

INSIDE TIBET:

ICT Report: Storm in the Grasslands : Self-immolations in Tibet and Chinese policy: ICT's new publication 'Storm in the Grasslands: Self-immolations in Tibet and Chinese policy' takes a in depth look at the Tibetan self-immolations and includes new evidence through the statements and last conversations of Tibetans who self-immolated, analysis of a direct correlation between the self-immolations and an intensified campaign against the Dalai Lama together with aggressive expansion of legal measures tightening state control over Tibetan religion and culture. The report also includes an assessment of the Chinese official response to the self-immolations. <http://www.savetibet.org/resource-center/ict-publications/reports/storm-grasslands-self-immolations-tibet-and-chinese-policy>

China sentences four Tibetan monks to long prison terms: The Tibetan Centre for Human Right and Democracy (TCHRD) reports that four monks from Gyalrong Tsodun Monastery have been sentenced to long prison terms by the Barkham Intermediate People's Court in Barkham (Ch: Ma'erkang), capital of Ngaba (Ch: Aba), Sichuan Province. According to the information received, Namsey, 18 yrs, Yarphel 18 yrs, Sangay 19 yrs and Asong 22 yrs, were sentenced to 10 years, 6 years, 2 years, and 2 years and six months, respectively. <http://www.tchrd.org/2013/01/china-sentences-four-tibetan-monks-to-long-prison-terms/>

ICT Report: Authorities bar customary religious rituals to enforce quick cremation of Tibetan who self-immolated in Amchok: Following the self-immolation of 22 year old Tsering Tashi on January 12, Chinese police and Public Security Bureau officials barred local monks and lay people from offering prayers and the family from performing customary religious rituals for a death. The family was threatened and told they would be responsible for consequences if they refused. A harrowing video has been posted online that depicts Tsering Tashi lying on the street in flames, lifting his hands into a prayer position and saying the name of the Dalai Lama in a voice that remains steady as he speaks. <http://savetibet.org/media-center/ict-news-reports/authorities-bar-customary-religious-rituals-enforce-quick-cremation-tibetan-who-self-immol>

ICT Report: Chinese state media blame "Dalai clique" and announce detentions in aggressive security drive against Tibetan self-immolations: A January 15, 2013 report in Chinese state media Xinhua.net announced the detention of seven Tibetans in Gansu who they blame for 'organizing' a self-immolation, saying they are members of the 'Dalai clique' and the exile activist group the Tibetan Youth Congress, based in India. The statement is indicative of an increasingly aggressive strategy of reprisals against friends, family and others connected to Tibetan immolators. Also in December, Xinhua reported the detention of a monk and his nephew, reportedly accused of playing a role in inciting self-immolation and passing on information to Tibetans in India. <http://savetibet.org/media-center/ict-news-reports/chinese-state-media-blame-dalai-clique-and-announce-detentions-aggressive-security-drive-a>

Tibetans face passport dilemma: RFA reports that hardly any Tibetans have been issued international passports since the Chinese authorities introduced tough travel rules in 2012 in the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR). Passport applications are scrutinized at the village, district, county level and then by the TAR police bureau and the applicant is required to sign a document guaranteeing that he will not engage in any 'illegal activities' or activities that are 'harmful to the nation' while abroad. In addition, authorities began implementing a nationwide electronic passport scheme in 2012, whereby Tibetans in TAR are required to surrender their passports and are now being subject to further investigation and screening. <http://www.rfa.org/english/news/tibet/passports-01202013213254.html>

Teen dies before burning protest: On January 19, Jigji Kyab, a 17 year old Tibetan teenager was found dead soaked in gasoline with two lighters in his hands. Sources said that Jigji "died from consuming a poisonous drug used for killing foxes before he could execute his plan to self-immolate in protest against Chinese rule." Jigji left a suicide note on his bed, praising the Dalai Lama and asking Tibetans to "rise up" against Beijing's rule. <http://www.rfa.org/english/news/tibet/poison-01232013192823.html>

U.S. CONGRESS:

ICT Report: Members of Congress urge administration to lead effort to end Tibet crisis: Members of the U.S. House of Representatives wrote to President Obama asking that the "United States take a leading role and engage actively with partner nations on measures that could bring near-term improvements in the human rights situation in Tibet." The letter, dated December 20, 2012, was authored by Representatives Jim McGovern (D-MA) and Frank Wolf (R-VA) and signed by a total of 58 House members of both parties. Congressmen McGovern and Wolf said, "With the steep rise in self-immolations by Tibetans and the Chinese authorities' failure to address their legitimate grievances, the United States must lead efforts to resolve the crisis." <http://savetibet.org/media-center/ict-press-releases/members-congress-urge-administration-lead-effort-end-tibet-crisis>