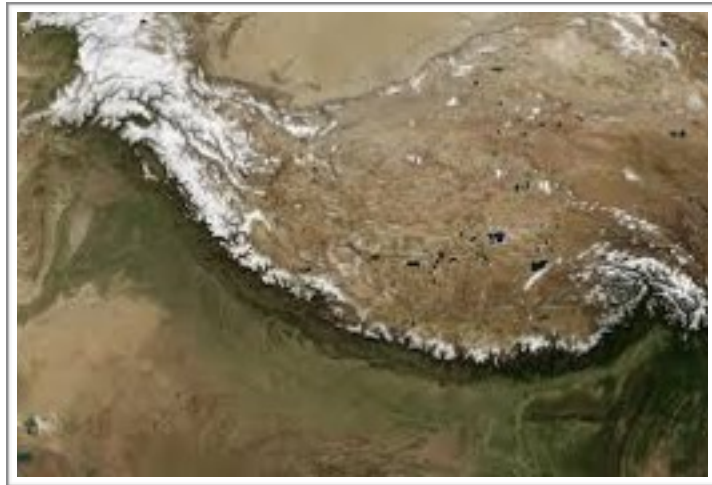


Tibet Digest

September 2015



FOUNDATION FOR NON-VIOLENT ALTERNATIVES

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China's Minority Policies

China micromanages Tibet, floods it with money to woo locals

KENTUCKY.COM
ARITZ PARRA
September 30, 2015

Ji Yunpeng misses hotpot dinners with his wife and daughter back in Beijing and fights insomnia caused by the high altitude in the Tibetan capital by playing computer games, and, occasionally, studying Tibetan Buddhism.

"It's just out of pure intellectual curiosity," he said, aware that genuine religious interest would be a breach of discipline in China's nominally atheist Communist Party.

Ji is in Lhasa on a three-year loan from the Beijing municipal government to oversee the school curriculum in Tibetan classrooms. In return, he gets a double salary and a shortcut up the party ladder. Nearly 6,500 civil servants like him have been dispatched to manage hefty budgets and shape Tibet's modernisation.

They are the human face of top-down development that has poured more than \$100 billion dollars into the region since 1952. Critics say that Beijing's obsession with social stability also has led to widespread human right abuses. But as incomes finally begin to increase across the Tibetan countryside, Chinese authorities are hopeful they can dispel international criticism over their rule in Tibet while winning the hearts of Tibetans and pulling some of their loyalty away from the exiled Dalai Lama.

"The strategy for Tibet is now shifting from the overall kind of repression that we have seen in the past to actually moving toward luring sections of the community and trying to work with those who cooperate with the authorities," Tibet researcher Tsering Shakya said in an interview from University of British Columbia in Vancouver.

For most Tibetans in exile, the region has been unlawfully occupied by China since it was overrun by the People's Liberation Army in 1951, and no material gains justify Beijing's repression. But even skeptics like Shakya acknowledge that "without its intervention, the disparities between the development in Tibet and in China would be even greater."

In a sign of new confidence, authorities this month invited a handful of foreign media organisations, including The Associated Press, on a tightly scripted visit to showcase Tibet's development, timed to the 50th anniversary of the creation of the Tibet Autonomous Region.

STRINGS-ATTACHED DEVELOPMENT

Ji oversees the \$40 million dollar Lhasa-Beijing Experimental Middle School, where many of the 2,500 students are from rural Tibet. Acting as deputy to the head of Lhasa's education bureau, Ji explains how the pupils are entitled to nine years of free schooling.

As government minders watched, a Tibetan teacher wrote in Tibetan on a chalkboard crowned by the national flag, the Communist Party emblem and a portrait of President Xi Jinping. School officials explained that all subjects are taught in Mandarin, China's official language, but that the curriculum includes mandatory Tibetan language.

In Lhasa, Beijing has also paid for housing projects, hospitals, an amusement park, an \$80 million stadium and the Tibet Yak Museum, honouring the "hairy cow" of the grasslands.

"Beijing and Lhasa are still like two worlds apart," Ji says. "But in a place like this, where things are still backward, there is a sense of achievement in every step forward."

Robert Barnett, leading academic of Tibetan studies at Columbia University in New York, questions whether the two-decade-old policy is truly benefiting Tibetans. Economic gains of the development have for decades gone largely to migrants from China's ethnic Han minority, who make up only 8 percent of the Tibet's 3.2 million inhabitants. Only recently, he said, have they started to trickle down to the countryside.

"If you pour in money in that amount to an area that is fragile in its ecosystem and social composition and you just remove barriers for migration, you attract income seekers, with a huge negative effect and a domination of the economy," Barnett said.

MOVING IN FROM GRASSLANDS

Perfectly identical "new socialist villages" have sprouted in the countryside of the Tibetan plateau during the past decade, compelling former nomads to take on a sedentary lifestyle, but also giving them immaculate two-floor villas with running water, latrines and biogas cookers.

Dawa, a 55 year-old herder resettled in Lhoka prefecture's Gongkar county, proudly showed visiting officials and journalists how each member of the family now has a separate room. "Even in my dreams I never thought of having a house like this," he said.

When repeatedly prompted about what he misses from his old life, Dawa paused and stared at the officials seated in his living room before answering.

“We have become selfish,” he said finally. “Now that living standards have improved, eating a piece of meat doesn’t make me as happy as eating a potato once did.”

THE INFLUX OF TOURISTS

Looking ahead, the government hopes to develop the mineral water industry, wool garment weaving workshops and factories of byproducts of traditional Tibetan medicine that will directly benefit locals. Tourism development is, however, the biggest priority.

With plans to go from 15.5 million tourists in 2014 — five times Tibet’s population and most of them Chinese — to 20 million in the next five years, the industry already is transforming Lhasa’s landscape. Four huge pyramids of concrete and glass, the skeleton of a 2,000 room five-star resort, are joining new shopping malls, karaoke parlours and theme parks.

Visitors sweep through chambers of the labyrinthine Potala palace and compete for space with local pilgrims at the iconic Jokhang temple.

“There is a great deal of unhappiness and resentment among Tibetans over the way their culture and religion is being exploited,” said spokesman Alistair Currie of the London-based activist group Free Tibet, which is campaigning against foreign hotel chains in the autonomous region.

STABILITY ON THE PLATEAU

More than 140 Tibetans, men and women, lay people and monks, have died since 2009 protesting Beijing’s rule and demanding the return of the Dalai Lama, who fled to exile in 1959 following an aborted uprising by Tibet’s elites against the Communist Party.

Tibet’s security budget increased by 28 percent annually from 2007 to 2012, a similar pace as in Xinjiang, home to the Turkic-speaking and Islam-practicing Uighurs. The per capita spending in Tibet was 3.6 times the national average in 2012, said the Center for Human Rights and Democracy in Tibet.

Penpa Tashi, an ethnic Tibetan party member who is the region’s vice chairman, blames the tight security on unrest linked to the Dalai Lama, the spiritual leader of Tibetans, many of whom revere him as a demi-god. “Only by remaining stable can we achieve development and improve people’s livelihood,” he said.

The paramilitary police who were ubiquitous following deadly riots in 2008 have retreated from the spotlight, leaving the streets in the hands of lightly-armed patrols

and police stations on every block. More subtle forms of surveillance — from CCTV cameras to plainclothes agents and monitored communications — have taken the lead.

COMMUNISTS IN THE MONASTERY

The party in the past installed “special working groups” at Tibet’s county levels to ensure patriotism. Those groups now have been extended to every village and every monastery, exercising an unprecedented level of control while also funnelling money and resources to groups who cooperate.

In Lhoka’s Tradruk monastery, the secular management office has obtained funds for the latest renovation of this 12-century-old institution, one of the earliest Buddhist constructions in Tibet. As Han Chinese workers placed the last slate slabs in a courtyard, congregation head Migmar Tsering explained how the monastery can get electricity, televisions and libraries in exchange for displaying the Communist leaders’ portraits and topping the complex with the red flag of China.

In addition, monks meet once a week with the monastery’s Communist Party branch to receive legal and patriotic education.

“We now enjoy complete freedom of religion,” Migmar Tsering, 43, said in an interview arranged by the county propaganda office.

Shakya said the new system is actually helping to revive Buddhism throughout Tibet, although under the controlling eyes of the party.

However, other experts dispute that there has been any revival, especially given that the government has been providing the same figure of nearly 1,800 religious sites and more than 46,000 monks and nuns in the autonomous region since the early 90’s.

“You can have television sets, roads and flags in monasteries but you are not allowing the number of people to grow,” said Barnett, the Columbia University professor. “It’s hard to have monastic life thrive if you have a cadre team overseeing them.”

DALAI LAMA’S LONG SHADOW

The current, 14th Dalai Lama, who is now 80, remains the nemesis of China’s interests in Tibet. Despite an obsessive vilification of the man by Chinese government and party officials, he remains immensely popular and influential among Tibetan Buddhists.

He has said he may not reincarnate, to undercut Beijing’s plans to pick his successor. This has forced the atheist Communist Party to embrace a practice introduced seven centuries ago by a Qing dynasty emperor to control the

selection by having names drawn from a government-controlled golden urn.

The region's vice governor, Penpa Tashi, told reporters over a dinner of yak meat that, without doubt, the 15th Dalai Lama will be approved by the Chinese government and that the 14th has been an "anomaly" who made no contribution to Tibet's development and sought only to split the region away from China.

"His attempt to split and destroy will never be realised," he said. "The 14th Dalai is just like a pustule or a weed. A pustule must be squeezed to make the body healthier, the same way that a weed must be uprooted."

Tibet bids for more flights to boost tourism

Xinhua
September 30, 2015

Tibet will encourage airlines to launch more domestic and international flights serving the southwest Chinese region to boost its pillar tourism industry, the chairman of the regional government said on Tuesday.

The regional capital Lhasa is aiming to be "an international cultural and tourism city," said Losang Jamcan during the Second Tibet Tourism and Culture Expo, a three-day event which opened in Lhasa on Monday.

The only direct international flight into Lhasa is from Nepal's Kathmandu. The government believes that with more flights and better infrastructure, attractions like the scenic prefecture of Nyingchi in southeast Tibet and the Gangdise mountains in southwest Tibet can be powerful draws. Gangdise is a destination for Buddhist pilgrimages.

Tibet will accelerate the construction of highways and airports, said Losang Jamcan.

He said Tibet will also tap the Belt and Road project bolstering Asian trade and infrastructure to "open the door of tourism and cultural exchange with south Asian countries."

Tibet welcomed 14.3 million tourists in the first eight months of 2015, generating 19 billion yuan (3 billion U.S. dollars) in revenue, according to the local tourism development commission.

Tourism contributes one fifth to the region's GDP. The region aims to attract 17 million tourists this year. Tibet bids for more flights to boost tourism

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Tibet hosts international expo to boost tourism and culture

chinadaily.com.cn
Wang Fan
September 29, 2015

Tibetan dance, song and traditional opera echoed across the Exhibition Center of Lhasa as a tourism and culture expo drew thousands to the capital of the Tibet autonomous region.

The expo, with the theme 'Sacred Place on Earth, Heavenly Land in Tibet', opened on Monday and showcases the region's unique culture.

The event drew 5,000 participants, including entrepreneurs, tourism professionals and guests from more than 15 countries.

Biyaya Mulmi, an executive member of the Nepal-China Chamber of Commerce & Industry, said he hoped to find new business partners in Tibet as relations between Nepal and Tibet have been steadily growing each year.

"It is my first trip in Tibet. I like the landscape, culture, and people of Tibet, and it is my great pleasure to have my carpets exhibited on the expo," said Biyaya, 54. "Many

imported products from China have gained popularity in Nepal.”

Wang Leiming, president of Tibet Dazhao Travel Service Co, said he was excited to attend the expo’s investment conference.

“From the discussion session of the conference, I had the opportunity to exchange thoughts with many different business people, I have found new business partners, and I have learned new things,” said Wang Leiming, 45.

The central and the regional governments are making efforts to turn Lhasa into a world-class tourism city, he said, adding his business had improved over the years.

During an opening address, Li Shihong, deputy head of the China National Tourism Administration, stressed the importance of tourism in Tibet.

Tibet is an important gateway in the southwest of China, and a shining pearl of tourism both in China and the world, Li said.

“Tourism is one of Tibet’s pillar industries and accounts for 20 percent of the region’s economic contribution, and it has become the main channel of Tibet’s opening up,” Li said.

The three-day event also includes an investment conference, an exhibition of Tibetan cultural relics, conferences on tourism promotion and a Tibetan medicine forum.

Zhou Qiang makes inspection tour in Tibet

en.chinacourt.org
September 29, 2015



President of the Supreme People’s Court Zhou Qiang made an inspection tour in Tibet Autonomous Region from September 20 to 22. He said people’s courts of the whole country should comprehensively implement the guiding principles of the 18th National Party Congress and

the third and fourth plenary sessions of the 18th CPC Central Committee, thoroughly implement the spirits of the 6th Tibet Work Forum, put into practice the guiding principles from General Secretary Xi Jinping’s major speeches.

Zhou said that people’s court at all levels should put the decisions of the central government in place, give full play to the judicial function of people’s courts, and guarantee the sustainable healthy development and the long-term stability in Tibet.

Tibet welcomes 14.3 million tourists

ETN Global Travel Industry News
September 27, 2015

BEIJING, China – Tibet in southwest China welcomed 14.3 million tourists in the first eight months of this year.

They generated 19 billion yuan (US\$3 billion) in tourism revenue, according to the Tourism Development Commission of Tibet Autonomous Region.

The high tourism season for Tibet is May to October, and a big influx of visitors is expected during the weeklong National Day holiday, which begins on Thursday.

Tibet will hold its second tourism and culture expo from today to Wednesday. Representatives of companies from countries like India and Nepal as well as other provinces of China will attend the event.

Tourism is a pillar industry in Tibet, with revenue accounting for about one fifth of the region’s economy. The region aims to attract 17 million tourists this year.

China constructing USD 18-million cultural park in Tibet

Economic Times
PTI
September 25, 2015

China is constructing a USD-18 million cultural park at a site of ancient human ruins in [eastern Tibet that will recreate scenes from the lives of pre-historic Tibetans about 5,000 years ago.](#)

The Karub Ruins Park, located in Qamdo City (Tibetan: Chamdo), will allow visitors to learn about the plateau’s

prehistoric civilisation, according to Yungzhung Dawa, head of the city's cultural heritage bureau.

With a total investment of 120 million yuan (about USD 18.8 million), the project will replicate scenes from the lives of Tibetans' ancestors from 4,000 to 5,000 years ago.

The first-phase project includes an exhibition hall where pictures of the ruins of ancient houses will be displayed, state-run Xinhua news agency reported.

The Karub ruins were found in 1977 and put under state protection in 1996.

Three excavations have been conducted on an area covering 3,040 square metres of ruins since have been conducted on an area covering 3,040 square metres of ruins since their discovery.

They are the best-preserved Neolithic ruins on the Qinghai-Tibet plateau.

Tibet: "5100" Special Fund for development of education set up

China Tibet News
Subrina Zhu
September 21, 2015

The ceremony for the establishment of Tibet's "5100" Fund for the development of education was held in the Wanquan primary school of Damshung, southwest China's Tibet Autonomous Region.

Tibet's "5100" Special Fund donated cash and supplies. Besides, with donations from "5100" Fund, a modern Audio-Visual Education Room has been built in Wanquan primary school. This room is also equipped with 45 computers, 45 pairs of chairs and desks and a teaching projection, which are well-received by the teachers and students.

2,000-yr-old stupa marks revival of India-China Buddhist links

Business Standard
Press Trust of India
September 20, 2015

The restoration of the 2,000-year-old Ashoka Stupa in this quintessential Tibetan town by an Indian Buddhist monk marks a new beginning in the revival of Buddhism links between India and China.

Hundreds of men and women accompanied by their children in best attire attended the ceremony, which locals say is the biggest such religious gathering in recent years just to have glimpse of the Stupa containing the relics of Buddha.

Buddhist monks said the credit to preserve the Stupa in this town located in China's Qinghai province adjacent to Tibet, through the invasions of Mongols and in recent decades, the Cultural Revolution headed by Mao Zedong goes to the local people.

The parts of the original Stupa were preserved by the people by making them into hundreds of small Stupas which were preserved in the new temple, a monk said. Over 300 tiny Stupas were displayed around the main Stupa of the temple.

It was restored on September 15 signifying the revival of the Buddhist religious links between India and China in the Himalayan region strained by the departure of the Dalai Lama to India in 1959.

A massive gold-coloured statue of Buddha along with the Stupa and Ashoka Pillar was consecrated with Gyalwang Drukpa, the Himachal Pradesh-born Buddhist monk and the spiritual head of over 1,000 monasteries across Himalayas.

According to Buddhist records, Emperor Ashoka collected all parts of the body of Lord Buddha after his Nirvana, stored them in pagoda-shaped shrines before sending them to different parts of the world.

China is believed to have received 19 of them including the one in Nangchen but most of them have collapsed due to natural wear and tear as well as negligence.

Three more such Stupas were discovered in Chinese cities, Xian, Nanjing and near Ayuwang (Ashoka) Temple in Zhejiang Province. The Nangchen Stupa is the first to be discovered in Tibetan region. The fate of the rest of 15 Stupas sent by Ashoka to China is not known.

Chinese-Tibetan bilingual training base for procurators inaugurated

English.news.cn
September 16, 2015

A Chinese-Tibetan bilingual training base for procurators in southwest China's Nyingchi city, Tibet Autonomous Region, was inaugurated.

Cao Jianming, the procurator general of the Supreme People's Procuratorate, and the first batch of students including 74 procurators attended the opening ceremony.

Featuring a bilingual teaching system, the training base aims to improve the quality of procurators in Tibet and neighbouring provinces, Cao said.

More procurators should be fluent in Chinese and Tibetan and bilingual teaching should be improved, said Cao.

Authorities in Xinjiang Require Special Permits to Buy Kitchen Knives

Radio Free Asia
Reported by Eset Sulaiman
September 14, 2015

Authorities in northwestern China's troubled Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region are requiring residents to obtain special permits when purchasing kitchen knives and strictly controlling sales of bladed tools amid a crackdown on violence in the area following a spate of stabbing attacks, sources say.

According to an Aug. 26 notice issued by the municipal police department in Kashgar (in Chinese, Kashi) prefecture's Kashgar city, anyone who plans to buy a chef's knife must provide their name, ethnicity, address, ID number and telephone number when applying for a permit.

The notice—a photo of which was circulated late last month using the popular WeChat messaging app and other social media sites—says applicants must also include the name of the location where they will make the purchase, how many knives they plan to buy, and an explanation of what they will use them for.

On the application, the number of kitchen knives “must be written in Chinese characters, not in numerals,” the notice says, while any permit “will only be valid on the date of issue.” Successful applicants will be given a copy of their permit, while the “original will be provided to the police station.”

Police officers from Kashgar's South Liberation Road station, which signed the document, refused to speak with RFA reporters when asked about the new policy.

A Uyghur officer from the Nezerbagh township police station on the outskirts of Kashgar also refused to comment on the notice, but acknowledged that a special regulation is currently in place in the region to control the

purchase and sale of tools with blades on them, as well as how the items are used.

Residents confirmed that sales of knives, axes, cleavers, and other sharp tools—including prized artisan blades produced in Kashgar's Yengisar (Yingjisha) county—had dropped significantly in the region since 2014 due to the restrictions.

Abdukerim Akhon, a Uyghur butcher from neighbouring Hoten (Hetian) prefecture's Qaraqash (Moyu) county, told RFA that even professionals were being affected by the recent controls.

“The county government announced that all butchers' knives must be shorter 15 centimetres (six inches),” said Akhon of Zawa township, adding that any knife of greater length “will be confiscated, and the owner punished accordingly.”

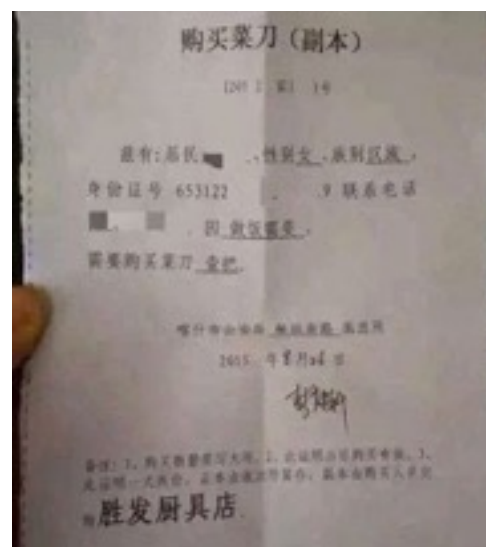
“This regulation is very strictly implemented in the seat of Qaraqash county—the police have a special device to check the length of knives and [whether they confirm to] other restrictions.”

Akhon said he had heard some police in the region were even “collecting all knives when butchers close their stores for the day and returning them the following morning,” adding that the restrictions were causing serious difficulties for people in his profession.

“We are professional butchers and our livelihoods have depended on our shops for several generations, but our predecessors never had to deal with these restrictions before,” he said.

“It is so inconvenient and stressful that I have decided to give up my work as a butcher and close my shop for good.”

Crackdown in the region



Police notice informing residents of Kashgar that special permits are required to purchase kitchen knives. Credit: WeChat

China has vowed to crack down on the “three evils” of terrorism, separatism, and religious extremism in Xinjiang, but experts outside China say Beijing has exaggerated the threat from Uyghur “separatists” and that domestic policies are responsible for an upsurge in violence that has left hundreds dead since 2012.

In late June, at least 18 people, and as many as 28, were killed in a knife and bomb attack by a group of ethnic Uyghurs on a police traffic checkpoint in the Tahtakoruk district of Kashgar city after the car they were in sped through a traffic checkpoint without stopping, sources told RFA.

The sources said the incident had been prompted by restrictions put in place by authorities a week after millions of Uyghurs began observance of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, including pressure not to fast and a policy forbidding children under 18 from taking part in religious activities.

In May, the ethnic Han Chinese head of Layqa township, in Hoten prefecture’s Hotan county, was stabbed to death by a young Uyghur man, prompting a security clampdown in the area, sources said.

Uyghur groups in exile say such attacks are likely expressions of resistance to Beijing’s policies in Xinjiang, where Uyghurs complain of pervasive ethnic discrimination, religious repression, and cultural suppression by China’s communist government.

Rights groups accuse the Chinese authorities of heavy-handed rule in Xinjiang, including violent police raids on Uyghur households, restrictions on Islamic practices, and curbs on the culture and language of the Uyghur people.

Another 900,000 Tibetans have clean water since 2011

Xinhuanet
September 13, 2015

LHASA, Sept. 13 (Xinhua) — New water conservation projects in Tibet have made clean water available to over 900,000 local people since 2011 thanks to surging investment into the southwest China region.

The Ministry of Water Resources said on Sunday the government intensified effort during 2011 to 2015 to solve water shortage in Tibet, with around 750,000 rural dwellers and 150,000 urban residents benefited and fresh water channeled to more than 1,400 temples.

The results are attributable to the central government’s investment on water conservation, which is expected to

reach 22.8 billion yuan (around 3.5 billion U.S. dollars) at the end of the year, over triple the amount during 2006 to 2010.

Besides water supply, the projects generate electricity for local residents, control water and soil loss and help protect the environment.

The ministry promised more efforts to guarantee fresh water, protect natural resources and improve people’s livelihood in the next five years.

Banned Tibetan Flag Openly Displayed in Restive Pema County

Radio Free Asia
September 11, 2015

A Tibetan national flag was found publicly displayed this week on an iron structure in northwestern China’s Qinghai province in defiance of official bans on the banner as a “separatist” symbol of Tibetan nationhood, sources said.

The flag, bearing the images of two snow lions and a sun, was placed on the metal frame in Golog (in Chinese, Guoluo) prefecture’s Pema (Baima) county sometime on Sept. 6 and remained hanging until noon the next day, a local source told RFA’s Tibetan Service.

“It was hung on an iron structure that could have been used as a billboard in Pema county’s Dida town,” RFA’s source said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

“The display of the Tibetan flag coincided with China’s official celebration of the 60th anniversary of the founding of Pema county,” the source said, adding that the flag was hung in a place that could be easily seen by others and was later taken down by Chinese officials.

Official celebrations of the county’s founding were held from Sept. 6 to 7, though local Tibetans showed no signs of joy at the event, the source said.

“Tibetans residents of the area have endured great sufferings during the last 60 years, especially during China’s Cultural Revolution [1966-1976], and Tibetans in Golog generally have suffered a lot under Chinese rule,” he said.

Displeasure

Separately, a second source confirmed the flag had been displayed, saying, “A Tibetan national flag with the emblem of two snow lions was displayed on an iron structure in Dida town and remained hanging there until Sept. 7.”

“This could have been an expression of displeasure at the official celebrations marking the 60th founding anniversary of Pema county in Golog,” the source said, also speaking on condition of anonymity.

“So far, no one has been apprehended or detained,” he said.

Chinese authorities in Pema county last year demanded that area monasteries and residents pledge loyalty to the ruling Chinese Communist Party and began to impose strict controls on the registration of monks and on information flows out of the region, sources said in earlier reports.

And in December 2013, county police detained two monks and a government worker amid a wider area crackdown following a fatal Nov. 11 self-immolation protest challenging Chinese rule.

The monks were dragged at night from their quarters, while the government worker was beaten and detained after being found with a photo of self-immolation protester Tsering Gyal on her mobile phone, sources said.

Sporadic demonstrations challenging Beijing’s rule have continued in Tibetan-populated areas of China since widespread protests swept the region in 2008, with 143 Tibetans to date setting themselves ablaze to oppose Beijing’s rule and call for the return of exiled spiritual leader the Dalai Lama.

China’s Communist Party stages grand parade in Lhasa to mark the 50th anniversary of its Tibetan government

Mail Online
QIN XIE FOR MAILONLINE
September 9, 2015

The enormous square outside Potala Palace in Lhasa, Tibet, became the setting of a parade that thousands attended earlier today.

It was part of the celebrations by China’s Communist Party to mark the 50th anniversary of the autonomous region, reported People’s Daily Online.

