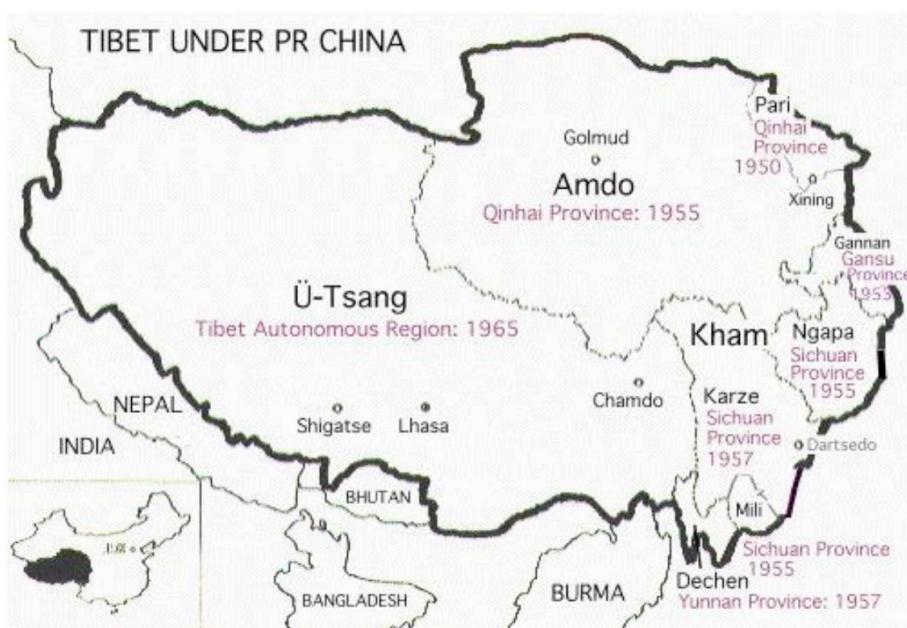
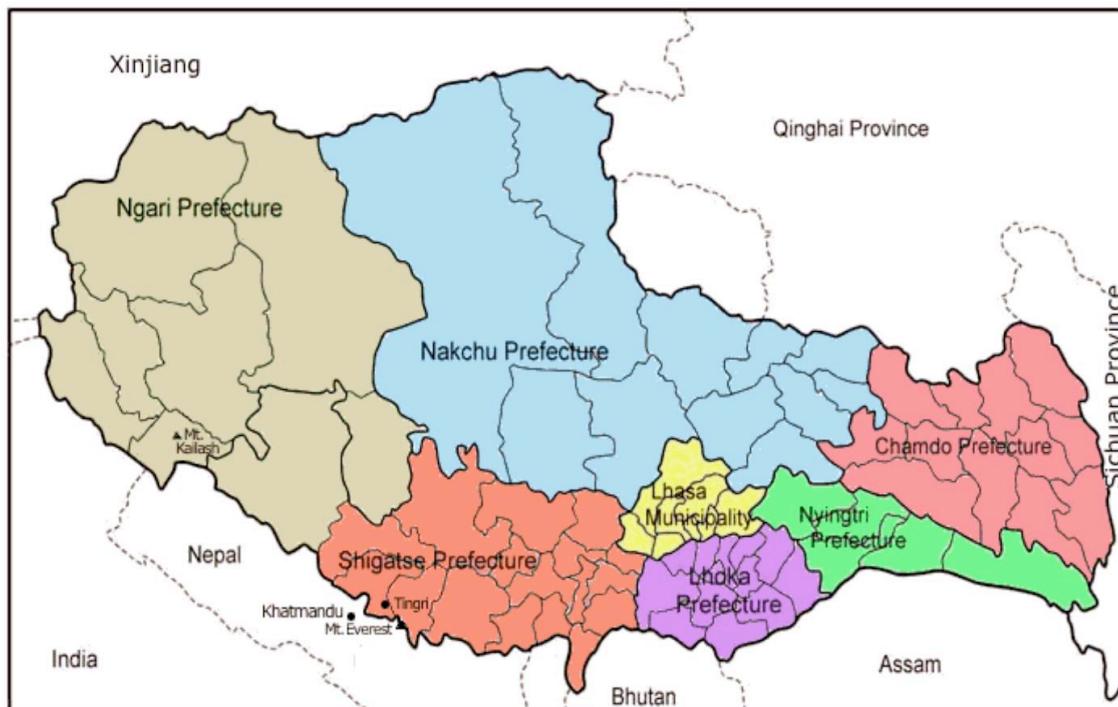




