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TIBET INSIGHT JULY 1-22, 2024

TAR NEWS

The Standing Committee of the TAR People's Congress holds the 30th Directors' meeting; the 11th Session of the TAR People's Congress is to be held in late July
July 03, 2024

On July 2, Gyaltzen, Deputy Secretary of the Party Leadership Group and Deputy Director of the Standing Committee of the TAR People's Congress presided over the 30th Directors' meeting of the 12th Standing Committee of the TAR People's Congress.

The meeting studied the agenda (draft) and schedule (draft) of the 11th session of the Standing Committee of the 12th TAR People's Congress and decided that the 11th session would be held in Lhasa in late July. Vice Chairmen of the Standing Committee of the TAR People's Congress, Zhang Yanqing, Liu Baicheng, Li Wenge, Sun Xianzhong, and Secretary-General Liu Guangxu attended the meeting.

In addition, the meeting studied the proposals of "Decision of the Standing Committee of the TAR People's Congress on Clarifying the Number of Fines for the Implementation of the "Regulations on Urban Appearance and Environmental Sanitation Management" in Ngari Prefecture (Draft)" and "Decision of the Standing Committee of the TAR People's Congress on Strengthening the Legal Supervision Work of the Procuratorate in the New Era (Draft)", listened to the report on the review results of the "Tibet Glacier Protection Regulations (Draft)", and agreed to submit the above-mentioned proposals and draft regulations to the 11th meeting of the Standing Committee of the 12th People's Congress of the TAR for deliberation.

Chinese State Councilor Chen Yiqin inspects Civil Affairs in the TAR

July 4, 2024

China's State Councilor Chen Yiqin conducted a three-day inspection on civil affairs work in TAR from June 30 to July 2, 2024. The purpose was to investigate the implementation of policies and strategies including Xi Jinping's instructions on civil affairs in Tibet and the Party's strategy for governing Tibet in the new era, focusing on the Party's campaign of fostering the communal sense of the Chinese nation, to oversee basic livelihood security and services in the TAR. Another objective was to "guide all types of civil affairs service recipients to feel grateful to the party, listen to the party and follow the party."

During her inspections, Chen Yiqin, first visited Lhasa and Nyingtri (Ch:Linshi), and went deep into communities, rural areas, and homes of people. She conducted detailed inspections of child welfare, elderly care services, and targeted support programs. She stressed the need to "accelerate the improvement of the basic urban and rural elderly care service system, strengthen the safety management of elderly care services, and let the majority of elderly people enjoy a happy old age." She said Tibet has a vast territory, and it is necessary to enhance the grassroots civil affairs service capabilities, actively create a "digital civil affairs", and improve the efficiency in serving the people. She added that it is necessary to make improving people's livelihood and rallying people's hearts an important focus of Tibet's civil affairs work, and further forge a strong sense of community for the Chinese nation. Inspecting Nanyi Lhoba Ethnic Township in Milin City, in Nyingtri, Chen Yiqin stressed the importance of border areas and the need to improve the lives of border residents, to ensure the well-being and security of the border residents, to encourage them to settle comfortably in border areas, and contribute to "national defence and guard the country."

China holds 4th "Cross-Himalaya" International Cooperation Forum in Nyingtri, Tibet July 4-6, 2024

On July 4, China held the fourth "Trans-Himalaya International Cooperation Forum in Lunang in Nyingtri, Tibet. Over 150 people from 20 countries participated in the forum whose theme was "Harmonious coexistence between man and nature and shared development cooperation results."

Qin Boyong, Vice Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) attended and spoke. TAR Party Secretary Wang Junzheng also delivered a speech at the Forum. In her speech, Qin Boyong said since the launch of the 'Trans-Himalaya' International Cooperation Forum, China has strengthened cooperation with all the Trans-Himalaya participating countries with the purpose of "protecting the roof of the world" and "The Common Home of mankind." She stressed that the current and the fourth 'Trans-Himalaya International Forum' focuses on the 'Nyingtri Initiative', to convene "in-depth discussions on ecological protection, cultural exchanges, to gather wisdom and pool efforts to make positive environmental contributions, promote coexistence between man and nature".

