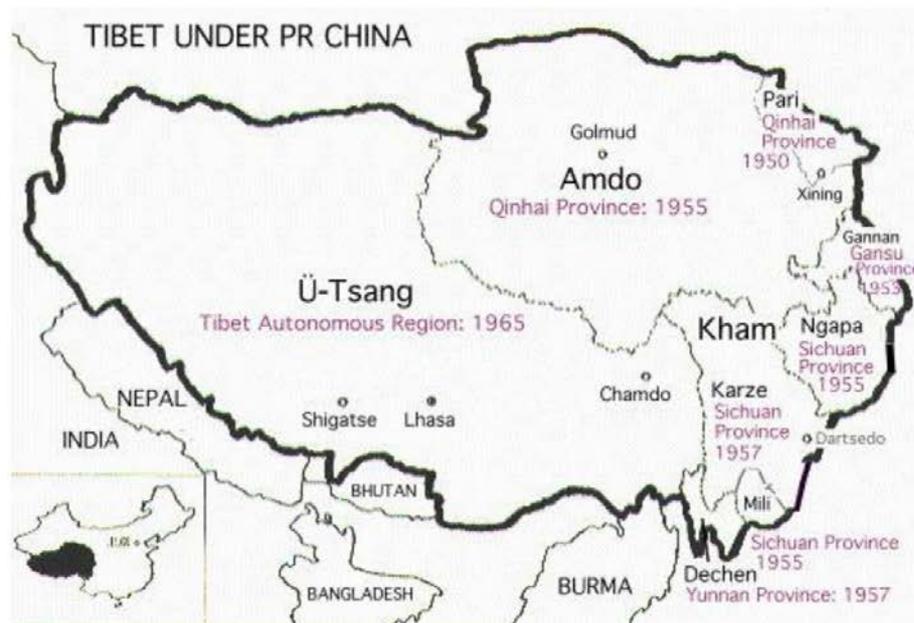
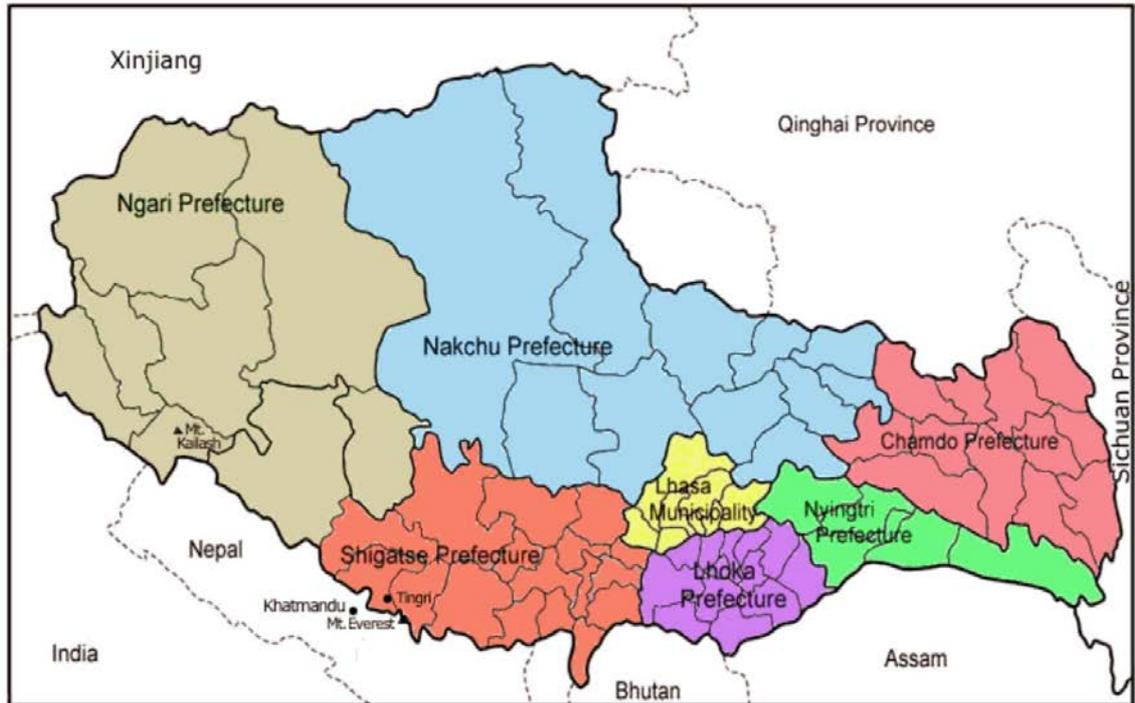