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Tibet Insight, 1-15 December 2018



TAR NEWS

TAR Party Secretary leads delegation to Shandong Province

November 29, 2018

TAR Party Secretary, Wu Yingjie led a delegation consisting of officials from TAR People's Government and Party Committee to Shandong Province from November 27-28, and held a symposium in the province to discuss 'aid Tibet.' The TAR Party Secretary was accompanied by Lobsang Dhondup, Liu Jiang, Wang Jun, Zhang Yanqing and Lobsang Jigme. Shandong Provincial Party Secretary Liu Jianyi, Deputy Secretary and Governor Gong Zheng and other leaders welcomed the delegation from TAR.

At the symposium, Liu Jianyi greeted the TAR delegation and commended the delegation for their achievements in Tibet. He added, "Tibet is an important national security, ecological barrier and a strategic resource reserve base for China, hence it is an important part." The Party Secretary said that General Secretary Xi Jinping and the CC had handed over the task of 'aiding Tibet' to Shandong Province and the Province had accordingly aided Tibet to the best of its abilities with a strong sense of political responsibility. He added that the Province had thoroughly studied and implemented General Secretary Xi Jinping's exposition on regulation of borders and stability maintenance. He assured he would continue to 'aid Tibet' with Xi Jinping as the "core leader" and adopt more pragmatic measures to push cooperation between Shandong and Tibet to a new level. Special focus, he said, should be laid on education, medical care, poverty alleviation, cultural tourism, talents and technology.

TAR Party Secretary Wu Yingjie thanked Shandong Province on behalf of TAR and expressed gratitude for 'aiding Tibet.' He said "at present, Tibet is faced with an important task of maintaining social stability, building a well-off society and the support from Shandong Province helped Tibet." A delegation from Shandong Province visited Tibet in May and signed a strategic cooperation framework. Wu Yingjie reaffirmed his commitment to consolidate 'four consciousness,' strengthen 'four confidences' and to carry out the spirit of the 19th Party Congress and General Secretary Xi Jinping's Socialism with Chinese characteristics in the New Era.

After the Symposium, the delegation from TAR and the Party Secretary of Shandong Province met the 'aid Tibet' cadres and told them to strictly adhere to Xi Jinping's thoughts, political responsibilities, political discipline and contribute to long-term stability.

Potala closed, over 3000 air passengers stranded due to late heavy snowfall in Lhasa

December 20, 2018

Xinhua news agency reported on December 19 that the Potala Palace was closed that day, while more than 3,000 passengers were stranded in Gonggar Airport on December 18 due to heavy snowfall which continued for 24 hours in Tibet's capital Lhasa. The authorities had announced free entry to the Potala Palace from November 1 to March 15, 2019 as part of its programme to promote "Winter Tourism in Tibet".

Jorden, Deputy Director of the Palace administrative office, said (December 18) "The palace is usually only closed on the Tibetan New Year's Eve and the second day of the New Year. There was no closure due to weather in the past." The city, which reported unprecedented snowfall, accumulated 10 cm of snow with the temperature dropping to minus 9.4 degrees Celsius at 9 am on December 19. Another Xinhua report said more than 3,000 passengers were stranded at Gonggar Airport on December 18 due to heavy snow and that snow had reduced visibility on the runways and landing fields. 47 flights were cancelled.

TAR People's Congress head leads delegation to European Parliament

December 14, 2018

A delegation from TAR, led by Lobsang Gyaltsen, Chairman of the TAR People's Congress, visited the European Parliament in Strasbourg, France, on December 11, when it met with parliament members and responded to concerns expressed by the EU. Meeting European Parliament Vice-President Dimitrios Papadimoulis, Lobsang Gyaltsen spoke of the "economic growth and social cohesion in the TAR, made possible under the leadership of the Communist Party of China and guided by the Party's policies toward ethnic minorities in the country." He said " living standards have improved among the ethnic groups in Tibet thanks to better environmental protection, full respect for freedom of religion and the preservation of traditional cultures". He said it must be seen to be believed and that EU Parliament members are welcome to visit Tibet. Papadimoulis said the delegation's visit was a valuable opportunity for the EU Parliament to better understand Tibet. He expressed the hope that regular exchanges with China to deepen understanding and trust would continue.

