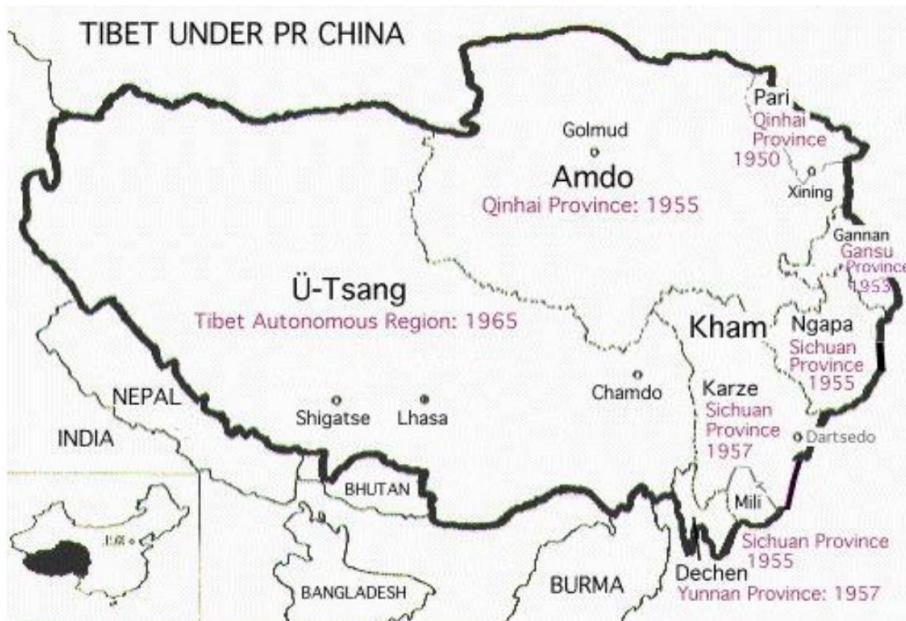




**TIBET INSIGHT, 1-15 MAY 2021**



## TAR NEWS

### **International Symposium on Tibet held in Beijing**

May 19, 2021

An International Symposium on Tibet held in Beijing on May 16 was attended by 70 experts and scholars from China and abroad. The four main topics discussed at the symposium were the social development of Tibet, the Himalayan regional coordination and cultural heritage, the ecological protection on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, and Tibetan history and linguistics. Organized by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, the symposium was sponsored by the Chinese Society for Human Rights Research, the China Association for the Protection and Development of Tibetan Culture, and the China Tibetology Research Centre.

Karma, Vice Chairman of the China Tibet Cultural Conservation and Development Association, Zhukhang Thupten Khedup, Head of TAR PPCC and Vice Chairman of the TAR People's Government, Ngapoi Jinyuan, former Vice Chairman of TAR PPCC (and son of Ngapo Ngawang Jigme who signed the 17th Point Agreement on behalf of Tibet in 1951), and Chen Zhongrong, Party Secretary of the China Tibetology Research Centre, participated in the symposium. The symposium was hosted by Zheng Dui, Director-General of China Tibetology Research Center and Liu Kai, President of Tibet University for Nationalities.

At the symposium, experts from China and Tibet stressed that the “peaceful liberation of Tibet was an important step for the reunification of the motherland and a turning point in the history of Tibet’s development”. They pointed out that the GDP of Tibet has grown from 129 million yuan in 1951 to 190.2 billion yuan in 2020.

Zhukhang Thupten Khedup pointed out that the ‘old Tibet’ was ruled by the Kashag (Cabinet) officials, aristocrats and senior monks of Monastery who constituted less than 5 per cent of the population. He added; it was a “hell on earth”.

Ngapoi Jinyuan, recalled his father Ngapo Ngawang Jigme’s role as the Chief Representative of the local government of Tibet at the time and how he experienced the “historical event of the peaceful liberation of Tibet”. He said “the 70-year history of peaceful liberation proves that Tibet, is an inseparable part of China, has always shared the same destiny with the motherland

and that Tibet's development and progress are closely related to the motherland. Only by adhering to the leadership of the Communist Party of China, socialism and adhering to a development path with Chinese and Tibetan characteristics, can Tibet have a prosperous and progressive today and a better tomorrow”.