This parade came less than a week after the country’s much-publicised V-Day parades, which took place in Beijing on September 3.



A grand ceremony marking the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Tibet Autonomous Region is held at the square of the Potala Palace



Float (above) has the slogan ‘strengthen ethnic unity, build beautiful Tibet’ emblazoned on the front as it prepares for the parades



One float (above) had a banner that said ‘forever following the Communist Party’. It also highlighted the regional railway links to China



Parade included thousands of performers. The ethnic drum dancers above are pictured wearing the traditional costumes of their tribe



An enormous flag of China is carried by around 200 people is part of the parade, showing the importance of China in its staging



Other parade participants wore their ethnic costume. Above, the people held the banners that thanked the central government attendees



Parade performers in ethnic costumes (above) stand on a parade with a mini replica of the Potala Palace where the celebrations are held

6,000 people were expected to be part of the parade. Chinese media also anticipated that 20,000 people from all over Tibet would be attending the celebrations.

Photographs from the event showed thousands of people sitting outside in the sun. They were either wearing uniforms or colourful ethnic outfits.

Everyone in the audience at the event was holding a national flag of the People's Republic of China as well as a flag designating 50 years of the Tibetan Autonomous Region.

There was a strong patriotic stance, where China featured prominently. All of the paraphernalia was in both Chinese and Tibetan. One float had a banner that said 'forever following the Communist Party'. Another had the slogan 'strengthen ethnic unity, build beautiful Tibet' emblazoned on the front.

The parades also featured marching bands and military troops.



All of the celebratory paraphernalia are in Chinese and Tibetan. Above, dancers are wearing traditional Tibetan costumers in the hot sun



Another group is wearing a different traditional outfit (above) as they carry the khata, a ceremonial scarf used in Tibet to signify purity



Masks and props are also used in the parade as the dancers show above. China recognises 56 ethnic minorities and several live in Tibet



Potala Palace is an important symbol for Tibet. It was where the Dalai Lama traditionally lived until the 14th Dalai Lama fled in 1959

China's top political advisor Yu Zhengsheng attended the celebration with 65 central government officials.

At the celebrations, he stressed the point of unity.

Yu Zhengsheng also revealed that the central government will continue to push the region's economic growth as well as basic education.

While addressing what's referred to as the separatist movement in Tibet, Yu Zhengsheng said that contentious issues in the region will be addressed within the legal framework.

Tibet has long been contentious subject for the Communist Party since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949.

Although China has declared Tibet an autonomous region since 1965, dissidents on the issue have always proclaimed its independence.

Tibetans signed an agreement declaring China's sovereignty over Tibet as long as it was led by the Dalai Lama, the spiritual head of Tibetan Buddhism.

After a failed attempt to overthrow China's hold on the region in 1959, the 14th Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, fled to India while China declared Tibet as an autonomous region.

The 14th Dalai Lama, who has just turned 80, hasn't issued a statement over China's Tibet celebrations. He is currently teaching in India and is expected to be in London later this month for a series of public talks.

However, Sikyong Dr. Lobsang Sangay, the democratically elected political leader of the Tibetan people according to Tibet.net said: 'There is nothing to celebrate in Tibet. Tibet is still under occupation and Tibetans are still brutally repressed.'

The celebrations in Tibet are considerably smaller than the much-publicised V-Day parades last week where 12,000 troops formed the parade.

Preparations for the V-Day parades started more than a year ago and Chinese citizens were given a public holiday for the event.

Political advisor Yu Zhengsheng stressed the importance of unity in Tibet during a speech made before the parades started this morning. While addressing separatist movement, Yu Zhengsheng said contentious issues in the region will be addressed within the legal framework. Yu Zhengsheng also revealed that the central government will continue to push the region's economic growth as well as basic education. Although China has declared Tibet an autonomous region since 1965, dissidents on the issue have always proclaimed its independence



A small military march was also part of the parade (above) but it's dwarfed by the large scale V-Day parades that took place last week



Yu Zhengsheng curses Dalai Lama in Lhasa speech

Want China Times
Xinhua
September 9, 2015

China's government has vowed greater resolve to end separatism and stressed adherence to the law in managing Tibet's religious affairs while celebrating the 50th anniversary of the founding of Tibet autonomous region on Tuesday.

"Tibet has achieved sustained stability after people of all ethnic groups steadfastly fought separatism, foiling the sabotage attempts of the 14th Dalai Lama clique and hostile international forces," top political adviser Yu Zhengsheng told a rally of senior officials and thousands of Tibetan people gathered at a celebration in front of the Potala Palace.

Border areas must be well managed to successfully govern the country, he said.

Stability in Tibet relies on the management of these areas, said Yu, chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference.

Tibet is important in safeguarding national security, and it is in the interests of all the people of Tibet to maintain national unity and ethnic solidarity, he noted. Yu vowed to "intensify the fight against separatism" and oppose all kinds of separatist activities.

One day before the celebration, Yu urged army, police and judicial staff in Tibet to be ready to fight a protracted battle against the 14th Dalai clique. Yu urged them to

improve the “governing Tibet according to law,” specifically dealing with separatist forces according to law.

“On one side, Chinese authorities are warning the 14th Dalai Lama to stop separatist activities, and on the other they are urging him at his advanced age to make a choice that is good for the nation and the people,” said Wang Chunhuan, head of the Marxism-Leninism Research Institute of the Tibetan Academy of Social Sciences.

If a group stands opposed to the nation and people, the central authorities are resolved to fight a long battle against it, said Wang.

Yu, also a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, asked authorities to “stick to the rule of law,” a strategic thinking championed by central authorities since late 2014.

“Law-based governance is the basic guarantee of the region’s long-term stability,” Yu said.

“Religious affairs should be managed according to law and problems should be addressed through legal means to maintain order in the practice of Tibetan Buddhism,” he was quoted as saying.

Religion is an important aspect of the Tibetan civilisation, and Yu’s calls will help legalise the management of religion and protect people’s normal religious beliefs and activities, said Pallbar Lhamo, a senior researcher of the Tibetan Academy of Social Sciences.

More importantly, managing religious affairs by law is an important transformation of method, said Pallbar Lhamo. “In the past, authorities managed religions by policy, now it is by law.”

INCREASED INCOME, IMPROVED ARMY-PEOPLE RELATIONS

Yu said the central government will continue to give special support for the Himalayan territory’s economic development and narrow its gap with other regions.

The government will create more jobs and increase the Tibetan people’s income, and give them more access to better education, housing and health care. He also stressed environmental protection.

In the past 50 years Tibetan regional GDP has grown 68 times and local financial income has increased 564-fold, he was quoted as saying.

He asked authorities to strengthen ethnic solidarity, which he called a “lifeline” and enhance Chinese people’s national identity.

Yu praised the People’s Liberation Army, People’s Armed Police Force and the judicial staff in Tibet as loyal

guardians of the national security and all people in the region.

He asked them to always put the people’s interests as top priority and improve relations with the people.

Yu also told them to accomplish their missions and contribute more to Tibet’s stability and prosperity.

After Yu’s speech, more than 6,000 civilians, army and government staff joined a parade. Army, police and paramilitary troops marched through the square armed and in battle dress, while civilian formations walked wearing Tibetan attire, singing, dancing and releasing colourful balloons.

There have been road closures and traffic controls in place for the past four days, but citizens and tourists have mostly been able to move about freely.

Many foreigners gathered on streets near the square to watch the ceremony.

On Tibet anniversary, China amplifies Marxist pitch

The Hindu
Atul Aneja
September 9, 2015

Among comments by a Chinese official was the rejection of the 14th Dalai Lama’s role in shaping modern Tibet.

China on Tuesday celebrated the 50th anniversary of the formation of the Tibet Autonomous Republic (TAR) by sending a powerful visual message of unity, along with an advocacy of fusing religious and socialist values.

In the backdrop of the imposing Potala palace — once home of the Dalai Lama — thousands gathered on Tuesday morning to listen to Yu Zhengsheng, a top Chinese official who had flown in from Beijing. A spectacular parade that followed, including soldiers in full uniformed regalia, goose-stepping marchers and flag-waving schoolchildren, reinforced the message of Tibet’s role, as a frontier state, in safeguarding China’s security.

“Border areas must be well-managed to successfully govern the country, and stability in Tibet is paramount to the management of these areas,” said Mr. Yu.

He, who was heading a 65-member delegation, was echoing some of the salient points regarding Tibet that President Xi Jinping had made last month, during a two-day seminar.

Among them was the rejection of the 14th Dalai Lama’s role in shaping modern Tibet. Mr. Yu said that Tibet had

entered a new stage of sustained stability after people of all ethnic groups had foiled “sabotage attempts by the 14th Dalai Lama group and international hostile forces.” He asserted that China will be relentless in cracking down on all kinds of separatist activities in the future. Addressing troops from the People’s Liberation Army and other law enforcing agencies a day earlier, Mr. Yu, a Politburo member, urged the army, police and judicial staff in Tibet “to crack down on separatist forces and be ready to fight a protracted battle against the 14th Dalai clique.”

President Xi had pointed out that stability in Tibet would resonate in a much larger territorial swathe, as ethnic Tibetans and other ethnic minorities were residing in strength in neighbouring provinces, such as Sichuan and Yunnan.

Though China has been focusing on a cultural renaissance based on the revival of Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism, President Xi had made it plain that Marxist values should be promoted in shaping people’s views on ethnicity, religion and culture.

Analysts say that a fresh focus on Marxism could be part of drive to consolidate support within the Communist Party of China, following the President’s extensive, but sometimes divisive, anti-corruption campaign.

Xinhua is reporting that Mr. Xi had pointed to efforts that were required to promote patriotism among the Tibetan Buddhist circles, effective management of monasteries, and encouragement to interpretations of religious doctrines “that are compatible with a socialist society.”

Meanwhile Free Tibet, a London-based human rights group, accused China of defining Tibetan identity, in accordance with its own priorities. It added that Tibetans suffered restrictions on movement and faced censorship — a claim rejected by Beijing which has been pouring in funds and capital, leading to a visible economic boom in Lhasa.

Yushu Intensifies Promotion of Tourist Attractions

YIBADA
Cesar Tordesillas
September 19, 2015

A journey through tourist destinations of Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Qinghai Province, jointly held by the Yushu government and the Chinese club Jeep Rangers, will commence during this year’s National Day holiday week, beginning Oct 1.

There are around 300 Jeep owners who have signed up for the event.

Around 80 percent of the motorists will be traversing roads and highways to Tibet for three days, while 20 percent, including invited scientists, will go off track to explore Yushu’s Zadoi County to Nyainrong County in Tibet.

Participants will spend five days getting across Yushu’s Sanjiangyuan area to the Tibet Autonomous Region on five routes to explore exotic vistas.

Among the highlights of the trip are glaciers, snow mountains, snow leopards, old trees and Danxia landform featuring red sandstone and geologic formations.

Increasing public knowledge of Sanjiangyuan, protecting China’s great rivers and promoting Yushu’s tourism resources are among the purpose of the event, the organisers said.

Sanjiangyuan is the origin of China’s three major waterways: Yellow River, Yangtze River and Lancang River.

Yushu attracted 382,000 tourists in the first eight months, up 54 percent as compared with the same period last year, with the prefecture raking in \$29.8 million in the same period, up 37.6 percent, said the Yushu tourism bureau.

The number of daily flights to Yushu peaked at 11 during a five-day horse racing festival held in late July.

Yushu, with its 500 tourist attractions, is eager to introduce itself to the world, said La Maocuo, a local tourism official.

On top of the Jeep event, Yushu officials are organising counterparts in Nepal and Myanmar about organising self-drive trips.

China holds giant rally stressing Tibet claim, rebukes Dalai Lama

AFP
Sep. 8, 2015



Chinese paramilitary police conduct a flag rising ceremony as thousands of people gather in front of the iconic Potala Palace in the regional capital Lhasa on September 8, 2015

China on Tuesday stressed Communist party control over Tibet, with a senior official denouncing the Dalai Lama at a giant ceremony condemned by rights groups.

Thousands of people gathered in front of the iconic Potala Palace in the regional capital Lhasa for an event billed as marking 50 years since the founding of the administrative area of Tibet.

Crowd members waved Chinese flags while “cheering like they were ushering in a new year”, the official Xinhua news agency reported.

China says it grants Tibet autonomy, but Beijing tightly controls the region while no ethnic Tibetan has ever held its top Communist post.

Many Tibetans complain of restrictions on Buddhist traditions and economic discrimination.

Beijing denies repression and says it has brought economic development.

Top leaders of the Communist Party of China (CPC) said in a message to mark the anniversary: “Only by sticking to the CPC’s leadership and the ethnic autonomy system, can Tibetans be their own masters,” Xinhua said.

Yu Zhengsheng, one of China’s seven highest-ranking Communist officials as a member of the Politburo Standing Committee, who normally works in Beijing, vowed to continue a “crack down on all kinds of separatist activities”, Xinhua added.

China brands the Dalai Lama and his supporters as “separatists” seeking independence for the region, though

the Tibetan spiritual leader says he advocates greater self-rule.

Yu told the crowd that “sabotage attempts” by the Dalai Lama and his associates had been “foiled”, without giving details.

After Yu’s speech more than 6,000 civilians, army and government staff joined a parade “featuring singing, dancing and the release of colourful balloons”, Xinhua said.

Beijing established the Tibet Autonomous Region in 1965, 15 years after Chinese troops took control of the area.

It covers only some of the areas in which ethnic Tibetans have historically lived, with the rest of the population divided between several Chinese provinces.

“The so-called Tibet Autonomous Region only covers about half of Tibet,” the London-based Free Tibet group said in a statement.

It said the anniversary celebrations were “imposed” on Tibetans by Beijing.

“Tibet is locked down: independent media, human rights organisations and diplomats can’t travel there freely,” the group added.

“If Tibet’s people have a good news story to tell, why doesn’t Beijing let them freely tell it.”

On the 50th anniversary of Tibet’s “autonomy,” China vows to crack down on the Dalai Lama and his supporters

Zheping Huang
QUARTZ
September 08, 2015

China vowed to fight the Dalai Lama, the exiled spiritual leader of Tibet, at a grand ceremony on Tuesday (Sept. 8) celebrating the 50th anniversary of the creation of the Tibet Autonomous Region.

Yu Zhengsheng, China’s top political advisor for religious groups and ethnic minorities, said (link in Chinese) that “the Dalai clique,” along with “foreign hostile forces,” have been constantly conducting separatist activities—but Chinese people of all ethnic groups have always thwarted them. “[We] will, in accordance with laws, deepen the battle against separatism, crack down on all kinds of

separatist activities, and resolutely safeguard national unity and stability in Tibet,” he said.

Chinese troops marched into Tibet in 1950. In 1951, the Tibetans signed an agreement affirming China’s sovereignty over Tibet, on the condition of an autonomous administration led by the Dalai Lama.

In 1959, after an uprising against Chinese rule failed, the Dalai Lama fled to India where he established the Tibet government-in-exile. The Chinese government officially established the Tibet Autonomous Region in 1965.

A paramilitary policeman unfurls a Chinese national flag at the celebrations event on Sept. 8.(Reuters/China Daily)

Yu addressed his speech to thousands of Tibetans dressed in their ethnic costumes in front of the Potala Palace in Lhasa, the capital of Tibet, according to state media reports.

Yu led a delegation of 65 central government officials to Tibet on Sept. 6 to attend the celebration. On Monday (Sept. 7), he visited representatives of the Chinese army, police, and judicial staff in Tibet and warned them of a long fight against “the Dalai clique.” State-run media Xinhua pledged a “deepened war” against separatists. The Dalai Lama has not responded.

The leader of Tibet’s government-in-exile said before the celebrations that there was “nothing to celebrate in Tibet.” Tibet is “still under occupation and Tibetans are still brutally repressed,” Lobsang Sangay said in a statement.

A few days ahead of the ceremony, China issued a white paper about Tibet’s economical and social development under the rule of the Chinese Communist Party. “Tibet is now in its golden age,” it said, while condemning the Dalai Lama for “plotting towards Tibetan independence.”

Tensions between Beijing and the Dalai Lama have risen after the Dalai Lama said last year he might not reincarnate—Tibetan Buddhists believe their spiritual leaders will be reborn after death. The Chinese government hopes to guide selection of the next Dalai Lama in order to instate a spiritual leader that accepts China’s rule in Tibet, as the New York Times noted.

Decades ago, the Dalai Lama named a Panchen Lama, the second-highest figure in Tibetan Buddhism, but he has not been seen publicly for 20 years. Instead, Beijing selected a new Panchen, who is reviled by many Tibetans as a fake. On Monday, a Tibetan official said at a press conference for the 50th anniversary ceremony that the vanished Panchen Lama is “living a normal life” and “does not wish to be disturbed.”

The government, not the Dalai Lama, that has the final say in reincarnation, the official stressed.

The first casualty of China’s vowed war on the Dalai Lama supporters appears to be Bon Jovi. The US rock band’s two concerts next week in Beijing and Shanghai have been cancelled after Chinese authorities discovered that they included a picture of the Dalai Lama in a video backdrop during a concert in Taiwan in 2010, the FT reported (paywall) citing unnamed sources familiar with the matter.

Tibet was not Part of China but Middle Way Remains a Viable Solution

Tibet was not Part of China but Middle Way Remains a Viable Solution. Central Tibetan Administration’s Response to China’s White Paper on Tibet.

This response to the Chinese white paper on Tibet challenges Beijing’s claims that the legitimacy of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet rests on China’s recognition and approval. This response provides comprehensive explanation with regard to Communist China’s schemes of picking the reincarnation of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and its claims of not only territorial sovereignty over Tibet but also sovereignty over the soul of the Tibetan people.

This response argues that there will be an international pushback to such a Chinese move. The pushback will not only come from the Tibetan people but millions of Buddhists who traditionally share Tibet’s spiritual culture and others in the rest of the world who have benefitted from the teachings of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. These include a growing number of Chinese Buddhists who flock to India and follow His Holiness the Dalai Lama around the world to receive his teachings. Such a move on the part of China will create an international furore comparable to China muscling its way into the South China Sea.

This response also argues that there is a way to resolve the issue. Till now, China has repeatedly rejected the Middle Way Approach. However, if wiser Chinese heads look into the Tibetan proposal of not seeking independence but autonomy for all the Tibetan people under a single administration, they will find in the proposal a solution that respects Tibet’s distinct cultural and national identity and preserves the territorial integrity of the People’s Republic of China. Increasing number of Chinese intellectuals within and outside China support this peace initiative, including Liu Xiaobo, the imprisoned

Nobel Peace Laureate. Their support, Twelve Suggestions for Dealing With the Tibetan Situation, is published as an open letter to the Chinese authorities.

Any move by China to meet the concerns of the Tibetan people along the lines of the Middle Way Approach will pave the way for the restoration of strategic trust between India and China. This will open the borders between the two and free their militaries from entanglements. This in turn will improve the economic and cultural development of the Himalayan region and contribute to lasting peace in Asia. [To read the full White Paper please click here: http://fnvaworld.org/?p=17337](http://fnvaworld.org/?p=17337)

Senior official stresses lawful management of Tibet's religious affairs

Xinhua
September 8, 2015

Top Chinese political advisor Yu Zhengsheng on Tuesday called for managing religious affairs according to law and maintaining sound orders of Tibetan Buddhism.

In a speech marking the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Tibet Autonomous Region, Yu, chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, stressed upholding law-based governance in Tibet.

"Religious Affairs should be managed according to law; problems should be addressed through legal thinking and judicial means; and the good order in the worship of Tibetan Buddhism should be maintained," Yu said.

He continued by saying that the campaign against separatism and the crackdown on separatist and sabotage activities must also be carried out in line with laws.

Yu arrived in Lhasa, capital of Tibet Autonomous Region, on Sunday, leading a central government delegation to attend festivities marking the 50th anniversary of the region's founding.

New measures to preserve Potala Palace, Jokhang Temple

CNTV.cn
Xinhuanet
September 8, 2015

Tibet's landmark sites are famous around the world. Every year, hundreds of thousands of visitors make the high-altitude journey to witness the wonders of Lhasa. But the crowds are posing a threat to the UNESCO World Heritage sites.

For 1,300 years, Potala Palace has stood proudly atop Red Hill, overlooking Tibet's regional capital of Lhasa.

Once the seat of the Tibetan government and the winter residence of the Dalai Lama. The Palace now welcomes daily hordes of tourists.

The magnificent Potala Palace Lhasa, the world's highest palace, is an architectural wonder. It rises 13 stories high and contains more than 1,000 rooms. Inside, Buddhist believers and tourists alike are shuffling their way around.

The influx of tourists has put wall paintings, Buddha statues, frescoes, and scriptures at risk.

The threat has pushed authorities to implement new regulations, limiting the number of visitors to 5,000 a day.

"We're currently discussing new ways to cut the number of visitors while still meeting the demand, like online presentations or other hi-tech ways to showcase the palace," said Kunker Tashi, deputy director of management of Potala Palace.

Since 1989, the central government has invested over US \$30 million into a long-term restoration program.

"We have a team of painters, carpenters and bricklayers, which renovates the palace and does maintenance work. Each year, 3 million to 6 million yuan are spent on repairs, depending on the work required," Tashi said.

The palace, added to UNESCO's list of World Heritage Sites in 1994, received 830,000 visitors last year.

This July, a new regulation for protecting the Potala Palace was adopted by the legislature of the Tibet Autonomous Region, containing articles on the planning, administration, research and protection of the structure.

Also kept under a protective eye is the nearby Jokhang Temple and its surrounding Barkhor Street in central Lhasa, also a tourist hotspot and world heritage site.

"The Committee was formed in 2012 with the aim of protecting old districts in Lhasa, especially around Barkhor Street. We restored many traditional Tibetan architectural features, like the Tibetan-style windows and also added traditional elements to the street lamps," said Cao

Pengcheng, deputy director of City Management Committee At Barkhor.

Like Potala Palace, Jokhang Temple was built by Tibetan King Songtsa Gambo, in the seventh century, for his two wives.

Today, it serves as the spiritual center and holiest destination for Tibetan Buddhist pilgrims, attracting tourists from near and far.

At Potala Palace, visitors say they are hopeful more renovation work will be done to preserve the architectural wonder for generations to come.

“The palace should be preserved. It’s an important part of China’s cultural diversity and a symbol of Buddhism. We enjoyed the tour and I hope future generations can also come and admire the building and its displays, which I believe will teach them something in life,” said Li Song, a tourist from Ningxia.

China stages mass spectacle in Tibet to mark 50 years’ rule

San Francisco Chronicle
September 8, 2015

Schoolchildren waved flags and paramilitary troops marched in full battle dress at a mass spectacle China staged Tuesday to mark 50 years since establishing Tibet as an ethnic autonomous region firmly under Beijing’s control.

The event lauded Tibet’s economic successes under Communist Party rule, even as activists criticised its record on human rights.

Top political adviser Yu Zhengsheng stressed Tibet’s unity with the rest of China in his address to thousands gathered in front of the stunning Potala Palace in the regional capital of Lhasa, once home to the Dalai Lama and now a museum.

“During the past 50 years the Chinese Communist Party and the Tibetan people have led the transformation from a backward old Tibet to a vibrant socialist new Tibet,” Yu told the audience of schoolchildren, soldiers, armed police and party officials applauding and waving flags.

People’s living standards have improved, infrastructure has been built across Tibet and its gross domestic product had grown 68 times, Yu said at the ceremony broadcast live on state television.

Yu’s speech was followed by a parade of goose-stepping marchers carrying the national emblem of China, along

with portraits of past and present leaders, including President Xi Jinping. Dancers and musicians in traditional Tibetan dress also performed, although there was no visible participation by representatives of the Buddhist clergy that forms the backbone of the Himalayan region’s traditional culture.

Beijing sent troops to occupy the Himalayan region following the 1949 communist revolution. The government says the region has been part of Chinese territory for centuries, while many Tibetans say it has a long history of independence under a series of Buddhist leaders.

The region’s traditional Buddhist ruler, the Dalai Lama, fled in 1959 amid an abortive uprising against Chinese rule, and continues to advocate for a meaningful level of autonomy under Chinese rule.

China established the Tibetan autonomous region in 1965, one of five ethnic regions in the country today. While Tibet is nominally in charge of its own affairs, its top officials are appointed by Beijing and expected to rule with an iron fist. The region incorporates only about half of Tibet’s traditional territory, is closed to most foreign media and has been smothered in multiple layers of security ever since deadly anti-government riots in 2008.

Reinforcing the importance of strict control from Beijing, the party’s central committee said in a statement that: “Only by sticking to the CPC’s (Communist Party’s) leadership and the ethnic autonomy system, can Tibetans be their own masters and enjoy a sustainable economic development and long-term stability.”

Referring to the Dalai Lama, Yu said activities by him and others to “split China and undermine ethnic unity have been defeated time and time again.”

Free Tibet, a London-based rights group, said Beijing was trying to define Tibetan identity according to its priorities, and that Tibetans suffered restrictions on movement, censorship and lived in a system designed to punish opposition to the Beijing government.

“If Tibet’s people have a good news story to tell, why doesn’t Beijing let them freely tell it or give the world’s media the opportunity to freely see it?” the group said.

The 80-year-old Dalai Lama is in Britain this month for speaking engagements and had no immediate comment.

Tuesday’s event reflects Xi’s taste for organised spectacle, in a throwback to the mass rallies common in the early decades of communist rule. It comes less than a week after a massive military parade in Beijing to mark 70 years

since Japan's surrender at the end of World War II.