Lobsang Gyaltsen also met Nirj Deva, Vice Chairman of the European Parliament Development Committee and Chairman of the Parliament's EU-China Friendship Group. They discussed the history and present situation in Tibet. Lobsang Gyaltsen told Deva that the "purpose of the Dalai Lama group is to split Tibet from Chinese territory under the guise of religion." Deva said one

cannot observe the real Tibet through a prism, adding that the EU-China Friendship Group will continue to objectively present China's efforts in promoting the development of Tibet. The delegation visited the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and the European Court of Human Rights.

The Delegation also went to Denmark and met Danish lawmakers, government officials, think tanks and local Chinese compatriots. During their interaction with the former Speaker of Danish Parliament and former President of the General Assembly of the United Nations Mogens Lykketoft, several members of Foreign Policy Committee of Danish Parliament, and State Secretary of Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs Lone Dencker Wisborg, Lobsang Gyaltsen said "the contradiction between us and Dalai group is neither a national or religious issue, nor a human rights issue, but a major issue of principle concerning national sovereignty and territorial integrity." Lobsang Gyaltsen also expressed hope that "the Danish side will recognize the Dalai Lama's anti-China separatist nature and earnestly respect China's core interests and major concerns."

Jiang Jie presides Airport Construction Work special meeting

December 08, 2018

On December 6, the TAR Airport Construction Coordination Leading Group held its second meeting to evaluate the progress report of the "3+1" airport construction projects and to coordinate and solve problems in preliminary work and in the re-arrangement and re-deployment of construction of the second runway of Lhasa Gongkar Airport and the construction of three civil airports in TAR. Jiang Jie, member of the Standing Committee of TAR Party Committee, Executive Vice Chairman of TAR People's Government, and leader of the Airport Construction Work Coordination Leading Group of TAR, presided over the meeting and delivered a speech.

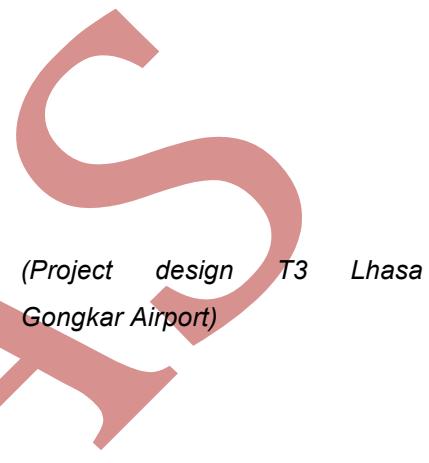
Jiang Jie emphasised that "the "3+1" airport construction project is an important implementation of General Secretary Xi Jinping's important exposition on "the stability of the border" and the promotion of Tibet's economic and social development. He said, "It is good for the benefit of the country and the people. The TAR Party Committee, government and the Civil Aviation Administration of China attach great importance to the promotion. All departments at all levels must unify their thinking, fully understand the major political and economic significance of the "3+1" project, and enhance the urgency and sense of responsibility that are not waiting for us."

Jiang Jie demanded that "all municipalities, counties and districts should change their work styles in an effort to speed up the pace, coordinate and strengthen coordination, and achieve seamless integration and that all departments, units and project headquarters must perform their duties and

responsibilities, seize key points and key links, and complete the pre-feasibility study and feasibility study and approval of new airport projects as soon as possible." He added that the Civil Aviation Administration of China and the Second Runway Construction Headquarters of Lhasa Gongkar Airport should strengthen communication and coordination and request for reporting, speed up the preliminary work of land acquisition and flood control embankment design approval, and ensure the completion of flood control levee construction before the next flood season. Jiang Jie said the main project will create conditions for completing construction of the second runway next year.

T3 Lhasa Gongkar Airport Construction

December 10, 2018



Work to complete the T3 Lhasa Gongga Airport of TAR was started on January 10, 2018 and construction of the project has entered an intense winter construction phase.

The project is 3,561 meters above sea level and construction mainly includes the newly built 83,000 square meters of the T3 terminal building and the 21-station of platform, 56,000 square meters of parking lot, 10,800 square meters of freight space, and an additional 60,500 square meters for production and living and other support facilities.

