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TAR NEWS

‘Glorious Border’ Propaganda Campaign in Lhuntse, Lhoka

November 2023

The Lhasa Municipal Party Committee, Lhasa Municipal United Front Work Department (UFWD), Lhasa Municipal Propaganda Department, and Lhasa Municipal Federation of Industry and Commerce, jointly organized a ‘Glorious Border’ Propaganda Campaign in Lhuntse of Lhoka (Ch: Shannan) on November 13. As part of the campaign, these Departments also conducted inspections and “encouraging” activities.

An inspection team also assessed the staffing, daily operations, and work development of the county's centralised support centre at the Service Centre of Lhuntse. It inspected the accommodation environment and leisure activities of the elderly on-site and inquired about their physical condition and immediate needs. Additionally, the team provided a ‘condolence’ fund of 10,000 yuan to the county's centralized support centre.

The same night a performance titled "Glorious and Helping the Border" was held at the county theatre. The song and dance propaganda performance was described as an “emotionally moving performance, audio-visual feast.”

The Head of the TAR UFWD inspects UFWD Branches in Lhasa: stresses “fighting skills”

November 12, 2023

From November 6 to 9, Karma Tsetan, a member of the Standing Committee of the TAR Party Committee, Head of the TAR United Front Work Department (UFWD), Deputy Secretary of the Party Group, and Vice Chairman of the TAR People's Political Consultative Conference (PPCC) conducted “in-depth” inspections of the UFWD branches and units in and around Lhasa. The purpose of the inspections is to reinforce loyalty and implementation of the ‘Two Establishments’ and ‘Two Maintenances.’ During the inspections, Karma Tsetan emphasized the importance of focusing on the "four major events" and the "four creations." He stressed the need to further instil a sense of responsibility and mission among the officials and cadres of the TAR UFWD, improve their “fighting skills”, enhance their ability to navigate work intricacies, leverage the united front as a strategic tool, and fortify their role in promoting stability and harmony within the service centre's overarching goals.

Karma Tsetan inspected 13 monasteries and visited ethnic and religious departments in six counties (districts), namely the Chengguan District, Dagze District, Maldogongkar County, Lhundrub County, Chushul County, and Lhasa High-tech Zone. The purpose of the visits was to understand the local situation, discuss ongoing work, and personally engage with grassroots United Front cadres, ministry staff, monks and nuns.

Karma Tsetan acknowledged the significance attached to united front work by party committees and governments at all levels in Lhasa. He commended the adherence of ethnic and religious departments to strategic planning and promotion, highlighting the fruitful outcomes achieved through dedicated implementation and enhanced self-construction.

In his directives, Karma stressed the importance of recognizing the prevailing situation and tasks, maintaining a focus on missions and responsibilities, and employing effective work strategies. He urged a continuous commitment to stability, calling for proactive efforts in investigating and resolving latent risks across various united front sectors while firmly upholding the systemic risk bottom line.

Karma Tsetan also emphasized the need to strengthen the propaganda campaign ‘Instilling Communal Consciousness of the Chinese nation/nationalism’, as the main line and strategic task. He encouraged the vigorous promotion of a model area for national unity and progress and deepening and expanding "three consciousness" education campaign. To ensure long-term religious harmony, social harmony, and national harmony, he suggested measures such as

improving the long-term management mechanism for monasteries, advancing the Sinicization of Tibetan Buddhism, and conducting in-depth research on policy and issues.

Executive Vice Chairman of TAR inspects Metok County, Nyingtri

November 2023

Ren Wei, a Standing Member of the TAR Party Committee, and Executive Vice Chairman of the TAR People's Government, recently went to Metok County of Nyingtri and conducted inspections there.

During his inspections of Green Village, Ganden Village, Phudrong Village, Delgon Village, and others, Ren Wei saw the rectification of Party branches and the development of various industries, including tea planting and processing, tourism homestays, and forest economy. He emphasised strengthening the construction of grassroots party organizations, enhancing social governance capabilities, and continuously bolstering the political leadership, ideological leadership, mass organization, and social appeal of Party organizations. Ren Wei stressed the importance of leveraging Party policies to benefit the people, optimizing resource advantages, promoting industrial development, and ensuring stability, and prosperity.

In locations such as the Avalanche Disaster Prevention and Control Point of Duoxiong-la tunnel, the Grain and Material Reserve in Metok County, and the Forest Fire Prevention Station in Metok Village, Ren Wei inspected the management of emergency materials reserves, forest management practices, and technology-enabled disaster prevention, mitigation, and relief efforts. The focus was on strengthening emergency preparedness, implementing preventive and response measures, and ensuring the safety of lives, property, and overall social stability.

While investigating maintenance and reinforcement projects such as the Black Sun Bridge on Palmo Highway, Ren Wei paid attention to construction progress and project quality. Ren Wei emphasized the need to continue consolidating grassroots governance.