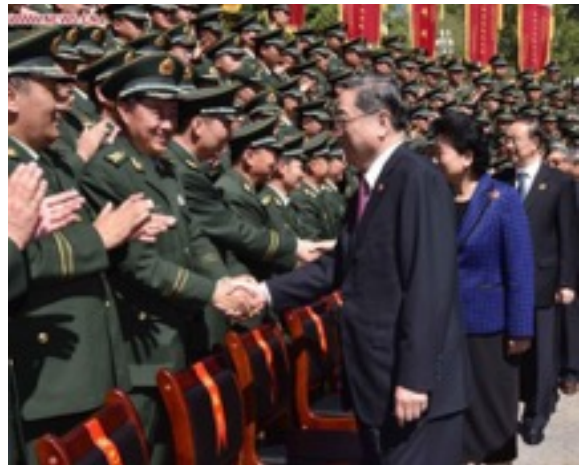


Photo: Pang Xinglei, AP In this photo released by China's Xinhua News Agency, phalanxes attend a grand ceremony marking the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Tibet Autonomous Region at the square of the Potala Palace in Lhasa, capital of southwest China's Tibet Autonomous Region, Tuesday, Sept. 8, 2015. Schoolchildren waved flags and paramilitary troops marched in full battle dress as the Chinese government on Tuesday staged a mass spectacle marking 50 years since Tibet's establishment as an ethnic autonomous region firmly under the control of Beijing. The banner reads: "Celebration for the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Tibet Autonomous Region." (Pang Xinglei/Xinhua via AP)



Chinese army, police warned of long fight against Tibet separatists

English.news.cn
Sep 08, 2015



Yu Zhengsheng, chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), shakes hands with representatives from the People's Armed Police Force in Tibet, in Lhasa, capital of southwest China's Tibet Autonomous Region, Sept 7, 2015. (Xinhua/Li Tao)

Senior Chinese official Yu Zhengsheng on Monday urged army, police and judicial staff in Tibet to crack down on separatist forces and be ready to fight a protracted battle against the 14th Dalai clique.

Speaking to a rally of representatives from the People's Liberation Army, People's Armed Police Force and the judicial organs in Tibet, Yu urged them to improve the abilities of "governing Tibet according to law", specifically cracking down on the separatist forces, strengthening social management and protecting the people's rights.

They should uphold the correct “political direction” and exert a bigger role in safeguarding border stability and ethnic solidarity, said Yu, who is leading a central government delegation in Lhasa to celebrate the 50th founding anniversary of the Tibet Autonomous Region.

Yu, chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference, also greeted staff at the stability-maintaining command centers in seven places across the plateau region.

Tibet affairs matter in the national strategy and play a special, significant role in consolidating national unity, ethnic solidarity and the Communist Party of China’s (CPC’s) governing status, said Yu, also a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee.

Yu praised the army, police and judicial staff’s contribution to Tibet’s stability and development, calling them a strong team that the Party can trust in and the people can rely on.

He told them to regard the people’s interests as top priority and promote a closer relationship with the people.

He also conveyed greetings from State President and Central Military Commission Chairman Xi Jinping and presented them with gifts, including a plaque on which Xi inscribes “enhancing ethnic unity, building a beautiful Tibet.”



Yu Zhengsheng (C, front), chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), attends a video meeting with headquarters in charge of maintaining social stability of 7 prefectures and cities of the Tibet autonomous region, in Lhasa, capital of southwest China’s Tibet Autonomous Region, Sept 7, 2015. (Xinhua/Pang Xinglei)

White paper reaffirms living Buddha policy

Editor: Wang Fan
China Daily
Sep 07, 2015

Beijing ‘has undeniable endorsement right on the reincarnation system’, document says

The central government has an undeniable endorsement right on the reincarnation of living Buddhas in the Tibet autonomous region, a senior official said on Sunday.

The comment was made as China issued a white paper reaffirming Tibet’s ethnic autonomous policy ahead of the 50th anniversary of its foundation.

The official said the central government respects Tibet’s history and religious traditions. The reincarnation system is an important tradition to ensure the inheritance of Tibetan Buddhism, which since the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) has been affirmed and regulated by the central government, the official added.

Norbu Dundub from the United Front Work Department of the Communist Party of China Tibet Autonomous Regional Committee, was speaking at a news conference.

The regulation on the reincarnation system is clearly outlined in a document issued by the State Administration for Religious Affairs in 2007, he added.

“So, no matter what the Dalai Lama says or does, he cannot deny the central government’s right to confirm the new reincarnation,” he said.

Among its roles, the United Front Work Department is a Party organ that supervises religious affairs in China.

Norbu Dundub was responding to an interview in The New York Times in July with the Dalai Lama who said, “The CPC is pretending that they know more about the reincarnation system than the Dalai Lama.”

Norbu Dundub accused the Dalai Lama of violating historical conventions and religious rituals by designating a Panchen Lama at will. “The designation is illegal and invalid,” he said. The regulation states that a Panchen Lama must be confirmed by the central government.

Choekyi Nyima, now 26, was named by the Dalai Lama as the 11th Panchen Lama “against historical customs and religious rituals”, Norbu Dundub said.

“This so-called ‘soul boy’ designated by the Dalai Lama is receiving education, living normally and growing healthily. He does not want to be disturbed by anyone,” he said.

In a regulation introduced in September 2007, the State Administration for Religious Affairs said all the

reincarnations of living Buddhas of Tibetan Buddhism must receive government approval.

Reincarnation applications must be submitted to the provincial Religious Affairs Department, the provincial government and the State Administration for Religious Affairs for approval based on the “fame and influence” of the living Buddhas, the regulation said.

For living Buddhas with major influence, the reincarnation application must be approved by the State Council, it said.

The Dalai Lama said in an interview with the German newspaper *Welt am Sonntag* in September last year that the traditional practice of reincarnation for the post could end with him, adding that Tibetan Buddhism was not dependent on a single person.

A spokeswoman for the Chinese Foreign Ministry responded by telling him to respect the historic practice of reincarnation.

The white paper, “Successful Practice of Regional Ethnic Autonomy in Tibet”, condemned the Dalai Lama for “plotting toward ‘Tibetan independence.’”

“The 14th Dalai Lama clique, in plotting toward ‘Tibetan independence’, has constantly preached the ‘middle way’, peddled the concept of a ‘Greater Tibet’, and lobbied for ‘a high degree of autonomy’, so negating regional ethnic autonomy and its contribution to Tibet’s progress,” the white paper said.

According to the document, there are 1,787 religious venues and more than 46,000 Buddhists in Tibet. The region has 358 living Buddhas, of whom more than 60 were newly incarnated according to customs and religious rituals.

The white paper also said Tibet is at the best stage in its history.

Regional GDP has expanded from 327 million yuan (\$51.4 million) in 1965 to 92 billion yuan last year.

The disposable income of urban residents in the region reached 22,016 yuan per person last year. For herdsmen and farmers, the figure was 7,359 yuan per person.

The region has also prioritised the protection of ecology and the environment. Tibet has 47 nature reserves covering 412,200 square kilometres, or 34.35 percent of the region’s land area, the paper said.

Dorje Tserdru, vice-chairman of the Tibet autonomous region, said at the news conference, “We can say with pride that Tibet is the only unpolluted land in the world.”

China issues white paper endorsing right on Tibet’s reincarnation system

Asia One
Xu Wei
September 07, 2015



A Chinese stamp collector shows a stamp issued to mark the 50th anniversary for the establishment of Tibet autonomous region at a China Post Office in Suzhou city, East China’s Jiangsu province. Photo: China Daily/ANN

The central government has an undeniable endorsement right on the reincarnation of living Buddhas in the Tibet autonomous region, a senior official said on Sunday. The comment was made as China issued a white paper reaffirming Tibet’s ethnic autonomous policy ahead of the 50th anniversary of its foundation.

The official said the central government respects Tibet’s history and religious traditions. The reincarnation system is an important tradition to ensure the inheritance of Tibetan Buddhism, which since the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) has been affirmed and regulated by the central government, the official added.

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"This so-called 'soul boy' designated by the Dalai Lama is receiving education, living normally and growing healthily. He does not want to be disturbed by anyone," he said.

In a regulation introduced in September 2007, the State Administration for Religious Affairs said all the reincarnations of living Buddhas of Tibetan Buddhism must receive government approval.

Reincarnation applications must be submitted to the provincial Religious Affairs Department, the provincial government and the State Administration for Religious Affairs for approval based on the "fame and influence" of the living Buddhas, the regulation said.

For living Buddhas with major influence, the reincarnation application must be approved by the State Council, it said.

The Dalai Lama said in an interview with the German newspaper *Welt am Sonntag* in September last year that the traditional practice of reincarnation for the post could end with him, adding that Tibetan Buddhism was not dependent on a single person.

A spokeswoman for the Chinese Foreign Ministry responded by telling him to respect the historic practice of reincarnation.

The white paper, "Successful Practice of Regional Ethnic Autonomy in Tibet", condemned the Dalai Lama for "plotting toward 'Tibetan independence'."

"The 14th Dalai Lama clique, in plotting toward 'Tibetan independence', has constantly preached the 'middle way', peddled the concept of a 'Greater Tibet', and lobbied for 'a high degree of autonomy', so negating regional ethnic autonomy and its contribution to Tibet's progress," the white paper said.

According to the document, there are 1,787 religious venues and more than 46,000 Buddhists in Tibet. The region has 358 living Buddhas, of whom more than 60 were newly incarnated according to customs and religious rituals.

The white paper also said Tibet is at the best stage in its history.

Regional GDP has expanded from 327 million yuan (\$51.4 million) in 1965 to 92 billion yuan last year.

The disposable income of urban residents in the region reached 22,016 yuan per person last year. For herdsmen and farmers, the figure was 7,359 yuan per person.

The region has also prioritised the protection of ecology and the environment. Tibet has 47 nature reserves covering 412,200 square kilometres, or 34.35 per cent of the region's land area, the paper said.

Dorje Tsedrup, vice-chairman of the Tibet autonomous region, said at the news conference, "We can say with pride that Tibet is the only unpolluted land in the world."

China wants to grab institution of Dalai Lama: CTA

TNN
Anand Bodh,
September 7, 2015

SHIMLA: Amid the controversy that China wants to control the process of reincarnating next Dalai Lama, Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) at Dharamshala has claimed that China wants to grab Tibet's institution of the Dalai Lama due to its past geopolitical importance in the volatile politics of China, Mongolia and Tibet.

According to CTA, China's internal assessment that it cannot rule Tibet forever without the legitimising influence of Dalai Lama over the Tibetan people is also behind the move.

CTA has prepared a 31-page report in response to China's White Paper on Tibet claiming that the legitimacy of the 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet rests on China's recognition and approval. The report states that by demanding that 14th Dalai Lama reincarnate and in its determination to appoint his reincarnation, China is claiming this spiritual resource of Tibet which at its whim could be turned into a highly potent political tool.

Challenging China's claim, CTA said that there would be an international pushback to such a Chinese move. "The pushback will not only come from the Tibetan people but millions of Buddhists who traditionally share Tibet's spiritual culture and others in rest of the world who have benefitted from the teachings of His Holiness the Dalai Lama," it added.

"Such a move on the part of China will create an international furore comparable to China muscling its way into the South China Sea," the report stated.

The report stated that Communist Party in China has realised the total collapse of Tibetan people's trust in its administration. "The peaceful protests that erupted

throughout Tibet and the ongoing self-immolations are indicators of the Communist China's consistent failure to win the trust of the Tibetan people," it said.

"The Party's fear of the influence of Dalai Lama in China is best expressed by former President Jiang Zemin. He said even a visit by the Dalai Lama to China would make all Tibetans go mad," the report added.

It claimed this was a risk the Party had no stomach for. "Now, the Party wants to wait for the passing away of the 14th Dalai Lama and then select a pliant successor to continue its rule in Tibet," it added.

It said that Khata (white cloth) in hands and head slightly bowed, Gyaltsen Norbu swore undying allegiance to the Party and to its sitting general secretary. In the Party's game plan, Gyaltsen Norbu would be pivotal in helping the party to impose a 15th Dalai Lama on the Tibetan people, report stated.

China says missing Tibet Lama appointee 'living normally'

AFP
September 7, 2015

A man detained by Chinese authorities 20 years ago after the Dalai Lama named him as one of the most senior figures in Tibetan Buddhism is living a normal life and does not want to be disturbed, government officials said.

Gedhun Choekyi Nyima was declared by the Nobel laureate as the reincarnation of the Panchen Lama, the second most senior figure in the Gelug school of Tibetan Buddhism, at the age of six in 1995.

The boy was then taken into custody by Chinese authorities and has not been seen since, with Tibetan authorities in exile describing him as "the world's youngest political prisoner".

Nyima "is receiving education, living normally and growing healthily. He does not want to be disturbed by anyone", the official Xinhua news agency late Sunday quoted Norbu Dondup, an official at Tibet's United Front Work Department, as saying.

The Dalai Lama's designation of him was "illegal and invalid", he said.

Beijing appointed Gyaincain Norbu as its own 11th Panchen Lama, who is now a deputy to the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, a national debating chamber, but many Tibetans do not recognise him.

He has made numerous tightly scripted public appearances since he turned 18, and visited Hong Kong, his first trip outside the Chinese mainland, in 2012.

The 10th Panchen Lama died in 1989 after a tumultuous relationship with China's Communist leaders which saw him lauded and later imprisoned.

Asked whether Nyima was still alive, a Chinese foreign ministry spokesman declined to respond explicitly on Monday.

"What I know is consistent with what the Tibetan official has briefed you about," Hong Lei told reporters at a regular briefing.

The Central Tibetan Administration, the government-in-exile, lambasted Beijing for detaining Nyima.

"As long as people are not given free access to meet him, we will consider him as missing and held against his will," Dicki Chhoyang, minister for information and international relations, told AFP.

"He's the youngest political prisoner in the world and we continue to see his forced absence as a symptom of Chinese repression."

– Wheel of life –

The officially atheist Communist Party reiterated its right to control the process of reincarnation in a white paper issued at the weekend to mark the 50th anniversary of the forming of the Tibet Autonomous Region, China's administrative designation for the area.

"Reincarnation is a succession system unique to Tibetan Buddhism, and is respected by the state and governments at different levels of the autonomous region, the state having issued the Measures on the Management of the Reincarnation of Living Buddhas of Tibetan Buddhism," the document said, adding the system was "proceeding well".

The method of selection includes "historical conventions like drawing lots from a golden urn", it insisted — but the Tibetan government in exile says senior lamas should make the choice.

The issue of the selection is becoming increasingly important as the Dalai Lama ages — he turned 80 this year — raising the prospect of Beijing seeking to name its own successor to the exiled spiritual leader.

He has suggested in recent months that he may not be reincarnated after he dies, infuriating Chinese authorities.

The Dalai Lama fled Tibet in 1959 after an armed rebellion against Chinese rule was put down by its military.

China considers Tibet to be part of its sovereign territory which it claims is backed by a long-standing historical right, and accuses the spiritual leader of separatism.

The Buddhist monk denies aspirations for independence and says he seeks “a high degree of autonomy” for the region.

He has called for limits to state-backed Han Chinese migration to Tibet, a stance which the white paper said was “tantamount to an ethnic cleansing of the plateau”.

Nothing to celebrate for Tibetans on 50th TAR Anniversary: Tibetan PM

Phayul
September 5, 2015

As Beijing celebrated the 50th founding anniversary of what it calls the “Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR)”, the Prime Minister of the exile Tibetan government based here said there was nothing to celebrate in Tibet for the Tibetans who are still under occupation and brutal repression.

The Tibetan PM Dr. Lobsang Sangay was speaking at the Bengaluru-based Takshashila Institution, an independent think tank and public policy school. “Tibetans inside Tibet have to carry an ID card, which have second generation microchips with their biometrics. If they swipe the card, the authorities would exactly know where the particular Tibetan is from, which makes surveillance much easier for the Chinese authorities,” Sangay said.

Sangay said that these surveillance are targeted at Tibetans from traditional Tibetan regions incorporated into Chinese provinces who visit Lhasa, the capital, on pilgrimage. “They are permitted to stay in Lhasa for only two weeks and are restricted from mingling freely with local Tibetans in Lhasa. They also have to stay in their designated hotels in a bid to severely restrict their freedom of movement. Such restrictions are unthinkable for a citizen of a free country like India but in Tibet, it is considered the norm,” regretted Sangay.

The Tibetan PM rued the Chinese authorities’ clampdown on religious freedom of the Tibetans, saying that a Tibetan would be arrested and subjected to immense torture with the whole family being deprived of government jobs and subsidies if he or she is found in possession of the Dalai Lama’s photo. The family of the self-immolators also face similar consequences, added Sangay.

Taking a dig at the China’s claim that Tibetans enjoy freedom of religion, Sangay said the Jokhang temple in the capital has become a symbol of the mistrust as a result of the Chinese occupation and repression.

“The Jokhang is the holiest shrine for Tibetans and for centuries, we have worshipped the temple. However, if you visit the Jokhang now, there are surveillance cameras and sharpshooters perched on rooftops everywhere, which is making the Tibetan people apprehensive about going to the Jokhang now,” he said.

The Tibetan PM also emphasised the significance of Tibet, both geographically and politically, calling it an ‘Effective buffer zone’ between China and India.

The Tibetan PM spoke to the Tibetan public and the monastic community in Doeguling Tibetan Settlement of Mundgod on Friday about his administrations’ activities over the past four years.

Tibet gov’t enhances recruitment

Global Times
Li Yan
September 2, 2015

Authorities from the Tibet Autonomous Region said they will be more selective in recruiting people, stressing that candidates who participate in separatism will be dropped, in its latest move against separatism.

A newspaper affiliated with the Ministry of Human Resource and Social Security reported on Monday that political standards come first in selecting cadres in Tibet, and people who violate six rules will be disqualified.

The six rules are avoid making speeches against the spirit of or overly agree to but covertly oppose the decisions made by the Central Committee of the CPC; avoid provoking ethnic dissensions or undermine ethnic unity; avoid participating in or supporting ethnic separatist activities; and avoid going aboard to enshrine the Dalai Lama and sending relatives and children to schools linked to the Dalai Lama, according to the report.

Wang Chunhuan, deputy director of the Theoretical Marxism Institute of the Tibet Autonomous Region Academy of Social Sciences (TARASS), said these criteria have been applied to the previous recruitment process. But authorities have rarely publicised them.

“The notice shows that authorities in Tibet have reinforced their attitude against separatism, and have made this known publicly,” Wang told the Global Times.

The rules aim to ensure that officials at all levels will truly be in the hands of people loyal to the CPC, the country and the people, read the report.

“Authorities have attached more importance to maintaining ethnic unity in Tibet since 1965, and cadres in Tibet play an important role in implementing the central

government's ethnic policy," Guo Kefan, deputy director of the Contemporary Tibetan Research Institute at TARASS, told the Global Times.

According to the report, 80,000 cadres have been sent to villages and 7,000 to temples. Eight thousand policemen have also been assigned to different districts in Tibet for four years, and those who contribute to the fight against separatism will be promoted.

"Ethnic separatists have recently expanded their influence to the grassroots level. Enhancing the cadres' awareness in fighting separatism would make them more effective," said Wang.

Wang said that other policies include choosing ethnic Tibetan cadres who support ethnic unity and oppose the Dalai Lama and his supporters to ensure lasting peaceful governance in the region.

The top positions in four of the seven districts in Tibet are held by ethnic Tibetans. A total of 694 villages have assigned one ethnic Han and one ethnic Tibetan as principal Party and government leaders.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the region's establishment.

Tibetans Defy Crackdown to Honor Monk Who Died in Police Custody

RFA
September 2, 2015

Residents of Tibetan-populated areas of China's Sichuan province over the weekend marked the passing of a popular Tibetan monk who died in July under unexplained circumstances in a Chinese prison, despite a crackdown on discussion of the incident.

Tenzin Delek Rinpoche, 65, died on July 12 in the 13th year of a life sentence imposed for what rights groups and supporters have described as a wrongful conviction on a bombing charge. He was widely respected among Tibetans for his efforts to protect Tibetan culture and the environment.

In recent weeks, authorities in Rinpoche's Nyagchuka (in Chinese, Yajiang) county in the Kardze (Ganzi) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture have ordered residents to stop discussing the circumstances surrounding his death, and had deployed security personnel and restricted communications there.

But despite the clampdown, Tibetans in Nyagchuka, as well as in Kardze's Lithang (in Chinese, Litang) and Bathang (in Chinese, Batang) counties, held prayer ceremonies and celebrated the life of Rinpoche Sunday to mark the seventh week of his passing, sources told RFA's Tibetan Service.

"In Lithang, Bathang and Nyagchuka, the local Tibetans invited the portrait of [exiled spiritual leader] His Holiness the Dalai Lama into the monasteries and conducted extensive prayer services on the 49th day after the death of Tenzin Delek Rinpoche," said Tenzin Sangpo, a Tibetan based in Sichuan who helped organise the events.

"During the Rukyil festival in Lithang, Tibetans gather for annual horse races and indulge in celebrations. But this year, the festival coincided with 49th day after the death of Tenzin Delek Rinpoche, so the Tibetans mourned and prayed for him, abandoning the festivities."

Sangpo said that in another area of Lithang, lamas and monks traditionally holding religious events followed by horse races to mark the seventh Tibetan lunar month "also abandoned the festivities and devoted prayers" for Rinpoche.

"In many monasteries in Nyagchuka too, many Tibetans mourned and prayed for Rinpoche, while in Bathang, where many monks in several monasteries had never even met Rinpoche, they organised similar events," he said.

Sangpo noted that in Nyagchuka, monasteries conducted continuous prayer ceremonies for Rinpoche, "despite official restrictions."

"Rinpoche's work helping others has really been recognised by the members of the community, who came out to express their support for him," he said.

Respected monk

Recognised by the Dalai Lama as a reincarnated lama in the 1980s, Rinpoche had been a community leader and a staunch advocate for the protection and preservation of Tibetan culture, religion, and way of life for decades, the International Campaign for Tibet (ICT) had said.

Rinpoche was charged with involvement in an April 3, 2002 bombing in the central square of Chengdu and initially sentenced to death in December that year along with an assistant, Lobsang Dondrub.

His death sentence was later commuted to life imprisonment, but Lobsang Dondrub was executed almost immediately, prompting an outcry from rights activists who questioned the fairness of the trial.

According to New York-based Human Rights Watch, authorities had begun to perceive Rinpoche as a threat as his "local status rose and he successfully challenged official policies on a number of issues."

In July this year, Chinese police informed his relatives that he was seriously ill, but when they rushed to visit him, they were told he was already dead, sources told RFA at the time. Despite protests from his family, prison authorities cremated Rinpoche's remains on July 16.

Following his death, authorities began conducting political re-education activities in Nyagchuka and instructing residents not to talk about it, sources said, adding that young men in the county had been "forced to engage in military training and exercises" or risk detention.

In mid-August, sources told RFA that "a large contingent of security forces" had been deployed to the area and had surrounded Rinpoche's Kham Nalanda Thekchen Jangchub Choling monastery, requiring special permission from residents to go near the site.

It was unclear whether authorities attempted to interfere with weekend events honoring the late monk.

Reported by Kunsang Tenzin and Lumbum Tashi for RFA's Tibetan Service. Translated by Karma Dorjee. Written in English by Joshua Lipis.

China celebrates Tibet anniversary

ECNS.CN

Li Yan

September 1, 2015

National integrity, rule of law emphasised

China is celebrating the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the Tibet Autonomous Region, as the country vows to maintain national integrity and ensure long-term peaceful governance in the region.

Teng Tingguo, deputy head of the press section at the regional publicity department, told the Global Times on Monday that the upcoming celebrations this week will include speeches delivered by top leaders and a gala show. Teng declined to give further details.

There have been a series of celebrations, including art exhibitions and the release of a documentary, since the beginning of April. A celebratory stamp set designed for the anniversary of Tibet and a musical featuring the Qinghai-Tibet Railway, the world's highest plateau railway, will also be released.

Tibet Autonomous Region was established on September 1, 1965. It was the last provincial-level region established within the People's Republic of China.

To further inspect the country's Tibet policy, the 6th Tibet Work Forum was held last week in Beijing, with Chinese

President Xi Jinping stating that the country's Tibet policy should be centered on maintaining national integrity and fighting against separatism, ensuring long-term peaceful governance and sustainable growth in the region, and improving social cohesion.

The meeting was aimed at setting the basic tone of policy for the next five years, analysts said, adding that although the meeting inherited many previous stances, new touches were also made, such as "enforcing the rule of law in Tibet," "sustainable growth" and "improving social cohesion."

Emphasis on people

"Enhancing social cohesion and an emphasis on a more human-centric approach is being put forward amid increasing conflicts caused by the economy-centered development," Xiong Kunxin, an ethnic studies professor at the Minzu University of China, told the Global Times.

Xiong said that this people-oriented approach had long-been ignored during the economy-driven development of the past two decades.

From 1993 to 2014, Tibet's GDP leapt from 3.7 billion yuan (\$580,160 million) to 92 billion yuan and the average income of farmers and herdsmen was 7,471 yuan, 10.6 times that of 1993, the Xinhua News Agency reported Wednesday.

Xi's predecessor Hu Jintao pointed out in the fifth meeting on the work of Tibet Autonomous Region in January 2010 that Tibet should stick to a path centering on economic construction and should safeguard leapfrog development.

Penpa Lhamo, deputy head of the contemporary studies institute of the Tibet Academy of Social Sciences, told the Global Times that giving up the leapfrog development in the latest development plan would reduce the chance of possible conflicts, which may evolve into ethnic ones via manipulation of Western anti-China forces and the Dalai Lama clique.

"Although the conflicts provoked by economic growth are the same as those in the rest of China, they can be easily manipulated in Tibet," she noted.

The better China develops, the higher the possibility of political dissidents to make use of the conflicts, she said.

At the 6th forum, Xi stressed that the country should "firmly take the initiative" in the fight against separatism, vowing to crack down on all activities seeking to split the country and destroy social stability.

Penpa Lhamo said that the fight against separatism would continue since the Dalai Lama's "government-in-exile" has already begun to differentiate itself from a theocracy, portraying itself as a democratic government.

“They consider this to be another trump card to accuse the Chinese government after their spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, dies,” she said.

Self-dependent development

Another highlight of Xi’s outline of Tibet development is the call to develop the region by local residents themselves, Penpa Lhamo noted.

Xi has asked for more efforts to promote self-dependent economic growth and comprehensive reforms in Tibet and Tibetan-inhabited areas in four other provinces, in a bid to encourage participation of locals from different ethnic minority groups.

Over the past six decades since Tibet’s peaceful liberation, Tibet has witnessed rapid development, thanks to special financial, tax and investment policies, and a helping hand from other interior regions – thousands of Party members volunteer to travel to Tibet every year to help locals build modern infrastructure, open new factories and receive better education.