The design of the T3 terminal building echoes the "day and month of the heart" in Tibetan traditional culture. It reflects the inner charm of regional culture and creates a dignified and beautiful external environment for Lhasa Airport. The main body of the T3 terminal building is expected to be completed by the end of 2020, and includes 18 near aprons and 3 remote aprons.

Nachen Hill Tunnel Construction Started

December 10, 2018

Tunnelling project of the Nachen Hill of Lhasa East Ring Line linking Lhasa City to Lhundup County and Taktse District was recently started, according to a report in Tibet Daily.

Construction of the northern line of the Lhasa East Ring Line, which has three pedestrian passages and two vehicle lanes, is expected to be completed in 14 months. The road surface is paved with asphalt concrete and the designed speed is 60 kilometers per hour.

The total length of the northern line of Lhasa East Ring Road is 9 kilometers long. It has 8 road bridges and 1 tunnel. Travel from Lhasa City to Lhundup County and Taktse District, necessitates crossing Nachen Hill on national highway 318. With completion of the Nachen Hill tunnel commuting between Lhasa City to Lhundup County and Taktse District will ease considerably.

Tibet to Develop World-Class Traditional Tibetan Medicine University

Tibet Daily, December 12 2018

The foundation ceremony for the new campus of a University for Traditional Tibetan Medicine was held in Lhasa on December 10,. The new Tibetan Traditional Medicine College (TTMC) was approved in May and changed its name recently to the Traditional Tibetan Medicine University. President of the TTMC, Nyima Tsing said the new campus will be a world-class traditional Tibetan medicine university.

According to Nyima Tsing, the total area of the new campus is 213,800 square meters. It is designed according to the basic standards of college construction of the Ministry of Education and the needs of school discipline and professional characteristics. It has research, experiment, book network, sports and other supporting and service facilities. "The proposed land for construction of the project is located in the Education City of Lhasa and is planned to be completed and put into use in 2021. The overall architectural layout will closely integrate the traditional culture of Tibetan medicine with modern high technology, reflecting the education system of traditional Chinese medicine, pioneering and innovative idea". "Since it was founded 29 years ago, the university has developed world-class disciplines in traditional Tibetan medicine and Tibetan pharmacy. The university helps the WTO formulate international training standards for traditional Tibetan medicine and enjoys a high reputation both at home and abroad." Nyima Tsing said that the inclusion of "Tibetan medicinal bathing" in the list of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO has expanded the international influence of traditional Tibetan

medicine.

The university aims to develop into a base for training talent, cultural inheritance, research and innovation in traditional Tibetan medicine. The university will enroll international students after the new campus is ready by 2021.

Tibet's first technical college under construction

December 13, 2018

Construction of the first technical college in the Tibet Autonomous Region started in Lhasa on November 11, according to Xinhua. The TAR Human Resources and Social Security Department disclosed that total investment in the college is 1 billion yuan (about US\$ 145 million) and it is expected to be completed and in use by 2020.

Li Fuzhong, Director of the college said that total area of the college is about 25.3 hectares and it is planned to enroll 5,000 students and train over 10,000 people annually in the short and medium term. The college will provide more than 20 technical majors including vehicle repair, computer network technology, architectural engineering technology and ethnic art, to cultivate technical professionals at different levels. It will also offer training courses, host examinations and give evaluations for professional technicians.

Four million passengers at Lhasa airport so far this year

November 28, 2018

Lhasa's Gonggar Airport received four million passengers this year, according to the official *Xinhua* news agency (November 26). The TAR office of the Civil Aviation Administration of China (CAAC) said before that passenger volume at the largest airport in TAR exceeded two million in 2013, and three million in 2016. The report noted that the TAR currently had 10 airlines operating a total of 81 routes, enabling convenient connections between TAR and most of the major cities in China. It added that by the end of this year, Gonggar Airport would have handled a total of 4.3 million passengers.

TAR currently has five civil airports, located in Lhasa, Qamdo (Chamdo), Nyingchi (Nyingtri), Ali (Ngari) and Xigaze (Shigatse).

(Comment: Construction of three more airports is to begin in 2019. These are at Lhunze county of Lhokha city; Dingri County in Shigatse city; and Burang County in Ngari prefecture. Gonggar

airport will also be expanded and a second runway added, according to *Xinhua* (June 8) and *Chinadaily.com.cn* (June 12)).