TAR Party Wang Junzheng emphasized Tibet's role as an important ecological security barrier. He outlined the progress made under the leadership of the CCP Central Committee and stressed the importance of promoting high-quality development, stability, and ethnic unity in Tibet. He highlighted the strategic goals of making TAR a national model area for ethnic unity and progress, a pilot area for high-quality development of the plateau economy, and a national ecological civilization highland

Notable attendees included:

- Indira Rana: Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives of Nepal
- Khin Maung Yi: Minister of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation of Myanmar
- Hanif: Acting Minister of Economy of the Interim Government of Afghanistan
- Taraka Balasuriya: Sri Lankan Minister of State for Foreign Affairs
- Ganesh Prasad Timilsina: Former President of the Rajya Sabha of Nepal and President of Nepal Cultural Center
- Zhao Zhiyuan: Assistant Foreign Minister
- Huang Luqi: Deputy Director of the State Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine
- Karma Tshering: Secretary of the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources of Bhutan
- Enrique Lee: Member of the House of Representatives of Chile
- Hong Ik-pyo: Former Member of the National Assembly of South Korea

- Vivian Tatiana Camacho: Director General of the Traditional Medicine Department of the Ministry of Health and Sports of Bolivia
- Bishnu Pukar Shrestha: Head of the Foreign Diplomatic Delegation in China and Ambassador of Nepal to China

In addition, those attending included representatives from Bhutan, Chile, South Korea, Bolivia, Pokhara (Nepal); Envoys to China from Jordan, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Myanmar; experts and scholars from Malaysia, Singapore, France, Nepal, the United States, Austria, Ethiopia; and journalists in China from Pakistan, Russia, Lebanon, Brazil, Cuba, the United Arab Emirates, Indonesia and other countries. Officials from China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the CCP CC International Department, Ministry of Ecology and Environment, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the General Administration of Sport of China, the National Immigration Administration and other ministries and commissions and officials from governments and enterprises in Yunnan, Qinghai, Sichuan, Shaanxi, Gansu, Jilin and other provinces also attended along with Chinese journalists and experts..

(Note: The earlier 'Trans-Himalaya' International Forums were held in Nyingtri, Tibet in 2018, 2019 and 2023 respectively. A special seminar on ecological environmental protection was held online in 2021).

CPPCC's Tibet Inspection Team in Tibet, Holds a Symposium

July 4, 2024

The CPPCC National Committee's Tibet Inspection group travelled to Tibet on July 4. It convened a symposium in Lhasa to gather work reports from the relevant departments in the TAR. The Team included He Baoxiang, Vice Chairman of the CPPCC National Committee and Executive Vice Chairman of the Central Committee of the China Democratic National Construction Association, Wang Ercheng, Member of the CPPCC Standing Committee of the National Committee and Deputy Director of the Social and Legal Affairs Committee, and Wei Xiuchang, Vice Chairman of the TAR People's Government. Meng Xiaolin, Vice Chairman of the TAR PPCC, presided over the symposium. The symposium stressed all relevant departments in Tibet must adhere closely to Xi Jinping's Thoughts on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era. Special emphasis was placed on thoroughly studying and implementing Xi Jinping's insights regarding the

strengthening and improvement of CPPCC work, his directives on Tibet work, and the Party's governance strategy for Tibet in the new era.

The symposium highlighted the CPPCC's critical role in Tibet's development efforts, particularly on advancing the "four major events" and supporting the "four creations." It called for active participation in building a rural governance system that integrates self-governance, rule of law, and moral governance. The symposium urged thorough research and pragmatic proposals to contribute valuable policies aimed at bolstering rural revitalization initiatives and advancing the construction of a new socialist modern Tibet.

Chen Yongqi, meets Indira Rana, Deputy Speaker of the Nepali House of Representatives

July 06, 2024

On July 4, Chen Yongqi, Deputy Secretary of the TAR Party Committee and Executive Vice Chairman of the TAR People's Government, met Indira Rana, Deputy Speaker of the Nepalese House of Representatives, and her delegation in Lulang, Nyingtri on the sidelines of the 4th Trans-Himalaya International Cooperation Forum.

