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TIBET AUTONOMOUS REGION (TAR)'s EXPENDITURE ON PUBLIC SECURITY

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Tibetans have till this day not acquiesced to China's occupation of Tibet or large portions of its territory being merged with the neighbouring Xinjiang-Uyghur Autonomous Region and the Qinghai, Sichuan, Gansu and Yunnan provinces to create the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) in September 1965. In the process Tibet was reduced in area from 2.5 million square kms to 1.2 million square kms. Tibetans in exile and the Tibetan Administration in Dharamshala continue to call it 'Cholka-Sum', or Greater Tibet. The Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), as it was renamed by the Chinese communist regime in Beijing, has been restive since the People's Liberation Army (PLA) marched into Lhasa and occupied Tibet in May 1951. China has expended considerable sums on maintaining its hold on Tibet, suppressing protests by Tibetans and persuading them to accept the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Beijing's policy towards Nepal has also, till very recently, been almost solely driven by its perception that Nepal could be used by "hostile foreign forces" as a launch pad for creating turmoil in Tibet.

After the widespread and violent riots that occurred in Tibet in 1988 and again in 2008, Beijing began devoting greater attention to the Tibet Autonomous Region. Security, or "stability maintenance" as the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) leaders euphemistically refer to it, became a high priority. Expenditure on the security apparatus in the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) and its Public Security Bureau (PSB) consequently increased steadily each year after 2008. While Guangdong province continues to receive the highest budgetary allocation for public security, till 2018 the TAR has been second with the troubled Xinjiang-Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) a close third.

Two consecutive TAR Party Secretaries namely Zhang Qingli (November 2005 – August 2011) and Chen Quanguo (August 2011 – August 2016), put in place innovative, new security structures in the TAR. Chen Quanguo was, incidentally, appointed at the express behest of then Chinese Vice President Xi Jinping and as reward for his good work was later elevated to the CCP's Politburo and appointed Party Secretary of the Xinjiang-Uyghur Autonomous Region. The innovative security measures included the "Iron Grid" system (wanggehua guanli, 网格化管理) of police

stations located at distances of 500 metres from each other and designed to ensure that security personnel reach the scene of an incident within 7 minutes of a report and the "Skynet" (tianwang gongcheng, 天网工程), an electronic eavesdropping system to augment other surveillance systems by monitoring all landline, mobile and satellite communications, internet traffic etc. The "Skynet" was augmented in 2015-16 by the "Bright Snow Project" (xueliang gongcheng, 雪亮工程), which expanded "Skynet" coverage by incorporating the TAR's rural areas. Ironically, an unintended benefit for Tibetans was the four-fold increase -- mainly of Tibetans -- in recruitment to the TAR Public Security Bureau (PSB) to monitor internet and mobile telephone traffic!

State surveillance in TAR has since expanded to include that by the CCP, which has deployed one Party cadre to each village. This January another year-long campaign titled 'One million policemen into ten million homes', ostensibly to maintain 'zero distance' between the police and the people, was launched.

Under Chinese President Xi Jinping spending on domestic security during 2013-2017, grew 34% faster than total spending. The budget for the Public Security Bureau (PSB), or domestic security, in 2014 was higher than the national defence budget of US\$ 141.45 billion. In 2016, China's national domestic security spending was US\$ 175 billion and in 2017 it was US\$197 billion. Spending on PSB and police rose by 54% in 2016. The Wall Street Journal on March 6, 2018 said spending on domestic security exceeds the defence budget by at least 20%. In 2019, the NPC announced a PSB budget of 178.78 billion Yuan or up by 45%. This amount, however, reflects only the central expenditure and not that of the provinces or subordinate administrative divisions. The National Defence budget was 1.19 trillion yuan (about \$177.61 billion).

Credible reports indicate that domestic security spending in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (UAR) increased from 5.45 billion RMB in 2007 to 57.95 billion RMB in 2017, reflecting annual increases of 2 to 3 times the national average and even higher than the increases in the TAR. Increases were noticed in the TAR's PSB budget too, which increased by 28% each year since 2007. Spending on TAR PSB and the police rose by 54% in 2016.

The upward trend in the TAR's Public Security budget has continued this year. The budget for Public Security for TAR for 2019 approved by the National People's Congress (NPC) in March 2019 was 2579 billion yuan. The allocation for 2018 was 1991.10 billion Yuan and for 2017 it was 1886.75 billion Yuan. The real figures are, however, considerably higher! Not included in the TAR Public Security Department's budget are the expenditures towards the Anti-Terrorist Special Reconnaissance Team, Special Service Bureau, Border Inspection Headquarters, Civil Aviation Bureau of the Tibet Regional Bureau, Tibet Police Officer College, and the Tibet Autonomous Region Traffic Management Bureau.