TIBET INSIGHT, 15-31 DECEMBER, 2021



TAR NEWS

“Rural Revitalization” Measures in Ngari

December 07, 2021

In the name of “Rural Revitalization” measures, coordinated and integrated initiatives worth 1.16 billion yuan have been taken by TAR Party Committee in Ngari (Ch: Ali). Ngari implemented 141 financial linkages to promote rural revitalization, provided funds in subsidies, continued to consolidate and expand the results of poverty alleviation, and accelerated other effective measures for rural revitalization.

Ngari had earlier focused on generating employment and incomes, established an information ledger for farmers and peasants to work outside Ngari and “lifted” 4,893 people out of poverty. In 2021, the employment rate of college graduates from poverty ridden families in Ngari reached 84.2%.

Nyingtri held 2021 special meeting of the leading group for religious work

December 18, 2021

Nyingtri’s Religious Work Leading Group meeting was held on December 16, 2021. Deng Xiaohong, member of the Standing Committee of the Municipal Party Committee and Minister of the Propaganda Department, and Wang Dong, Vice Chairman of the Municipal PPCC and Druk Tsering (Zhong Ciren) Vice Mayor attended the meeting. The meeting mainly discussed the National Religious Work Conference and implementation plan for its study and propagation in Nyingtri.

Deng Xiaohong reminded the relevant departments at all levels to closely unite around the Party Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at the core, and support the municipal party committee and the municipal government. He told them to improve their political positions, strengthen organizational leadership, fully implement the Party’s religious work theories and policies in the new era, and earnestly enhance the sense of responsibility for studying and implementing the spirit of the relevant conferences on religious work. He said the religious work in Nyingtri ought to strive to promote religious harmony, social harmony, and national harmony. It should be able to better organize and guide people in religious circles and believers to work with cadres and masses of all ethnic groups in the city to make new and greater contributions to the promotion of long-term stability and high-quality development of Nyingtri.

Bata tells Nyingtri schools to guide the students to love the Party

December 22, 2021

Bata, Deputy Secretary of the Municipal Party Committee and Mayor of Nyingtri People's Government, and Duan Ganghui, Deputy Mayor, visited middle schools in Nyingtri on December 21. They inspected classrooms, dormitories, school museums, and other surrounding areas. They also checked on infrastructure, faculty teams, and general campus culture and epidemic prevention work. At No.1 Nyingtri Middle School, Bata highlighted that 'the school should play a role as model and guide, thoroughly study and implement the spirit of the Sixth Plenary Session of the 19th Central Committee of the Party and the 10th Party Congress of the Autonomous Region'. He added that the school must adhere to the direction of socialist education, firmly grasp the direction of education in the new era, highlight ideological and political education, and patriotism education. Every student should be guided to love China and the Party from the depths of their heart, and become qualified builders and successors of socialism. He also stressed the need to make epidemic prevention efforts in schools' normal practice and conduct in-depth investigations and eliminate all kinds of hidden dangers and accurately grasp the health status of teachers and students, and comprehensively manage entry and exit.

Vice Chairman of TAR PPCC inspects Drepung Monastery

December 22, 2021

A day ahead of TAR Party Secretary Wang Junzheng's visit, the Vice Chairman of TAR PPCC and Secretary of the Party Group for Tibet Branch of the Chinese Buddhist Association, Sonam Rinzin inspected the Drepung Monastery on December 21. The inspection aimed to convey the 'spirit' of the Sixth plenary session of the 19th CCP Central Committee, the recently concluded 10th TAR Party Congress and the Party's policies on religious affairs. Pasang Tsering, Secretary of the Party Leadership Group and the Director of the Monastic Management Committee of Drepung Monastery, presented the work report.