TAR Party Committee Announces First Inspection of the UFWD

November 28, 2023

The TAR Party Committee announced the details and procedures for an upcoming inspection of the United Front Work Department, encouraging public participation and emphasizing the identification and resolution of various issues within the department. According to the announcement, the inspection to be conducted by the First Inspection Group of the TAR Party Committee will place the TAR UFWD as the target of the inspection. The focus areas of the inspection are to examine the implementation of the Party's lines, principles, and policies by the officials and cadres of the Department, to assess the adherence to major decisions and arrangements made by the CCP Central Committee and the TAR Party Committee; and also to evaluate the implementation of the Party's strategy of governing Tibet. The specific objectives cited in the announcement are that it aims to:

- identify issues related to responsibility, corruption, and work style within the United Front Work Department;
- look for problems such as formalism and bureaucracy; and
- to find challenges that impact the “interests of the masses and hinder reform, development, and stability”.

The announcement encourages party members, cadres, and the general public to actively participate by submitting letters and providing information related to the inspection. Specific scope for accepting letters and visits is outlined, focusing on problems within the United Front Work Department leadership. The announcement also provides contact details for the inspection team, including a special telephone number and a post office box for submitting information. Specific locations where the contact boxes of the inspection group are set up for convenience are also mentioned. The inspection is scheduled from November 28, 2023, to mid-January 2024 and the deadline for accepting letters and visits is January 8, 2024.

TAR Party Secretary inspects Shigatse

November 28, 2023

On November 24-25, Wang Junzheng, the TAR Party Secretary inspected Municipal Units, enterprises and monasteries in Shigatse. He emphasised the implementation of Xi Jinping's instructions on Tibetan work and the Party's strategy for governing Tibet in the new era.

During the inspection, Wang Junzheng visited Dareva Beer and Tianmuyuan Yak Dairy Co., Ltd., emphasizing the importance of clarifying direction, concentrating efforts, addressing

shortcomings, and promoting industry quality and efficiency. He called for continuous optimization of the business environment, improvement of service levels, and the attraction of large and beneficial projects to inject new vitality into economic and social development. Wang Junzheng urged the acceleration of in-depth processing of agricultural and livestock products, the introduction of new concepts, technologies, and processes, and the strengthening of plateau characteristic industries. He stressed the need to adhere to the brand strategy, enhance brand strength, improve quality, innovate varieties, and effectively transform location and resource advantages into economic and developmental advantages.

In the Housing Security Section and Party Building Office of the Housing and Urban-Rural Development Bureau of Shigatse, Wang Junzheng stressed on improving the housing security system, increasing the supply of affordable housing, and implementing the transformation of shantytowns. The construction of new urbanization and urban renewal were highlighted, with a focus on infrastructure, public services, and living conditions for urban and rural residents. Safety measures, including gas and housing projects, were underlined.

At the Tashi Lhunpo monastery, Wang Junzheng inspected the progress of Party propaganda and the “Three Consciousness.” He urged the Monastic Management Cadres and other Party Officials in the monastery to ask the monks to inherit “patriotic and unifying actions”, contribute to the country (China), and promote exchanges and integration among ethnic groups. Wang Junzheng called for strengthening the achievements of the "Three Consciousness" propaganda campaign, emphasizing a deep understanding of its significance and core meaning. He also highlighted the importance of fire protection and cultural relics safety, urging the protection of cultural relics and the construction of intelligent fire protection.

In addition, Wang Junzheng listened to the work report of the Shigatse Municipal Party Committee and urged party members and cadres to strengthen their political positions, understand the importance of the "two establishments," and resolutely achieve the "Two Maintenances." Wang Junzheng emphasized the need to improve grassroots party organizations, deepen ideological indoctrination, and build strong battle fortresses at the grassroots level.

He was accompanied by TAR Officials, Lai Jiao, Karma Tsetan, Dawa Tsering and Sonam Nyima.

Resolution of the Standing Committee of the People's Congress of the Tibet Autonomous Region on the Mid-term Assessment Report on the Implementation of the 14th Five-Year Plan and the Outline of the 2020-35-Year Plan for the National Economic and Social Development of the Tibet Autonomous Region

November 30, 2023

The Standing Committee of the People's Congress of the TAR issued a resolution on November 30, 2023, regarding the mid-term assessment of the implementation of the 14th Five-Year Plan and the Outline of the 2020-35-Year Plan for the National Economic and Social Development of the Tibet Autonomous Region. The resolution was adopted at the sixth meeting of the Standing Committee of the 12th TAR People's Congress on November 29, 2023.