Between 1952 and 2013, 95 percent of the investment local governments in Tibet used to develop their economy came from the central government’s fiscal transfer payment, reaching 544.6 billion yuan, according to statistics from the regional government.

“The central government has put more emphasis on self-reliable development than ever in the meetings on the work of Tibet Autonomous Region,” Penpa Lhamo said.

She said that self-dependent development can boost the self-esteem of Tibetans who have become used to waiting and asking for aid from the central government and other provinces.

“Poor self-esteem will lead to a weak sense of belonging and hamper ethnic unity as a result,” Penpa Lhamo said.

Exiled Tibetan Gov’t Warns China Not to Meddle in Tradition

Associated Press
ASHWINI BHATIA
September 1, 2015

The exiled Tibetan government said it saw no cause for celebrating 50 years since China formed the Tibetan Autonomous Region, insisting that Tuesday instead marked a half-century of occupation and control over the once-independent Himalayan kingdom.

It also warned China against proceeding with its plans to choose the next Dalai Lama from inside China, home to some 5.4 million Tibetans, when the present spiritual leader dies.

The Tibetan government-in-exile issued the statement as China was revealing in lavish celebrations marking the 70th anniversary of Japan’s World War II defeat. Earlier this year, China released a military strategy statement again declaring Tibet has been an integral part of China since antiquity.

The exiled Tibetan community’s elected prime minister, Lobsang Sangay, flatly denied the claim, and warned that such a position would pit China against millions worldwide who support the Dalai Lama and other Tibetans forced to flee in 1959 after a failed uprising against Chinese rule.

“Tibet was an independent country, and Tibet is under occupation today,” said Sangay, who was elected prime minister in 2011 by some 150,000 exiles after the Dalai Lama abdicated political duties in favour of focusing on his role as Tibetan Buddhism’s spiritual leader.

Tibetan Buddhists believe the Dalai Lama himself chooses his own successor through reincarnation. The next Dalai Lama, who would be the 15th incarnation over some 500 years, would then reveal himself to monks and oracles. The current Dalai Lama has downplayed expectations, however, saying he could even be the last of his line.

“The pushback will not only come from the Tibetan people, but from millions of Buddhists who traditionally share Tibet’s spiritual heritage and millions more in the rest of the world who have benefited from the teachings of His Holiness the Dalai Lama,” the statement said.

The current Dalai Lama was enthroned when Tibet was a feudal Himalayan kingdom that remained deeply isolated until well into the 20th century.

China Vows to Keep Tibet

Voice of America
September 1, 2015

At a meeting of senior Chinese communist party leaders in Beijing known as the Sixth Work Forum on Tibet, Xi Jinping pledged to fight against Tibetan aspirations for greater freedom from Chinese controls, which Tibetan activists and rights groups have described as being harsh and repressive.

Coming just a month before Xi’s scheduled state visit to the U.S. where human rights is expected to be raised in talks between the two sides, the strong positions announced by Xi against the exiled Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama’s proposals for a genuine autonomy solution for the troubles in Tibet appear to be designed to make any meaningful discussion on the topic a non-starter.

With statements such as, “We should fight against separatist activities by the Dalai group,” Xi is repeating words that have been used by the Chinese communist party since the early 1990s when it resumed attacking the Dalai Lama after a halt of several years. Beijing’s denigration of the Dalai Lama and stated designs on selecting the next Dalai Lama is highly offensive and hurtful for Tibetans, and analysts say has exacerbated the Sino-Tibetan conflict and is a leading cause of the protests that erupted across Tibet in 2008.

Since the 1980s, the Dalai Lama has pursued a goal of seeking genuine autonomy for Tibet in areas such as religion, culture and education, while remaining a part of China, a proposal he calls the Middle Way. Beijing has repeatedly rejected the compromise, calling it a call for independence in disguise, and talks between the two sides have remained stalled since 2010.

Other key vows from the meeting are that China would continue efforts to improve infrastructure development and urbanisation in Tibet, two policies that China has been implementing since the 1990s. However, critics have said that these sorts of development do little to alleviate problems for Tibetans, and that they in fact cater to and encourage Chinese migrants and settlers in Tibet.

Two of the most repeated grievances heard during the Tibetan protests of 2008, as well as from many of the over 140 Tibetans who’ve carried out self-immolation protests since 2009, have been that religion and religious life in Tibet was being oppressed, and that China was forcing Tibetan language medium teaching in schools to either end, or be reduced to second language status.

Without expressing any acknowledgement for those grievances or providing assurances to study the situation, Xi called for further efforts to “effectively manage monasteries in the long run, encouraging interpretations of religious doctrines that are compatible with a socialist society”, state media said. In the past, this sort of message from Chinese leaders has been zealously implemented on the ground with further controls and restriction on religion, and sweeping re-education campaigns in Tibetan monasteries where monks and lamas are forced to denounce their spiritual masters such as the Dalai Lama.

The psychological trauma and suffering caused by such state actions on monks and their family members is widely believed to be the catalyst for the first self-immolation protest inside Tibet by Tapey, a young monk from the heavily securitised Tibetan town of Ngaba (Chinese: Aba, Sichuan).

On the language front, Xi stated that efforts should be made in Tibet to promote ‘a sense of being part of the Chinese nationality’, and that the Chinese language and

script should become more widely used in Tibet. Xi’s order appears to ignore the fact that the ending of Tibetan medium education and inability to study Tibetan properly in Tibetan schools were the specifically stated reasons for the 2012 self-immolation death of 20 year old female student Tsering Kyi, and the widespread recent student protests in the region.

The public announcements from The Sixth Work Forum on Tibet vow to continue many of the policies that Tibetans have been against, and that have been identified by critics and rights organisations as being some of the main causes behind the 2008 Tibet wide protests and their often harsh suppression by Chinese security forces and legal systems.

The only clear message from the meeting seems to be that China wants to keep Tibet for the benefit of China’s national interests, regardless of how well its policies and actions impact the Tibetan people.

China Denies all Universal Rights to Tibet Even After 50 Years of Rule

The New Indian Express
ANI
September 1, 2015

HONG KONG: Its been more than 50 years since China established complete control over Tibet and in this period China has institutionalised a system of two policies – one for the Chinese people and another for the Tibetans.

Hong Kong based Tibet watchers who on the condition of not being identified for fear of Chinese reprisal outlined a series of instances which prove that China has treated Tibet as nothing more than a Colony and as a strategic buffer against India.

Experts point to the fact that China has accepted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) as a member of the United Nations.

The declaration forms the basic charter of rights for all global citizens. However over the past many decades, adherence to the UDHR has been minimal at best as far as Tibet is concerned.

When it comes to Tibet and Tibetans, they count for less than an average Han Chinese citizen, and actually don’t enjoy the rights they are entitled to as per international laws.

The UDHR calls on governments to grant every human being these rights, but the reality is that not one of the UDHR rights is extended to the people of Tibet.

For example Article 16 of the UDHR says that men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to create a family. They are also entitled to equal rights as when to marry, how to manage their marriage, and to decide when to dissolve it.

The family, according to the UDHR, is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the state.

But, when comes to Tibet, since 1980, China has passed a series of measures related to marriage laws. Beijing has stopped the practice of polygamy in TAR, and has been actively promoting the mixed marriages between Tibetans and Han Chinese.

The local administration has reportedly announced offers of special treatment to children born of such unions. Such incentives are publicised heavily by the state media.

Tibetan poet Tsering Woeser says that “authorities use it as a tool”, and compared it to the Japanese police being encouraged to marry local women during Japan’s occupation of Taiwan.

On the issue of owning property, the UDHR says no one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his or property, but in China-dominated TAR seizure of farmland for industry is arbitrary and common.

Joel Brinkley of the Chicago Tribune adds that “China has evicted more than 400,000 Tibetans from their homelands” over the past few years, and believes that the intent behind this is to exploit Tibet’s vast mineral and water resources.

The UDHR’s Article 18 talks about the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, but evidence has surfaced of the People’s Armed Police firing on unarmed Tibetan protestors calling for a semblance of religious freedom.

During the Cultural Revolution, most, if not all, Tibetan monasteries (97 percent were actually closed down) were reportedly ransacked by the Communist Party.

Currently, every monastery and nunnery is constantly under surveillance and subject to random checks by Communist Party officials. So-called Monastery Management Committees have been set up in increasing numbers to keep check on the activities of monks and nuns, and to control their numbers, particularly in the largest ones of Drepung, Sera and Ganden.

Such checks extend to night raids for images of the Dalai Lama and other such “subversive” objects.

For example, recently, a 13-year old nun, after participating in a peaceful protest, was held, interrogated, beaten and tortured.

She was sentenced for singing nationalist songs – which does not exactly exemplify “freedom of thought”.

On the issue of everyone having the right to express their opinion without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers, which is enjoined in Article 19 of the UDHR, China routinely cuts off internet and phone-messaging services after each incident of self-immolation in TAR, of which there have been over 140 in the past six years.

As for the right to expression and freedom of opinion, the armed crackdowns, the surprise arrests and the extrajudicial killings are indicative of a general intolerance to such niceties.

The right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association as enshrined in Article 20, is regularly stamped out and quickly, with violence if required.

Tibet and the Tibetan people have been compelled to identify with the People’s Republic of China. In April 2015, the Communist Party demanded that all Buddhist monasteries display the Chinese flag, or face punishment.

This latest move is part of a drive to make places of worship ‘secularised’, and in line with Beijing’s ideologues.

Article 21 of the UDHR allows every individual to take part in the government of his or her country, directly, or through freely chosen representatives, but in the case of China, democracy does not exist in the sense that it is understood the world over.

The political representatives of the Chinese are not freely chosen, but are designated by the Communist Party. As such, not only Tibetans, but all citizens under the authority of the People’s Republic of China have no right of participation in their governance.

Recently, China arrested ten Tibetans for protesting against the denial of welfare benefits to their community.

Tibetans have been subject to “city moats” which prevent their access to their own cities.

The ‘will of the people’ is a concept almost entirely alien to any Chinese citizen in conceptual and real terms.

The right to social security, as enshrined in Article 22 of the UDHR, which calls for realisation both through national effort and international co-operation, is used to violate the rights of Tibetans further.

Article 23 says everyone has the right to work, and to have free choice of employment, but in Chinese –ruled TAR, the

resettlement policy violates this article, depriving Tibetan nomads of their free choice of employment.

As far as just conditions of work, Tibetans are forced to learn Chinese in order to access any gainful employment, even as a construction worker.

Tibetans claim that Chinese workers receive higher wages; the loss of jobs due to political activities is also very common.

Even China admits that there is no minimum wage in the TAR.

The right to rest and leisure, as well as reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay does not exist in Chinese-ruled TAR.

Here, re-education is promoted through labor camps, and there is no semblance of worker's rights to be defended here.

Holidays, too, are out of the question, and there is no reasonable limitation on working hours.

What about the right to an adequate standard of living, as enshrined in Article 25 of the UDHR?

It simply does not exist in TAR. Pulmonary diseases are the most widespread affliction in Tibet. While prefectural and city hospitals are adequate in responding to such illnesses, there is very little recourse to proper medical care for nomadic tribes as village and township hospitals are extremely poor.

The medical system is "clearly inequitable." Distances across Tibet have also led to Chinese healthcare works failing to immunise children as "they don't want to travel so far."

Access to medication is clearly segregated: Tibetan doctors are unable to purchase drugs from pharmaceutical companies, as only Chinese government workers and 'officials with connections to the Chinese' are given access.

While officially, China's 'One Child' policy does not extend to Tibetans as a community, in practice, birth control has actively been promoted in the TAR.

Sterilisation can take place on the basis of volunteering or through forced abortions, which leaves a very chilling picture of healthcare in TAR.

Article 26 of the UDHR talks of the right to education and the right to have free education at the elementary and fundamental stages, but in TAR, schooling is compulsory until secondary education, nominally "bilingually", and guidelines are applied arbitrarily.

The emphasis is on creating Chinese-medium schools in Tibetan areas despite the fact that Tibetan students want

to be taught in Tibetan and learn more effectively when they are.

Tibet has six institutes of higher learning, but only 60 percent of those selected for university in TAR are ethnic Tibetans, compared to the 97 percent share of population they reportedly enjoy.

This demonstrates the fact that access to higher education is highly coloured by discriminatory policies. Indeed, state funds go disproportionately to schools where Chinese students predominate.

Chinese authorities in TAR are on record, as saying that the purpose of giving an education to Tibetans is to see whether they are "opposed to or turn their hearts to the Dalai Clique and in whether they are loyal to or do not care about our great motherland and the great socialist cause...."

China does not promote tolerance, but actively seeks to destroy it in TAR.

The right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community as enjoined in the UDHR's Article 27, is absent in TAR. The Chinese, admittedly, are very happy to impose limits on Tibetan intellectual production.

Insofar as duties to the community are concerned, while keenly desired by the Tibetan people, is trounced upon, and all vestiges of rights for the minorities are virtually non-existent.

China has a long history of using the justifications of human rights and economic prosperity "for all" to oppress those in Tibet, and nothing seems likely to change.

The recently concluded 6th Tibet Work Forum on August 24 and 25 did not offer any guarantees for the future, but harped instead on the need to maintain stability, a buzzword to Tibetans that they can expect an even harsher regime ahead.

Detention and Self-immolation

A Dozen Tibetans Detained in Sichuan After Reoccupying Grabbed Land

Radio Free Asia
Lobe Socktsang
September 24, 2015



Tibetans petition in southwest China's Chengdu for the return of land seized by local government, Jan. 28, 2015.

Authorities in western China's Sichuan province have detained at least a dozen Tibetans, later releasing one, who reoccupied land taken from them five years ago for a government development project, according to sources.

Residents of Thangkor town in Dzoerge (in Chinese, Ruo'ergai) county in the Ngaba (Aba) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture had appealed to the government for the return of their land on May 15 as no developer had begun construction and local authorities were leasing it out to private individuals, a local source told RFA's Tibetan Service.

But local officials, angered by the appeal, retaliated by withdrawing subsidies for local families, the source said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

When residents complained, the local government pledged to resolve the dispute by Sept. 20, but when the deadline passed, "the local Tibetans reoccupied the land," he said.

"In response, the authorities dispatched a contingent of police from Dzoerge county and [other parts of] Ngaba and cracked down on the Tibetans on Sept. 22."

According to the source, at least 12 Tibetans were taken into custody, including six who had assisted in writing up

the appeal—Dobe, Shetruk, Tsering Kyab, Patra, Tsering Tashi and Tsokyi.

Tsokyi, the sister of appeal organiser Jigje Kyab, was "severely beaten and then released," he said, while 11 others "are still detained in [neighbouring] Marthang (Hongyuan) county."

The source said Jigje Kyab, 39, is now missing "and nobody knows about his condition."

Earlier protest

In April, Kyab, also known as Jigme Kyab, went into hiding after a Thangkor official and local government employees visited his home, and said via video at the time that he had "evaded capture" and was in a safe place.

The custodian of documents supporting Tibetan claims to property taken five years ago in a land grab, Kyab said he had gone into hiding so that he could present the case to higher provincial authorities.

Kyab had also played a role in organising a Jan. 28 protest by 20 Thangkor-area Tibetans in the Sichuan provincial capital, Chengdu, sources told RFA.

In that incident, authorities quickly broke up the protest and detained 11 Tibetans, later releasing all but two, after the group petitioned in front of government buildings during a meeting of the Sichuan Provincial People's Congress for the return of their land.

According to sources, a portion of land belonging to Thangkor town was taken by force by authorities for a government development project some five years ago, and though the local Tibetans have repeatedly appealed to the county government for its return, they have never received a positive response.

The requisitioning of rural land for lucrative property deals by cash-hungry local governments triggers thousands of "mass incidents" across China every year.

Many result in violent suppression, the detention of the main organisers, and intense pressure on the local population to comply with the government's wishes.

China needs to grant genuine autonomy to Tibetan people

The Asahi Shimbun
September 23, 2015

Occupying the highlands of western China at an average elevation of 4,000 meters, Tibet marked the 50th anniversary of the foundation of its autonomous region on Sept. 1.

Celebratory events were held in Tibet on Sept. 8, but the Xi administration continues to pursue a policy for Tibet that combines economic development with tight control by Beijing. Given Tibet's autonomous status, China must clearly reset its course and respect Tibetan ethnic culture.

At a commemorative ceremony in the capital city of Lhasa, Yu Zhengsheng, a Politburo heavyweight in charge of ethnic policies and chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, said in his speech, "During the past 50 years, the Chinese Communist Party and the Tibetan people have led the transformation from a backward old Tibet to a vibrant socialist new Tibet."

Yu went on to point out that Beijing has taken care of 95 percent of Tibet's financial needs, and that the Tibetan people's incomes have grown by more than 10 percent every year. Yu stressed that Beijing will continue to focus on Tibet's economic development.

But it is hard to make a case for Beijing defending and promoting the culture of Tibet. Among the population of the Tibet Autonomous Region, the proportion of ethnic Han people has grown, and school education in standard Chinese is widespread.

Above all, it is disturbing that Beijing is reinforcing surveillance on Tibetan Buddhist temples and monks, which are of vital spiritual importance to the Tibetan people.

Religion was a complex matter even before the establishment of the autonomous region. In the 1959 Tibetan Uprising, the 14th Dalai Lama, the supreme spiritual leader of Tibetan Buddhists, fled to northern India and established a government-in-exile. He has since continued to demand greater autonomy for ethnic Tibetans, but Beijing decries this as an action that would cause China to fragment.

In Tibet, possessing photos and video footage of the Dalai Lama can invite a crackdown by security authorities. Any issue that is religious in nature may be interpreted as political by Beijing. There is no end to Buddhist monks who commit self-immolation to protest religious persecution.

To read the full article please click here: <http://fnvaworld.org/?p=17747>

Tibetan protesters detained less than a month ago identified as special anti-riot police deployed in Ngaba

Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy
17 September 2015

Details have emerged on the identities of some of the unknown number of peaceful Tibetan protesters Chinese authorities have detained less than a month ago in Ngaba (Ch: Aba) County in Ngaba Tibetan and Qiang Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan Province, in the Tibetan province of Amdo. Their identities remained unknown for weeks due to state surveillance and Internet blockade in Ngaba County, which has steadily intensified in the past several years partly due to the rising number of self-immolation protests. It was Tapey, a monk of Kirti Monastery in Ngaba who staged the first self-immolation protest in Tibet.

The situation in Ngaba County has deteriorated with the deployment of a large number of armed police and special anti-riot police force on major roads and intersections in Ngaba County town. Barring government offices and institutions, all Internet lines continue to remain disabled to block the flow of any information among the general public in Ngaba County.

New information received by TCHRD confirms the arbitrary detention of at least nine known Tibetans – among them are a 65-yr-old woman and a 29-yr-old mother of three – who had been detained in different incidents in the past weeks in Ngaba County town.

On the afternoon of 10 September 2015, two Tibetan youths, whose identities remain unknown at the moment, staged a peaceful protest in the main market of Ngaba County town. Other Tibetans present at the protest site soon joined them. Just then, local security forces arrived and detained both men. Security forces also detained a 64-yr-old Tibetan woman named Ghuemo and took her to an undisclosed location. Before her detention, Aye Ghuemo was a daily wagger employed to clean the streets of the county town. She is married to Mr Namkha Kyab and is a resident of nomadic camp no. 2 in Rong Khar Sar Township in Ngaba County. The identities of the two young men and others who were detained that day cannot be confirmed immediately.

The next day on 11 September, at least five monks from the Buddhist Logic class at Kirti Monastery were suddenly detained while they walking beyond the boundary set by the monastery during the Yar-ney (summer retreat) ritual in Ngaba County. The Yar-ney ritual is common to many Tibetan Buddhist monasteries and it requires monks to

stay within the monastery compounds or specific limits set by the particular monastery. In this context, Chinese police officers had no right whatsoever to detain the monks since it was the monastery administration that was responsible for addressing any breach of ritual requirements. Without any explanation, the monks detained for about two to three days and released, except for Lobsang Samten, age 22, who is still being held at an undisclosed location. Lobsang Samten belongs to the same village as Ghuemo, the 64-yr-old street cleaner who was also detained the day before. Son of Mr Kalsang and Mrs Dolma, he is the eldest of among his four siblings and became a monk at a young age at Kirti Monastery.

A Tibetan mother of three detained less than a month ago has now been identified as the 29-yr-old Dorjee Dolma who staged a peaceful protest, shouting slogans against the Chinese government in the main market of Ngaba County town. She staged her protest at around 8.30 am local time on 20 August, marching on the main market, but was caught by a group of about ten local police officers and taken to an unknown location. Dorjee Dolma is a resident of nomadic village no. 2 of Meruruma Town.

To read the full article please click here: <http://fnvaworld.org/?p=17610>

Recent peaceful protest yields detainment of monks, one grandmother

Tibet International Post
September 17, 2015
Molly Lortie

Dharamshala — It emerged that on the afternoon of September 10th in Tibet's Ngaba County of Amdo Regopm in north-eastern Tibet, two young men began a peaceful protest that slowly incorporated much of the local residents.

During the protest, police arrived and allegedly arrested one woman, a 64 year old grandmother on the scene. Her whereabouts remain unknown.

"The incarcerated grandmother's family name is Namkha Kyab and is originally from Rongkarsar, Ngaba. She has nine siblings and works as a street cleaner, according to Ven Lobsang Yeshe," Lobsang Yeshe and Kanya Tsering from Kirti Monastery told the Tibet Post International.

"The day of the protest, other protesters were also allegedly arrested by police, however their identities remain unknown."

The day after the incident, on September 11th, five monks from Kirti Monastery were also allegedly arbitrarily detained while going for a walk, and were not sentenced for a crime. Most of the monks were released from jail after the third day, however 22 year old monk Lobsang Sonam remains in detainment on charges unreleased by local authorities.

"Lobsang Sonam is also from Rongkarsar, Ngaba. His father's name is Kalsang, and his mother's name Tsering Dolma, and he has three younger brothers," said Ven Lobsang Yeshe. "He has been a monk at Kirti Monastery since he was a child."

This protest follows another from last month, on the morning of August 20th, when Dorjee Dolma, a 29 year old mother performed a solo peaceful protest and was immediately arrested by ten policemen, Ven Kanyag Tsering, a monk with close contacts in the Tibetan region, told the TPI.

"Dolma is the second of four daughters of father Dorjee Rabten and mother Tamdrin Tso, of the Tendartsang house in division no.2 of Me'uruma village, and is the mother of three children."

"Dorjee Dolma, a native of village no. 2 of Meruma town, Ngaba County in Amdho Region of north-eastern Tibet (Ch: Aba County, Tibetan and Qiang Autonomous Prefecture in the north-west of Sichuan Province)," Ven Tsering added, saying "her current conditions remain unknown." Her father's name is Dorjee Rabten, and mother's name Tamtin Tso. She has three sisters and three sons of her own.

The Ngaba area has been under military lock-down since major protests were held in the area following the spread of protests across the Tibetan plateau beginning in March, 2008.

The Chinese authorities are clamping down on the contents of popular social media, and particularly on the posting of photos, videos, and text that could be considered to be anti-China.

Tibetan Woman is Detained in Fifth Solo Protest in Ngaba County

Radio Free Asia
September 15, 2015



Armed police patrol a street in Ngaba county in an undated photo. Photo courtesy of an RFA listener

Authorities in southwestern China's Sichuan province have detained a Tibetan woman after she launched a solo protest in the latest public challenge to Beijing's rule in restive Ngaba county, according to sources in the region.

Dekyi Dolma, 22, staged her protest in the seat of Ngaba (in Chinese, Aba) county on Sept. 13, calling for an end to oppressive Chinese policies in the region, a local source told RFA's Tibetan Service, despite increased security in the aftermath of four similar protests held there since last week.

"She did it knowing full well about the huge presence of Chinese security personnel in the area," RFA's source said.

"It didn't take very long before she was taken away by Chinese police in the town."

A second local source confirmed that Dolma had been detained and said several bystanders expressed support for her act of defiance.

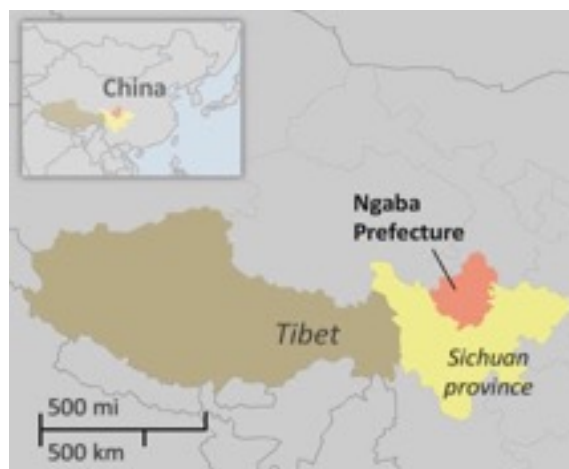
"There were many Tibetans in town at the time and they raised cries expressing their support for her and anger over the [police] roughing-up of a peaceful protestor," the source said.

According to the source, a security clampdown had been in place in Ngaba town since two Tibetan monks launched separate protests challenging Beijing's rule there on the same day last week.

"All internet access in the whole of Ngaba [county] has been disabled since Sept. 10, making it very difficult to communicate," the source said.

"Armed police have been stationed at every intersection, and additional police vehicles have been deployed to monitor the town and the peoples' activities."

Recent protests



Sources told RFA that Tibetan monk Lobsang Drakpa, 20, also known as Adrak, staged a protest in Ngaba town on Sept. 10, calling loudly for Tibetan freedom before he was taken away. They said that some in the crowd who fought with police at the time may also have been detained.

Also on Sept. 10, a second monk—also named Lobsang—launched a solo protest in the town, calling out for Tibetan freedom and the long life of exiled spiritual leader the Dalai Lama before he, too, was taken into police custody.

The two protests followed similar ones in Ngaba town on Sept. 9 and Sept. 7, in which two young monks—Jampal Gyatso, 21, and Lobsang Kalsang, age unknown—also marched in the street, shouting slogans, before being detained by police.