Programmes launched to train teachers and government minders at Tibet's religious centres in renewed Sinicization drive

December 14, 2018

A five-year training programme for Tibetan Buddhism teaching staff was launched in Lhasa on December 11, to better adapt Tibetan Buddhism to socialist society. This is part of the 'sinicization' of religion drive re-emphasized during the 19th Party Congress in October 2017. The report said that religious teachers will be taught that religion must give way to state and government policies, which often undermine religious beliefs and practices for political reasons. A three-year programme was also launched to train government officials assigned to run and manage temples. Globaltimes.cn reported that the opening session was held on December 10 at the Tibet Socialism College. Monks and nuns participating in the programme will study national policies, laws and regulations, history and culture, modern knowledge and religious learning. The report quoted Danke, head of the TAR United Front Work Department as saying, "A special textbook was compiled for the course, as monks and nuns are expected to firmly set up the concept that government power is higher than religious power, and that national laws are above religious rules."

Xiong Kunxin, an Ethnic Studies Professor at Tibet University in Lhasa, said some Tibetan monks and nuns only had a vague or no understanding of these topics, which could lead to illegal activities without them even realizing. It quoted Li Decheng, a research fellow at the China Tibetology Research Center, as saying Tibetan Buddhism teaching staff, consisting of people in the Tibetan Buddhist world, could spread this knowledge, noting that they were closer to local people than officials and therefore would be more effective. Danke, an ethnic Tibetan, said he expected Tibetan religious personages to integrate their religious doctrines into Chinese culture, link religious rules to national laws and adapt religious activities that suit the social needs, calling them part of the socialism construction work in Tibet. The same day another training course meant for government officials assigned to Tibetan temples was launched at the same venue. Danke said these officials will undergo a three-year training to improve their personal ability, boost the management of temples and contribute to maintaining harmony and stability in the religious field. Xiong Kunxin said that after training, the TAR officials will better serve the monks and nuns and guide them to conduct daily religious affairs in accordance with Chinese laws and regulations.

(Comment: The TAR has more than 1,700 religious sites with more than 46,000 Buddhist monks and nuns in-residence.)

LHOKA NEWS

Youth Law-related Education Base Opened in Lhokha

12 December 2018

A Youth Law-related Education Base was recently officially opened to the public in Lhokha. More than 70 teachers and students from primary and secondary schools in Lhokha participated in its first program. Under the guidance of interpreters, the teachers and students learned about the development process of Chinese law, the causes of juvenile delinquency, and how to deal with campus bullying and protect themselves by watching the exhibition boards, listening to legal stories and interacting with the interpreters. "The purpose of building the education base is to enable the youth to acquire legal knowledge in the process of seeing, hearing, learning, using and talking, so as to improve their legal literacy, enhance their concept of rule of law and build up their legal awareness," an official of the law enforcement office of Lhokha said. He added, "In the next step, Lhokha will also build a law popularization platform integrating mock courts and mini law lecture hall to better guide teenagers to learn, abide by and use the law."

SHIGATSE NEWS

Shaythongmon County Public Security Bureau arrested animal poachers

December 12, 2018

The Criminal Investigation Brigade of Xietongmen County Public Security Bureau of Shigatse recently uncovered illegal hunting of endangered wild animals and arrested two suspects.

On November 26, 2018, the police of Shaythongmon County Public Security Bureau of Shigatse carried out a routine check at Phutoe Village, Tsophu Nob Township, and found poaching of wild animals on Youlei Mountain. The police of the Criminal Investigation Brigade of the County Public Security Bureau, after investigating the crime scene discovered that Pamo from Phuru Village, Tanakphu Township and Tsemo from Chare Village, Emagang Township of Namling County are the prime suspects. On November 27, the police of the Criminal Investigation Brigade of the

County Public Security Bureau caught the two suspects from a Tsophu Nob Township guest House and seized two deer and six hunting tools. Pamo and Tsemo confessed to poaching and were taken for further legal processing.

NYINGTRI NEWS

Appointment and Removals in Nyingchi City Government

December 13, 2018

China Economic Daily reported (December 13) that the Standing Committee of the First People's Congress of Nyingtri (Ch: Linzhi), TAR, on December 7, 2018, at the 20th meeting decided to remove and appoint some leaders of the City.