Sonam Rinzin recalled Xi Jinping's visit to Drepung monastery in July 2021 and told the monks, cadres and officials of the Monastic Management Committee how they should use the President's visit as a fundamental motivation to maintain stability, to support the leadership of the CCP, and safeguard the unity of the "motherland." In addition, he asked the monks to be politically reliable,

morally convincing, efficient during “critical situations”, and to adhere to Xi Jinping’s thoughts on socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era and repay the Party’s “care and love”.

TAR Party Secretary inspects Drepung and Sera Monasteries

December 24, 2021

On December 22, TAR Party Secretary Wang Junzheng inspected two main Gelug (Yellow Hat) monasteries in Lhasa. He was accompanied by Danke (Tib: Tenkho) Head of the United Front Work Department of TAR, Yan Jinhai Acting Chairman of TAR People’s Government, Karma Tsetan and Dawa Tsering, both newly appointed Standing Members of the TAR Party Committee.

At the monasteries, the TAR Party Secretary listened to the work reports, reiterated Xi Jinping’s speech given during the National Conference on Religious Affairs and stressed the need to adhere to the Party’s guideline on Sinicization of Tibetan Buddhism, Xi Jinping’s instructions on religious work in Tibet, and the Party’s strategy of governing Tibet in the new era. Wang Junzheng urged the monks to be politically reliable, be propagators of patriotism, asked them to increase their recognition and respect to the Party, Chinese culture, Chinese nation, and extend their support to socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era. He urged the monks to ‘listen to the party, follow the party, appreciate the party’s care, to lead the public in moral ethics’ and asked to be of use when necessary and at “critical events.” Wang Junzheng told the monks to oppose “division, separatism and maintain stability and national unity.”

China plans to complete the Lhasa-Zedang express track in 2022

December 23, 2021

The TAR S5 Line Lhasa-Zedang Express Corridor Project is a key project for the integrated development of Lhasa and Lhoka (in Chinese: Shannan). It starts at the Linla Expressway Interchange Hub in Deqing Town, Dazi District, Lhasa, and ends at Sangye Town, Zanang County, Lhoka. The Zedang Expressway, with a total mileage of 47.46 kilometres is expected to open in 2022. It is designed for a two-way four-lane first-class highway construction. The roadbed works of the Lhasa section and Lhoka section of the project have been completed, and 77.13% of the total engineering of the tunnel project has been completed. After completion of this project, the travel time from Lhasa to Lhoka will be reduced to one hour.

Lhasa City-Wide Training held for Islamic Clerics and Cadres

December 24, 2021

A Lhasa city-wide training was organized for Islamic clerics and cadres by the Religious Bureau and United Front Work Department of Lhasa Municipality Party Committee on December 21, 2021. Yagu, Vice Chairman of Lhasa Municipal PPCC and Head of the Great Mosque and Dawa Tsering, Deputy Secretary and Director of the Religious Bureau of Lhasa city, attended and spoke at the training. Migma, a Fourth-level investigator of the Lhasa Municipal Bureau of Religious presided over the training. The concerned cadres and officials from Mosques, Civil Management Committees, Faculty members, Heads of Religious Bureaus of various counties, Governance Office of Management Committees of Functional parks were among the total of 57 trainees.

The training agenda included studying Xi Jinping's speeches given during his inspection to Tibet, the 'spirit' of the Sixth plenary session of the 19th CCP Central Committee, the party's policies on religious affairs etc. The training was aimed to "educate and guide the Islamic clergy through systematic and effective training mechanisms on patriotism, and how to influence and guide Islam followers into Sinicization of religion, and adapt to socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era." The training also focussed on curbing "religious extremism, resisting infiltration and fighting crimes."

Tibet Himalaya General Aviation Co., Ltd debuts helicopter in Lhasa

December 28, 2021

The first domestically made AC311A Helicopter of the Tibet Himalaya General Aviation Co., Ltd arrived at the Tibet Emergency rescue base on December 24 2021. It is a 2-ton light general-purpose helicopter, which can perform various tasks for emergency rescue, disaster relief and medical rescue. Tibet Himalaya General Aviation Co., Ltd. is a state-owned general aviation company established by TAR People's Government for operations at Tibet's emergency rescue base. It initially purchased 8 domestically-made AC series high-altitude helicopters with "large, medium and small" model configuration with various tasks performing capabilities such as medical rescue and police law enforcement.

