

URGENT ACTION

TIBETANS DETAINED AFTER SUPPORTING DEAD MONK

At least 11 ethnic Tibetans have been detained following the death of a monk who set himself on fire in protest against government policies. They are at risk of torture and other ill-treatment.

On 16 March, a 20-year-old Tibetan monk called Phuntsok set fire to himself at a market in Ngaba County (in Chinese: Aba), Sichuan province, in protest against repressive government policies in Tibet Autonomous Region and other Tibetan populated areas in China. He died in hospital early in the morning of 17 March.

Following Phuntsok's self-immolation, hundreds of monks from the same monastery, Kirti monastery in Ngaba County, and other local residents staged another protest. Several of them were briefly detained and many others have since been taken into custody. **Lobsang Choepel**, 24, and **Lobsang Ngodup**, 32, both monks from Kirti monastery were detained on around 30 March. Two other monks from Kirti monastery, **Dhonyoe Dorjee**, aged around 34, and **Tenzin Gyamtso**, 27, were detained on 8 April. All were detained at the monastery and are believed to be held at the Ngaba county police detention centre.

The police in Beijing detained **Lobsang Tsepak** on 25 March. He is a former Kirti monastery monk, studying at the Central University for Nationalities (Minzu University) in Beijing.

A-dor, 35, **Dorjee**, around 35, **Palko**, 40, and **Woesel Dorjee**, 28, were all detained on 23 March in the neighbouring Namda Township in Dzamthang County by the county police. They are believed to be held at the county police detention centre. The four had taken part in a demonstration in Dzamthang County, in solidarity with the monks in Ngaba County.

On 12 April, the authorities detained the brother and uncle of Phuntsok, the monk who self-immolated – **Lobsang Dhargay**, 22, and **Lobsang Tsondue**, around 46. Both had previously been detained on 22 March and released on 25 March. They are also believed to be held at Ngaba county police detention centre.

PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in English, Chinese or your own language:

- Calling on the authorities to release immediately and unconditionally Lobsang Choepel, Lobsang Ngodup, Dhonyoe Dorjee, Tenzin Gyamtso, Lobsang Tsepak, A-dor, Dorjee, Palko, Woesel Dorjee, Lobsang Dhargay and Lobsang Tsondue unless they are to be charged with an internationally recognizable criminal offence;
- Urging the authorities to ensure they have immediate access to their families, legal representation of their choice, and any medical care they may require;
- Calling on them to guarantee that they will not be tortured or ill-treated while they remain in custody;
- in restoring order, use force only when necessary and then in a proportionate way;
- Urging them to respect and protect the right of Tibetans to enjoy their own culture, to practise their religion, and to use their own language.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 30 MAY TO:

Director of the Sichuan Provincial

Department of Public Security

ZENG Shengquan Tingzhang

Sichuansheng Gong'anting

9 Jindunlu, Chengdushi 610041

Sichuansheng

People's Republic of China

Fax: +86 28 86301177

Salutation: Dear Director

Governor of the Sichuan Provincial

People's Government

JIANG Jufeng Shengzhang

Sichuansheng Renmin Zhengfu

30 Duyuanjie, Chengdushi 610016

Sichuansheng

People's Republic of China

Fax: +86 28 86604036

Salutation: Dear Governor

And copies to:

Minister of Public Security of the

People's Republic of China

MENG Jianzhu Buzhang

Gong'anbu

14 Dongchang'anjie

Dongchengqu

Beijingshi 100741

People's Republic of China

Salutation: Your Excellency

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

16 March was the third anniversary of a 2008 protest at Kirti monastery, during which the security forces allegedly shot dead at least ten ethnic Tibetans. In 2008, a wave of protests swept across the Tibetan populated areas. After a few initial days, the protests were largely peaceful but the authorities did crack down on them heavily.

Phuntsok is the second Kirti monk to have self-immolated. Another Kirti monk identified as Tapey set himself on fire in February 2009, in protest against orders that prohibited the monks from taking part in a traditional prayer festival. According to unconfirmed reports, the security forces beat Phuntsok when putting the flames down; there are also unconfirmed reports that the security forces opened fire on Tapey when he was surrounded by flames. Tapey survived but his whereabouts are unknown.

According to the Xinhua news agency, the security forces that put out the flames also rushed Phuntsok to a hospital but that later, the Kirti monks took him briefly away from the hospital and back to the monastery. NGO sources, including International Campaign for Tibet and Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy, dispute this version of the events.

According to NGO sources, security forces have been flooding Ngaba County since Phuntsok died on 17 March. From 19 March onwards, the authorities suspended religious services in Kirti monastery. On 20 March, they began a patriotic education campaign at the monastery. The security forces control the traffic in and out of the monastery. Because of the tight control, the monks are said to possibly face food shortages.

The authorities earlier announced that some younger monks would be removed from the Kirti monastery on 12 April to receive patriotic education. According to reports, the local residents successfully prevented any plan to remove the monks by blocking the monastery entrances.

According to NGO sources, some unidentified people have also been detained and remain in custody in Ngaba County, in addition to Lobsang Choepel, Lobsang Ngodup, Dhonyoe Dorjee, Tenzin Gyamtso, Lobsang Tsepak, A-dor, Dorjee, Palko, Woesel Dorjee, Lobsang Dhargay and Lobsang Tsondue.

There are around 2,500 monks in Kirti Monastery.

UA: 118/11 Index: ASA 17/021/2011 Issue Date: 19 April 2011