A) Removed

- 1) Zhang Gengwei: He was recently appointed Deputy Director of the TAR Health Committee but was removed from the post of Deputy Mayor of People's Government of Ningtri
- 2) Ma Shengcai : removed from the position of Director of Public Security Bureau of Nyingtri
- 3) Damden: removed from the post of Director of the Agriculture and Animal Husbandry Bureau of Nyingtri
- 4) Dechen: removed from Nyingtri Safety Production Supervision Administration.

B) Appointees

- 1) Ren Weidong: appointed Director of the Nyingtri Public Security Bureau.
- 2) Yang Bo: appointed Director of the Nyingtri Municipal Safety Production Supervision Administration

Beam-laying on Changgo Bridge of Lhasa-Nyingtri Section of Sichuan-Tibet Railway Completed

December 03, 2018

The beam laying of the Changgo Bridge in the Lhasa-Nyingtri section of the Sichuan-Tibet Railway was completed on November 19. The Changgo Bridge is located on the Yarlung

Tsangpo River and is 3,794 meters long. There are total of 111 t-beams and work on laying them was started in October this year.

Nie Yongjun, captain of the Second Team of China Railways 11th Bureau responsible for laying beams and raising the frame of the Changgo Large Bridge, said that since October because of high altitude it is difficult for 'inner-land' workers to work to lay the beams and the construction period had to be extended to compensate for shorter working hours.

Shen Yubin, a project manager for the China Railways Lhasa-Nyingtri Railway Second Division, said, "The total length of bridges and tunnels on the Lhasa-Nyingchi Railway is 330.975 km or 74.66 percent of the total distance of the line. Of these, there are 120 bridges totaling 84.51 km, which account for 20.96 percent of the total length of the line. As a single-track railway, there have been difficulties in construction and logistics transportation while building the Lhasa-Nyingchi Railway. We have also encountered unique geographical, climatic, and environmental situations, which have brought unique challenges to the beam-laying process. By completing the beam-laying for the Changgo Large Bridge, we have laid a solid foundation for the successful construction of future large bridges on the Lhasa-Nyingtri Railway."

CHAMDO NEWS

Publicity activity on Constitution held in Chamdo

December 12, 2018

On December 4, Chamdo organized a publicity activity on Constitution with the theme of "promoting the spirit of the Constitution" in Chamdo's Jiefang Square. To advertise the event, publicists set up legal information desks, hung banners, placed exhibition boards and distributed publicity materials to citizens to publicise knowledge of the Constitution and provide legal advice and answers. Chamdo also organised a series of activities such as reading the Constitution in the morning as well as organising lectures on the Constitution. The purpose of the activity was to enhance legal consciousness of cadres and masses and to make them abide by and defend the law and participate in urban construction.

DEVELOPMENTS IN TIBETAN ETHNIC AREAS OUTSIDE TAR

Kanlho Invests 3.13 Billion yuan for 300 Xiaokang Villages

December 7, 2018

Zhao Lingyun, Deputy Secretary of the Kanlho (Gannan) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture State Committee and Governor of the Province in an interview stated that “Gannan Prefecture must improve its political position, resolutely unify its thoughts and actions to the major decision-making arrangements of the central and provincial party committees on implementing the rural revitalization strategy, and grasp the two priorities of maintaining priority on development, poverty alleviation, and rural revitalization; and secondly urban-rural integration and five revitalizations (industry revitalization, talent revitalization, cultural revitalization, ecological revitalization and organizational revitalization)”.

In an interview, he mentioned that in 2018, the Kanlho Tibetan Autonomous Region invested 3.13 billion yuan to build 300 ecological and civilized Xiaokang villages. Through the “environmental revolution” and ecological poverty alleviation, the whole state achieved poverty alleviation for 9,740 households and 41,400 people, accounting for 48% of the total population lifted out of poverty in the past three years.

During the “Thirteenth Five-Year Plan” period, it plans to invest 15 billion yuan to build 1,500 ecological and civilized Xiaokang villages. 300 will be built each year, and the effort is to cover the vast majority of natural villages in the whole state benefiting 102,000 households with 480,000 farmers and herdsmen. In 2015, 103 pilot projects were built as ecological civilization Xiaokang Villages. On the basis of these successful pilot projects, according to the "13th Five-Year Plan" ecological civilization Xiaokang Village construction plan, from 2016 to 2020, the state will build 300 ecological Xiaokang Villages every year.