Chen Yongqi extended a warm welcome and expressed gratitude to the Nepali delegation for their visit to "China's Tibet" and participation in the international forum. Chen Yongqi highlighted the longstanding friendship between China and Nepal, emphasizing their status as "good neighbours connected by shared mountains and rivers", as well as "good friends and partners striving for mutual development". He noted that bilateral relations have consistently grown under the leadership of both countries, especially since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, which has propelled relations to new heights.

Referring to significant bilateral visits between leaders, such as President Xi Jinping's historic visit to Nepal in 2019 and Prime Minister Prachanda's visit to China in 2023, Chen stressed the importance of these exchanges in guiding the direction of bilateral relations.

Chen Yongqi pointed out that in recent years, the TAR has actively implemented Xi Jinping's diplomatic principles, fostering pragmatic exchanges and cooperation with Nepal. Efforts have focused on expanding infrastructure and enhancing trade access through ports like Kyirong,

Purang, Dram (Ch:Zhangmu), and Lizi, as well as revitalizing traditional border trade points. He said this has led to closer personnel exchanges and accelerated border trade between the two sides.

Indira Rana expressed Nepal's strong commitment to enhancing exchanges and cooperation with China and Tibet. She conveyed her delight in attending the 4th China Tibet "Himalayan" International Cooperation Forum and congratulated the organizers on its success. She remarked on the impressive economic development she witnessed during her visit to Tibet and expressed her desire to deepen mutual exchanges and cooperation for the benefit of both nations.

The meeting concluded with mutual pledges to strengthen bilateral ties further through continued dialogue and collaborative initiatives, reinforcing the spirit of friendship and partnership between China, the Tibet Autonomous Region, and Nepal.

Ren Wei meets Taraka Balasuriya, Sri Lankan Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and his Delegation

July 6, 2024

On the sidelines of the 4th Trans-Himalaya International Cooperation Forum, Ren Wei, member of the Standing Committee of the TAR Party Committee and Executive Vice Chairman of TAR People's Government, met Taraka Balasuriya, Sri Lankan Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and his delegation in Lhasa.

Ren Wei warmly welcomed the Sri Lankan delegation on behalf of the TAR Party Committee and the TAR People's Government and acknowledged "the longstanding historical exchanges between China and Sri Lanka, noting that diplomatic relations were formally established in 1957." Highlighting the strategic cooperative partnership established in 2013, Ren Wei emphasized the enduring friendship based on mutual assistance and cooperation between the two countries.

Ren Wei described Tibet as a region of magnificent mountains, rivers, and unique cultural heritage, expressing his hope that the Sri Lankan delegation would experience the openness, harmony, prosperity, and natural beauty of Tibet during their visit. The Sri Lankan Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and his delegation expressed their desire to strengthen ties with Tibet,

aiming for enhanced cooperation and mutual benefits in economic, cultural, and other spheres in the future.

Zhang Hongbo meets Hanif, Acting Minister of Economy of the Afghan Interim Government

July 06, 2024

On July 4, Zhang Hongbo, Vice Chairman of the TAR People's Government met Hanif, Acting Minister of Economy of the Afghan Interim Government, and his delegation in Lhasa.

Zhang Hongbo provided an overview of recent developments in the TAR, emphasizing the shared destiny between China and Afghanistan, linked by common mountains and rivers, and shared aspirations for prosperity. He expressed hope for deeper exchanges under the "Belt and Road" Initiative and broader cooperation across various sectors. Zhang Hongbo also encouraged the Afghan delegation to gain a deeper understanding of Tibet's successful experiences in modernization.

In response, Hanif acknowledged Tibet's significant contributions at the international forum, particularly in the field of environmental protection, which he noted as exemplary for all participating countries. He expressed Afghanistan's pride in having Tibet as a neighbour and expressed optimism for the further strengthening of bilateral relations in the future.

TAR starts Centralized Heating Projects in one Dzong in five Prefectures of the TAR

July 07, 2024

As per instructions of the TAR Party Committee and TAR People's Government, the TAR Housing and Urban-Rural Development Department started the pilot projects for centralized heating across the prefectures in TAR. The projects, which have a reported investment of 3.91 billion yuan, have started in Tsochen Dzong in Ngari; Chusum Dzong of Lhoka; Lhundrub Dzong of Chamdo; Samdrubtse in Shigatse; Senyi Dzong in Ngachu; and Kongpo Gyamda Dzong of Nyingtri. The projects are expected to be completed and put into trial operation before the end of 2024.

