICT Report: Tibetan singer Tashi Dhondup detained: On December 3, Tashi Dhondup, a popular Tibetan singer from the eastern Tibetan region of Amdo, was detained by authorities and is being held in a police station in Xining according to a report from Tibetan exiles. The same sources said that Tashi Dhondup was taken at gun-point while his wife wept and grabbed one of the police officer’s legs in an attempt to hold him back. There are fears for his safety and welfare. Tashi Dhondup appears to have been under political suspicion after the release of his album of songs in October, ‘Torture Without Wounds’ containing lyrics that express his pain over the situation in Tibet. Some of his lyrics refer to: “The pain that there is no freedom in the land of Tibet. The pain that the heritage of our ancestors has been taken away.” And other lyrics express the widely-held desire of the Tibetan people for the Dalai Lama to return home: “Our root-lama, His Holiness the Dalai Lama / Please stop the life of exile in the land of others and come home as soon as possible / All the devoted men and women are around your golden throne waiting for you.” Thousands of copies of the album were sold in the area following its release. <http://www.savetibet.org/media-center/ict-news-reports/tibetan-singer-tashi-dhondup-detained>

Security stepped up in Eastern Tibet as Tibetans protest over jailed monk: Security has been stepped up in Eastern Tibet as over 300 people in the towns of Golok and Othog in Nyakchu district, began peaceful demonstration and hunger strike calling for the release and retrial of a revered monk, Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche on December 5 and 6. So far, 90 people are reported to be arrested and around 20 seriously injured. Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche was sentenced to death in 2002 for his alleged involvement in a series of bombings in eastern Tibet. His sentence was later commuted to life imprisonment in 2005. Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche is widely acclaimed for his work to develop social, medical, educational and religious institutions for Tibetan nomads in eastern Tibet, and he advocated for environmental conservation in the face of destructive logging and mining projects. Tibetan protesters, overseas human rights groups and UN human rights experts argue that the case against Tenzin Deleg is seriously flawed and continue to support his release or a fair retrial. The Associated Press report said that five members of Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche’s family had traveled to Beijing in recent weeks to deliver a petition seeking a new trial that was signed by 30,000 people but were forced to return to Sichuan. They then went to the municipal courthouse in Sichuan’s capital Chengdu to request permission to visit the lama in prison but it is not clear if the request was granted. <http://www.thetibetpost.com/en/inside/51-news-in-focus/521-ninety-people-arrested-and-twenty-injured-in-nyakchu-district-lithang-eastern-tibet>
http://www.ctv.ca/servlet/ArticleNews/story/CTVNews/20091208/tibet_monk_091208/20091208?hub=World

DALAI LAMA:

The Dalai Lama meets with new Australian Opposition Leader: Australia’s new federal Opposition leader Tony Abbot has irked the Chinese by meeting with visiting exiled Tibetan Leader, His Holiness the Dalai Lama on December 3, as one of his first foreign policy acts. They reportedly talked about China, Tibet, India and refugees. Radio Australia later quoted Abbot who said, “It has been good for me to learn from his Holiness who has many decades of experience in these matters. I’ve had three days as an opposition leader.” Mr. Abbot recalled that Prime Minister John Howard had met with the Dalai Lama and said that he understood why people were disappointed with the current Prime Minister Kevin Rudd for not doing the same. Mr. Rudd has met with the Dalai Lama several times before but has declined to do so on this visit. A spokesman for the Chinese embassy said, “We are firmly opposed to the Dalai’s visit for engaging in separatist activities. This position is consistent and clear.” <http://www.dalailama.com/news.498.htm>