Officials from Central Party School, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, China Tibetology Research Center, Tsinghua University, Lanzhou University, Minzu University of China, Beijing Foreign Studies University, Tibet University, Tibet National University, Yunnan University, Tibet Autonomous Region Academy of Social Sciences, Qinghai Provincial Academy of Social Sciences and other institutions, as well as 22 scholars from 5 countries including the United States, the United Kingdom, Norway, Latvia, Pakistan, and Taiwan, participated in the symposium. They discussed topics ranging from fostering and forging consciousness of the Chinese nation and advancing the sinicization of Tibetan Buddhism. Among the other topics were; the international situation before and after “liberation” a new pattern of Tibetan research, standardization of Tibetan translation of Tibetan new words and terms, Tibetan education, historical process of Tibetan governance, the significance of Tibet's 'peaceful liberation'.

Ding Sai, Deputy Director and Professor at the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences said, “Tibet itself has unique features – it is the 'water tower' of the world, and it has a great influence on the global climate and ecological environment. That is why more ecologists, climatologists, geographers and other scientists study Tibet.” She added “Tibet is the only place in China where the whole region was set as a goal to shake off extreme poverty. In 2019, the region eliminated extreme poverty, which is a remarkable achievement. Tibetan people have also been enjoying the benefit of modernization, such as public services and infrastructure.”

Professor Wu Xi said when reporting about Tibet, “many foreign media have a biased perspective, especially when talking about human rights issues”.

## **China orders Tibetan parents to shed religious symbols, acts when visiting schools**

May 11, 2021

Radio free Asia (May 10) reported that Chinese authorities in at least one county of Nagchu in northern Tibet have ordered parents to leave behind their rosaries, prayer wheels and other religious items or symbols when visiting their children's schools. It said a circular posted on notice boards of schools in Sog (Chinese: Suo) County of Nagchu (Naqu) last month, banned Tibetan parents from visiting their children's schools with these religious accoutrements. The notice said "Schools are places to cultivate and produce socialist scholars, and should not be used as places in which to follow rituals and traditions." Quoting an anonymous source RFA said "The restrictions are now in place in all junior and middle schools in Sog county, and students have been told to make sure their parents or guardians follow the regulations." The source attributed the move as for strengthening efforts for the spread of the CCP's ideology in Tibetan counties, towns, monasteries, and schools ahead of the country's upcoming centenary celebrations on July 23, 2021.

## **Trip organised for Religious Representatives from Lhasa to Ngari**

May 13, 2021

The Lhasa Municipal's Buddhist Association organised a trip to Ngari for 20 religious representatives from Lhasa on May 12(Ch: Ali), to witness the "changes the Communist Party of China" had carried out. The activity is part of the preparation for the centenary celebration of the founding anniversary of CCP and the 70th anniversary of the 'peaceful liberation' of Tibet. In Ngari, these "religious representatives" were taken on tours by Ngari's Municipal Bureau of Religious Affairs to the Military History Museum of Ngari Army Division, Kong Fansen Memorial Hall, and the Ecological Agriculture Industrial Park.

Awang Kunsang, Executive Deputy Director of Drepung Monastic Management Committee, said the trip for the religious representatives was organised to carry out a "series of activities to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the Communist Party". The on-site visits helped them understand the heroic deeds of Kong Fansen and others who sacrificed their blood for the Party, country and the benefit of the frontier people's well-being. He said the trips will broaden the horizon of these religious figures in understanding Tibet's prosperity, especially after the 18th Congress.



An official of the Lhasa Municipal Buddhist Association said that organizing such trips and exchanges helped to enhance the sense of patriotism of the Buddhist community and strengthen their confidence and determination to maintain stability.

### **Training of the Trainers for the Party History and Education Programme**

May 13, 2021

As part of the new propaganda campaign for propagating the Party History and Education Programme being carried out across Tibet, the Lhasa Municipal Party Committee held a training programme on May 12, for more than 140 people. The Deputy Ministers of the Propaganda Departments of the counties of Lhasa also attended the training programme.