TAR's Urban-Rural Development Department actively studied the franchise model, injected social capital to participate in the construction of urban centralized heating projects, and selected one district/Dzong in each of the seven prefectures to implement clean energy heating pilot projects. Three of these were renovation projects with a total built area of 4.29 million square meters. All seven heating pilot projects have presently been started. After the project is completed, heating will cover government offices, schools, hospitals, residential buildings, enterprises, hotels and commercial buildings.

Vice Chairman of the Standing Committee of China's People's Congress and delegation on an inspection tour to Tibet for about a week

July 14, 2024

Peng Qinghua, Vice Chairman of the National People's Congress Standing Committee led a delegation on an inspection tour to Tibet from July 8-13, 2024. Delegates included Xiao Kaiti Yimin, a Member of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress and Vice Chairman of the Ethnic Affairs Committee; and Yu Chunsheng, Vice Chairman of the Finance and Economics Committee of the National People's Congress. TAR Party Secretary Wang Junzheng met Peng Qinghua and his delegation along with other leaders of the TAR, namely Yan Jinhai, Chairman of TAR People's Government; Dawa Tsering, Standing Member and Secretary-General of the TAR Party Committee and Secretary of the TAR Government Working Committee; Chen Yongqi, Executive Vice Chairman of the TAR People's Government; Xiao Youcai, Executive Vice Chairman of the TAR People's Government; Gong Huicai, Secretary-General of the TAR Party Committee; and Gyaltzen, Vice Chairman of the TAR People's Congress.

The TAR Party Secretary thanked the delegation for their support for the development initiatives in Tibet and the CCP Central Committee's "unwavering attention" to Tibet, since the 18th Party Congress citing Xi Jinping's directives and the Party's strategy for governing Tibet in the new era. He highlighted Tibet's strategic significance as a national security bastion and affirmed the TAR's commitment to bolstering border security. He briefed the delegation on implementation of Xi Jinping's instructions on Tibet work including the need for unified thinking and concerted efforts to strengthen border defence and enhance governance capabilities at the grassroots level.

Peng Qinghua thanked the TAR Party Committee, TAR People’s Congress and TAR People’s Government for their support during their inspection tour to Tibet. He pledged to consolidate findings from the delegation's field visits and symposiums, offering strategic insights and actionable recommendations to further solidify Tibet's long-term stability and prosperity.

During their inspection tour from July 8 to 13, Peng Qinghua and his delegation conducted field visits across Lhasa, Shigatse, Nyingtri and other locales. They engaged directly with grassroots representatives, cadres, and residents, culminating in a symposium in Lhasa where progress reports from relevant sectors were reviewed and discussed.

NYINGTRI (CH: LINZHI)

Nyingtri’s First Photovoltaic Project to Connect to the Grid**

July 08, 2024

According to the State Energy Group, Nyingtri (Ch: Linzhi) is set to inaugurate its inaugural photovoltaic project soon. The project, a 35MW photovoltaic + energy storage initiative located in Chongkang Village, Nang town, has been largely completed and is poised for a full-capacity grid connection.

Situated on the north bank of the Yarlung River, the project spans an area of 600 mu (about 40 hectares) with an investment totalling approximately 194 million yuan. It features 2,574 sets of photovoltaic panel arrays comprising 66,924 panels. Construction commenced on December 30, 2023, and it is Nyingtri City's first centralized photovoltaic venture and Nang Town’s “premier government-enterprise collaboration.”

The project operates under a "pastoral and photovoltaic complementarity" model, aimed at synergizing clean energy production with local pastoral activities. Once fully operational, it is expected to generate 60 million kWh annually, equivalent to conserving 16,900 tons of standard coal and curbing carbon dioxide emissions by around 41,400 tons per year. This capacity is reportedly sufficient to supply electricity to approximately 30,000 households annually.