Gannan Prefecture promotes a specific construction process of ‘one village, one policy’ where each village has to follow a one construction plan, one promotion plan, one work team. To avoid homogenization and generalization, they need to follow “one village, one product; and one family, one special”. This policy has led to the emergence of a number of different types of ecological villages, such as Red tourism, ecological experience area, leisure and vacation spot, folk culture, and characteristic industries etc. Gannan is guided also by the two major industries of cultural tourism and modern agriculture and animal husbandry.

Clean-up Dalai Lama portrait project initiated in Zogie County, Qinghai

December 10, 2018

In Zogie, Domar County, Qinghai, the local government has initiated an extensive project of cleaning and confiscation of portraits of the Dalai Lama. A post circulated on the local party's WeChat group, this has been initiated to ‘implement the spirit of the 19th Party Congress and promote socialism with Chinese characteristics under the leadership of General Xi’.

The local authorities are forcibly seizing portraits of the Dalai Lama both from the monasteries, and individual households particularly from the households of Tibetan party members and local cadres. They are forced to hang pictures of leaders of the Communist Party instead of the Dalai Lama.

As part of this project, they not only convened the heads of monasteries and village leaders but also forcefully entered their homes and checked their possessions to ascertain whether they possess any photos of the Dalai Lama. Except for two monasteries, they have so far already replaced the Dalai Lama's photo with the leaders of the CCP. The portrait of the 14th Dalai Lama has been removed from four monasteries, six mani halls, and from the houses of village cadres and village leaders. The authorities said that they would continue to carry out "clean up" activities among the masses.

According to Woeser, a Tibetan blogger and writer inside Tibet, the main message of the communist party was "to resolutely fight the so-called "Dalai Group" and "hostile foreign forces" in the region". Since 2012, the CCP authorities have implemented the so-called "nine-state policy". The first item is "there must be a leader." In many of the monasteries, they issued official orders to place the communist official document in the monastery.

More modern technology to promote the development of Tibetan Medicine Industry

December 11, 2018

A recent report said the Qinghai Provincial Tibetan Hospital uses modern drug testing equipment such as biochemical incubators, high-performance liquid chromatography and gas chromatographs in the preparation room, which has never been seen in the history of Tibetan medicine. Tibetan medicine processing has moved from the "workshop" to the modern laboratory and is moving into standardized large-scale scientific research.

Dorjee, Director of the preparation room, said the hospital preparation room can currently produce a total of 368 kinds of Tibetan medicines with an annual production capacity of 200 tons. The Qinghai Province Tibetan Medicine Research Institute put in extra effort for digitalising the ancient books of Tibetan medicine. They enter the contents of the handwritten ancient books into the national Tibetan medicine industry technology innovation service platform system. In recent years, Qinghai Province Tibetan Medicine Research Institute has organized more than 100 people to go to more than 10 countries including the United Kingdom, the United States, Italy, India, Nepal and Tibet, Qinghai, Gansu, Sichuan and other places to collect Tibetan medicine ancient books of more than 1060 different kinds. There are now more than 600 ancient books on digital processing including some rare copies.

The Director of the Document Information Center of the Qinghai Provincial Institute of Tibetan Medicine said these ancient books are an important basis for research on Tibetan medicine theory, clinical research and new drug development, and will play a major role in enhancing the level of Chinese Tibetan medicine research and industrial innovation.

Duan Zhi, Director of the Qinghai Provincial Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine, said that since the “12th Five-Year Plan”, Qinghai Province has accumulatively funded 53 scientific and technological projects, with a total investment of 95.48 million Yuan and technology funding of 15.435 million Yuan. The development pattern of Tibetan Medicine Industry is integrating product research and development, personnel training and health services.

The Chinese Panchen Lama stresses on the adaptation of Tibetan Buddhism to a Socialist society

December 12, 2018

Gyaltsen Norbu, the Chinese Panchen Lama, on 12th December broadcast a video message through China Tibet Network where he emphasized that ‘senior monks should consciously interpret Tibetan Buddhist doctrines and promote the adaptation of Tibetan Buddhism to the socialist society. This consciousness does not mean "by instinct". Instead, it means that we in the Tibetan Buddhist community should take the initiative to undertake the mission. This is what consciousness is. It is not something we do only when the Party and the government ask us to do. It is that we take the initiative to adapt Tibetan Buddhism to the socialist society in line with development trends of the current era, in line with the development direction of the country, integrating with Chinese culture, and matching China's national conditions. We cherish the prosperity and stability of this country, our motherland, and we support the Party's leadership, we support the leadership of the Party Central Committee with President Xi as the core. This is something that relates to each of us and the future fate of our compatriots and our various ethnic groups. So we should interpret Tibetan Buddhism in a way that can help safeguard national unity, promote ethnic unity, and be an active force for the promotion of social harmony and stability’.