Members of the Lhasa Municipal Party Committee and Gonpo Tsetan and Kelsang Tsering, Lecturers from the Municipal Party School, were invited to speak on the Party's history and Seventh Work Forum on Tibet. The Trainees were reported to have "listened with great attention" and considered it a "rare opportunity" for them to fully grasp the fundamental teaching essentials of the 'Party History and Education Programme'. Geshe, a key Trainer for the programme said "Participating in this training has benefited me a lot. I have felt the tremendous changes between old and new Tibet, and I also learned a lot about the party history and the hardships and wisdom of revolutionary martyrs. From here onwards, I will adopt a down-to-earth approach to teach party history to the masses".

Bian Guanghui, Deputy Director of the Lhasa Municipal Propaganda Department said, "it is important to deepen the understanding of and awareness about the Party's history and play a pivotal role in propagating the Party History and Education Programme at grassroots/primary levels".

### **China completes building a new strategic highway to Medog, next to India's Arunachal Pradesh border**

May 17, 2021

China announced on May 16 that it had completed the building of a new highway passing through the Yarlung Zangbo Grand Canyon, known as the world's deepest canyon with a

maximum depth of 6,009 metres, on May 15. A 2,114-meter tunnel was dug through on May 15 morning, marking the completion of the major construction of the 67.22-km road connecting Pad Township in the city of Nyingtri and Medog County. It marked the opening of a new strategic road to Medog County which borders the Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh. Xinhua (May 17)said the project took seven years to complete.

The project, which was started in 2014, was built by the China Huaneng Group Co., Ltd. with an estimated investment of over 2 billion yuan (about US \$310 million). The road has been built on the former hiking route between Nyingtri's Pad Township and Baibung Township, Medog County, with an altitude difference of up to 2,892 meters between the highest and lowest points. This is the second significant passageway to Medog, after the first one connecting the county and Zhamog Township, Bomi County. After the new highway opens to traffic, the road connecting Nyingtri City and Medog County will be shortened to 180 km from 346 km, cutting travel time by eight hours.

**Chushul County's Public Security Bureau organised a play themed on "Policing into villages and maintaining zero distance"**

May 12, 2021

The Public Security Bureau of Chushul County of Lhasa organised a play on May 10 themed "Policing into villages and maintaining zero distance" to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Communist Party of China and 70th anniversary of the "Peaceful Liberation of Tibet", and demonstrate "maple-bridge style" policing system. The play organised by the County's Propaganda Department, and Education and Rectification Team of the County's Political and Legal Department along with the County's Public Security Bureau propagated the work of the police forces in the villages to show they had bridged the gap, or narrowed the distance, between the masses and the police force. Peng Feiyue, Deputy Director of the Lhasa Municipal People's Congress and Party Secretary of Chushul County attended the play along with village cadres, Village Resident Teams, party members from neighbouring counties and students.

Zhao Hongzhong, Standing Committee Member and Deputy Secretary of Chushul Party Committee, Secretary of the Political and Legal Committee, and Director of the Public Security Bureau, said the activity would promote propaganda campaigns such as the "Four Consciousness", "Four Self-Confidences" "Two Safeguards", and improve the political

consciousness of the people in the county. He added that “National Political and Legal Teams are carrying out educational and rectification works with higher and stricter standards, and that Chushul County’s Public Security Bureau is not only complying with those standards, but also taking the rectification work as an opportunity to serve people through “Maple-Bridge Style” policy methods and have developed a series of measures to serve people”.

### **Lhasa starts vaccination process against Coronavirus**

May 14, 2021

The Duodi Township Health Centre of Lhasa has started vaccinating people against the coronavirus on May 12 with Sinovac (Chinese vaccine). Penpa Sangpo, Director of the Duodi Township Health Centre, stated that the Health Centre has increased publicity efforts of Sinovac and so far, more than 2000 people are vaccinated. He added that 19 vaccination points have been set up in various health centres across Lhasa, TAR People’s Hospitals, and Municipal People’s Hospitals. The authorities had directed people to get vaccinated as soon as possible as it is the most “effective and economical way of fighting against the coronavirus”. The gap between each jab is 3 to 8 weeks.

### **Border Counties of Lhoka and Nyingtri completes joint inspections of boundaries**

May 12, 2021

As the per direction of the TAR Party Committee, three border counties of Tibet i.e Lhuntse and Tsona County of Lhoka (Ch: Shannan) and Medog of Nyingtri (Ch: Linzhi) conducted the sixth round of Joint Inspection on the boundaries of these counties. The purpose of the Joint Inspection was to strengthen the management of the boundaries of these counties and maintain social stability.