Village Working Team of Bayi conducts 100 days of inspection in the Pemagang subdistrict

July 16, 2024

A team led by Tenzing Jigme, Deputy Secretary of the TAR Party Committee and Chief of the Village work team of Bayi district conducted a 100-day inspection tour and survey of Pemagang Subdistrict. The purpose of this inspection was to identify the current and existing issues and examine grassroots governance needs and community development. The Inspection Team gathered detailed reports from “street officials” about community conditions, the performance of the ‘Two Committees’ and overall governance in the Pemagang Subdistrict. During the inspection, Tenzing Jigme and the Team reiterated the role of the ‘Village Two’ Committees in effectively managing social security, conflict resolution and grassroots governance. They said the ‘Village Two’ committee members must execute the “Five Key Tasks” and “Ten-Actions” of village work. Emphasis was placed on promoting orderly task development and maintaining strict adherence to village work discipline, and implementation of a leave system to ensure continuous personnel availability. The Team urged the enhancement of grassroots governance capabilities based on the credibility and execution of the "Residents' Convention," which the Team said serves as a “cornerstone for community engagement and governance.”

The Inspection Team also recommended that the Village Working Teams leverage governance systems such as the “Double Household System”, and Grid style of social management, which also include the management of in-service party members, mobile party members, new employment groups, and community residents.

The 100-day inspection and survey conducted by Tenzing Jigme and the accompanying team in the Pemagang Subdistrict also outlined future initiatives towards building a robust grassroots governance framework, fostering greater community participation, and achieving sustainable development objectives.

Mainling Holds Earthwork Machinery Operator Training for Farmers and Herdsmen

July 19, 2024

The Orong and Nelung Town of Mainling City had recently started an earthwork Machinery Operator training for 267 farmers and herdsmen to “cultivate skilled personnel and promote the transfer of rural labour force into employment.”

At the opening function of the training, staff from the Mainling Municipal Human Resources and Social Security Bureau listed the specific requirements on training discipline, course arrangements, training content, and safety matters, and emphasized that “trainees should cherish this training opportunity, strictly follow the relevant requirements of the human resources and social security departments and training schools.”

(Note: Mainling City lies at the mid-section of the Yarlung Tsangpo (Brahmaputra River), situated between the Nyenchen Tanglha and Himalayan Mountains. It officially covers 9,490 square kilometres but includes territory disputed with Arunachal Pradesh, India.)

SHIGATSE (CH: RIKAZE)

The Lhasa to Shigatse Airport Section of the G-4218 Expressway opens to traffic

July 03, 2024

On June 30, the Lhasa to Shigatse Airport section of the G4218 Ya'an to Yecheng National Expressway was completed and opened to traffic. The opening ceremony was held at the Chabala Service Area on the Lhasa-Shigatse Expressway. Ren Wei, member of the Standing member of the TAR Party Committee and Executive Vice Chairman of TAR People's Government, attended the opening ceremony and announced that the project was officially opened to traffic.

Completion of the G4218 Ya'an-Yecheng National Highway Lhasa-Shigatse Airport section marks the opening of the entire Lhasa-Shigatse high-grade highway, shortening the driving time between the two cities to about 3 hours compared to the previous National Highway G318.

Also on June 30, the Drupa Tunnel said to be the longest single-hole two-way highway tunnel in Tibet, from Rongmey Town of Markham Dzong to Dengba Village, Choeten Township of Markam on National Highway 318 was officially opened to traffic.

(Note: China National Highway 318 (G318) runs from Shanghai to Dram (Ch: Zhangmu) on the China-Nepal border. Said to be the longest China National Highway at 5,476 kilometres (3,403 mi) in length and runs west from Shanghai towards Zhejiang, Anhui, Hubei, Chongqing, and Sichuan, and ends in the TAR. The Highway G318 is also called Friendship Highway. From Markam to Zogang it shares the highway with G214. At the Sino-Nepal Friendship Bridge, it connects with the 115 km long Araniko Highway to Kathmandu.)

Shigatse's Gyantse Dzong holds exhibition to commemorate Tibet's defense war against the British

July 01, 2024

On July 1st, an exhibition on Gyantse Dzong of Shigatse' Anti-British Defense War (Zongshan Horn), 120 years ago was held at the Tibet Cultural Museum of the China Tibetology Research Centre. The exhibition was hosted by the China Tibet Culture Protection and Development Association and the China Tibetology Research Center, and undertaken by the Tibet Cultural Museum of the China Tibetology Research Center and the Gyantse Dzong/County Committee of the Communist Party of China. Reportedly, more than 100 people attended the opening ceremony, including concerned officials of the CCP Central Committee's United Front Work Department, the China Tibet Culture Protection and Development Association, the China Tibetology Research Center, and the Gyantse Dzong/County Committee of the Communist Party of China, and officials of various departments of the Tibetology Research Center, teachers and students of the Central University for Nationalities, and China Tibet Network and media personnel.

