

Three self-immolations in April bring total to 117

[2 May 2013] During the month of April three Tibetans self-immolated in further protests against China's oppressive rule over Tibet. All three, a young mother and two young monks, died following their protests. There have been 20 self-immolations in Tibet so far this year, and 117 in total since February 2009.

Chugtso | Lobsang Dawa & Kunchok Woser

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Chugtso (16 April 2013)

Chugtso (also referred to as Jugtso or Chuktso), a 20 year-old mother of one child, self-immolated at approximately 3pm (local time) on 16 April near Jonang monastery in Dzamthang (Chinese: Zamtang) county, Ngaba (Ch: Aba) prefecture, Amdo (incorporated into China's Sichuan province).

Radio Free Asia cited local sources as saying, "her self-immolation was in protest against China's repressive policies in Tibet."

Chugtso died at the scene of the protest. Her body was taken inside Jonang monastery, where monks performed traditional prayers. Afterwards, her remains were taken to her home in Bharma village, Dzamthang county.

According to Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD), "Family members of Chugtso were forced to cremate the body in haste that same night after orders came from County government and Public Security Bureau office asking for an immediate cremation or allow confiscation of the body."

Thousands of local Tibetans and monks are reported to have gathered at the monastery and Chugtso's home to show solidarity.

Chugtso is the sixth Tibetan to self-immolate in Dzamthang.

Further reading: TCHRD | RFA | Phayul

(Note: the Phayul report incorrectly states Chugtso is a mother of four)

Lobsang Dawa and Kunchok Woser (24 April 2013)

Two young monks died after self-immolating on the eve of the 24th birthday of the Panchen Lama, who was kidnapped by the Chinese authorities in 1995.

The two monks, Lobsang Dawa (aged 20, pictured above right) and Kunchok Woser (23, below right), set fire to themselves at 6.40pm (local time) on 24 April. The joint protest took place near the main prayer hall of Taksang Lhamo Kirti monastery in Dzoge (Ch: Ruanggui) county, Ngaba (Ch: Aba) prefecture, Amdo (incorporated into China's Sichuan

province).

According to Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD), both monks "shouted slogans of protest against the Chinese government and its policies in Tibet".

Though the protest came on the eve of the Panchen Lama's birthday, it is not known if the protest was deliberately timed to coincide with the date or not. However, many previous self-immolators have chosen significant dates on which to hold their protests.

Both Lobsang and Kunchok died at the scene. Fellow monks took their bodies into the monastery to conduct traditional prayers and rituals. The local Chinese authorities issued an order that the bodies had to be cremated the following morning. Due to the difficulty in communicating with Tibetan areas, due to blocking measures by the Chinese authorities, it is not yet confirmed if the cremation took place or if there have been any recriminations for the monastery.

Lobsang and Kunchok were said to be model students. Lobsang was studying philosophy and Kunchok was studying in the Tantric college. Both were from nomadic communities in Dzoge and had joined the monastery at a young age.

Further reading: [TCHRD](#) | [RFA](#) | [Phayul](#) | [BBC](#)

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