Officials from the Civil Affairs Bureaus of Lhuntse and Tsona County took part in the inspection, as did the Deputy Magistrate of Medog County, Dhondup Tsering and Director of the Megod Civil Affairs Bureau, Nan Xiaopeng.

(Comment: The Joint Inspection is conducted every three years and evaluates discrepancies (if any) in the boundaries from the previous inspection through on-site surveys, and signs joint

agreement between the three counties for better consolidation, administration and clearer boundary demarcations.)

### **Medog County signs agreement with Foshan University of Science and Technology**

April 20, 2021

The Agriculture and Rural Bureau of Medog County of Nyingtri (Ch: Linzhi) signed an agreement with the Foshan Institute of Science and Technology on April 18. Hao Zhifeng, Deputy Secretary of Medog County Party Committee and Ye Minjian, Group leader of the County, represented Medog County's Agriculture and Rural Bureau while, Shang Xuebing, Principal of the Foshan University of Science and Technology and Xu Xiaozhu, Director of the Foshan Municipal Education Bureau and Deputy Secretary of the Party Committee of the University and also the ninth batch member of the Tibet Aid Taskforce of Guangdong Province, represented the other party. Officials from the Medog County Working Group, Agriculture and Rural Bureau and delegates from the Foshan Institute of Science and Technology attended the meeting to sign the agreement.

The agreement was signed by Xian Weiguang, Deputy Director of the Media County Agriculture and Rural Bureau of Medog County and Yan Yingquan, Party Secretary of the Food College of Foshan University of Science and Technology. The agreement also provides for the development and utilisation of Medog's citron and injection of "new vitality" into Medog's fruit industry.

Shang Xuebing expressed his gratitude to the leaders of the Medog County Party Committee and Medog People's Government for agreeing to sign the agreement which includes establishment of the Medog Citron Foshan Scientific Research Base.

### **Another Border Defence Village Construction completed in Zayul County of Nyingtri**

April 09, 2021

With aid from Shenzhen City of Guangdong Province, construction of a new border defence village (Ch: Xiaokang) was completed in early April in Zayul County, southwest of Nyingtri. Xinhua reported that the 27 villagers who used to "live in traditional Tibetan wooden houses" in Xiongjiu village have been moved into newly constructed homes in the mountains.



(Comment: Construction of the border defence villages was started in 2017 in the border regions of TAR. They focus on “improving living conditions of the border residents” including ensuring facilities such as water, electricity, roads, education, science, culture and health, and functioning as “frontier watch towers”.)

### **Nyingtri tells Tibetans to work hard on inheriting red genes**

May 6, 2021

During this May holiday, Nyingtri’s Municipal Bureau of Human Resources and Social Security, the Labor Union, Women's Federation, and Youth League of Nyingtri branch jointly launched an education activity with the theme ‘Learning Party History and Inheriting the Red Gene’. In the course of this propaganda activity, the people were told to work hard on “inheriting the Red Gene”, imbibe the party spirit and work hard on enriching the study of party history and education.

Nyingtri’s Municipal Bureau of Human Resources and Social Security tested party members, cadres and employees on their knowledge of party history and made them attend special lectures on the theme 'party history education and three changes.'

### **Lang County introduces three measures to maintain the national unity work**

May 12, 2021

In recent months the Lang County, Nyingtri, conducted a series of lectures on the Party's ethnic theory and policy in 52 villages and communities, distributed more than 2,000 propaganda brochures, and hung more than 100 banners across these villages.

The work team stationed in Lang County for promotional work of Ethnic Unity and Progress Law introduced three measures to enhance its effectiveness. The first measure is to strengthen the Party’s preaching of the correct interpretation of the party's ethnic theory and ethnic policy and establish a solid ideological foundation for ethnic unity and progress. Under the theme of 'ethnic unity and building a beautiful Tibet’, the relevant departments were instructed to carry out more theoretical interpretation and policy publicity work in each village.