Sporadic demonstrations challenging Chinese rule have continued in Tibetan-populated areas of China since widespread protests swept the region in 2008, with 143 Tibetans to date setting themselves on fire to oppose Beijing's rule and call for the Dalai Lama's return.

Two More Tibetans Are Detained Following Solo Protests in Ngaba

Radio Free Asia
September 9, 2015

Two Tibetan monks launched separate protests challenging Beijing's rule in Sichuan province's Ngaba county on Thursday following similar solo protests by two other monks in the area earlier in the week, sources in the region and in exile said.

Both were quickly overpowered by police, with at least one being beaten after being taken into custody and bystanders who shouted in support of his protest also reportedly detained, sources said.

Lobsang Drakpa, 20, also known as Adrak, staged his protest in Ngaba (in Chinese, Aba) county's main town on Sept. 10, calling loudly for Tibetan freedom before he was taken away, a local source told RFA's Tibetan Service.

"Local Tibetans who witnessed the scene raised cries in his support," RFA's source said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Separately, a second local source confirmed that the monk had been detained.

"It is true that a monk of Kirti monastery protested in Ngaba town," the source said.

"His name is Adrak. He is also known as Lobsang Drakpa, and his family are residents of Suruma township in Ngaba," the source said, adding that a security clampdown was now in place in Ngaba, with authorities cutting lines of communication to outside areas.

"When Lobsang Drakpa was taken away, some Tibetans who witnessed the scene clashed with police, but no details regarding injuries or detentions are known," he said.

Others possibly detained

Some in the crowd who fought with police may also have been taken away, though, Kanyak Tsering, a Tibetan monk living in exile in India told RFA, citing local sources.

"Many were reported detained, but details are not available," Tsering said.

A nephew of Drakpa's, Lobsang Tsultrim, was jailed in 2012 for allegedly supporting a self-immolation protest and is now serving an 11-year prison term, Tsering said.

Also on Thursday, a second monk, also named Lobsang, launched a solo protest in the town at around 6:00 p.m., calling out for Tibetan freedom and the long life of exiled spiritual leader the Dalai Lama, Tsering said.

"When police saw him, he was immediately detained and taken away," he said.

"A group of lay Tibetans in Ngaba town are reported to have protested his detention, but details cannot be confirmed," he said.

Thursday's protests followed similar protests in Ngaba on Wednesday and Tuesday in which two young monks—Jampal Gyatso, 21, and Lobsang Kalsang, age unknown—also marched in the street, shouting slogans, before being taken into custody by police.

Sporadic demonstrations challenging Chinese rule have continued in Tibetan-populated areas of China since widespread protests swept the region in 2008, with 143 Tibetans to date setting themselves on fire to oppose Beijing's rule and call for the Dalai Lama's return.

Important Meetings & Religious Gatherings

Hundreds of Tibetan Monks Attend Annual Gathering in Golog

Radio Free Asia
Kunsang Tenzin
September 25, 2015



Tibetan monks attend the annual Jang Gunchoe teachings in Golog prefecture, Qinghai, Sept. 25, 2015. Photo sent by an RFA listener

Over 700 Buddhist monks converged this week on a Tibetan monastery in northwestern China's Qinghai province to observe a seven-day period of religious teachings, gathering together in what one source described as a "subdued atmosphere" due to Chinese security restrictions.

The Jang Gunchoe, or Winter Teachings, is the 21st in the series of annual events, drawing participants this year

from as many as 27 different monasteries in Tibetan regions of western China, sources in the region and in exile said.

“This year’s Jang Gunchoe is being held in Ragya monastery in Golog [in Chinese, Guoluo] prefecture, and those attending are primarily monks, with very few laypeople taking part in the event,” a Tibetan participant told RFA’s Tibetan Service on Friday.

Though previous Jang Gunchoe gatherings have featured special teachings on moral ethics and conduct addressed to the general public, “these programs are not scheduled this year,” RFA’s source said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

“Today is the second day, and it will conclude five days from now,” he said.

Over 700 monks from 27 monasteries are taking part in the event, with some coming from Zilkar monastery in Qinghai’s Yulshul (Yushu) prefecture, Rebgong Riwu monastery in Malho (Huangnan) prefecture, and Se monastery in the Ngaba (Aba) prefecture of neighbouring Sichuan, a monk living in South India said, citing local sources.

“The event is said to be proceeding in a subdued atmosphere due to unprecedented Chinese restrictions in the area,” the monk, named Damchoe, said.

Public assemblies at monasteries in Tibetan regions of China have greatly increased in size in recent years, observers and participants say, as tens of thousands of Tibetans gather to assert their national and cultural identity in the face of Chinese domination.

Chinese security forces, however, fearful of sudden protests by Tibetans opposed to Beijing’s rule, frequently monitor and sometimes close down events involving large crowds, sources say.

Sporadic demonstrations challenging Chinese rule have continued in Tibetan-populated areas of China since widespread protests swept the region in 2008, with 143 Tibetans to date setting themselves on fire to oppose Beijing’s rule and call for the return of exiled spiritual leader the Dalai Lama.

Thousands Gather in China’s Qinghai For Tibetan Buddhist Ceremony

Radio Free Asia
September 18, 2015



A view of the crowd of Buddhist devotees at Kumbum monastery, Qinghai, Sept. 17, 2015. Photo courtesy of an RFA listener

Massive crowds converged this week on a Tibetan monastery in northwestern China’s Qinghai province for the start of a four-day period of advanced Buddhist rituals and teachings, sources said.

The ancient Kalachakra ceremony is scheduled to be held from Sept. 18 to Sept. 21 at Kumbum monastery in Qinghai’s Tsoshar (Haidong) prefecture, a local source told RFA’s Tibetan Service on Friday.

Kalachakra, which means “Wheel of Time,” is a ritual that prepares those attending to be reborn in Shambhala—a celestial kingdom which, many Buddhists believe, will vanquish the forces of evil in a future cosmic battle.

It is frequently conducted outside Tibet by exiled spiritual leader the Dalai Lama.

This week’s ceremony, conducted by senior Tibetan religious leader Geja Rinpoche, has drawn “thousands of devotees from all sectors of Tibetan society for the four-day ceremony,” RFA’s source said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Other sources meanwhile placed the number of those attending—including Tibetans, Mongolians, and Han Chinese—at about 200,000.

‘A safe environment’

Preparations are now under way to set up 10 large video screens and at least a hundred loudspeakers to allow participants to see and hear the blessing rituals and teachings, according to a public notice issued by the monastery and obtained by RFA.

The monastery is also managing traffic flow and has designated special spaces for parking vehicles and pitching tents, the notice said.

“Every effort has been made to ensure a safe and comfortable environment,” the notice said.

Though Chinese security forces, fearful of sudden protests by Tibetans opposed to Beijing’s rule, frequently monitor and sometimes close down events involving large crowds, the event is proceeding with official approval, one source said.

Last year, government employees in neighbouring Gansu province were barred from taking part in a similarly large Kalachakra ceremony, with warnings given of administrative punishment if they ignored the ban, sources said in earlier reports.

Sporadic demonstrations challenging Chinese rule have continued in Tibetan-populated areas of China since widespread protests swept the region in 2008, with 143 Tibetans to date setting themselves on fire to oppose Beijing’s rule and call for the Dalai Lama’s return.

Chimed Rigzin meets the delegation of Nepal mainstream media

China Tibet News
Subrina Zhu
September 16, 2015

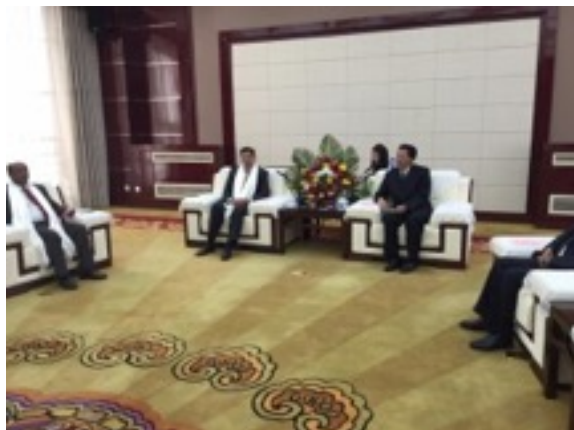


Photo shows Chimed Rigzin, the vice-chairman of China’s TAR is meeting the delegation of Nepal mainstream media on Sep. 15. [China Tibet News/ Zhu Shan]

On the afternoon of 15th Sep, 2015, Chimed Rigzin, the vice-chairman of the southwest China’s Tibet Autonomous Region, gave an exclusive interview to the delegation of Nepal mainstream media in Lhasa, the capital city of the southwest China’s Autonomous Region.

Chimed Rigzin extended a warm welcome to Nepal’s delegation and introduced the great development of Tibet ,especially in economy, education, culture,sanitation and technology over the past 60-odd years. He said: “At present, Tibet presents a picture mixing traditional and modern elements, featuring economic and political progress,cultural prosperity, social harmony, sound ecosystem and a happy and healthy life for the local people. All these show that only by adhering to the leadership of the CPC, the socialist system and the system of regional ethnic autonomy, can Tibetans become and remain the masters of their own affairs, and can the fundamental interests of the Tibetan people be safeguarded and developed.” In addition, he reaffirmed that, China cherishes its traditional friendship with Nepal and still upholds the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence.

The media from Nepal showed thanks for Tibet’s thoughtful arrangements. Besides, they will show the real Tibet to the world and look forward to more opportunities for communication.

Military and Infrastructure Development

PLA Boosts ELINT Y-9JB with Reconnaissance Capabilities

Yibada
Manny Salvacion
September 15, 2015

The People’s Liberation Army has made a major upgrade to its new electronic intelligence (ELINT) gathering aircraft, the Y-9JB, by equipping it with electronic reconnaissance capabilities, according to the Sina Military Network.

The Y-9JB, also known as the GX-8, which literally means the “High New 8,” is the ELINT variant of the Shaanxi Y-9 mid-sized transport aircraft.

The Want China Times reported that the aircraft has significant advancements over China’s first-generation electronic reconnaissance planes, the Y-8DZ or GX-2 and the Y-8G or GX-3.

According to the report, the electronic warfare aircraft has been developed by China for decades to improve the PLA's ability to gather and analyse operational and tactical electronic intelligence, and to to assist them in strategic decision-making.

To develop its first generation of electronic warfare aircraft, China relied on Soviet technology, specifically the Il-14, the Il-28 and the Tu-4, the report said. But majority of these aircraft were designed for the PLA Air Force and not for its Naval Air Force, which only began to install electronic reconnaissance systems in the 1980s.

In 2001, the PLA Naval Air Force has reportedly completed its first successful test flight of the Y-8DZ. The aircraft was regarded as a major step in the PLA's ELINT capabilities, as it is equipped with domestic systems that included computer controls, fully automated analysis and satellite distribution.

The report said, however, that there are issues with the Y-8DZ, which included outdated antennas and the lack of proper airlock, making it dependent on temporarily installed air conditioning equipment.

The PLA said that the Y-9JB has reportedly addressed the problems, as it has now has improved cabin pressurisation and also a higher operational altitude to boost the coverage distance of its electronic systems. The new aircraft is now equipped with a 5,000-horsepower 6C turboprop engine with six-blade composite propeller to enhance its flight and handling performance.

The aircraft now has mounted four distinctive elongated antennas on its fuselage, replacing the old external antenna covers after it was removed from the aircraft, in addition to a prominent nose radar and satellite communications dome. According to the report, this enabled the Y-9JB to perform radar and communication signal reconnaissance missions with greater frequency coverage, a wider range and higher precision.

The report also identified several flaws of the Y-9JB, such as slow speed, a short flight range and relatively small space and load capacity, which may force the PLA Naval Air Force to develop bigger and more effective ELINT platforms by modifying large-sized planes like the Y-20 large military transport aircraft or the C-919 narrow-body twin-engine jet airliner.

New High-speed Rail System Bridging Shanghai and Chengdu Proposed

Yibada
Vanna Emia
September 15, 2015

Feasibility studies have been conducted to assess the possibility of linking 22 cities in China's eastern, central and southwestern regions with a railway system that would reduce the current 15-hour travel time by six hours.

The proposed project is expected to cover 1,985 kilometres, traversing Shanghai, Nanjing, Hefei, Wuhan, Chongqing and finally Chengdu at 350 km/h, according to a report by China Daily.

"Passengers from Shanghai will arrive in Chengdu within nine hours upon completion of the railway," said Peng Qiyuan, dean of the School of Traffic at Jiaotong University.

As it stands today, the majority of the current railway line is limited to a speed of 100-200 km/h, while the track between Chengdu and Chongqing is designed for speeds of up to 350 km/h.

Sichuan, where a total of 90 million people reside in the upper reaches of the Yangtze River, is considered to be the most developed province in Southwest China and has the largest GDP within the country. Officials expect the new railway to spread such economic development throughout the other regions.

"People in Southwest China will have more contact with the more developed central and eastern parts of the country, and abundant resources from the southwest will be transported to central and eastern areas faster," said Peng.

The Yangtze River Delta generates as much as 20 percent of the country's GDP.

The State Council announced last month that new guidelines will be implemented in order to bolster the development of the Yangtze Economic Zone and expedite the construction of the high-speed rail system.

Railway Industry to Drive China's Next Major Economic Development

YIBADA

Manny Salvacion

September 15, 2015

The construction of high-speed railways and subway lines is expected to bolster China's urban development and the development of city clusters, as well as lay the foundation for a second economic development in the country, the China Business News reported.

WANG MING, DIRECTOR OF THE INSTITUTE OF COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORTATION UNDER THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND REFORM COMMISSION (NDRC), SAID THAT THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE RAILWAY SYSTEMS WILL PLAY A BIGGER ROLE THAN THE PROPERTY MARKET, AS THE COUNTRY WILL NEED TO BUILD MORE THAN THE 6,000 KILO METERS OF RAIL NETWORKS UNDER ITS 12TH FIVE-YEAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN.

Wang Ming, director of the Institute of Comprehensive Transportation under the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC), said that the construction of the railway systems will play a bigger role than the property market, as the country will need to build more than the 6,000 kilometres of rail networks under its 12th Five-Year Economic Development Plan.

Wang Ming, director of the Institute of Comprehensive Transportation under the National Development and Reform Commission (NDRC), said that the construction of the railway systems will play a bigger role than the property market, as the country will need to build more than the 6,000 kilometres of rail networks under its 12th Five-Year Economic Development Plan.

At present, China's total subway network is expected to extend to 6,000 km by 2020, as 39 cities around the country have met the stipulated criteria for subway construction.

Wang said at a transport forum held recently that an estimated 4 trillion yuan (\$625 billion) will be spent in urban subway construction.

The railway construction market is estimated to be worth 10 trillion yuan (\$1.57 trillion).

Li Guoyong, an NDRC official, said that with the rapid urbanisation, urban transit systems will provide natural solution to traffic congestion, not only in first-tier cities but also in second- and third-tier cities.

Li said that as the number of cities with a population of more than 1 million is expected to rise to more than 200

by 2020, the urbanisation rate is also expected to exceed 60 percent by that period.

This would require the government to speed up construction of the railway systems in cities to improve urban traffic flow, Li Puming, a spokesperson at the NDRC, said.

Arunachal Pradesh okays roads to villages on China border

Deccan Herald

Ratnadip Choudhury

September 13, 2015

In a major development, the Arunachal Pradesh government on Friday decided to immediately start building new roads to the remotest villages on the India-China border, which can only be reached after trekking for days.

The decision was taken in a cabinet meeting held in state capital Itanagar, chaired by Chief Minister Nabam Tuki. According to government sources, the Cabinet agreed to recommend a proposal for connectivity to unconnected habitations on border areas of the state under Border Area Development Programme (BADP) as a special case.

As many as 72 roads in 23 border blocks of 12 districts of the state would come under the programme. It shall cover 2098.40 km of roads with 219 bridges covering 227 unconnected remote villages right at the McMahon Line that divides India and China. The estimated cost of the project is Rs 3,345.03 crore, government sources further added.

Last week, Chief Minister Nabam Tuki had held several rounds of meeting with central ministers on the border area development issue.

According to Arunachal Pradesh government sources, the state government has sent several reports to the Centre over the year in terms of how the border population is moving towards the towns due to lack of development and this might lead to threat to the security since the border population also helps the security forces in terms of intelligence in border guarding.

Arunachal Pradesh government spokesperson Bamang Felix also informed that the state Cabinet has decided to suspend the operation of Pawan Hans Helicopter Service in the state till completion of inquiry into the recent incident of chopper crash at Tirap which claimed three lives, including the then Tirap Deputy Commissioner the late Kamlesh Joshi.

The state government has already written to the Ministry of Home Affairs to conduct a thorough inquiry into the incident to unearth the facts behind repeated accidents of Pawan Hans Helicopters in the state.

China launches communication satellite

Times of India
PTI
September 13, 2015

BEIJING: China successfully launched an experimental satellite for communication technology, state media reported on Sunday.

The satellite was launched by a Long March 3B carrier rocket at the Xichang Satellite Launch Centre in Sichuan Province late on Saturday.

It will be used to perform tests on the Ka frequency band in broadband communications.

Solar power station to illuminate Mustang

The Kathmandu Post
Post Reporter
September 12, 2015

A handover ceremony of Solar Energy Power Station Project, built with the grant of the Government of Tibet Autonomous Region of China, took place at Lomanthang of Mustang district on Friday.

The handover document was signed by Baldeb Joshi, the local development officer of Mustang, and Ma Qinsheng, deputy director general of Foreign and Overseas Chinese Affairs Office of Tibet Autonomous Region of China. Purna Chandra Bhattarai, joint secretary of the Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development, Jhabindra P Aryal, joint secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Purushottam Dhungel, consul general of Nepal in Lhasa, were also present.

A nine-member Chinese team, including Cheng Ji, deputy chief of mission at the Chinese Embassy in Kathmandu, and Ni Ma Duo Ji, deputy chief of Zhongba county, represented the Chinese side.

“This support has greatly helped in the livelihood as well as socio-economic development of the people in

the districts. Such cooperation has substantially contributed to develop friendly relations between the peoples of the two countries,” said the statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

On this occasion, Bhattarai and Aryal expressed their gratitude to the government of Tibet Autonomous Region of China for their generous support on behalf of Nepal government.

According to the statement, the total capacity of this power project is 70 kilowatts and provides power to 221 households of around 1,400 people in the area.

A development cooperation agreement for the project was signed in November 2014 for development focused on livelihood, living standard, healthcare, rural roads etc. For this, the government of Tibet Autonomous Region of China has been providing RMB 10 million each year for five years duration to 15 districts in Nepal that share borders with China.

The Solar Energy Poser Station Project built with the assistance of Government of Tibet Autonomous Region of China will power 221 households

Adding muscle to strategy, China developing new airport on Tibet plateau

Samay Live
12 Sep 2015



China is developing a new airport on Qinghai-Tibet plateau

Virtually adding muscle to its strategy vis-a-vis India, China is set to develop a new airport on Qinghai- Tibet Plateau which will be ready for operationalisation by the end of this year.

It will be the sixth aerodrome in the ecologically-rich Qinghai province located adjacent to Tibet. Located in

Golog Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture of Qinghai province, the airport is located at an altitude of 3,500 meters.

The construction of the airport will be completed by the end of October and it will feature a 3,800-meter-long runway besides a 3,000-square-meter terminal.

Three air routes will connect Golog to Qinghai's capital of Xining, Lhasa City in Tibet and Chengdu City in Sichuan Province.

The airport will be the sixth in Qinghai and the first in Golog which boasts rich ecological and tourist resources, state-run Xinhua news agency reported.

High altitude Tibet has five airports connecting the Himalayan region with the rest of China. The airports coupled with large-scale rail and highway development enhance Chinese military's logistic ability to transport men and material in the border region.

New civilian airport to open on Qinghai-Tibet Plateau

Xinhua
2015-09-13

A new civilian airport will open the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau in western China by the end of this year, authorities with Qinghai Airport Company said Saturday.

Located in the Golog Tibetan autonomous prefecture of Qinghai province, the airport site is at an altitude of 3,500 meters. The airport will feature a 3,800-meter-long runway and a 3,000-square-meter terminal and construction will be completed by the end of October.

Three air routes will connect Golog to Qinghai's capital Xining, Lhasa in Tibet, and Chengdu in Sichuan province after the airport is put into use by the end of this year.

The civilian airport will be the sixth in Qinghai and the first in Golog, according to the company.

Golog boasts rich ecological and tourist resources. The new airport is expected to make travel more convenient for tourists and scientific researchers who come to the prefecture.

China to Build High Altitude Observatory

NDTV.com
Indo-Asian News Service
September 11, 2015

CHENGDU: China will invest more than one billion yuan (about \$157 million) to build a high altitude observatory to monitor cosmic rays, authorities said today.

The observatory, the second of its kind in China, will be built in the Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture of Garze in southwest China's Sichuan Province, said Cao Zhen, a research fellow with the Institute of High Energy Physics (IHEP) under Chinese Academy of Sciences.

The Garze government and IHEP inked an agreement on Wednesday that will see the observatory built on Haizi Mountain in Daocheng County, where the average altitude is 4,410 metres, Xinhua reported.

"With an acute gamma ray detector, it is the world's second most expensive cosmic ray observatory, after the IceCube Neutrino Observatory in Antarctica," said Cao Zhen.

The observatory will be able to cover an area of one million square metres, detecting rays whose energy range from one billion trillion to 10,000 billion trillion volts.

Mr Cao didn't give a timetable for construction of the observatory.

Discovered in 1912, cosmic rays are high energy charged particles from outer space that travel at nearly the speed of light and strike the Earth from all directions. The study of cosmic rays could help people learn about supernova explosions, black holes and the origin of the universe.

Study of cosmic rays began in China in 1951. Currently, most research is done in the Yangbajain cosmic rays monitoring station in Tibet.

PLA may establish a space warfare division

Want China Times
Staff Reporter
September 11, 2015

The People's Liberation Army may establish a new division for space warfare after cutting its troop numbers by 300,000, said Duowei News, a US-based Chinese political news outlet, citing Japan's Asahi Shinbun.

The outlet's sources said the PLA may establish the new division for space warfare, as satellite communication has

begun to play an increasingly important role in modern warfare. However, Duowei News said that that this has still not been confirmed, as the establishment of a new division will hike China's military budget up further and goes against Chinese president Xi Jinping's calls for a streamlining of the PLA's structure.

The Chinese military is also likely to increase the number of its troops in its navy, air force and the Second Artillery Corps and reduce the number of its military regions from the current seven to four or five.

Xi Jinping announced military reform measures and a cut to Chinese military forces during the Sept. 3 military parade that marked the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II.

Xi may restructure the Chinese military in line with the structure of the US military, which has a Unified Combatant Command controlling and commanding joint missions across military branches. The PLA's military regions may also establish their own cross-branch combatant commands. Expanding navy capacity is likely to be one of the priorities in the reform given rising territorial tensions in the East and South China Seas, where several countries are competing for resources.

Lhasa-Nyingchi high-grade highway is to start a trial operation

China Tibet News
Megan
September 11, 2015



According to the information of Tibet Business Daily reporters, the high-grade highway between Lhasa and Nyingchi is expected to start a trial operation on September 15.

On September 10, 2015, reporters from Tibet Business Daily drove from education city in Lhasa to Maizhokunggar County by the Lhasa-Nyingchi high-grade highway to

experience highway condition of this section. The whole journey takes about only about 40 minutes.



Photo taken at 11:05 am of September 10, 2015 shows that freeway entrance has not yet open to the public.

Lhasa-Nyingchi high-grade Highway is one of key projects in Tibet's twelfth Five-Year Plan. The high-grade highway is about 409.2 kilo meters long. Once it opens to traffic, the traffic time from Lhasa to Nyingchi is expected to reduce more than two hours.



Photo taken at 11:13 am of September 10, 2015 shows the No.1 Taktse Tunnel.

Three rows of induction lamps light up the tunnel, which allows car drivers to have a very clear sight of road condition in these tunnels. No.2 Taktse Tunnel is less than a few hundred meters from the No.1 Taktse Tunnel.



Black-necked cranes choose to pass the winter in this wet land, so passengers and citizens passing by can see black-necked cranes here when the winter comes.



When one arrives at Maizhokunggar County, it is a good choice to take a bath in Dezhong Hot Spring. One staff on site says that once the monitoring equipment is adjusted, the high-grade highway between Lhasa and Nyingchi shall start its trial operation. At that time, passengers and citizens can go to Nyingchi and back from Lhasa on the freeway. Besides, monitoring equipment installed on the highway all relies on solar and wind energy generation. Several good-sized LED display screens are installed to display information of the whole region's road traffic situations.

China's military committed to reform

China Daily
September 7, 2015

The overhaul of the military has reached a point of no return as measures to shake up structure, revise attitudes and adjust interests are already set in motion, according to an article responding to an announcement that the armed forces will be downsized.

By the end of 2017, China will have reduced its military personnel by 300,000. This will be the 11th time the military has been reduced in size since the founding of New China in 1949, and the fourth time since the 1980s.

The cuts are part of a wider slew of measures to reform the People's Liberation Army (PLA), which will have about 2 million members after the reduction, compared with 6.27 million in October 1949.

As a country grows stronger, national defense and military strategies become more important, according to the article run in Friday's edition of the PLA Daily.

President Xi Jinping, who is also chairman of the Central Military Commission, has, on many occasions, stressed that "a prosperous nation and a strong army" are the foundations upon which national rejuvenation will be built, it said.

Many major countries are accelerating military reform and international competition for military predominance is fierce, the article said, adding that state security will be threatened if China's military falls behind.

Xi has identified the PLA's shortcomings and he firmly believes reform will target these problems, the article said.

However, the reforms will be difficult and risky as they require a change in mentality and could affect special interest groups, it said, adding that the old ways of thinking were firmly implanted and "it will be very hard to clear them away."

Despite challenges, the article calls for determination to carry out the reforms.

PLA officers in the line of fire as China's plan to axe 300,000 military personnel targets top brass over rank-and-file

South China Morning Post
MINNIE CHAN
6th September 2015

Retrenchment and early-retirement packages to be offered and two military commands to be shut down, sources say.

