



INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

Young Tibetan man sets himself on fire; third self-immolation in Tibet this year

<http://www.savetibet.org/young-tibetan-man-sets-himself-on-fire-third-self-immolation-in-tibet-this-year>

December 10, 2018

According to information from Tibetan sources, a young Tibetan man set fire to himself in Ngaba (Chinese: Aba) in the Tibetan area of Amdo on Dec. 8, 2018. News of the self-immolation circulated in Tibetan-language media but was difficult to immediately confirm because the Chinese government imposed an information blackout in the area and punishes Tibetans who discuss such incidents with outsiders.

The Tibetan language newspaper Tibet Times as well as the Tibet Post International identified the man as Drugkho from Ngaba. The Tibet Post also said that he set himself on fire while calling out for the long life of the Dalai Lama and freedom in Tibet. Radio Free Asia also reported the news, with one source telling RFA: "It has become an emergency issue and the details of the incident cannot be discussed at the moment. Everyone is aware of this self-immolation case in Ngaba, but no one has received a detailed account of the situation."

It is not clear if Drugkho is still alive.

The self-immolation this weekend was the 155th self-immolation by a Tibetan in Tibet and China. While committing self-immolation, Tibetans have consistently called for freedom in Tibet and the return of the Dalai Lama, and have with no exception conducted themselves in a non-violent way, making sure that nobody else would be hurt or any other property damaged or destroyed. As Tibet remains effectively closed to foreign reporters, diplomats or any other independent observers, their plight and peaceful resistance under the oppression of the Chinese government for nearly 70 years, continues to be under-reported and contribute to the Chinese government's strategy to isolate Tibetans from the world.

The wave of self-immolations began in February 2009, when a Kirti Monastery monk named Tapey walked out of his monastery and set himself alight.

Just over a month ago in Ngaba, a young Tibetan man named Dorbe set himself on fire on Nov. 4, saying "May the Dalai Lama live long! May we soon behold his golden countenance" before he died. According to Kanyag Tsering and Lobsang Yeshe, two Kirti monks in exile in India who passed on the news of the self-immolation, Dorbe was 23 and from Jakorma (Chinese: Xiakunma) village in the pastoral Choejema (Chinese: Qiujima) township of Ngaba county in present-day Ngaba, Tibetan and Qiang Autonomous Prefecture in Sichuan province.

Dorbe's self-immolation followed the death of a Tibetan man in his 40s, Tsekho Tugchak, who set fire to himself on March 7, 2018 in Ngaba, the first self-immolation in Tibet this year.

On Dec. 23, 2017, Konpe, a Tibetan who was also from Ngaba, set himself on fire close to the area of the first self-immolation in Tibet in 2009. All four of these men were laypeople, not monks.