The second measure is to guide party members to establish "three inseparable" ideas and build a solid foundation for national unity and progress work. The local party branch is to act as a unifying force and party members will be the face of this work. Party members were told to focus and intensify investigations on conflict and disputes and make villagers understand how the Han and other ethnic entities are intertwined, and make people feel that the Han nationality cannot do without ethnic minorities and vice-versa. They exemplified how Bangma Village enjoys ethnic harmony amongst the Tibetans, Hans, and Lhoba and has "successfully built a fortress of national unity".

The third is to secure the benchmark of the "Regulations on the Establishment of a Model Area for Ethnic Unity and Progress in the TAR" and consolidate the mass foundation for ethnic unity and progress. The villagers were told to regard the study and implementation of the "ethnic unity law as a powerful tool for advancing the cause of national unity and progress, and a sacred mission of safeguarding national unity, social stability, and unification of the motherland."

### **Guangdong Shengfeng Group Co., Ltd. visited Nyingtri**

May 12, 2021

Ma Shengchang, Secretary of the Municipal Party Committee, met Jiang Nan, a member of the 12th CPPCC, the Standing Committee of the All-China Federation of Industry and Commerce, Chairman of the China Brand Building Promotion Association, and the current Chairman of the Guangdong Shengfeng Group Co., Ltd., and other delegates.

Ma Shenchang briefed them about the progress and development in Nyingtri in recent years. He said that great importance has been attached to Tibet work since the 18th Party Congress with Xi Jinping at the core, and there have been major developments in various sectors. He reiterated that the Lalin section of the Sichuan-Lhasa Railway would be opened to traffic on June 30, and construction will resume on the others parts of the Sichuan-Lhasa Railway. He said that Nyingtri has championed and achieved a high level of ethnic unity and social harmony in TAR, and won the "Chang'an Cup", the highest award for comprehensive management of social security in the country. He also said that the 'the Fifth Plenary Session of the 19th Party Congress made a major strategic decision to fully implement construction of the Sichuan-Tibet railway and the development of the lower reaches of the Yajiang River'. He indicated that

Nyingtri would invite more large enterprises from Chinese cities like Guangdong. He said there is an effort from all sides to create a favourable situation for expanding cooperation.

### **Lhoka opened up three Red tourist routes in the Prefecture**

May 10, 2021

As part of the project of inheriting the Red Gene campaign, the Lhoka Tourism Development Bureau, Lhoka Tourism Culture Investment Co., Ltd., and Lhoka International Travel jointly organized the 'follow the Party forever' event on May 7. The 3-day event is to demonstrate the Party's achievements, history, and various reforms. The event also launched the three Red tourist routes with a procession march. These Red tourist routes are from Zedang Town, Lhoka City to Zhang Guohua Command Post, Tsona County; Lebugou, Liemai Memorial Hall to Yumai, Lhuntse County; and Lhoka Museum to Tashi Qudeng village.

There is an increasing effort to promote Red culture in recent years, and Lhoka is acclaimed as a successful case. It has a 'martyrs cemetery' to remember the 18th Army, '100 classic Red tourism scenic spots', and several Red education bases.

The news report highlighted the significance of the starting point of this event as General Zhang Guohua's Command post and said he is the one who witnessed the first shot of the self-defence counterattack against India. It also mentioned, "this launching ceremony marks the official promotion of Lhoka's red tourism to the whole society."

### **TAR Party Secretary gives “special lecture” at Tibet University**

May 14, 2021

On May 13, TAR Party Secretary Wu Yingjie gave a special lecture at Lhasa on the theme 'Learning Party History, strengthening beliefs and following the Party'. At his lecture, Wu Yingjie presented a history of the Communist Party of China, Xi Jinping's thoughts on youth, the Party's strategy of governing Tibet, the role of youth in building a socialist and modern "new" Tibet and that the youth should strive to compose and contribute the "Tibetan chapter" in the China Dream. He reminded the University students of the appreciation letter that Xi Jinping sent to the youth in Tibet for their response to the "party's call in times of need such as the Mount Everest Torch relay in 2008, Nepal earthquake relief works, in maintaining social

stability, poverty alleviation projects, strengthening border defence, Coronavirus relief assistance, their response at other “critical moments”, not being afraid of taking risks, for establishing a good image of youth on the Tibetan plateau, and for following the party”.