Officers will account for more than half of the 300,000 personnel to go in President Xi Jinping's plans to streamline the PLA, two sources close to the military told the South China Morning Post.

At least 170,000 officers, ranging from lieutenants to senior colonels, in the country's land forces would be laid off after two of the existing seven military commands and three army corps were scrapped, one source said on Friday.

But the massive downsizing plans, exclusively revealed by the Post on Wednesday, were also aimed at encouraging pilots from the land forces to merge into the air force and navy, as part of the PLA's drive to master joint operational warfare.

One of the sources said the People's Liberation Army would announce some details of the downsizing as early as middle of this month.

Defence Ministry spokesman Yang Yujun said on Thursday that the decision to shed 300,000 military personnel was aimed at further modernising and restructuring the army, and the lay-offs would be completed by 2017.

Each key military command has two to three army corps, with each corps having 30,000 to 50,000 troops.

Shutting down two military commands would mean the loss of at least 120,000 personnel.

The PLA has 18 army corps distributed among its seven commands centred in Beijing, Shenyang, Lanzhou, Chengdu, Jinan, Nanjing and Guangzhou.

Once the overhaul was completed, the PLA would be left with five key military commands, the source said. The 15 army corps remaining under those five commands would strengthen joint operational command by recruiting soldiers from the air force and navy, the source added.

Beijing-based military expert Li Jie said trimming the number of commands back to five “makes sense”, especially when compared to Russia.

“Both China and Russia are continental countries and face different kinds of security challenges from various directions on land,” Li said. “But Russia, which covers more than 17 million square kilometres of land, has only four joint strategic commands, while China’s territory is only about 9.6 million square kilometres.”

It was not clear which two main military commands will be affected.

Read more: China to drastically overhaul its People’s Liberation Army in ‘ambitious’ plan to build modern fighting force on par with West

A Beijing-based source said the Shenyang army corps would become an air commando unit, suggesting that more pilot teams would be formed.



President Xi Jinping inspects troops on Tiananmen Square. Photo: Reuters

He also said that two other army corps, one from Nanjing and the other from Jinan, which also command the North Sea and East China Sea fleets, would become marine corps.

With the exception of the Beijing Garrison, which is directly under the PLA’s powerful Central Military Commission and safeguards the capital, all provincial and

municipal garrisons would be shut down, and 50,000 personnel dismissed.

As many as 100,000 troops from non-combat units, such as medical, communications, and artists brigades, would be cut, and 50,000 soldiers from border forces will merge into the People’s Armed Police, the sources said. All of those laid off would be offered good compensation packages, with 50,000 transferred to civilian posts, the sources said. Some would be offered inducements to retire early.

“The PLA’s land forces will definitely be the main targets for downsizing because it has more personnel than the air force and navy combined. This is not the right path for China’s defence strategies,” said Xu Guangyu, a senior adviser at the China Arms Control and Disarmament Association in Beijing. “Because of its expanding national interests overseas, China’s defence strategies have shifted from ‘offshore defence’ to ‘protecting both offshore and open seas’.”

All PLA units yesterday pledged their support for Xi’s downsizing plans, with the military publishing a commentary in its mouthpiece saying the plan had the backing of all major military units.

Read more: The radical plan to turn China’s People’s Liberation Army into a modern fighting force

China says troop cuts will happen by 2017 and further military reforms on way

South China Morning Post
September 3, 2015

Focus will be on phasing out outdated equipment, simplifying administrative and non-combat roles and improving military structure, Defence Ministry says.

A 300,000 troop reduction announced by President Xi Jinping on Thursday would be basically completed by the end of 2017 and further reforms of the world’s largest armed forces were on the way, the Defence Ministry said.

Xi made the surprise announcement at the opening of a military parade marking 70 years since the end of the second world war. The cut represents a little more than a tenth of the military’s 2.3 million strong forces.

The reduction would make the People’s Liberation Army more modern and better able to achieve the aim of China having a strong military, the ministry said in a question and answer statement carried by the official Xinhua news agency.

“The Chinese armed forces will be slimmer but more capable, and their composition will be more scientific,” it said.

The cut would not affect China’s ability to protect itself, the ministry said.

“Cutting troop numbers is beneficial for concentrating resources, speeding up information and raising quality. We have the confidence and ability to deal with all kinds of security threats and risks,” it said.

This is the fourth time since the 1980s that China will be reducing its military numbers, as it speeds up an ambitious modernisation programme which has seen the development of stealth jets and anti-satellite missiles.

The focus of the cut announced on Thursday would be on phasing out outdated equipment, simplifying administrative and non-combat roles and “adjusting and improving military structure”, the ministry said, adding it would be basically completed by late 2017.

Defence spending would not go down as a result, as China still needed to update old equipment and would need to spend money to support those who would leave the military in the process, it added.

Further military reforms would happen in a “step-by-step” manner and were coming “at the appropriate time”, the ministry said, without elaborating.

The cuts are likely part of long-mooted reforms to simplify and further professionalise the military, especially command and leadership structures that are still largely run along Soviet lines.

China stuns military experts with new missiles display

Times of India
Saibal Dasgupta,TNN
Sep 3, 2015,

BEIJING: China on Thursday tried to stun the world’s military establishment by displaying missiles that travel 10 times faster than the speed of sound, and the firepower that is loaded on its aircraft carrier. Chinese authorities displayed a range of sophisticated killing machines at a military parade in Beijing on Thursday.

Military experts said that the missile formations on display, which have not been seen before, established China’s capability to hit a variety of targets on land, air and water. The missiles are capable of hitting US air bases in Okinawa in Japan and in Guam besides targeting countries in China’s neighbourhood, they said.

“China has demonstrated new models and innovation in each field — short, medium and long range missiles,” Michael Raska, research fellow at the Institute of Defense and Strategic Studies in Singapore, told TNN.

The parade confirms China’s equipment modernisation program is going apace, and it will continue on this path, he said. “I think the DF21D mid range ballistic missile is most significant. It is an aircraft killer, which can target American carriers in Pacific. So is the DF26. It is a road mobile killer which can target Guam,” he said.

The land-based DF-21D intermediate-range missile is believed to be equipped with onboard terminal guidance systems making it capable of hitting moving targets, observers said.

Another machine on display, the DF16 intercontinental ballistic missile, can target the US base in Okinawa in Japan, Raska said.

Though China has only one aircraft carrier, it has displayed a range of missiles that are potentially disruptive and unprecedented in their fire power, some of which can match that of the United States, they said.

The new missiles, particularly DF21D, are going to force a rethink among countries who plan to deploy aircraft carriers against China, observers said.

Some observers see the weapons displayed at the parade as a sign that China will use them to enhance its political influence in the world, and make sure it is heard even by NATO member countries. Analysts say there is little possibility of the weapons being used in a war but they are potent symbols of power that will enhance Beijing’s political prestige.

The firepower display at a parade filled with anti-Japan sentiments and rhetoric was also meant to warn Japan, its bitter rival, against moves to go for militarisation at a large scale. Japan’s Shinzo Abe has announced plans to amend the pacifist constitution, and go for large scale militarisation.

India’s nuclear outlook focused towards China: Report

The Times of India
PTI
September 3, 2015,

WASHINGTON: After nearly two decades of nuclear competition with Pakistan, India with the several long-range ballistic missiles in development is seemingly now

paying attention to its future strategic relationship with China, a think-tank report has said.

“Now, with several long-range ballistic missiles in development, the Indian nuclear posture is entering an important and dynamic new phase. After nearly two decades of concentrating on competition with Pakistan, India’s nuclear outlook now seems to be focused more toward its future strategic relationship with China,” authors Hans M Kristensen and Robert S Norris said in a report for Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists yesterday.

In the report titled “Indian nuclear forces, 2015”, Kristensen and Norris said India was estimated to have produced approximately 540 kilograms of weapon-grade plutonium, enough for 135 to 180 nuclear warheads, though not all of that material is being used.

They estimate that India has produced between 110 and 120 nuclear warheads.

The country’s fighter-bombers still constitute the backbone of its operational nuclear strike force, but it has made considerable progress in developing credible land-based ballistic missiles as well, the report said.

They include the Agni-4, which will be capable of delivering a single nuclear warhead more than 3,500 kilometres, and therefore able to strike Beijing and Shanghai from northern India.

In 2014, India conducted its first ever sea trial of a nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine, they wrote.

“It will need more than that to arm new missiles it is developing. In addition to the Dhruva plutonium production reactor near Mumbai, India plans to construct a second reactor near Visakhapatnam, on the east coast,” it said.

“An unsafe guarded prototype fast breeder reactor is also under construction 650 kilometres south at the Indra Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research (IGCAR) near Kalpakkam, which will significantly increase India’s plutonium production capacity once it becomes operational,” the report said.

The original nuclear aircraft are ageing, and India may be searching for a modern fighter-bomber that could potentially take over the air-based nuclear strike role, it said.

Environment

Pollutants buried under glaciers surface to haunt India

T.V. Padma
September 22, 2015

As glaciers in the Himalayas melt faster due to global warming, pollutants buried under them are finding their way down to the north Indian plains



A study shows melting Himalayan glaciers are “major contributors” to chemical pollution in the Ganga. (Image by tian yake)

Pollutants carried from lands far away and buried for decades under glaciers in the Himalayas are now finding their way into the Ganga and its tributaries, a new study has found. The pollutants are being released as the glaciers are melting faster due to climate change.

Melting glaciers in general are ‘re-distributors’ of legacy pollutants stored in them. While they have been shown to release these pollutants in Europe and the US, there had been no study on the Himalayan glaciers.

Now, a study by researchers from India, Norway and the Czech Republic shows that melting Himalayan glaciers can be “major contributors” of two classes of pollutants – polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and polyaromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) – to the Ganga and its tributaries during the dry season. PCBs are man-made chemicals that were widely used in electrical wires and paint, plastics and rubber products. PAHs occur naturally but are also released into the environment due to burning of coal, coal tar, asphalt, hazardous waste and from vehicle exhausts.

During the non-monsoon dry months in South Asia – eight months of the year – these pollutant loads released by glacier melting can exceed the loads from other sources in the catchment areas of these river basins, says the new

study, according to its report in the Environmental Pollution journal.

The scientists, from the Norwegian Institute for Water Research (NIVA), Research Centre for Toxic Compounds in the Environment (RECETOX) at Masaryk University in the Czech Republic and The Energy Resources Institute (TERI), India, analysed air and river water samples, as well as deposits along the Ganga and its major headwaters.

In the central Gangetic plains, compared to pollutants discharged from lower parts of the river basin, the pollutant load from glacial meltwater can be as low as 2% but also as high as 200%, the scientists found. "By remobilising legacy pollutants from melting glaciers, climate change can enhance exposure levels over large and already heavily impacted regions of northern India," the report says.

"The study provides evidences of high pollution levels of various emerging and legacy hazardous chemicals even in the regions which are far from the dense industrial and agricultural areas," TERI researcher Girija Bharat explained to thethirdpole.net.

At different sections of the river, the Ganga receives varying amounts of glacial meltwater and industrial effluents, Bharat pointed out. The pollutant load from each source is different. This means that at different sections of the river, the percentage of the pollutant load from each source – glacier or local – is different. The study could not quantify this percentage at various places along the Ganga, as the scientists did not measure the pollutant levels in industrial wastewater and agricultural runoff.

Toxic effects

Although the levels measured in water "are relatively low, especially for PCBs", nevertheless these substances accumulate and are found in much higher levels in algae and fish, lead author Luca Nizzetto from NIVA said. Levels of PCBs especially tend to magnify throughout the food chain and "will reach top levels in predators and final consumers such as humans."

PCBs are now banned around the world. In India they were used in for limited purposes until the early 1980s. Globally, the environmental levels of PCBs are declining slowly. "The PCBs emitted from the glaciers, however, were possibly brought to the glacier surface in the past decades by long range atmospheric transport from other regions/countries of the world. Glacier melting is delivering to the Himalayan rivers and the Indian environment this toxic burden released somewhere else, contributing to slowing the decline of PCBs levels in India," according to Nizzetto.

While Nizzetto's team does not expect the contaminants surfacing from Himalayan glaciers to cause acute toxic effects, their action could be "subtle and chronic", and varies from pollutant to pollutant. Some PCBs, for example, disrupt the endocrine hormonal system, and can also accumulate in the fat tissues of humans and be transferred from mothers to children through breast milk.

PAHs can cause cancers, but the danger from these chemicals released into water streams is relatively low. PAHs bind themselves to water molecules as well as particles and debris in a river or stream. So they do not enter the food chain to any great extent from this source. Human exposure to PAHs is mainly through air pollution, especially in cities and industrial districts. PAHs include benzo (a) pyrene – better known as BaP – that is released due to incomplete burning of tobacco, wood and natural gas.

"We do not know exactly what is the total toxic load of the Ganga from a chemical contamination perspective, because of lack of data," says Nizzetto.

But PCBs released by the glaciers is an additional concern for Indians who are also exposed to other pollutants such as DDT. The two have a cumulative toxic effect.

Himalayan glacial pollution neglected

Compared to the Alps and the polar regions, pollutants in the Himalayan glaciers have not received much attention from policy makers or scientists, says Bharat.

This is despite the Himalayas being important recipients of pollutants transported long distances. It is important to investigate the historically deposited pollutants in the Himalayan glaciers, given their geographical location, surrounded by world's rapidly growing economies and the densely-populated countries in Asia, Bharat added.

Estimates of the number of people dependent on rivers that flow down the Himalayas vary between 1.4 and 2.5 billion. Bharat said that despite this, "There have been few studies in which the importance of glaciers on a small scale has been explained using mathematical models."

Water management issues

The study "would like to bring the attention of both policy makers and scientific community to focus more on pristine areas such as the Himalayas," she added. Another major concern is over "the retrospective approach of current water management policies, which look at water quality after its degradation."

According to her, industries producing new chemicals should undertake appropriate field trials to assess the potential negative impacts before manufacture, instead of considering such studies solely as the responsibility of scientists.

Bharat said the study assumes importance in the light of two recent initiatives of the India's Ministry of Water Resources. One is the country's National Mission for Clean Ganga, which includes rejuvenating the river, and the second is on conservation, development, management and abatement of pollution in the Ganga and its tributaries.

Another important aspect is the expected socio-economic impacts of climate change in India, especially in the Ganga. These include changes in future rainfall patterns and, hence, flows in the river and changes in its water quality. "These changes could affect sources and sinks of contaminants and hence exacerbate future water pollution issues," Bharat said.

The study "investigates for the first time in India the importance of Indian Himalayan glaciers in fate and distribution of emerging and legacy contaminants in the Ganga basin," according to the researcher.

China calls for better management of small hydropower stations

English.news.cn
September 20, 2015

BEIJING, Sept. 20 (Xinhua) — China still has vast potentials to develop small hydropower plants but better management should be in place to minimise their environmental impact, officials said on Sunday.

China had 47,000 small hydropower stations, each with an installed capacity of less than 50,000 kilowatts, at the end of last year, said Tian Zhongxing, an official with the Ministry of Water Resources (MWR).

The aggregate installed capacity of the small hydropower stations hit 73 million kW with an annual electricity output of 220 billion kWh, which accounted for one fourth of China's total hydropower output.

However, the small stations represent only 41 percent China's small hydropower potential, lagging far behind developed countries, Tian said. The rate stood at 97 percent in Switzerland and France, 96 percent in Spain and Italy, and 84 percent in Japan.

Tian called for more efforts to develop hydropower as most of China's untapped hydro resources are based in 832 impoverished counties. Related projects can stimulate local economic growth.

There are dissenting voices on the construction of small hydro stations. But the environmental impact, such as soil

erosion, is resulted from a lack of oversight and management, said Liu Huan, director of the International Center of Small Hydro Power under the MWR.

"With scientific planning and management, we can minimise or even eliminate the adverse effect on the environment," Tian said.

China aims to bring the installed capacity of small hydropower stations to 75 million kW by 2020.

Scientists dig for ice cores on Tibetan plateau

CCTV.COM
Jin Yingqiao
September 18, 2015

A major multinational scientific expedition is being carried out on China's Southwest Qinghai-Tibet Plateau. Its mission is to collect ice cores in the remote, primitive land, which could allow us to further understand climate change.

A major multinational scientific expedition is on going on China's Southwest Qinghai-Tibet Plateau. Its mission is to collect ice cores in the remote, primitive land which could allow us to further understand climate change.

The plateau, with its glaciers of all sizes, is sometimes known as "the third polar region in the world."

Stretching across dozens of square kilometres, the Guliya ice cap has vertical ice walls more than 20 meters high.

After a gruelling eight-day journey, the expedition team has reached a point 6,200 meters above sea level, using snowmobiles, and sometimes manual labor, too.

Some of them had already visited 20 years ago.

"The most difficult part is that this slope is very slippery. It's a bit dangerous walking on it," said Zhao Huabiao, Chinese Academy of Sciences.



After an 8-day gruelling journey, the expedition team has reached a place 6,200 meters above sea level using snowmobiles, and sometimes manual labor too.

When the team was about to set off again, a Russian team member rushed over to them on a snow motorbike, shouting along the way. It turned out there was a big crack in the ice ahead of them. Falling into it would cause sudden death.

“There’s a big crack and another small one. You may not notice them over there, watch out,” said Li Jiule, Chinese Academy of Sciences.

The team is more than 6,000 meters above sea level, in a world of ice and snow.

“This glacier is on our Tibetan plateau, which can have impact on Asian and global climate. And this glacier is the thickest on the plateau,” Zhao said.

From this point, scientists will further penetrate another 6–10 kilo meters down into the drilling zones, into the heart of the plateau, to recover the deep hidden ice cores.

Beijing Welcomes World’s First Smog-Eating Tower

China File
September 17, 2015

Beijingers enjoyed a rare breath of fresh air this week. The city’s smog levels fell to their lowest levels in recent years, as authorities scrambled to shut down factories and curb car use so that China’s Second World War victory military parade had a pollution-free backdrop.



Photo courtesy of Studio Roosegaarde

But the blue skies will likely dissipate once the celebrations are over and cars go back on the roads, construction work restarts, and factories resume production.

With China’s chronic smog in mind, Dutch architect Daan Roosegaarde has come up with an innovative solution he says will help cities such as Beijing clean up toxic air and harmful pollutants.

His team of designers has created The Smog Free Tower, intended to be the “largest purifier in the world.”

The 7-meter unit will use ionic filters to charge and remove smog particles by blowing fresh air out of the tower’s side vents. This will create a high-pressure zone —“bubbles” of air, which will be 75 percent cleaner than the rest of the city.

The Dutch designers have raised money on the crowd-sourcing website ‘Kick starter’ to make the tower a reality and an opening ceremony for the first model will be held in their home city of Rotterdam in the first week of September.

The technology is similar to that used in hospitals. “In a few hours it will clean [air] in a small space; if you leave it on for a couple of days it cleans a small neighbourhood,” Roosegaarde says.

It is also highly energy efficient, using about 14,000 kilowatts of power—less than a kettle, Roosegaarde told Chinadialogue. In Rotterdam, the tower will be powered by wind energy, while elsewhere he hopes it will run on solar-generated electricity.

If enough funds are raised, the plan is to take the tower on a tour of smog-choked cities around the world—including Beijing, New Delhi, Paris, Los Angeles, and Mexico City.

To read the full article please click here: <http://fnvaworld.org/?p=17634>

Scientists on Tibetan Plateau Explore Glacier

Chinese Academy of Sciences
September 16, 2015

An international expedition team is on the Tibetan Plateau, on a mission to drill ice core samples from the Guliya Glacier.

Scientists from five countries led by the Chinese Academy of Sciences have entered a high-altitude no-man’s-land that ranges about 200 kilometres, where they will drill the samples.

The ice cap stretches dozens of square kilometres, and it has vertical ice walls of more than 20 meters.

Guliya is surrounded by snow mountains and lakes, which can also provide scientists with climatic data. The

expedition aims to find clues about global climate change held in the ice cores.

Worms Contribute to Soil Ecology After Glacier Retreat

Glacier Hub
Manon Verchot
September 16, 2015

The rock, gravel, sand and fine particles that are trapped under glaciers for millennia undergo major changes as glaciers retreat. Once they are exposed to the atmosphere, they are colonised by a variety of organisms and develop soils. They shift from having relatively few species of bacteria to developing more complex ecosystems.

Studying nematodes — or roundworms — communities in these soils can provide insight into the stages of ecosystem development as the worms respond differently to vegetative changes from grasslands to forested areas, a recent study from the Chinese Academy of Sciences found. The types of nematodes found in soil can also give insights about soil health, the authors found.

Though they may not look very impressive, nematodes are complex creatures. More than 25,000 species have been identified and have been known to adapt to a large variety of environments — from terrestrial to watery ecosystems, from salty to fresh habitats, and from northern to southern longitudes.



Collecting samples in glacier forelands (source: LTERNET)

The Hailuoguo Glacier on the southeastern Tibetan Plateau in China has retreated 1.8 kilometres in the 20th century, according to glaciologist Mauri Pelto. Because of the glacier's rapid retreat, researchers from the Chinese Academy of Sciences were able to observe 120 years of plant regeneration in seven different stages. In phase one—the first 3 years after soil is initially exposed—mosses, small

plants and grasses begin to grow. During phases two, three and four, or years 3 through 40, grasses eventually become replaced by shrubs and low trees. In phases five, six and seven, from 40 to 120 years after exposure, mature forests develop. Samples of these phases were taken from seven different sites and analysed for pH balance, phosphorus and nitrogen content. Nematodes were extracted from the samples.

The researchers found that while all these changes were occurring above ground, dynamic changes were also occurring beneath the surface. As the soils first developed, levels of soil phosphorous increased, and fungi-eating nematodes were dominant. In later stages, these nematodes were replaced with bacteria-eating nematodes; this shift is likely a response to the improvement of soil quality.

But by the seventh phase, soil health began to decrease, and the researchers noticed the return of fungi-eating nematodes, species that survive well in poor soil conditions. Nutrient availability at this later phase began decreasing, suggesting that the ecosystem was entering a retrogressive phase.

“Further research should be conducted to determine the most efficient approach to integrate plant succession, nutrient availability, and soil bacterial and invertebrate community dynamics into models of ecosystem development and succession,” the researchers concluded. “These models would be helpful for prediction and management of nutrient limitation during long-term soil development.” It will be interesting to see whether the patterns of changing nematode populations in the glacier forelands in China are similar to those in other areas. It will also be of importance to framing climate change policy, since the expansion of vegetation in areas formerly covered by glaciers has the potential to sequester carbon dioxide.

China cleans up 1,790 environment crimes from January to July

Xinhua
Gu Liping
September 15, 2015

China has cleaned up 1,790 crime cases involving environmental pollution from January to July this year, vice minister of environmental protection Wu Xiaoping said Monday.

Addressing a symposium on environment and development, Wu said that since the new environmental protection law came into effect, the environmental protection authorities have been very busy.

The ministry conducted inspections and warned local officials with serious environmental problems in their area, Wu added.

The ministry has strengthened work on pollution. Among the 161 cities implementing new air quality standards in the first half of this year, 8.2 percent more days met the standard compared to the same period last year.

An action plan for water pollution has been fully implemented, while the authorities are devising action plan on soil pollution, Wu added.

The ministry has assisted local governments and centrally administered state-owned enterprises to make plans for emission cuts. Chemical oxygen demand and emissions of ammonia, sulphur dioxide and nitrous oxides dropped by 2.9 percent, 3.18 percent, 4.63 percent, 8.8 percent year-on-year respectively in the first half of this year.

Discovery of 17 million-year-old fossilised flower adds to mystery of Tibetan plateau

South China Morning Post
Stephen Chen
September 14, 2015

Strange location of an ancient plant prompts rethink on rise of the plateau

The discovery of a 17-million-year-old fossilised flower has forced scientists to rethink the history of the Tibetan Plateau, which may have risen faster and more recently than thought.

Scientists found the flower at an altitude of 4,600 metres – thousands of metres above its normal living range, prompting an international team led by researchers from the mainland to calculate the plateau had risen by up to 3,000 metres since the flower was alive.

The timeline for the rise of the Tibetan Plateau is a hotly debated topic, but the discovery appears to rule out the claim by some scientists that significant growth stopped more than 20million years ago.

The collision between the Indian and Eurasian tectonic plates causes the plateau to rise a little every year, but environmental effects such as wind and rain erode some of this growth.

Many scientists had believed that the force generated by the colliding plates over the past 20 million years was not enough to outweigh the environmental erosion. Some had even argued that the plateau might have been higher in the past than today, with its present height reached as early as 50 million years ago.

But the team's discovery appears to rule this out. They believe the fossilised flower, of a Berberis plant in the Hol Xil Basin, gives an unprecedented insight into the elevation of the regional landscape at the time.

Berberis, which still thrives in Tibet, lives at altitudes between 900 and 2,500 metres – far lower than the fossil. Even allowing for the warmer climate of that period, which might have enabled the plant to live at a higher altitude, the researchers estimated the plateau must have been 2,000 to 3,000 metres lower when the plant was alive.

“Our finding does not support earlier views that northern Tibet had reached or even exceeded its modern elevation before the Miocene [23 million years ago],” wrote the team in a paper published in Scientific Reports.

They said when the plateau rose, it did so relatively quickly. “The elevation of northern Tibet probably remained stable from the Eocene [more than 50 million years ago] to early Miocene [23 million to 5 million years ago] but since then there has been a considerable uplift,” they said. The team was led by professor Wang Yufei and Li Chengsen of the Chinese Academy of Sciences' Botany Institute.

Wang Jiangang, associate researcher with the academy's Institute of Geology and Geophysics, said the study provided new and valuable information.

“It is commonly accepted that the Tibetan Plateau stopped growing at some point, but when exactly that happened remains a hot debate,” said Wang Jiangang, who was not involved in the research. The debate has led to the development of ingenious methods to calculate the plateau's rise, such as measuring lightweight oxygen isotopes in sediment.

“The plant fossil provides a good angle to look at the issue, but the method has its limits – such as possible natural transportation of the plant before burial,” Wang Jiangang warned.

Even so, he added, “[their] result can be trusted if it matches the findings of other methods”.