Ngari's Gar County held training for 'Emergency Response' skills for Township Leaders

December 28, 2021

The Party School of GAR County of Ngari held a two-day training for 20 Township leaders on "Emergency Response Skills" on December 25, 2021. The theme of the training was disaster prevention and control measures. Trainers from the County Emergency Management Bureau, Regional Meteorological Bureau, Agricultural and Rural Affairs Bureau, Health Commission etc spoke on fire safety, disaster prevention, food safety and on measures for resolving "major risks and challenges."

Nyingtri conducts a Discipline Inspection and Supervision training

December 28, 2021

Nyingtri conducted a Discipline Inspection and Supervision Training for the Secretaries and Deputy Secretaries of the disciplinary committees of counties and towns, heads of departments and offices of counties and towns of Nyingtri from December 27. Xu Ping, member of the Standing Committee of the Municipal Party Committee, Secretary of the Disciplinary Committee, and Director of the Supervisory Committee delivered the opening speech. He said 'with the principle of unwavering and strict persistence for a long time, Nyingtri should continue to consolidate and develop an overwhelming victory in the anti-corruption struggle, and demanded that the Secretaries and Deputy Secretaries of the Disciplinary Committee at the county and township levels should perform their duties with due strictness'. He said, "Sticking to long term strictness is not only a political declaration and political requirement but also a mobilization order for the Communist Party of China to start from comprehensive and strict governance of the party in the new era".

According to Xu Ping, the purpose of this training is to build a strong team and make the cadres strong. The trainers include experts and leaders of the District Disciplinary Committee who have been engaged in case-handling work for a long time, as well as the 'backbone' personnel of the front-line discipline inspection and supervision organisation. He told them to cherish learning opportunities, study earnestly, and invest in discipline inspection and supervision with more vigorous morale, fuller enthusiasm, and a more pragmatic style, and continue to promote the construction of party style and clean government in the new era. A total of 97 leaders of different levels are attending the training, with three main lecturers and 15 other trainers from different counties.

TAR Party Secretary meets Religious Representatives

December 30, 2021

A meeting chaired by Lobsang Gyaltzen, the Chairman of TAR People's Congress for all Religious Representatives across TAR was held in Lhasa on December 28. Wang Junzheng, the Party Secretary of TAR, Yan Jinhai Acting Chairman of TAR People's Government and Deputy Secretary of TAR Party Committee, Chen Yongqi, the Executive Vice Chairman of TAR People's Government and Deputy Secretary of TAR Party Committee were among TAR officials attending the meeting.

TAR Party Secretary Wang Junzheng spoke at the meeting and reiterated the importance of adhering to Xi Jinping's Thoughts on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics in the new era and the spirit of the National Conference on Religious Affairs. He emphasised the need to actively promote the process of Sinicization of Tibetan Buddhism, to adapt Tibetan Buddhism to Socialism with Chinese characteristics, and to contribute to long term stability in Tibet.

After listening to work reports, Party Secretary Wang Junzheng thanked the Religious Representatives, monks and nuns for their "positive contribution to stability" and pointed out that patriotic (re)education and the propaganda campaign 'four standards to become exemplary monks and nuns' have yielded results. He added that "with the joint efforts of all cadres of the Monasteries, nunneries, and concerned Officials, evident results have been achieved." Implementation of the 'four standards to become exemplary monks and nuns' indicates the TAR Party Committee's compliance with the Party's basic policy on religious affairs and to Xi Jinping's thoughts on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics. Wang Junzheng further outlined what it means to be a "good monk"- a monk who is patriotic, always listens, follows, cares and supports the party. The Party Secretary said we must love the "great motherland, always table the interest of the country and people first, protect the country, educate the monks and nuns to be more effective in maintaining social stability and unity of the motherland". Wang Junzheng stressed that laxity in curbing extremism, resisting infiltration, and fighting separatism should not be tolerated and must be fought vigorously.

Lobsang Gyaltzen the Chairman of TAR People's Congress who presided over the meeting said "all departmental units at all levels especially the United Front Work Department, Religious Representatives must unify thinking, unite religious figures, bring the masses closer to the party and maintain stability and social harmony."