He emphasised the importance of “nationalism, cultivating love and feelings for the party and the country, strengthening “four consciousness”, “two safeguards” “four confidences”, the need to have “a clear-cut stand to eliminate the negative influence of the 14th Dalai Lama”, and to be a role model. In addition to the University students, officials and youth representatives from the TAR Party History and Learning Programme, teachers, students, farmers, young entrepreneurs, members of the youth federation, and emerging and model youth representatives who have received awards over the years, attended the lecture.

### **China aims for full enrolment of Tibetan children in the Sinicization school system**

May 09, 2021

Xinhua (May 8) reported that the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) has been moving steadily towards full enrolment in preschool education offering the implementation of the region’s free education policies as incentive. The policies are complemented by shutting down private schools which focus on teaching the Tibetan language and culture. Education in schools in Tibet is now fully Sinicized, with Tibetan being taught only as a language subject and with tens of thousands of meritorious students being sent to schools in provinces in China for their further study. The TAR Education Department revealed that by the end of 2020, the TAR’s gross enrolment rate for preschool education stood at 87.03%, up more than 52% from 2011. It reported that there were currently almost 2,200 kindergartens in TAR, or more than 10 times that in 2011 when the region exptended its free education policies for farmers and herders to cover preschool education. There are preschool education institutions now in almost all cities, counties, townships and villages in TAR.

## **DEVELOPMENTS IN TIBETAN ETHNIC AREAS OUTSIDE TAR**

### **Gemang Highway Construction in Qinghai is completed**

May 4, 2021

The Gemang Highway Expansion Project undertaken by the China Railway Fifth Bureau was completed on May 3 along with completion of the Gemang Highway Expansion Subgrade



Project. Located in Haixi Mongolian-Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Qinghai Province, it has a total length of 343.14 kilometres and an average elevation of 2850 meters. The total investment is about 6.275 billion yuan and it has two-way four-lane first-class highway construction. The project is an integral part of the highway transportation corridor from Qinghai to Xinjiang in the west and Sichuan in the south. Completion of the project will have greatly improve the transportation network between Qinghai Province, Xinjiang, and TAR. It will also build a comprehensive transportation system within Qinghai Province and improve its transportation network structure.

### **China began special political education in middle schools in the Tibetan area, Sichuan**

May 02, 2021

The Chinese police regularly visit the secondary schools in Jekudoe, Yushul Tibetan Region and at least three times a week take special classes on political education. In April, large numbers of senior officials from Jekudo were transferred to Xilling (in Chinese: Xinning) and other cities in China, and new officials were temporarily recruited. The new officials are officially inspecting each home. They distribute cash subsidies and rations to each family and tell them to feel the love of the Party. Family members are instructed to educate their child on the 'glorious history of the Party, love for the motherland, and willingness to give back to the motherland.'

### **China appointed Panchen Lama meets Party Secretary of Shanghai**

May 13, 2021

Gyaltzen Norbu, the China-appointed Panchen Lama met Li Qiang, Party Secretary of the Shanghai Municipal Party Committee, on May 13. Li Qiang welcomed the Panchen Lama and briefed him on the economic and social development in Shanghai. He highlighted that by implementing Xi Jinping's speech, Shanghai has transformed into a modern socialist international metropolis with world standards. He assured the Panchen Lama that Shanghai would further strengthen its relations with Tibet and assist it with economic and social development. This, he said, will include overseeing implementation of the Seventh Work Forum of Tibet and working together to “serve the overall development of the country”.

Li Qiang added that the Panchen Lama is the “living Buddha of Tibetan Buddhism” and he has played an important role in supporting the leadership of the Communist Party including, but not limited to, promoting and adapting Tibetan Buddhism to socialism with Chinese characteristics.

### **Ngaba adopts a policy of returning migrant workers from Lhasa**

May 14, 2021

Sichuan’s Ngaba Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, held a meeting of its returning policy migrant workers in Lhasa on 13 May. Su Shisheng, Deputy Director of the Organization Department, Secretary of the Party Leadership Group, and Director of Human Resources and Social Security, attended the event and delivered a speech. He said, "Ngaba Party Committee and the state government attach great importance to the work of migrant workers as a strategic resource and human resource, and a major political responsibility." He hoped that entrepreneurs who have succeeded in starting a business abroad will use their hometown as a new starting point for their dreams and a new platform for their careers and actively return to their hometown to invest and start businesses.

