

INSIDE TIBET:

China jails Tibetan filmmaker Dhondup Wangchen for 6 years: According to information received, Dhondup Wangchen, the Tibetan filmmaker who was arrested last year, soon after completing filming of the documentary, "Leaving Fear Behind," has been tried and sentenced to six years in prison on December 28, 2009. It is not known where the trial took place. Wangchen's film documented Tibetan views of last year's Beijing Olympics, the current situation in Tibet and the Dalai Lama's return to Tibet. In July 2009, the Chinese government authorities arbitrarily replaced the lawyer chosen by Wangchen, Li Dunyong, with a government-appointed lawyer. Li Dunyong reported that Wangchen had been tortured in order to extract a confession and that some of the injuries he sustained as a result were still painful a year later. Li Dunyong said that Wangchen had intended to plead not guilty and had admitted no wrongdoing during his 16 months in detention. Human Rights Watch, on August 3, 2009 had said that, "A verdict against Dhondup Wangchen under the present circumstances will have no legitimacy whatsoever." <http://www.savetibet.org/media-center/tibet-news/china-jails-tibetan-filmmaker-dhondup-wangchen-6-years>

Tibet governor tenders resignation at policy meeting: On January 12, as Beijing convened a meeting to spur economic growth and quell dissatisfaction in Tibet, Chinese state-owned media reported that the governor of Tibet has tendered his resignation. Qiangba Pingcuo (Tib: Jampa Phuntsok), an ethnic Tibetan, was governor during the March 2008 demonstrations by Tibetans in Lhasa. The report did not give a reason for his resignation, which can indicate a person is slated for another post. His resignation came as China convened a major policy conference on Tibet, that stressed increased industrial development and investment from Beijing as well as continued controls on religious institutions. The most powerful official in Tibet is party secretary Zhang Qingli, a Han Chinese. The emphasis on greater investment at the meeting implies that China is recognizing some of the economic causes for discontent by Tibetans, many of whom feel that Chinese migrants have benefitted more from large projects, including mining and a train line to Lhasa. <http://in.reuters.com/article/worldNews/idINIndia-45324320100112?pageNumber=1&virtualBrandChannel=0>

U.S.:

ICT Report: Chinese government fails to block Tibet film screening at major festival in U.S.:

Chinese government has failed to stop a film on Tibet from being shown at a major international film festival in Palm Springs, California despite pressure on festival organizers. In protest, the Chinese withdrew two films from the festival, blaming it on being a decision taken by the Chinese film directors. Darryl Macdonald, director of the Palm Springs International Film Festival (PSIFF) said, "After meeting with representatives from the Chinese government regarding their request to cancel our screenings of 'The Sun Behind the Clouds: Tibet's Struggle for Freedom,' we have respectfully declined their request.....we cannot allow the concerns of one country or community to dictate what films we should or should not play, based on their own cultural or political perspective. Freedom of expression is a concept that is integral both to the validity of artistic events, and indeed, to the ethos of this country." This isn't the first time that the Chinese government has tried to exert pressure at an international film festival. In July Chinese hackers attacked the website of Australia's biggest film festival over its decision to screen a documentary about the exiled Uighur activist, Rebiya Kadeer. <http://www.savetibet.org/media-center/ict-news-reports/chinese-government-fails-block-tibet-film-screening-major-festival-us>

U.S. GOVERNMENT:

Secretary Clinton on Tibet: On January 12, the Washington Post reported that Secretary Clinton, while speaking on the first day of her nine day, three nation Asia-Pacific journey, played down the friction between United States and China and said, "What I'm expecting is that we actually are having a mature relationship. That means that it doesn't go off the rails when we have differences of opinion." On Tibet, the Washington Post article said, "Secretary Clinton acknowledged that more friction is likely when President Obama meets with the Dalai Lama. In an effort to get off to a good start with China, Obama last year postponed a meeting with the exiled Tibetan spiritual leader until after a summit with Chinese President Hu Jintao. Obama's meeting with the Dalai Lama is expected to take place soon. While Clinton said the United States recognizes China's sovereignty over Tibet, she said U.S. officials differ with China over the region, 'we support the legitimate desire for cultural, religious respect and autonomy.'" <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/01/11/AR2010011102883.html>