Standing Members of TAR Party Committee, Liu Jiang, Wang Weidong, Lai Jiao, Ren Wei, Dawa Tsering and Religious Representatives such as Zhukhang Thupten Khedup, Tashi Gyaltsen, Kunsang Wangue, Lobsang Monlam Gyatso were among those attending the meeting.

TAR Discipline Inspection Committee Expels Four TAR Officials for Discipline Violations

December 30, 2021

As part of consolidation and rigorous implementation of the eight central regulations of the CCP Central Committee, the TAR Discipline Inspection Committee convicted four TAR leaders of violation of discipline and expelled them from their respective leadership positions.

Li Yunfeng (Han), Deputy Secretary-General of the TAR Political and Legal Committee, Choedup (Tibetan) Vice Chairman of the Finance and Economic Committee of Nyingtri People's Congress, Tsering Norbu (Tibetan), Director of the Housing and Urban-Rural Development Bureau of Gar County, Ngari Prefecture, and Dorjee Wangchuk (Tibetan); Secretary-General of the Shigatse Municipal Party Committee and Deputy Secretary of the Municipal Work Committee were charged with discipline violations, use of public properties for personal benefits, misappropriation of public funds among other charges.

Li Yunfeng had served as the Head of the Traffic Police Corps of the Public Security Department of TAR, Director of the Party Committee of the Nyingtri Public Security Department, the Standing Committee (Member) of the Nyingtri Municipal Party Committee Secretary of the Political and Legal Committee, the Secretary of the Party Committee of the Public Security Bureau, and the Political and Legal Affairs of the Party Committee of the TAR. As Deputy Secretary-General of Nyingtri Municipal Party Committee, between 2012 to 2017, Li Yunfeng was reported to have accepted banquets from subordinates and private business owners based in Lhasa, Nyingtri, Chengdu and other places. He was expelled on September 18, 2021.

Dorjee Wangchuk, was accused of illegally using public funds to purchase gifts, and had grant subsidies beyond allowance. He was also charged with serious violations of other discipline and laws. He was expelled and executed on January 08, 2021.

Choedup was accused of taking bribes worth 80,000 yuan and more than 80 cigarettes from his subordinates between 2013 to 2017. He was also charged with serious violations of “other law and discipline.” Choedup was expelled on January 15, 2021.

After investigation in November 2019, Tsering Norbu the Director of the Housing and Urban-Rural Development Bureau of Gar County, Ngari Prefecture, was charged with poor management of public toilets, unsatisfactory of the rectification work, and not performing his duties correctly. Tsering Norbu was expelled in October 2021.

The TAR Discipline Inspection Committee warned Party Committees at all levels in TAR to thoroughly study and implement the ‘spirit’ of the Sixth plenary session of the 19th CCP Central Committee, the 10th TAR Party Congress, urged cadres to rectify their work discipline, to be cautious of “risks” and focus on the four major areas of work i.e., stability, development, consolidation of borders and ecological protection. The circular by the TAR Discipline Inspection Committee emphasized that the discipline inspection and supervision organs at all levels in Tibet must follow the requirements of the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection’s circular on “Doing a Good Job in Discipline during the New Year’s Day and Spring Festival in 2022”, and that the officials must “earnestly perform their supervisory duties, and pay close attention to the illegal collection of gifts during the holiday season, and the payment of allowances etc.”

TAR Security Command Head Convenes Video Conference to ensure continuous “harmony and stability”

December 31, 2021

The TAR Security Command convened a video conference on December 30 to review the stability maintenance work of 2021 and finalise new work for the new year. Zhuang Yuan, the Head of the Security Command of TAR who is also the Executive Deputy Secretary of the TAR Party Committee, Secretary of the Party Group for TAR PPCC and the Commander-in-Chief of the TAR Security Command, attended and spoke at the video conference. Zhuang Yuan stressed the need to adhere to Xi Jinping’s Thoughts on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics in the new era, his thoughts on the rule of law and the party’s governing strategy for Tibet. Zhuang Yuan also urged concerned officials to ensure overall social harmony and stability throughout TAR in the coming years.