A new route from Dechen County to Shenzhen on New Year, Yunnan

December 12, 2018

In an effort to promote the World Shangri-La tourism, on December 9 and 10, the State Government of Diqing (Dechen) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Yunnan Province, hosted a conference on the opening of Shangri-La to Shenzhen air route. It was sponsored by the State Tourism Development Committee and held in Shenzhen. The Shenzhen-Diqing direct flight route

will be opened on January 1, 2019, and shortens the time and distance from Shenzhen to Diqing. Zeng Rongsheng, a member of the Standing Committee of the State Committee of Diqing Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture and Deputy Governor, attended the meeting.

Two more self-immolations in Ngaba, Sichuan

December 14, 2018

Gendun Gyatso and Choekyi Gyatso, both around sixteen years of age, set themselves on fire in protest against Chinese oppression in Tibet. The self-immolations took place on the road Tibetans call Hero Street in Ngaba County, on December 9. They were taken to two different hospitals in Barkham County and Kakhog County where one of the teenagers died. Sources were quoted saying they called for freedom for Tibet while dying.

(Comment: Of the more than 150 confirmed self-immolations that have taken place in Tibet since 2009, over 40 have now taken place in Ngaba which is a hotspot for Tibetan resistance.)

DIASPORA TIBETAN NEWS

Donald Trump signs bill on Tibet into law despite China protest

On December 19, 2018, the President signed into law: H.R. 1872, the “Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act of 2018,” which promotes access for diplomats, other officials, journalists, and others from the United States to Tibetan areas of China; H.R. 2454, the “Department of Homeland Security Data Framework Act of 2018,” which requires the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to develop a data framework to integrate existing DHS datasets and systems for access by authorized DHS personnel in a manner consistent with relevant legal authorities and privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties protections; H.R. 3996, the “Protecting Access to the Courts for Taxpayers Act,” which authorizes Federal courts to transfer certain cases to the United States Tax Court; and

H.R. 4111, the “Spurring Business in Communities Act of 2017,” which amends the Small Business Investment Act of 1958 to foster an increase in the number of small business investment companies in under licensed states.

Claim of a rift between Dalai Lama and exile Tibetan administration head dismissed as mischievous

December 08, 2018

The Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) has on December 5 denied a November 27 news report claiming that a major Tibetan religious conference scheduled to be held at Dharamsala at the end of November had to be postponed indefinitely due to “serious differences between His Holiness the Dalai Lama and CTA President”. It called the news article not only a misrepresentation of facts but also highly misleading and accuses its author of having done so “with an ulterior motive to malign His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s image and also to delegitimize the CTA leadership.”

A statement issued by the CTA’s Department of Religion and Culture reiterated its November 24 announcement that the ‘13th Religious Conference of the Schools of Tibetan Buddhism and Bon Tradition’ scheduled to take place from November 29 to December 1 this year in Dharamshala was indefinitely postponed due to the sudden demise on November 19 of the supreme head of the Nyingma tradition, Kathok Getse Rinpoche. The statement pointed out that on November 25, upon his return from Japan, the Dalai Lama had said at Gaggal airport that holding the conference despite the passing away of the “very high lama,” the head of Nyingma tradition, the oldest tradition of Tibetan Buddhism, would be “inappropriate.” It said there was no room for any “differences” between His Holiness and the CTA President and that the latter had the highest reverence for the former.

The author of the controversial news article, Rajeev Sharma, has claimed in southasianmonitor.com report that insiders, whom he did not name or describe, had revealed that CTA President Lobsang Sangay canceled the conference without consulting the Dalai Lama. He claimed that during a telephone conversation initiated by the Dalai Lama from Japan on November 22, a furious arguments broke out between the two, when the Dalai Lama allegedly “shouted” at Lobsang Sangay using some expletives in Tibetan which the latter could not understand, and denying having any plan to make the Karmapa his successor and refusing to be dictated terms by anyone.

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