The resolution had the following key points

- Meeting Details: The sixth meeting of the Standing Committee of the 12th TAR People's Congress convened
- The meeting discussed the mid-term assessment report presented by the TAR People's Government on the implementation of the 14th Five-Year Plan and the Outline of the 2020-35-Year Plan
- The meeting acknowledged and approved the review results report presented by the TAR Financial and Economic Committee of the TAR People's Congress
- The resolution agreed with the report submitted by the TAR People's Government regarding the implementation of the 14th Five-Year Plan and the Outline of the 2020-35-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development
- The meeting approved the proposed adjustments to seven key indicators by the TAR People's Government. The indicators include the average annual growth rate of GDP, the per capita disposable income of urban and rural residents, the ratio of good air days in cities at the prefecture level and above, forest coverage, grassland comprehensive vegetation coverage, and arable land ownership.

Chairman of TAR People's Government visits Maldives, Thailand and Myanmar

November 30, 2023

From November 19 to 28, Yan Jinhai, Deputy Secretary of the Party Committee and Chairman of the TAR People's Government, led a delegation from the Tibet Autonomous Region to visit Maldives, Thailand, and Myanmar. The visit aimed to thoroughly implement Xi Jinping's diplomatic thoughts and to “comprehensively publicize the successful practice and rich experience of the Party's strategy to govern Tibet in the new era”, and promote extensive exchanges and cooperation under the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative, aligning with the overall diplomatic situation of the country.

During their stay in the Maldives, Yan Jinhai met Maldivian President Mohammed Muizzu. Yan Jinhai highlighted the long-standing friendly relations between China and the Maldives and expressed the commitment to strengthen cooperation in various areas, including Belt and Road Initiative projects. TAR pledged to donate 1,500 tons of glacier mineral water to the Maldives. President Mohammed Muiz welcomed the delegation and praised the strong China-Maldives relations, congratulated TAR on its “achievements”, and looked forward to enhanced cooperation, including the opening of direct flights between the two places.

In Thailand, Yan Jinhai met Chula Sukmanop, the Secretary-General of the Office of the Eastern Economic Corridor, and the Mayor of Pattaya. Both sides acknowledged the close ties between China and Thailand, and Yan Jinhai visited Zhengda Group and the Chinese General Chamber of Commerce in Thailand, discussing cooperation with business leaders.

During the Myanmar visit, Yan Jinhai met Wu Piao Zuo Sou, Deputy Minister of Hotels and Tourism. They emphasized the deep friendship between China and Myanmar and discussed ways to enhance political trust, security coordination, and mutually beneficial cooperation. Online seminars on tourism cooperation were agreed upon.

During these visits, Yan Jinhai held work exchanges and talks with the Chinese embassies in Malaysia, Thailand, and Myanmar. Chinese ambassadors Wang Xin, Han Zhiqiang, and Chen Hai participated in relevant activities.

(**Comment:** The TAR Deputy Secretary and TAR Chairman’s delegation appeared to have focussed on trade and tourism. The TAR will, it appears, now promote international tourism to TAR.)

Nyingtri PPCC Members conduct inspections

November 30, 2023

A group of Members of the Nyingtri People’s Political Consultative Conference (PPCC), including Norbu Tsering and Penpa Dolma, conducted inspections in the Drayibchu (Ch: Payi/Bayi) district. The Nyingtri PPCC members went to villages of the District, the Exhibition hall and the Economic Development Zone to assess the progress of ‘Red research and practical activities, as well as the implementation of a proposal for a new motor vehicle testing site. The objective was to understand existing difficulties and problems.

The PPCC members emphasized the need to enhance the significance of publicizing and practising ‘Red research’ and fostering a favourable atmosphere for society to collectively support these activities. They also underscored the importance of strengthening the construction of ‘Red research’ bases, creating high-quality courses, and continuously enhancing the enjoyment and propaganda education aspects of the activities. Additionally, the team highlighted the importance of improving the training of ‘research tutors’ to build a team with strong beliefs and excellent teaching abilities.

Decision of the Standing Committee of the TAR’s People’s Congress on convening the second session of the 12th TAR People’s Congress

November 30, 2023

The sixth meeting of the Standing Committee of the 12th TAR People’s Congress has determined that the second session of the 12th TAR People’s Congress will be convened in Lhasa in January 2024. The Directors of the Standing Committee of the TAR People’s Congress are authorized to decide and announce the specific date.

The primary agenda for the proposed meeting includes the following:

- Listening to and reviewing the work report of the TAR People’s Government;

- Reviewing the report on the implementation of the ‘2023 national economic and social development plan’ and the draft ‘2024 TAR national economic and social development plan’;
- Reviewing the report on the implementation of the 2023 Financial Budget of the TAR and the Draft Budget and finances of 2024;
- Listening to and considering the Work Report of the TAR People’s Congress;
- Listening to and assessing the Work Report of the Higher TAR People’s Court; and
- Listening to and reviewing the work report of the TAR People's Procuratorate of the Autonomous Region and “other matters”.