Tibet Environment Well Protected

CRIENGLISH.com
Web Editor: Li Chenxi
2015-09-08

Environmental protection has been highlighted as one of the Chinese government's priorities when it comes to the development of the remote, southwestern areas of the Tibet Autonomous Region.

CRI's Qi Zhi explains.

Dubbed 'The Roof of the World,' the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau encompasses Qiangtang.

Qiangtang is China's largest nature reserve in Tibet.

It's located in the northwestern part of the Autonomous Region, covering the foot-hills of the highest points on earth, as well as part of the Tarim Basin and the extreme western regions of China.

Situated more than 5-thousand meters above the sea level, and making up an area of nearly 300-thousand square kilometres, Qiangtang is almost 3-times the size of the eastern Chinese province of Jiangsu.

Karma Tsedrup, one of the local Environmental Protection Officers, says Qiangtang is ecologically unique, in that it affects the entire region around it.

"The Qiangtang Natural Reserve is dominated by a special paramos ecosystem. This means the region plays a key role in how climatic changes evolve both here in China and in other parts of Southeast Asia."

Qiangtang is among 47-nature reserves in Tibet which cover over 400-thousand square kilometres in total.

Tibet is one of the areas of China which has abundant water resources.

Lakes in the Region cover a total area of more than 25-thousand square kilometres.

The autonomous region is also where the Yangtze and Yellow River start.

Qiangtang is also home to more than 100 different kinds of mineral deposits.

Around two-fifths of China's copper reserves are located in the area.

Large amounts of lead and zinc are also in Tibet.

Despite the opportunities, Zhang Tianhua with the Tibetan Resource Management Bureau says they still want to maintain the environment in the Region.

"We will never choose to develop the economy at the cost of the environment. When it comes to environmental

protection, we do everything we can to make sure it is safe."

As part of the environmental commitment, no new mining projects in the region have been approved over the last 2-years.

A number of existing mining operations have also been closed.

At the same time, steps are also being taken to try to stop the desertification of the region, which lies on the southern edge of the Gobi Desert.

Jia Qinqing is a forestry official from Shandong who has been sent-in to try to help create tree-breaks in the desert areas.

"At first, most of the trees died not long after being planted. But now, keeping trees alive isn't a problem thanks to our improved watering, fertilising and maintenance techniques."

One issue still creating a challenge in the Qiangtang Region of Tibet is a lack of people willing to make the step out into the wilderness.

Zongga with the Regional Environmental Protection Bureau says a lack of personnel is becoming a significant problem.

"The staff at all our natural reserves in Tibet have less than 400 people. Each of them has to take care of more than a thousand square kilometres of land."

In an attempt to try to bridge the gap, money has already been set aside this year to hire an additional one-thousand rangers to help patrol the protected areas of Qiangtang.

Super grain quinoa flourishes on Tibetan plateau

Zee News
September 7, 2015

Lhasa: Called the "super grain" for its qualities, quinoa is flourishing along the banks and valleys of the Lhasa and Yarlung Tsangpo rivers, despite a lasting drought on the Roof of the World.

An unusual-looking crop with dark-red spikes and purple-green leaves, quinoa is highly nutritious, drought resistant and salt tolerant, making it popular with many industrialised countries.

It is so nutritious that National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) of the United States feeds the grain to its astronauts on space missions, making it a candidate

for the 'Controlled Ecological Life Support System' in spaceships, which will grow crops.

The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation named 2013 the International Year of Quinoa in recognition of its "potential contribution to the fight against hunger and malnutrition".

"A bumper harvest of quinoa is expected this autumn on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau," said Gongbo Tashi, a professor at the agricultural college of Tibet University, who introduced quinoa to China.

A 3,000 mu (200 hectare) plot of quinoa will yield 250,000 kg grain, Xinhua quoted Huang Zhaogang, president of a quinoa company and Gongbo Tashi's business partner, as saying.

Quinoa has been cultivated in the Andes in South America for over 5,000 years. However, its health benefits such as high protein and mineral content have only recently garnered worldwide attention.

Experts say quinoa responds well to controlled environments with large increases in seed production, maintenance of short canopy stature, and increased harvest index.

Gongbo Tashi had the idea of introducing the crop in Tibet after reading a report about it in an English newspaper in 1987.

He said quinoa was quite adaptable and would be suitable for high-altitude areas, usually 3,000 or 4,000 metres above sea level, making the Qinghai-Tibet plateau a desirable new home for the plant.

"It will help improve the health of locals," he said. Meats and barley are the core foods eaten by Tibetans in the cold and rigid highlands, but they are not comprehensively nutritious and believed to be a factor affecting their life expectancy.

Gongbo Tashi sought technological support from a leading quinoa producer in the United States in 1987.

Then he went to study in the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center in Mexico in 1988, where he attended classes of Norman Borlaug, the 1970 Nobel laureate called "the father of the Green Revolution" and "agriculture's greatest spokesperson".

Gongbo Tashi brought seeds back to Tibet and, in the early 1990s, the Tibetan government approved the quinoa cultivation project.

After a few failed experiments, Gongbo Tashi and his team cooperated with Huang, and they successfully grew the crop in Qinghai Province. Since 2010, they have planted quinoa on a large-scale in the Tibetan counties of Lhoka, Chushu and Lhatse.

In more than 20 years, his team have bred several new varieties to suit the environment and condition of the plateau, and named one of the variants "Quinoa of Tibetan Dream".

Gongbo Tashi was born into a farming family in 1959 in west Tibet. He was the only Tibetan student enrolled by China's Northwest Agriculture College in the late 1970s. He earned his master's of science from the University of Hawaii at Manoa in 2006.

"As a Tibetan scientist, I haven't wasted my life, because I brought quinoa into Tibet and made it live," he said.

Huang said his primary goal was to ensure quinoa's benefits reach ordinary Tibetans while meeting consumers' demands nationwide.

Gongbo Tashi and Huang have helped Tibetan farmers, engaged in the production of quinoa, double their incomes through the new crop.

They hope that quinoa will become the first Tibet-grown food to be exported overseas.

Nearly 300,000 relocated to protect environment in China's Ningxia

Xinhua
September 2, 2015

This article was produced by the Xinhua News Agency, the official press agency of the People's Republic of China. Xinhua describes itself as the "information organ of the central government." Given China's size and importance, GlobalPost publishes Xinhua's press feed as a resource for its readers and makes no claims as to journalistic accuracy.

YINCHUAN, Sept. 2 (Xinhua) — An "eco-immigration" project has moved 299,300 villagers out of the mountains to protect one of China's worst regions affected by soil erosion.

The Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region plans to move a total of 350,000 people, a goal set by the project, into new homes by the end of this year, according to the region's poverty alleviation office.

Launched in 2011, the project aims to depopulate 848,000 hectares of lands to restore bio diversity. The arid region has long been plagued by severe soil erosion due to deforestation and excessive farming.

Dong Ling, head of the poverty alleviation office, said the region constructed 76,200 new homes or apartments for

the immigrants. The government also built greenhouses and husbandry facilities and are providing training to improve immigrants' incomes.

Villagers and officials say an increase in the wildlife population has been a prominent change brought by the project.

Hou Bingchao, whose family was the only to stay after his village in Jingyuan County was relocated in 2012, said he encountered a family of wolves outside his home for the first time.

"A wolf with five cubs stared at me from a distance, and retreated into the woods. I yelled and my dog barked," Hou said.

"The forest grew more dense after the villagers left. That was why the wolves have returned."

government-controlled media to do so. During past altercations, Chinese officials at the foreign ministry and the military have expressed hope that the two sides will be able to resolve their differences through mutual dialogue. This may be the first time in recent years that the PLA has publicly challenged the Indian action on the border.

"We ask the Indian Army to earnestly implement the important consensus reached by the two governments and refrain from taking any unilateral actions which will affect the situation in the border areas and work together with the Chinese military to jointly maintain peace and stability in China-India border areas," Wu said.

India's view is that Chinese soldiers were the one to cause provocation by erecting a hut with equipment for generating solar power and watching the movement of troops inside its border.

Border Issue

Chinese military directly blames Indian Army for border standoff

Times of India
September 25, 2015

BEIJING: In a rare statement, the Chinese military on Thursday directly blamed India for its actions during the recent border standoff between the two countries. It was referring to India's move of removing a hut, along with surveillance cameras, that had been erected by Chinese troops at Burtse in Ladakh on the Indian side of the border about two weeks ago.

"The recent actions by the Indian Army in the relevant area were not consistent with the relevant agreement and spirit of the consensus of the two sides," People's Liberation Army spokesman Wu Qian said at a news briefing. "Jointly maintaining peace and tranquillity of India-China border is an important consensus reached between the leaderships of the two countries, and also a solemn commitment and promise made by the two government and militaries."

The Chinese government usually refrains from public criticism of India on the border issue, leaving it to

China upset by reported hut demolition on India border

REUTERS
Ben Blanchard
SEPTEMBER 24, 2015

China's Defense Ministry expressed concern on Thursday about reports that Indian troops had demolished a Chinese-built structure along their contested border.

The Times of India said Indian troops had brought down a "watch tower like structure" they had spotted on their side of the line of control in the Ladakh region. Other media said it was a hut.

Disagreement between the neighbours over parts of their 3,500-km (2,175-mile) border led to a brief war in 1962 and involves large stretches of remote territory.

Chinese Defense Ministry spokesman Wu Qian, asked about the report, said leaders of both countries had agreed to maintain peace and tranquillity along the border.

"The moves by the Indian military in the relevant region do not accord with the relevant agreements reached by both sides or the spirit of the consensus," Wu told a regular monthly news briefing.

"We demand the Indian military conscientiously put into effect the consensus reached by both governments, not take any unilateral moves which could affect the border situation and maintain the peace and stability of the border with the Chinese military."

China claims more than 90,000 sq. km (35,000 sq. miles) of territory disputed by India in the eastern sector of the Himalayas. Much of that forms the Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh, which China calls South Tibet.

India says China occupies 38,000 square km (14,600 sq. miles) of its territory on the Aksai Chin plateau in the west.

However, the nuclear-armed countries have moved to control the dispute, even as repeated rounds of talks have failed to make much progress.

Wu said both militaries would hold joint anti-terror drills in the southwestern Chinese province of Yunnan next month.

Has GoI conceded Daulat Beg Oldie?

Rising Kashmir
Faisal Yaseen
September 20, 2015

If they come here, we also go there: Army



In April 2013, reported incursions of the Chinese Peoples Liberation Army (PLA) in Daulat Beg Oldie in the cold desert region of Ladakh made mainstream Indian media hysterical but last month PLA hosted Indian Army at the same location.

Does it imply that the Government of India (GoI) has given up its claim on Daulat Beg Oldie?

PRO Army, Lt Col Manish Kumar said Indian Army and the PLA differ in perception regarding the Line of Actual Control (LAC), which divides the territories between India and China.

The 4056-km long LAC passes through Jammu Kashmir, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh.

Lt Col Kumar said there was a mechanism in place for border post management and the two armies were holding border post meetings at different locations.

Defence sources said earlier the Indian Army only held border post meetings with the Chinese Army at Spanggur, Nathu La and Bumla but now the two armies have added two more sectors at Daulat Beg Oldie and Kibithu.

Daulat Beg Oldie comes under the domain of 14 Corps.

PRO Defence Northern Command, Col S D Goswami said LAC is matter of perception and if the PLA ventures into the Indian territory, Indian Army ventures into Chinese territory.

“If they come here, we also go there,” he said.

Col Goswami said the two armies conduct patrolling of the areas as per their perception.

However, he said one thing was sure that Daulat Beg Oldie was not on the Chinese side.

“Daulat Beg Oldie for sure is on our side,” Col Goswami said.

In April 2013, Daulat Beg Oldie region, a historic spot on the famed Silk Route, was in news over reports of Chinese incursion.

The confrontation between the two armies had reached to such a level that the Indian Air Force (IAF) landed its biggest war plane C 130J-30 Super Hercules aircraft at the world’s highest Daulat Beg Oldie airstrip, which is located at 16,614 feet in the Aksai Chin.

An airstrip in Daulat Beg Oldie was built during the Indo-China War in 1962 and came into prominence when packet aircraft of the IAF operated between 1962 and 1965.

After the 1962 war, India claimed that China was occupying about 33,000 sq. km of its territory in the Aksai Chin region of Ladakh.

In response, China alleged that India was occupying 90,000 square km and even went on saying that Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh is actually part of its territory.

Both New Delhi and Beijing have tried to mend their relations over the decades.

However, China’s oft repeated claim for Arunachal Pradesh and Beijing’s proximity with Islamabad is not going well with New Delhi.

Likewise, India’s posture on Tibet initially and providing asylum to Dalai Lama was taken seriously by China.

Each side has been improving its military and logistics capabilities in the region and reinforcing their capabilities in the area, despite showing interest in negotiations.

The airbases that India of late has started reconstructing were built for troop movement prior to 1962 war but abandoned by the Indian Army in 1966.

However, the situation along LAC has been relatively peaceful since Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to China earlier this year but whether or not the peace is a result of GoI having given up Daulat Beg Oldie remains to be seen.

India, China play down border standoff, flag meeting likely today

Hindustan Times
Rahul Singh
September 15, 2015

A flag meeting between Indian and Chinese commanders is likely in the sensitive Ladakh sector on Tuesday to ease tensions along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) following a border squabble last week, sources said.

A sense of unease gripped the LAC, prone to violations by the Chinese, after Indian forces on Friday flattened a one-room shed constructed by Chinese troops inside what India considers to be its territory in the Burtse region.

But a flare-up was avoided as both sides stuck to protocols for maintaining border peace.

The flag meet, a mechanism to resolve frontier issues, could be held either at Daulat Beg Oldie (DBO) or at Chushul, a source said.

"It wasn't a face-off but we don't want such things to fester," he said.

China too said there was no face-off between the two sides, seeking a "clarification" from India on the incident.

"As far as I know there is no such face off in the border area," Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Hong Lei told reporters in Beijing.

He said Chinese troops were carrying out their duties on their side of the LAC. China was committed to border peace and stability, Lei added.

New Delhi and Beijing signed a new boundary pact in October 2013 to ensure peace and stability along the LAC, but the cycle of border violations continues to be an old irritant in bilateral ties.

A border personnel meeting between India and China took place at DBO for the first time on August 15.

The Indian Air Force has landed its special-mission planes at the 16,614-foot landing strip in the area, the world's highest military airfield—barely 8km from the LAC—on several occasions despite resistance from China.

India currently restricts its surveillance in the Ladakh sector to a self-imposed "patrolling limit" ranging between 2km and 20km inside New Delhi's perception of the LAC, which witnessed a series of Chinese incursions that have caused friction between the two countries.

The development on Friday came exactly a year after a tense standoff in the Chumar sector between the two armies that was triggered when Indian forces found Chinese troops had deployed heavy machinery to construct a temporary road inside Indian territory.

Stand-Off Between Indian, Chinese Troops in Ladakh After China Builds Watchtower

NDTV
Sudhi Ranjan Sen, Edited by Shyam Balasubramanian
September 13, 2015



Chinese troops were building a watchtower very close to a critical Indian air strip. (File photo)

NEW DELHI: A stand-off is on between Indian and Chinese troops in the Burtse region of northern Ladakh. Both sides have sent reinforcements, top officials have told NDTV. The stand-off began after Indian troops dismantled a watchtower the Chinese were building close to the mutually-agreed patrolling line.

The Chinese Army, sources told NDTV, was constructing an observation post very close to the agreed Border Patrolling Line. India had objected to the construction a few days ago. The Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) and the Indian Army dismantled the tower yesterday, triggering the stand-off.

The observation post was being constructed near Burtse, in the Depsang Plains. It was close to two points of strategic importance – the airstrip at Daulat Beg Oldie and

the Karakoram Pass. China claims the Depsang Plains as part of its territory, a claim rejected by India.

Daulat Beg Oldie, or DBO, is an Advanced Landing Ground that is the critical supply link to Indian troops at the Siachen Glacier. It is among the highest airstrips in the world. The Karakoram Pass is among the most important land links between India and China, with its significance stretching to the ancient Silk Route.

Sources told NDTV that as of now, troops on either side are within the accepted 'Border Patrol Line'. The alignment of the Line of Actual Control (LAC) is disputed in this area. So, both sides work using the concept of a 'Border Patrolling Line'.

It is also the last point till which either side sends its patrol up to. The alignment is broadly accepted in Ladakh. Nonetheless, there are contentious pockets and the 'Border Patrolling Line' works as the de-facto border.

A senior field commander played down the stand-off and termed it as "routine". "The PLA test our response. We expect the issue to be sorted out locally through a Border Flag Meeting," he told NDTV.

India, China face-off at Burtse in Ladakh

The Hindu
September 13, 2015

Indian and Chinese troops are locked in another standoff at Burtse in northern Ladakh after India objected to China building a watch tower. As China rejected India's objections both sides moved a platoon each of soldiers in a show of strength, sources said on Saturday.

Sources said this standoff is not an isolated incident as minor incidents keep happening regularly due to difference of perception on the un-demarcated boundary. India claims 15-23 km ahead of its holding point in this region which is rejected by the Chinese.

In September last year, troops of both sides were held in a standoff in the Chumar sector at the same time as Chinese President Xi Jinping was visiting India.

A strategic road India plans to build to Daulat Beg Oldie (DBO) passes through Burtse. DBO was the scene of a 21-day standoff in April 2013.

Other News

Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission Host Stateless Breakfast

Voice Of Tibet
September 29, 2015



Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission Host Stateless Breakfast

As the Chinese President Xi Jinping met with the US President Barack Obama at the White House this morning, Congressman Jim McGovern (D-MA 2nd district), Co-Chairman of the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission, hosted a 'Stateless' breakfast to honour the human rights defenders who have been imprisoned, persecuted, and silenced by the Chinese government.

Congressman Jim McGovern, Congressman Joe Pitts, Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi, Congresswoman Sheila Jackson, and Human Rights Activists representing various organisations were present at the event.

Nancy Pelosi, who has been a strong advocate for Tibet for decades expressed her support for the Tibetan cause and her solidarity with the Tibetan people. Sheila Jackson Lee, US Representative for Texas's 18th Congressional District also expressed her support for Tibet and said that her state had the privilege to invite the Dalai Lama.

Chen Guangchen, a Chinese civil right activist; Lu Pin, Chinese feminist activist; Rebiya Kadeer, President of World Uyghur Congress; Teng Biao, lawyer and human rights activist; Ti-Ann Wang, daughter of a Chinese activist currently serving a life sentence in China's prison, and Tsering Kyi, a blogger and poet who works at VOA's Tibetan Service were among the presenters at the event.

Tsering Kyi spoke about the current situation inside Tibet and her nephew, who self-immolated to protest China's policies towards Tibetans in 2013.

The event also reserved an empty chair to represent the human rights defenders who still remain in Chinese custody; in prison, house-arrest, or victims of enforced disappearances.

China Aid, Freedom House, Human Rights Watch, Initiatives for China, International Campaign for Tibet, Project 2049 Institute, Reporters Without Borders, World Uyghur Congress, and Uyghur American Association were the host organisations for today's stateless breakfast in conjunction with The Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission and The Congressional-Executive Commission on China.

Dalai Lama's former biographer takes up residence in China

Reuters
Ben Blanchard
September 27, 2015

A former senior member of the exiled Tibetan government in India and one-time biographer for the Dalai Lama has returned to live in China, where he had visited several times in recent years, a Chinese government-run news website said.

Tibet.cn said late on Saturday that Achok Rinpoche had returned in May and was now living permanently in Ngaba, a heavily Tibetan part of the southwestern province of Sichuan that is traditionally strongly defiant of Chinese rule.

"I've now really become a Chinese citizen," he was quoted as telling senior Sichuan government official Cui Baohua last week.

The website showed a picture of the two of them walking around a temple in Ngaba surrounded by Tibetan Buddhist monks.

According to the website of the Austria-based Tibet Centre Institute, where Achok Rinpoche is listed as a teacher, he had been working on compiling a list of teachings of the Dalai Lama and had once been his official biographer.

He also lived in Beijing for a year in 1987 at the request of the Dalai Lama and the late Panchen Lama, working at a school for reincarnated lamas, the center said.

China has ruled Tibet with an iron fist since the People's Liberation Army "peacefully liberated" it in 1950.

Achok Rinpoche and Cui, who heads the United Front Work Department in Sichuan, which is in charge of co-opting religious groups and ethnic minorities, are "old friends", the Chinese report said.

Achok Rinpoche, who was born in Sichuan in 1944 and left in 1959 after a failed Tibetan uprising against Chinese rule, first came back to China in 1982 as part of an effort by Beijing to engage with exiled Tibetans, the Chinese website said.

Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama fled at the same time. China reviles him as a separatist, although he says he merely wants genuine autonomy for Tibet.

Achok Rinpoche had headed a Tibetan hospital and worked as a senior librarian in exile, the Chinese website said.

He fell and injured himself while in Nepal in December 2014 and asked to be taken to China for treatment, which Cui organised, the report said.

During each trip Achok Rinpoche could see with his own eyes China's amazing development, and that religious and ethnic groups were well-treated, the website said.

"The motherland and home are the best. The motherland is the warmest," it said.

Although he was invited to the Dalai Lama's birthday celebrations in July, what he wanted to do more was come home and settle down, the website said.

It was not immediately possible to reach him for comment.

(Reporting by Ben Blanchard; Editing by Paul Tait)

China's President Pledges to Fight Poverty and Gender Discrimination

The Wall Street Journal
JEREMY PAGE
September 27, 2015

UNITED NATIONS—China's President Xi Jinping sought to mollify concerns about his country's growing power by pledging billions of dollars to fight poverty and gender discrimination during a United Nations meeting at the end of a weeklong U.S. visit.

The pledges appeared designed to portray China as a global leader on social issues following a U.S. presidential summit on Friday that was dominated by tensions over Beijing's economic policies, alleged cyberattacks on the U.S., and island-building in the disputed South China Sea.

At a U.N. summit on women's rights on Sunday, Mr. Xi pledged \$10 million to the U.N. agency for women and said China would help developing countries by initiating

100 health projects for women and children and building an equal number of schools for girls in the next five years.

Mr. Xi announced on Saturday that China would launch an assistance fund for developing countries with an initial investment of \$2 billion, and step up investment in the least developed countries—mostly in Africa—by at least \$12 billion by 2030.

China was “putting justice before interests,” Mr. Xi told the U.N. General Assembly on Saturday, before holding talks with dozens of leaders from developing nations in the southern hemisphere.

That followed a pledge by China on Friday to launch a program by 2017 to cap some greenhouse-gas emissions and put a price on carbon, and to contribute \$3.1 billion to help poorer countries finance their own transition programs.

“This is major break with the past,” said Steve Tsang, an expert on Chinese politics at the University of Nottingham. “It’s the first time China is putting a large amount money” toward international development.

“This shows a new and in some ways positive assertiveness in China’s foreign policy, although a lot will depend on how the money is spent,” he said. “In the short term, for the U.S. visit, I think this is working almost exactly as the Chinese government wanted it to.”

China has long been criticised by the U.S. and other developed countries for not taking on international responsibilities commensurate with its ambitions to be a global power. Chinese overseas aid and investment have focused more on securing resources than achieving humanitarian goals.

In recent months, there have been fresh concerns in the U.S. and many other countries that China’s handling of an economic slowdown and a stock-market crash could affect the broader global economy.

Mr. Xi has sought to focus public attention on the positive aspects of China’s rise at the start and finish of his U.S. visit, which began with meetings with U.S. business leaders in Seattle and will conclude with an address to the U.N. General Assembly on Monday.

Zhang Jun, head of the Chinese foreign ministry’s department of international economic affairs, admitted that there was a strong political component to China’s spending plans, particularly the \$2 billion fund for developing countries in the southern hemisphere.

“It’s more political than practical,” he told a briefing on Saturday evening in New York’s Waldorf Astoria hotel, which was purchased last year by a Chinese company.

“What might be different from other Western countries or traditional donors is that we do not impose political conditions from outside,” Mr. Zhang said. “That’s also why the policies and measures taken by China are warmly welcomed by recipient countries in other parts of the world.”

Mr. Xi’s wife, Peng Liyuan, also helped to burnish China’s reputation as a global leader, making a rare speech in English on the importance of education for women and girls.

Xi Jinping says China will offer billions of dollars

Obama raises the issue of Tibet with Xi Jinping

Tibet Sun
Lobsang Wangyal
September 26, 2015

United States President Barack Obama raised the issue of Tibet with his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping during a joint press conference on Friday, along with addressing a range of critical issues between the world’s top two economic and military powers.

Obama spoke in the White House Rose Garden alongside Xi during the Chinese president’s official state visit, and chided Xi over the issues of Chinese cyberthreats, violation of basic human rights, and Chinese action in the South China Sea.

Regarding the issue of Tibet, Obama said, “Even as we recognise Tibet as part of the People’s Republic of China, we continue to encourage Chinese authorities to preserve the religious and cultural identity of the Tibetan people, and to engage the Dalai Lama or his representatives.”

Obama said they had a frank discussion about human rights, and that he affirmed America’s support for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all people, including freedom of assembly and expression, freedom of the press and freedom of religion.

He stressed to Xi that preventing journalists, lawyers, NGOs and civil society groups from operating freely, or closing churches and denying ethnic minorities equal treatment are all “problematic”.

Xi responded to Obama’s human rights remarks saying, “We must recognise that countries have different historical processes and realities, and we need to respect people of all countries in the right to choose their own development path independently.”

In particular, the last few US governments have consistently encouraged the Chinese leadership to find a solution to the grievances of the Tibetan people. Although the US Government maintains that Tibet is a part of the People's Republic of China, it continues to urge the Chinese leadership to engage in dialogue with the Dalai Lama or his representatives.

The United States has provided humanitarian and educational assistance to exile Tibetans, along with funding supportive radio broadcasts in Tibetan language by two organisations.

The red carpet and full ceremonial welcome accorded to Xi from the White House underlined the importance of the growing dependence of the two great powers, but the leaders candidly expressed their differences.

Obama hosted Xi Jinping and Madame Lady Peng Liyuan for an official White House State Dinner that Friday evening.

