Beat: Politics

Tibetan nun sets self on fire in anti-China protest

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USPA News - A Tibetan nun set herself on fire last week to protest against Chinese rule in Tibet, the Tibetan government-in-exile confirmed on Monday, raising the number of people who have set themselves on fire in similar protests over the past three years to 129. The incident happened at about 3 p.m. local time on Saturday when a 31-year-old nun identified as Dolma set herself on fire while walking around the Ba Choede monastery in Bathang county of Kardze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, which is part of southwestern China`s Sichuan province. "Nearby Tibetans who witnessed the incident tried to douse the fire and sent her to a hospital," said Bawa Kalsang Gyaltsen, a member of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile.

Dolma was reportedly taken to People`s Hospital of Bathang where police prevented Tibetans from visiting her, and her condition remained unknown on Monday. Free Tibet, a group campaigning for an end to the `Chinese occupation` of Tibet, said Dolma belongs to a well-known family. "The Thonglaka Tsang family are well known for their involvement in fighting against the Chinese invasion," the group said, adding that various family members had been killed or imprisoned in the past. Bawa Kalsang Gyaltsen said Chinese authorities had cut communication lines to the area of the protest and China`s state-run media did not report on Saturday`s incident. Since March 2011, a total of now 129 Tibetans have set themselves on fire as part of protests taking place in Tibet, leading to the arrests of hundreds of Tibetans by Chinese security forces. The self-immolations continued despite Chinese authorities stepping up security in the region, though the protests have become less frequent since the beginning of 2013. The first incident happened on March 16, 2011, when 21-year-old Phuntsog from Kirti Monastery set himself on fire. It happened on the third anniversary of protests in Ngaba during which at least 13 people were shot dead by Chinese security forces. Phuntsog later died of his injuries.

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