The Agriculture and Rural Bureau of Ngaba Prefecture and the Human Resources and Social Security Bureau have both publicised and interpreted the rural revitalization strategy policy to encourage people to return to the countryside and start a business. The conference also selected and launched 13 ‘return-home’ entrepreneurship projects, mainly involving cultural tourism, agriculture and animal husbandry, etc.

### **Cultural relics in the border area of Tibet receive "overweight" protection**

May 14, 2021

Entrusted by the TAR Cultural Relics Bureau, the Architectural Design and Research Institute, Tsinghua University, and Beijing Guowenyan Cultural Heritage Protection Center Co., Ltd. formed the "Research on the Protection and Utilization of Cultural Relics in the Border Areas of Tibet" project team in 2018. After a series of investigations, it reported that today there are 1,147 immovable cultural relics at all levels in 21 counties in the border area, including 18 national key cultural relics protection units and 145 cultural relics protection units at the Tibet Autonomous Region level.

According to Li Lei, Deputy Director of the Cultural Heritage Protection Center of the Architectural Design and Research Institute, Tsinghua University, Shigatse has the largest number of immovable cultural relics in its four border towns, followed by Ngari (Ali). She suggested that to protect cultural relics at various levels, the protection units in the border area should give priority to key national cultural relics and the "important historical sites reflecting the early civilization of Tibet".

## EXILE TIBETAN NEWS

### **US congratulates new head of CTA ahead of taking office on May 26**

May 17, 2021

Penpa Tsering, the Sikyong-elect (Executive Head of the Central Tibetan Administration) was congratulated on his election as the Central Tibetan Administration's (CTA) next Sikyong by the United States government following the official declaration of election results on May 14. In a Tweet on May 15, the US State Department spokesperson Ned Price said "We look forward to working with him and the CTA to support the global Tibetan diaspora".

Penpa Tsering won the election by a margin of 5,417 votes, having polled 34,324 votes against Kelsang Dorjee Aukatsang's 28,907. Voter turnout was 63,991 (77.02 %) out of 83,080 registered voters from some 26 countries, mainly India, Nepal, United States, Switzerland, Canada, France, Belgium, and Australia. He is scheduled to be sworn in on May 26, the day Lobsang Sangay's term ends. There are, however, some doubts as the Tibetan Parliament in Exile (TPiE) sacked the entire panel of Justice Commissioners of the Tibetan Supreme Justice Commission (TSJC) on March 25. The Chief Justice Commissioner normally administers the oath of office. An additional session of the TPiE is to be held on 20 May to elect new justice commissioners, although it is not clear who will administer the oath to them.

### **Lawmakers from the US, Taiwan, Canada, and Australia, others call on China to release Tibet's 26-year disappeared Panchen Lama**

May 19, 2021

As Tibetans on May 17 marked the passage of 26 years of the Chinese government's abduction and disappearance of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, the 11th Panchen Lama recognized by His Holiness the Dalai Lama, lawmakers and others from several countries have endorsed the calls for his immediate release, according to the Central Tibetan Administration on its Tibet.net website May 18. The Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission of the US Congress on May 17 called on China to "release the Panchen Lama and his family without conditions". The US Commission on International Religious Freedom also renewed its call on China to reveal the whereabouts of the 11th Panchen Lama. Taiwanese pop singer and MP Freddy Lim tweeted for urgent freedom of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima while calling on China to "disclose any real info about him and his family." Arif Virani, a member of the Canadian House of Commons, also called for the immediate release of Tibet's 11th Panchen Lama. He wrote in his Facebook post: "Have had the opportunity to directly ask the Tibetan delegation from the Tibet Autonomous Region on the whereabouts of the Panchen Lama when they visited Ottawa in 2018 to appear in front of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development.

The 11th Panchen Lama was abducted by the Chinese government three days after the Dalai Lama proclaimed his recognition of six-year-old Gedhun Choekyi Nyima as the reincarnation of the 10th Panchen Lama. There has been no credible or verifiable information about Gedhun Choekyi Nyima's health or whereabouts ever since, apart from the Chinese government's claims that he was an ordinary boy and doing well but did not wish to be disturbed.

(Comment: The Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama have historically played a role in the recognition and education of each other's reincarnations.)