Official TAR documents show that the TAR PSB's budget includes expenditure only on the Public Security Department Office, the Political Department, the Police Security Department, the District Discipline Inspection Commission, the Public Security Department's Discipline Inspection and Supervision Team, the Party Committee, the Police Inspector Corps, the Economic Crime Investigation Corps, and the Public Security Department's Management Corps, Supervisory Management Corps, Criminal Investigation Corps, Exit and Entry Management Corps, Network Security and Security Corps, Legal Corps, Command Center, Anti-drug Corps, Science and Technology Information Corps, Audit Office, etc. The TAR PSB has more than 20 department-level agencies, 14 sub-departmental agencies, and 74 bureaucratic departments within the entire agency.

Though there are offices of the Ministry of State Security (MoSS) in TAR, the expenditure on National Security in TAR is listed separately and in 2018 totalled 11069.51 billion Yuan (RMB).

The TAR Public Security Department is under the jurisdiction of the TAR Party Committee and TAR People's Government. A similar arrangement exists at the level of the Administrative Districts and below where a Deputy Party Secretary of the District or County is in charge of Public Security and Chairs the Political and Legal Affairs Commission.

The total budgetary revenue of the TAR Public Security Bureau for the year 2018 was 240.8067 million RMB, an increase of 32.2587 (15%) million over the 2017 budgetary revenue of 208.5480 million yuan. Out of 240.8067 million RMB, 8.1262 (3.43%) were allocated as expenditures for projects in TAR, which was 580,100 RMB less than the 8.7963 of 2017 for the same. The reduction from 8.7963 (2017) to 8.1262 (2018) which equals to 580,100 yuan was reportedly due to the reduction of training fees for the civilian police officers.

The main reasons given for the increase in budgetary revenue and expenditure of financial appropriations are the increase in salary of the police, and increase in personnel. The decrease in project funding compared to the previous year was reportedly due to the decrease in training fees for public security department agencies. 231.409 million yuan was budgeted for administrative operations, 1 million yuan for general administrative affairs and 7.2162 million yuan for other public security expenditure. Administrative operations expenditure increased by 31.8696 million yuan over the 199.5394 million yuan of 2017 due to increment of staff wages and increase in daily public funds. The budget allowed for general administrative affairs was the same for 2018 as well i.e. 1 million.

The Basic Public expenditure of the TAR Public Security Department for 2018 totalled 231.409 million yuan while personnel budget was 189.4067 million. The latter includes basic wages, subsidy allowances, bonuses, social security, other wage and welfare

expenses, housing accumulation funds and subsidies for individuals and families. 42.0023 million Yuan was accounted for public expenditure which includes printing fees, post and telecommunications charges, travel expenses, conference fees, welfare fees, daily maintenance fees, special materials and general equipment purchase fees, office space utilities, office heating costs, and official use, vehicle maintenance costs and other expenses.

Breakdown of the TAR Public Security Bureau Budget:

Total Budget: 240.8067 (239.6252 General Public Budget Appropriation Revenue (99.51%), 1.1815 (0.49%) million carried over or balance from 2017).

1. Administrative operations (Public Security) amounted to 231.5006 million Yuan, accounting for 96.13% of the expenditure.
2. The General Administrative Affairs was 1 million Yuan, accounting for 0.41% of the expenditure.
3. Other Public Security Expenditures were 8.3061 million Yuan, accounting for 3.48% of the expenditure.
4. In 2018, the financial budget of the Public Security Bureau's operating expenses was 42.0023 million Yuan, an increase of 7.2092 million Yuan compared to the 34.7931 million Yuan in 2017, or an increase of 20.72%. This was mainly due to the increase in personnel and the increase in the daily public budget.

Government procurement:

In 2018, the Public Security Department arranged a civilian government casualty insurance government procurement project with an amount of 440,300 yuan, an increase of 13,700 yuan compared to 426,600 yuan for the civilian police casualty insurance budget in 2017, an increase of 3.21%, mainly due to the increase in personnel.

Description of the use of state-owned assets:

As of the end of 2017, the Public Security Department had a total of 268 vehicles. Among them: 1 provincial level leader's car, 48 general official vehicles, 18 general law enforcement duty vehicles, 2 special technical vehicles, and 199 other vehicles. In 2018, the public security department did not allocate any budget for the purchase of vehicles in its departmental budget.

The available breakdown of the Public Security budgets of the six TAR Administrative Districts as discerned from a scrutiny of official media reports are as under:

In million USD/RMB

Lhasa PSB: US\$ 133.12 (Yuan RMB 894.441) in 2019

Lhasa City PSB: US\$ 17.95 (Yuan RMB 120.606) in 2019

Shannan PSB: US\$ 157.04 (Yuan RMB 1055.16) in 2019

Nyingchi PSB: US\$ 18.90 (Yuan RMB 127.0157) in 2018

Chamdo PSB: US\$ 35.58 (Yuan RMB 239.077) in 2018

Shigatse PSB: US\$ 173.27 (Yuan RMB1,164.235) in 2018

Expenditure incurred on the large deployments of the People's Armed Police Force (PAPF), now directly under the PLA, in TAR is not included. Expenditure on the continuous intensive campaigns in TAR launched by the TAR Communist Party's United Front Department, including to win over Tibetan Buddhist monks and nuns etc., are excluded from the TAR's security budget. Together, however, they all contribute to Beijing's efforts at 'stability maintenance'.

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