He added that under the supervision of the TAR Party Committee, the Security Command has strengthened the role of mechanisms for maintaining stability, woven a dense prevention and control network with thorough planning, deepened social governance, and continuously demonstrated the political advantages of stability maintenance in the past years. He further said officials of the TAR Security Command are always in the frontline to maintain stability, keep their “original mission and intention close to heart” and that they always dare to fight hard and win “challenges and risks.” He thanked the officials and asked them to continue to “mobilise the masses, forge the consciousness of the Chinese nation, and adhere to rule of law but innovate new mechanism of social governance.”

The video conference, presided over by Liu Jiang, Standing Member of TAR Party Committee and the Secretary of the Legal and Political Committee, was broadcast to Security Command Branches across TAR.

DEVELOPMENTS IN TIBETAN ETHNIC AREAS OUTSIDE TAR

The Tibet Branch of the National Qinghai-Tibet Plateau Science Data Center inaugurated in Lhasa

December 18, 2021

The Tibet branch of the National Qinghai-Tibet Plateau Science Data Center was officially inaugurated in Lhasa on December 17. The branch is expected ‘to support the long-term development of Tibet’s data industry, promote the “digital plateau” and advance the construction of digital Tibet’. Meng Xiaolin, Vice Chairman of the TAR, Chen Fahu, Director of the Institute of Tibetan Plateau Research, CAS, and Heads of related units attended the ceremony.

Li Xin, Director of the National Qinghai-Tibet Plateau Scientific Data Centre, said in his briefing that the centre was established in 2019 and is one of the 20 national scientific data centres in China. The centre is responsible for the collection, exchange, storage, management, integration, mining, and shared services and international cooperation of scientific data for the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau and surrounding areas. More than 4,500 scientific data on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau and surrounding areas have been collected and released till now. They provide data support for the scientific and technological innovation and development of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau.

It was reported that the TAR Sub-centre of the National Qinghai-Tibet Plateau Science Data Center will conduct research in the areas of scientific data management, big data technology, and simulation computing on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, in-depth exploration of the application value of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau scientific data, and serve major strategic tasks such as the second Qinghai-Tibet scientific expedition. They will also provide policy recommendations and information for decision-making in protecting the ecological environment of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, responding to climate change, preventing and controlling natural disasters, and optimizing industrial upgrading, and assisting the construction of Tibet's ecological civilization and high-quality economic and social development.

Chen Fahu said, "The National Qinghai-Tibet Plateau Science Data Center did a good job in the national team and handled the national affairs, and performed the national responsibility. The Tibet Branch of the National Qinghai-Tibet Plateau Science Data Center will continue to work in the future. It will serve the needs of making the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau into a national and even international ecological civilization highland, and serve the TAR's digital economy construction and green sustainability development."

Lithang adopts point system for party building, Sichuan

December 15, 2021

Shangmula town, Lithang, has started 'party building+ point system' from November 2021. The villagers are controlled and evaluated according to their behaviour in daily life and participation in implementing the party's guidelines and village regulations. The point system of individuals and families are adopted 'to further strengthen the implementation of party building and consciously abide by the village rules and folk's conventions, patriotism and abiding by the law, hard work to get rich, neighbourhood unity, care for environmental sanitation, etc'.

Party members, families, and the masses of the township are all included in point management and a basic score of 100 points is set. Various skills training, night school for farmers and herdsmen, and participation in mass meetings merit a rating as 'advanced individuals', 'model families' and other 'advanced models'. Points will be added according to different levels. And points will be deducted if anyone is disregarding integrity, not supporting the construction of public utilities, damaging public facilities, not implementing the correct decisions of the two village committees, and violating village rules and people's agreements etc. The Shangmula Township uses different platforms to promote and

advertise this new initiative such as WeChat workgroups, mass meetings, night schools for farmers and herdsmen, and home to home propaganda and publicity.

The Party branch of each village establishes a point ledger and exchange ledger with each household as a unit. According to Gerong Cina, Secretary of the Township, “Everything from small environmental sanitation to large-scale hard work for party building and getting rich has the scope for points”. He further added that due to the competition to win more points, many villagers ‘have become more civilized and acquired moral qualities. Reward points that exceed the target line are redeemable in cash or an exchange for items from the village exchange ledger.

Each village conducts monthly evaluations on each household. The top five villagers with a score higher than 90 points will be issued a red flag, and the bottom 5 villagers with a score of less than 80 will be issued a yellow flag. Villagers with a yellow flag are required to rectify and improve their demerits within the given period.