Chen Zongrong, Secretary of the China Tibetology Research Center Party Leadership Group, delivered a speech. The opening ceremony was chaired by Zha Luo, Deputy Director General of the China Tibetology Research Center.

The Mayor of Shigatse People’s Government holds a meeting with the Director of the TAR Transportation Department

July 01, 2024

Wang Fanghong, Deputy Secretary of the Shigatse Municipal Party Committee and Mayor of Shigatse People’s Government held a meeting with Liu Zhiqiang, Director of the TAR Transportation Department to discuss Shigatse highway construction projects and the preparatory work of the 15th Five Year Plan. Deputy Mayor Tsering Yangchen also attended.

Wang Fanghong highlighted the TAR Transportation Department’s support for Shigatse’s “Nine Transportations” and said Shigatse will now focus on the construction of the “Two Central Cities” and International land ports, and strive to build a comprehensive transportation system with "reasonable layout, complementary advantages, smooth connection, and sound functions".

He hoped that the TAR Transportation Department would provide more funds, and policy support in constructing high-grade highways, upgrading and reconstruction of national and provincial roads, construction of rural roads, and cross-border transportation, and help Shigatse's transportation industry achieve a new leap.

Liu Zhiqiang said that the TAR Transportation Department will continue to support the development of transportation in Shigatse, jointly make up for the shortcomings of transportation, speed up the construction of a modern comprehensive transportation hub system, and promote new steps in the development of transportation.

Shigatse’s Nyalam Dzong launched ‘Everest Navigation-Border Red Port’

July 07, 2024

Recently, Nyalam Dzong of Shigatse launched the ‘Everest Navigation Border Red Port’, National Gate Party Building Initiative and also unveiled the integrated "Grand Party Committee" and the National Gate Party School, as part of party building work in Nyalam Dzong, Shigatse. In addition, the work of building the "Everest Pilot and National Gate Party Building Demonstration Zone" in Shigatse City has been further accelerated.

In recent years, Nyalam Dzong has made intensive efforts to implement five actions aimed at revitalizing the border and enriching the lives of border inhabitants. The efforts include creating a national flag, establishing an elderly red education base, and providing convenient services through 18 types of party-building position complexes, which encompass positions such as customs clearance efficiency services. Additionally, Nyalam Dzong has improved joint-building mechanisms, including joint defence, joint control, joint training, and joint action. These initiatives aim to build a new pattern of border party building, laying a strong foundation for promoting the high-quality development of ports.

CHAMDO (CH: QAMDO)

Chongqing Municipal Delegation in Chamdo for Inspection and Discussion

July 11, 2024

From July 8-10, a delegation from Chongqing conducted an official visit to Chamdo in eastern Tibet and held a work symposium on July 9. Yuan Jiajun, Party Secretary of the Chongqing Municipal Party Committee, and Wang Junzheng, Party Secretary of the TAR attended the symposium and delivered speeches.

Yuan Jiajun highlighted that supporting Chamdo aligns with a significant political responsibility entrusted to Chongqing by the CCP Central Committee. Yuan Jiajun reaffirmed Chongqing's commitment to studying and implementing Xi Jinping's instruction on Tibet work including advancing the Western development strategy. He added that Chongqing's aid to Tibet included enhancing industrial support, fostering green manufacturing clusters, establishing a collaborative innovation system in science and technology, and jointly promoting Tibet as a world-renowned tourist destination.

The symposium was attended by leaders from Chongqing including Cai Yunge, Chen Xinwu, and Dan Yanzheng, alongside TAR leaders such as Lai Jiao, Ren Wei, Dawa Tsering, and Gong Huicai. During the event, Chen Xinwu and Ren Wei presented reports on economic and social development and exchanges and cooperation initiatives between the Chongqing and Chamdo, respectively. The symposium was followed by the signing of the "Chongqing Municipal People's Government and the Tibet Autonomous Region People's Government Comprehensive Deepening Strategic Cooperation Framework Agreement".