DEVELOPMENTS IN TIBETAN ETHNIC AREAS OUTSIDE OF TAR

China opens crucial Lijiang-Shangri-la section of strategic Yunnan-Tibet railway for traffic

Tibetan Review: November 27, 2023

China opened a crucial section of its strategic grand Tibet-Yunnan Railway, connecting two well-known tourist cities in Yunnan province, to traffic on November 27. China’s official Xinhua news agency reported that with the operation of the Lijiang-Shangri-la railway, the travel time between the two cities will be reduced to one hour and 18 minutes.

China Railway said that as an important part of the Yunnan-Tibet railway network, the new line will help improve transportation in ethnic minority areas and will promote national unity, consolidate border stability and promote Yunnan’s high-quality development. Earlier, China completed the construction of a major tunnel for this railway project on May 5, after more than eight years of effort.

While Shangri-la (Tibetan: Gyalthang) is part of the traditional Tibetan province of Kham (or Dotoe), Lijiang is a multi-ethnic area with strong Tibetan connections, especially in language and religion. The railway line is stated to have a design speed of 140 km per hour and a total length of 139 km. This line, whose construction started in December 2014, also connects Shangri-la, in the Diqing (Dechen) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, to the provincial capital Kunming, according to another Xinhua report.

Construction of the entire Yunnan-Tibet Railway is scheduled to be completed by 2030, connecting Kunming with Tibet's ancient capital Lhasa.

The Yunnan Tibet Railway belongs to China's "Five Railways to Tibet" project. While the Qinghai Tibet Railway is already operational, the Sichuan Tibet Railway, the Xinjiang Tibet Railway and the Gansu-Tibet Railway are all under construction.

China opens Sichuan Tibetan territory to high-speed railway traffic as Sichuan-Qinghai Railway gathers pace

On November 28, China opened the Tibetan region of Ngaba (or Ngawa, Chinese: Aba) for high-speed railway traffic from China as part of its Sichuan-Qinghai Railway project. This is the first railway on the north-western Sichuan Plateau and, the China News Network said it had ended the period of no railway access in Aba Prefecture, Sichuan Province.

The report said the first train departed from Maoxian (Tibetan: Maowun) Station in Aba (Tibetan) and Qiang Autonomous Prefecture, marking the official opening of the Sichuan Chengdu to Qinghai Xining Railway (referred to as the Sichuan-Qinghai Railway) from Qingbaijiang East to Zhenjiang Pass. The railway has a total length of approximately 836 kilometres and a design speed of 200 kilometres per hour.

The Sichuan-Qinghai Railway is being constructed in sections. The section from Chengdu East to Qingbaijiang East and the section from Haixi (Tibetan: Tsonub, in Qinghai province) to Xining are co-aligned with the Xi'an to Chengdu High-speed Railway and the Lanzhou-Xinjiang High-speed Railway respectively and have been put into operation. The section from Zhenjiangguan to Haixi East is under construction.

The section from Qingbaijiang east to Zhenjiangguan of the Sichuan-Qinghai Railway is located in the alpine valley area where the Chengdu Plain transitions to the eastern edge of the Tibetan Plateau. It climbs nearly 2,000 metres, passes through many mountain ranges such as Longmen Mountain and Minshan, and crosses the Fujiang, Minjiang and Jialing rivers. The geological conditions are complex and it is known as the "super difficult railway under construction". The world-famous Jiuzhaigou Scenic Area is located along the Sichuan-Qinghai Railway and the Huanglong Jiuzhai Station is expected to open to traffic next year.

Chen Shunqing, Secretary of the Party Leadership Group of Aba Prefecture Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau of Sichuan Province, said “With the opening of the Sichuan-Qinghai Railway, tourism accessibility will improve. We are expected to exceed the 50 million reception mark throughout the year and become a record high”.

The report made it a point to say there were many Tibetan train staff in the first crew team of the Sichuan-Qinghai Railway.

EXILE TIBETAN NEWS

Bill making it US policy to act for resolving Tibet issue set for congressional vote

November 29, 2023

The United States Congress has unanimously approved a bipartisan bill, the Resolve Tibet Act, which now moves to a floor vote. The bill aims to compel the U.S. government to pressure China into negotiations with the exiled Tibetan leadership to address the longstanding Tibet-China dispute. The proposed legislation dismisses China's claim that Tibet has always been part of China and empowers the State Department to counter Chinese disinformation about Tibetan history. The bill encourages the resumption of negotiations between China and the Dalai Lama's envoys or the democratically elected leadership of the Tibetan people. The legislation emphasizes the right of Tibetans to determine their destiny under international law. Advocates believe the bill, once enacted, will send a strong message of support for Tibet and counter Chinese Communist propaganda. The proposed law states that the Tibet-China dispute must be resolved peacefully through dialogue without preconditions, aligning with international law, including the UN Charter.