China forcibly demolished 99-foot Buddha Statue in Drago, Sichuan

December 24, 2021

A 99-foot statue of Buddha, built with a financial contribution of 4,000,000 Yuan from local Tibetans in Drago (Ch: Luhuo 炉霍) County, Kardze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan Province was destroyed under the instruction of the local Chinese government. The demolition took place from December 12 onwards. The authorities deployed a heavy presence of military troops at the crossroads of its vicinity to prevent any form of protest. Over 45 huge prayer wheels erected near Drago Monastery were also destroyed and large vertical prayer flags were removed from their staves and burned.

Local sources mentioned to Tibet Watch that the statue was constructed with the full approval of the local authorities, and those overseeing the construction plans paid great attention to detail in following the tradition of respecting the location, time, cardinal direction and layout of the projects. However, during the demolition, the local Chinese authorities invalidated the documents related to these constructions and said that a statue of that height was not allowed.

Construction of the Buddha’s statue was officially completed in October 2015. It depicted a specific hand gesture known in Sanskrit as ‘Bhumisparsha mudra’, literally translated as ‘*touching the earth*’.

The destruction of both, the statue and the row of huge prayer wheels, has profoundly infringed on the freedom and dignity of lay Tibetans and the monastic community, for whom these form a tangible part of expressing and continuing their history, religion, and culture on a daily basis.

The present County Chief of Drago, Serta is Wang Dongsheng. He was one of the key officials involved in the widespread destruction of the Larung Gar Buddhist Academy.

China to build an astronomical observatory on Qinghai-Tibet Plateau

December 23, 2021

Chinese astronomers signed an agreement with officials of the Qinghai provincial government on December 22 2021 in Beijing to jointly build a world-class astronomical observation base on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, known as "the roof of the world." After three years of monitoring, researchers from the National Astronomical Observatories under the Chinese Academy of Sciences found that the Lenghu area, which is located on the Saishiteng Mountain in the north-western province of Qinghai, would be an ideal location to build an astronomical observatory.

According to scientists, the construction of the Lenghu astronomical observation base will provide key support for the development of optical astronomy, planetary science and deep space explorations in China. The area has the potential to become one of the world's best observatory sites, as good as the existing sites in Hawaii and Chile due to the region's clear night skies, stable atmospheric conditions and dry climate.

EXILE TIBETAN NEWS

More than 60 US lawmakers urge Biden administration to prioritize Tibet issue

December 16, 2021

More than 60 US senators and Representatives, both Democrats and Republicans, have called on President Joe Biden's Administration to prioritize the Tibet issue, including by engaging with Tibet's exiled spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, and bringing renewed or changed focus on aspects of its existing policy. In particular, the lawmakers have called on the Biden Administration's presumptive coordinator for Tibetan issues to push for a meeting between President Biden and the Dalai Lama, fully implement US laws on Tibet, and end the practice of calling Tibet a part of China.

Leading the move to write the letters were Marco Rubio, R-Fla., and Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., in the Senate and Jim McGovern, D-Mass., and Chris Smith, R-NJ, in the House.

Zeya currently serves as Under Secretary of State for Civilian Security, Democracy and Human Rights – the position that has traditionally doubled as the Special Coordinator for Tibetan issues. The Tibetan Policy Act of 2002 mandates the appointment of the special coordinator.

The letters' highlights include a suggestion that President Biden invite the Dalai Lama to the Oval Office—as several of his predecessors had done—or meet with him in his exile home of India, among other options. They called for resisting China's attempts to interfere in the religious process for the recognition and enthronement of the Dalai Lama's successor. They also called for ensuring full implementation of the Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act of 2018 to enable unencumbered access to Tibet for US journalists, diplomats and ordinary citizens. Besides, they called on the Biden Administration to make efforts to produce forward movement on resuming talks between the two sides on the Tibet issue.

In keeping with the State Department's 2020 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, which for the first time did not refer to Tibetan areas as “part of the People's Republic of China,” the Congress members have urged the State Department to continue excluding that phrase, both to promote dialogue without preconditions and to show respect for the rights and history of Tibetans. The letters also call for support for Tibetan political prisoners, Tibetan refugees in Nepal, Tibetan language and culture, and many other things.