DEVELOPMENTS IN TIBETAN ETHNIC AREAS OUTSIDE OF TAR

Award-winning privately run Tibetan education centre in Qinghai shut down in Sinicization drive

July 16, 2024

Chinese authorities of Qinghai province recently ordered the closure of the Jigme Gyaltzen Nationalities Vocational High School, located in Golok prefecture. The school, operated by the Snowland Academy of Sciences, catered to nearly 1,400 students including teachers, students from various educational institutes, monastic centers, government officials, and business people. This move is part of China's ongoing efforts to enforce Sinicization, and to suppress privately run institutions dedicated to preserving the Tibetan language, religion, culture, and identity.

Officially, the closure was purportedly due to an investigation into whether underage monks or nuns were enrolled, although details on the investigation's outcome or the true reasons remain unclear. The provincial government's actions follow years of legal challenges and pressure from local officials to shut down the school, despite its recent graduation ceremony held on July 8, 2024. The founder, Ragya Jigme Gyaltzen, expressed disappointment online but urged others to accept impermanence and look towards future educational endeavours.

(Note: Established in 1994, the Jigme Gyaltzen Nationalities Vocational High School in Qinghai province offered a diverse curriculum encompassing Tibetan language, English, computer science, engineering, medicine, video editing, and physical education. Its diverse student body included 742 university students, 40 research students, 3 doctoral students, 102 government officials, 242 teachers (including 13 university-level educators), 108 monastic administrators, and 252 businesspeople.)

China targeting Tibet's monasteries to student-populate their colonial-style boarding schools

July 04. 2024

In Sichuan province, Chinese authorities closed down monastic schools in Ngaba and Dzoegé counties, forcing young monks under 18 years old to enroll in government-operated residential schools. This move, part of President Xi Jinping's campaign to Sinicize ethnic minority areas,

aims to promote loyalty to the Chinese Communist Party in preference Tibetan Buddhism. The order affects approximately 1,000 novice monks at Kirti Monastery and 600 at Lhamo Kirti Monastery. Police patrols and security at the monastery gates enforce compliance.

The Tibetan service of Radio Free Asia (July 3), citing local Tibetans speaking anonymously for safety reasons, reported that officials said young monks in training at Kirti Monastery in Ngaba (Chinese: Aba) county and Lhamo Kirti Monastery in Dzoerge (Ruo'ergai) county in the province's Ngaba prefecture had not attained the age at which they could receive monastic education. Critics argue these actions deprive children of their Tibetan cultural upbringing and violate their rights, reflecting broader efforts to assimilate Tibetan Buddhists into mainstream Chinese society.

EXILE TIBETAN NEWS

President Biden signs the Resolve Tibet Act into Law

July 13, 2024

On July 12, US President Joe Biden signed into law the "Promoting a Resolution to the Tibet-China Dispute Act," despite strong objections and threats of retaliation from China. The legislation affirms US support for Tibetan human rights and their distinct cultural, linguistic, and religious heritage. It maintains that Tibet is currently part of the People's Republic of China, but challenges China's historical claims over Tibet. The Act empowers a Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues to counter Chinese disinformation and encourages substantive dialogue between China and Tibetan leaders. China condemned the Act as interference in its internal affairs and warned of retaliatory measures if the US proceeds with its implementation.

(Comment: Many in the Tibetan diaspora expressed their disappointment on social media at the fact that the USA did not change its stand and still recognizes Tibet as part of the PRC.)

Tibetan Sikyong says back-channel talks with China ongoing, albeit without expectations

July 18, 2024

Sikyong Penpa Tsering of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) has confirmed ongoing back-channel negotiations with China, despite China publicly denying any talks. He disclosed that these discussions, facilitated by a third country, are part of a long-term strategy for engagement, with the most recent meeting occurring in early July. The Sikyong emphasized that while expectations are low, maintaining communication beyond the current Chinese leadership, including President Xi Jinping, is crucial. The talks were initiated by China and are held in a third country's jurisdiction, although specific details like the third country's identity or the officials involved were not disclosed.

Penpa Tsering highlighted the recent US Resolve Tibet Act, criticizing China's human rights violations in Tibet and expressing confidence that Tibet's cultural identity will not be erased despite China renaming Tibetan places.