During the day pro-Tibet and pro-Uyghur activists protested outside the Rose Garden for China to recognise their demands for greater freedom for their homelands of Tibet and East Turkistan.

The administration of Tibetans in exile based in Dharamshala has been following a 'Middle-Way Policy' seeking autonomy rather than a Tibet independent from China.

Obama, Xi Talk Rights as Protesters Demand End to Oppression in China

Radio Free Asia
September 25, 2015

AFP

China's President Xi Jinping met with U.S. President Barack Obama at the White House in Washington Friday to discuss a variety of issues, including human rights, as protesters massed outside, calling on Beijing to end its oppression of minorities and dissidents.

In a joint press conference delivered after the meeting, Obama said the two leaders had held a "frank discussion" on human rights, reaffirming U.S. support for freedom of assembly and expression, freedom of the press and freedom of religion.

"I expressed in candid terms our strong view that preventing journalists, lawyers, NGOs and civil society groups from operating freely, or closing churches and denying ethnic minorities equal treatment are all

problematic ... and actually prevent China and its people from realising its full potential," he said.

Xi said China is making "all-around efforts to deepen comprehensive reform, to build law-based governance, [and] to enforce strict party discipline" in the interest of "building a society of initial prosperity in all respects."

He said that while democracy and human rights "are the common pursuit of mankind ... we must recognise that countries have different historical processes and realities, and we need to respect people of all countries in the right to choose their own development path independently."

According to Xi, part of China's reemergence as a global player requires achieving "social equity and justice, and advancing human rights," and he expressed Beijing's willingness to further conduct rights dialogue with the U.S. so that the two nations might "progress together."

While disagreeing over China's territorial ambitions in the South China Sea, Obama and Xi also agreed to measure to combat global warming and halt commercial cyber-theft and announced agreements with on a military hotline and rules of behaviour to govern air-to-air encounters between the two powers military aircraft.

During the press conference, chants could be heard from about a block away from the South Lawn, where more than 200 pro-China supporters and anti-China protesters in two groups were separated from one another by metal barriers and police.

The supporters, consisting largely of Chinese students based in the U.S. and members of Chinese-American associations, waved Chinese and American flags and called out pro-China slogans, welcoming Xi to the U.S. capital.

The more animated protesters were made up of a variety of anti-Beijing organisations, including ethnic Uyghur from northwestern China's Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, Tibetans and Chinese democracy campaigners.

One group of activists called China Rights Now carried a banner that said in large letters: "Xi Jinping Let Freedom Ring" with smaller letters underneath which read: "for Chinese, Tibetans, Uyghur and Mongols."

Oppressive policies



Anti-China protesters carry banners and flags outside the White House in Washington, Sept. 25, 2015. Credit: RFA

A group of Uyghur shouted slogans calling for freedom and human rights and greater autonomy in the Xinjiang region, where members of their minority complain of pervasive ethnic discrimination, religious repression, and cultural suppression by China's communist government.

Rebiya Kadeer, president of the Munich-based World Uyghur Congress, questioned why Xi was being invited to the White House when he is responsible for the "jailing of thousands and the killing of many others."

"The Chinese government arrested thousands of people during the 2009 protests in [the Xinjiang capital] Urumqi and sentenced [outspoken Uyghur academic] Ilham Tohti to life in prison," she said.

"China has been carrying out its oppressive policies over the past 60 years, but when Xi rose to power, the number of forced disappearances and sentences without due process intensified. Today we call on China to release all political prisoners, including Uyghur, Tibetan and Chinese alike."

T. Kumar, international advocacy director at London-based rights group Amnesty International, called on Obama to "give equal weight to human rights, along with business and tech issues" during his meeting with Xi, saying to steer clear of the issue would be "an extreme failure" for the U.S.

"We're concerned about thousands of political prisoners in Xinjiang," he said, as well as discrimination against Uyghurs in the region.

China has vowed to crack down on the "three evils" of terrorism, separatism, and religious extremism in Xinjiang, but experts outside China say Beijing has exaggerated the threat from Uyghur "separatists" and that domestic policies are responsible for an upsurge in violence that has left hundreds dead since 2012.

Uyghur groups in exile say such attacks are likely expressions of resistance to Beijing's policies in Xinjiang,

where rights groups accuse authorities of heavy-handed rule, including violent police raids on Uyghur households, restrictions on Islamic practices, and curbs on the culture and language of the Uyghur people.

A young Uyghur protester told RFA's Uyghur Service that he wanted China to provide equal rights for the people of his ethnic group.

The Chinese government took away our fundamental rights and put so many Uyghur in jail to suffer," he said.

"I'm here to be the voice for those innocent people, and for those who suffered or even died for our freedom and human rights."

Pressure on China

Also on Friday, Geng He, the U.S.-based wife of prominent rights lawyer Gao Zhisheng, questioned Washington's commitment to human rights amid Xi's visit to the White House, and suggested that her meetings with U.S. officials had only made his situation worse while he was in prison.

Two days earlier, U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Antony Blinken met with relatives of several Chinese dissidents and civil society activists, though Geng refused to attend, citing a letter from her husband who said little would come of the talks while officials wine and dine Xi in Washington.

"In the years I have been here, I have been to DC no less than 10 times, and each time I have met with officials at different levels of government," she told RFA Friday.

"I see them once a year, and each year they are higher ranking. I always thought that would mean my husband back home will have to put up with a bit less torture ... [but] it seemed that it just got worse and worse every time, even to the point where he pretty much came back from the dead."

Gao, 52, is currently under 24-hour surveillance by state security police at the home of his wife's parents in Xinjiang, where he was released from a three-year jail term for "incitement to subvert state power" in August.

According to Gao's friends, such as Beijing-based rights activist Hu Jia, the rights lawyer had barely been able to speak an entire sentence when he was first released from Xinjiang's Shaya Prison, where he had been held for lengthy periods in solitary confinement and tortured.

Gao suffered psychological torture and various forms of corporal punishment, severely affecting his memory, and leaving his teeth in such bad shape that he was unable to chew, they said.

EU, US raise Tibet issue at UN Human Rights Council meet

Phayul
Tenzin Monlam
September 23, 2015

DHARAMSHALA, September 23: The representatives of the US and the European Union (EU) raised the Tibet issue, the lack religious freedom and basic human rights at the 30th session of Human Right Council in Geneva on September 21.

Jean-Marc Hoscheit, Permanent Representative of the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg on behalf of the EU, and the delegation of the US led by Ambassador Keith Harper called on China to stop the excessive restrictions on religious freedom and to address the root causes of unrest and to foster dialogue with Tibetan representatives.

“The representatives of the US and the EU spoke of the rights violations happening in China including the suppression in Tibet. They spoke about the imprisonment of protesters in Tibet and rights activists in China,” Dawa Tsultrim, Joint Secretary at Office of Tibet, Geneva, told the Voice Of Tibet.

A group of 70 Tibetans across five different Tibetan communities in and around Switzerland & Liechtenstein on 18 September held a peaceful rally at the premises of the UN raising slogans such as “Tibet Needs Dialogue”, “Long Live Dalai lama” and “Stop Killing in Tibet”.

Meanwhile, Tenzing Jigme, President of the Tibetan Youth Congress (TYC) welcomed the development while indicating that it has been impacted by the ongoing indefinite hunger strike by the three executive members of the organisation at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi.

“We consider this, in a way, an impact of TYC indefinite hunger strike being held here. We had met with the US Embassy and EU officials recently in Delhi, and appealed them to raise Tibet issue in the UN General Assembly and Human Rights Council meetings,” said Tenzing Jigme.

“I Stand With Tibet” – Over 40 Scottish MPs show support

Tibet Post International
Molly Lortie
September 21, 2015



Over 40 MSPs have signed a Tibet petition on September 15, to be presented to the various bodies of the EU and its member states. Photo: David Lloyd Hudson

Edinburgh, Scotland — The Cross Party Group has just concluded an extremely successful week of exhibiting in the Scottish Parliament, in an effort to raise awareness of Tibet and the human rights abuses taking place.

Over 40 MSPs took the time to show their support and to sign the “Paris Declaration on the Freedom Struggle of the Tibetan People”, a petition to be presented to the various bodies of the EU and its member states.

During the exhibition, the group was honoured to host Ven. Thubten Wangchen, a member of the Tibetan Central Administration who travelled to Edinburgh in order to attend the exhibition and meet in person the MSPs who came to show their support for Tibet.

The Cross Party Group in the Scottish Parliament on Tibet (CPG on Tibet) also held an exhibit on Tibet in the Scottish Parliament— sponsored by Linda Fabiani in the Scottish Parliament.

Last week saw the Cross Party Group in the Scottish Parliament on Tibet (CPG on Tibet) form an exhibit in the Scottish Parliament. The Exhibition Coordinator David Lloyd Hudson and fellow organiser and member of the CPG on Tibet Iain Thom were joined by special guest Ven Thubten Wangchen, who is currently a European Member of the Tibetan Parliament in Exile and a Director of the Tibet House Trust based in Barcelona, Spain.

The exhibit’s focus was primarily on the impact of human rights abuses in Tibet and China and to raise this with Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs), bringing also to their attention the reports on the varied human rights issues in Tibet written by Dr. Martin Mills, Professor of Tibetan Anthropology at Aberdeen University.

The Cross Party Group on Tibet was most honoured to receive Ven. Wangchen, who brought with him an official petition by Tibet groups in Europe on human rights policies, being presented to the European Parliament and other bodies in November this year by Wangchen la and his European counterpart. These issues were well received

by MSPs available during the week and it was pleasing to see their support by signing the 'I Stand With Tibet' petition.

The petition forms part of the official campaign of Tibet groups in Europe, supporting the Paris Declaration which calls on all EU member '...governments to be true to the fundamental values and principles that Europe prides itself on' and to undertake three key actions.

Alex Salmond MSP when speaking with David Lloyd Hudson, and replying to questions raised to colleagues about the former then First Minister not meeting with the Dalai Lama in 2012, said he would be happy to meet with His Holiness on a future pastoral visit to Scotland and happily signed the petition in this context.

Members of the Scottish Parliament who signed to support the 'I stand with Tibet' petition along with Mr Salmond were (in alphabetical order): Clare Adamson, Claire Baker, Richard Baker, Neil Bibby, Cameron Buchanan, Roderick Campbell, James Dornan, Linda Fabiani (Convener of the CPG on Tibet), Mary Fee, Alex Fergusson, John Finnie, Christine Grahame, Rhoda Grant, Iain Gray, Hugh Henry, Cara Hilton, Jim Hume, Alison Johnstone, James Kelly, Bill Kidd, Richard Lyle, Angus MacDonald, Gordon MacDonald, Ken Mackintosh, Mike Mackenzie, John Mason, Joan McAlpine, Liam McArthur, Jamie McGrigor, Stuart McMillan, Anne McTaggart, Margaret Mitchell, Elaine Murray, Dennis Robertson, Alec Rowley, Mike Russell, Tavish Scott, Kevin Stewart, Jean Urquhart, Sandra White and John Wilson.

Mr Alex Salmond, former First minister of Scotland, also expressed that he would be happy to meet with His Holiness the Dalai Lama in the future while responding to David Lloyd Hudson and other colleagues on the question of the former First Minister's inability to meet His Holiness in 2012.

Late Tibetan monk's cousin testifies before US Rights Committee

Tibet Post International
Molly Lortie
September 21, 2015

Dharamshala — Geshe Jamyang Nyima, cousin of late Tibetan political prisoner Tenzin Delek Rinpoche, testified before the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission on September 17th.

The Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission is a bipartisan caucus of the United States House of Representatives,

aimed to promote, defend and advocate internationally recognised human rights norms.

U.S. House Representative Jim McGovern delivered the opening remarks of the hearing, briefing the caucus of the history of Tenzin Delek's incarceration and known illness.

"Last April, I wrote to the U.S. State Department to encourage our government officials to prioritise Tenzin Delek's release on medical parole, because he was reported to be suffering from serious health problems.

In late June, the State Department assured me the message had been transmitted. But at the end of the day, China ignored my pleas and those of many others around the world. I want to emphasise again today that the Chinese authorities bear direct responsibility for Tenzin Delek's unnecessary death."

In his testimonial, Geshe Jamyang Nyima raised the questions of how and why Tenzin Delek Rinpoche died. A prominent Tibetan political prisoner and a highly respected spiritual figure, he died in prison under mysterious circumstances on July 12th.

At the time of his death, Rinpoche was serving a life sentence under very harsh conditions for allegedly 'causing explosions' and 'inciting separatism,' charges which he never received a fair trial or legal representation for, and that he steadfastly maintained his innocence against.

"After Tenzin Delek Rinpoche's death, his family and community asked the prison authorities how and why he died. They asked the authorities for the body of Rinpoche in order to perform Buddhist final rites as per Tibetan tradition," Geshe Jamyang Nyima stated in his testimony before the commission.

"But the authorities withheld Rinpoche's body for several days, and finally, secretly cremated it. When Tibetans in Lihang, Rinpoche's hometown, organised a peaceful protest to demand Rinpoche's body for final rites, the Chinese police fired at them," he said.

Two of Tenzin Delek Rinpoche's relatives were detained and interrogated. Rinpoche's sister, Dolkar Lhamo, and community leaders submitted a 5-Point Appeal to the Chinese prison authorities, urging Chinese authorities to release the body for final rites and ritual.

However, authorities not only withheld the body, they also prohibited any kind of religious prayers or gatherings in the region of Lihang, Rinpoche's hometown. Tibetans were banned from observing any prayers, or displaying his photographs, or lighting butter lamps, or any other religious rituals for several days.

Geshe Nyima urged the US and Europe to speak out publicly for freedom and rights in Tibet under the repressive policies of the Chinese government.

He particularly called on the US Congress to urge President Obama to raise the issue of Tibet during the President's upcoming meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping.

Govt considering financing options for Bhasha Dam project

The News

Mehtab Haider

September 21, 2015

ISLAMABAD: After reluctance shown by World Bank and Asian Development Bank (ADB) to finance Bhasha Dam, Pakistan is considering different options including seeking multi-billion dollar loan from China and launching bond to attract overseas Pakistanis for investing in it.

"We are considering unbundling Bhasha Dam into construction of hydropower Dam then power turbines will be built into IPPs mode. We had already invested Rs100 billion on acquisition of land for Bhasha Dam," official sources confirmed to The News here on Sunday.

Federal Minister for Planning Ahsan Iqbal told 'The News' that the groundbreaking ceremony of Bhasha Dam would be held during the next calendar year 2016. He said that one Chinese company showed its interest to invest \$40 to \$50 billion in hydropower projects and currently they were conducting their feasibility studies to select projects.

He said that the government was also actively considering launching international bond to attract overseas Pakistanis for investing into this project. It is our endeavour to complete this project at all costs, he added.

One option is to seek assistance from China inside or outside the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) for which Beijing had committed \$46.2 billion for energy and infrastructure projects over medium to long-term basis.

The WB and ADB were not ready to finance Bhasha project owing to different excuses but the main hurdle was objections raised by New Delhi on this project.

So the options are limited as US had also indicated to provide financing but they have not so far delivered their promises in the past few years.

According to the technical feasibility for Diamer-Bhasha Dam Project, prepared by Wapda, the installed capacity would be 4,500MW. There will be 12 units having capacity

of 375MW each and the average annual generation of the Dam will be 19,000GWH.

The Diamer-Bhasha Dam project is located on Indus River about 315 km upstream of Tarbela Dam, 165 km downstream of Northern Areas capital Gilgit and 40 km downstream of Chilas.

On the main Dam, the type of the Diamer-Bhasha Dam will be Roller Compacted Concrete (RCC). The maximum height of the Dam will be 270 m (highest of its type in the world). On diversion system, there will be 2 number Diversion Tunnel (right side) and 1 number Diversion Tunnel (right side). Regarding main spillways, there will be 14 gates and the size of each gate will be 11.0 x 16.5 m.

On the reservoir side, the maximum operating level of Diamer Bhasha Dam will be EI 1,160m and minimum operating level of EI is 1060m. The Gross Capacity of the Dam will be 9.0 BCM (7.3 Million Acre Feet MAF). The live capacity of the Dam will be 7.9 BCM (6.4 MAF).

Regarding the outlets of the Bhasha Dam, the technical feasibility illustrates that there will be 7 low level outlets and five sluicing.

On sluicing tunnels, the Diamer-Bhasha Dam will have one right bank (through conversion of one diversion tunnel) and on the left bank there will be another tunnel.

Tibetan activists confront Chinese official at Xi Jinping book Launch

Phayul

Tenzin Dharpo

September 19, 2015

DHARAMSHALA, September 19: Activists from the Student of Free Tibet confronted a Chinese official at an event to launch a book by Chinese President Xi Jinping titled 'Xi Jinping Governance of China' at a book store in Washington DC, United States on Friday.

Lhadon Tethong, Director of Tibet Action Institute and Pema Yoko, Acting Executive Director of Students for Free Tibet, accompanied by other members of the group confronted Mr. Guo Weimin, Vice Minister of China's State Council Information Office (propaganda wing of the Politburo), at Xi Jinping's book launch at Politics and Prose book store.

In a video Lhadon Tethong was seen saying, "What I am wondering is that, if the question of Tibet is addressed in this book. A 150 Tibetans have self immolated, burned

their bodies in protest because China's repression in Tibet is so bad".

She continued, "The Tibetan, Chinese, Uyghur and people of Inner Mongolia should be allowed to live their lives in freedom and enjoy the rights people here have".

"Is the Tulku Tenzin Delek's murder and death in Chinese prison included in this book? These are questions Tibetans want to know. What about the over 300 lawyers hounded, arrested and disappeared in China? This is a book of a dictator," asks Pema Yoko in the same video.

PR activities such as the book launch are part of preparation for the upcoming state visit of Chinese President Xi Jinping on Sep 22, says Pema Yoko of SFT.

The owner of Politics and Prose, Bradley Graham, and a few Chinese officials intervened and pushed the duo out of the bookstore. However, the activists waited outside the store for the duration of the event and again confronted the Chinese official and his entourage blocking their passage for a few minutes. The activists held Tibetan flags and signs reading: "Xi Jinping: Tibet Will Be Free."

"Xi Jinping can publish as many propaganda books as he likes, but he cannot rewrite history and change the fact that Tibet was an independent nation and Tibetans have never given up their struggle for basic rights and freedom," says Pema Yoko.

Meanwhile the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission of the US Congress held a hearing on the deceased Tibetan philanthropist and leader Tulku Tenzin Delek in Washington DC on Thursday.

The hearing saw Gyeshe Nyima, cousin of Trulku Tenzin Delek, speak on the circumstances under which the Tulku was wrongfully convicted of 'inciting separatism', sentenced to life imprisonment and later succumbing to torture in Chinese prison under mysterious conditions on July 12. Congressman James P. McGovern moderated the event and also gave the opening remark at the hearing.

The hearing held at the 441 Cannon house office at the Capitol Hill was attended by more than 50 congressional staff and supporters.

PEN Appeals to Xi Jinping for Release of Imprisoned Chinese

New York Times
EDWARD WONG
SEPTEMBER 18, 2015



A photograph of Liu Xiaobo, the 2010 Nobel Peace laureate, at the Nobel Peace Center in Oslo. In 2009, he was charged with "inciting subversion of state power" and sentenced to 11 years in prison. A photograph of Liu Xiaobo, the 2010 Nobel Peace laureate, at the Nobel Peace Center in Oslo. In 2009, he was charged with "inciting subversion of state power" and sentenced to 11 years in prison. Credit Espen Rasmussen for The New York Times

For them, pens and laptops are the tools of their trade and their megaphones to the world. Among their ranks are some of the best-known chroniclers of American society and creators of fantasy worlds. Now, these 44 writers and public intellectuals have issued a strongly worded open letter to President Xi Jinping of China that calls on him to free all Chinese writers, scholars and intellectuals who have been imprisoned for their political views.



Liu Xia, the wife of Liu Xiaobo, remains under house arrest in Beijing. Credit Nir Elias

The 44, most of whom live in the United States, have given their names to a letter that PEN American Center drafted and published online on Friday that asks for the prisoners'

release as Mr. Xi prepares for his first state visit to the United States. The letter cites Liu Xiaobo, the imprisoned Nobel Peace laureate, and his wife, Liu Xia, who is under house arrest; Ilham Tohti, an ethnic Uighur and an economics professor; and Gao Yu, an ailing 71-year-old journalist.

To read the full article please click here: <http://fnvaworld.org/?p=17695>

China's first Tibetan language search engine to debut mid 2016

Xinhua
Mo Hong'e
September 16, 2015

"Cloud Tibet", China's first Tibetan language search engine, is on course for release in August next year, the developer said on Tuesday.

Development team head Tselo said the basic architecture had been finished and significant core-technology developments had been achieved.

The search engine will help speed up IT, economic and social development in the Tibetan regions, Tselo said.

A 100-member team from a Tibetan language research center in Hainan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Qinghai Province, northwest China, has been tasked with developing the search engine.

The project was launched in April 2013 with financial backing of 57 million yuan (9 million U.S. dollars).

The search engine will also feature news, pictures, video and audio, said Tselo.

China to Set Up High-altitude Observatory in Tibet's Garze

YIBADA
Manny Salvacion
September 14, 2015

China is planning to invest more than 1 billion yuan (about \$157 million) to build a high-altitude observatory in southwest Tibet to monitor cosmic rays, local authorities announced on Friday, Sept. 11.

The Xinhua News Agency said that the observatory, which is the second of its kind in China, will be built in the Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture of Garze in southwest

China's Sichuan Province, according to Cao Zhen, a research fellow with the Institute of High Energy Physics (IHEP) under the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

The report added that an agreement has been signed between the Garze government and IHEP on Wednesday, Sept. 9, that specifies that the observatory will be built on Haizi Mountain in Daocheng County, which has an altitude of 4,410 meters.

"With an acute gamma ray detector, it is the world's second most expensive cosmic ray observatory, after the IceCube Neutrino Observatory in Antarctica," Cao Zhen said.

The observatory will be able to cover an area of 1 million square meters, detecting rays whose energy ranges from 1 billion trillion to 10,000 billion trillion volts.

The report said that Cao did not give a specific timetable for the construction of the observatory.

Discovered in 1912, cosmic rays are high-energy charged particles that travel from outer space at nearly the speed of light and hit the Earth from all directions. By studying cosmic rays, people can gain knowledge about supernova explosions, black holes and the origin of the universe.

In China, the study of cosmic rays began in 1951.

Currently, most research on cosmic rays is done in the Yangbajain monitoring station in Tibet.

Dalai Lama calls for more research into 20-year disappearance of Panchen Lama

Channel News Asia
Editing by Ralph Boulton
September 14, 2015

The Dalai Lama said on Monday more research was needed to settle the fate of the man he named as the Panchen Lama, the second-highest figure in Tibetan Buddhism, who vanished two decades ago but is said by the Chinese to be living a normal life.

OXFORD, England: The Dalai Lama said on Monday more research was needed to settle the fate of the man he named as the Panchen Lama, the second-highest figure in Tibetan Buddhism, who vanished two decades ago but is said by the Chinese to be living a normal life.

Gendun Choekyi Nyima, now 26, disappeared shortly after he was declared by the exiled spiritual leader of Tibet to be the reincarnation of the Panchen Lama when he was six years old.

His fate, which is just one area of contention between China and the Dalai Lama over Tibet, continues to be a deep concern to many Tibetans and he remains one of China's most zealously guarded state secrets.

A senior Chinese official said earlier this month Gendun Choekyi Nyima was "being educated, growing up healthily and does not want to be disturbed".

The Chinese Communist Party has long maintained that Gendun Choekyi Nyima is not the real Panchen Lama, and in 1995, the government selected Gyaltzen Norbu as the 11th Panchen Lama.

The Chinese government sees the appointment of the next Dalai Lama as key to consolidating state control over Tibet, where separatist movements have flared since the 1950s, and to undermining the present Dalai Lama's influence.

"I think the Chinese government is more concerned with the Dalai Lama institution than myself," the Dalai Lama said on Monday at a news conference at Oxford University.

The Dalai Lama acknowledged reports on Gendun Choekyi Nyima, but said evidence was needed to make them credible.

"Some friends say that my Panchen Lama is still alive (...) and he has also had the opportunity to make a family," he said.

But he added: "We need more research. Unless we do the research, (it's) no use to make a comment like that."

The 80-year-old Dalai Lama fled to India after a failed uprising against Chinese rule in 1959. Beijing says he is a violent separatist but the Buddhist monk denies espousing violence and says he only wants genuine autonomy for Tibet.

He has not met British prime minister David Cameron during this visit, which comes a month before Chinese president Xi Jinping is due to make his first official state visit to Britain.

A meeting between Cameron and the Dalai Lama in 2013 triggered a diplomatic spat between Britain and China.

(Editing by Ralph Boulton)

China finds more accounting problems with Three Gorges Dam

Business Standard
Press Trust of India
September 11, 2015

Chinese auditors have unearthed corruption and accounting problems in the projects linked to USD 59 billion Three Gorges Dam, the world's biggest hydro-power project, nearly two decades after its construction.

China's National Audit Office says some 2 billion yuan (USD 314 million) remains unaccounted for in connection with an underground hydro-electric plant worth around 7-billion yuan (USD 1.11 billion).

It follows a critical report released last year that found nepotism and other corrupt practices in the construction of the dam, state-run People's Daily reported today.

The Three Gorges Corporation, which runs the dam, claims all the problems pointed out by the audit have been rectified.

"China Three Gorges Corporation attaches a great degree of importance to the problems pointed out by the audit. At present all the problems pointed out by the audit have already been finished or rectified," the company said in a statement on its website.

The Three Gorges Dam on Yangtze River is the world's largest power station in terms of installed capacity (22,500 MW) and it has been controversial almost since construction first began in 1994.

Environmental groups had warned of risks of ecological disasters and over a million residents had to be relocated for the construction.

Tibet relocation

Nepali Times
September 8, 2015

China is preparing to relocate the current residents of the earthquake-ravaged border town of Khasa to Xigatse, 200km to the northwest. The earthquake that hit central and eastern Nepal on 25 April affected Khasa as well and the residents were moved right after the quake. Some 43 Nepali families based there have also been relocated to Xigatse, while a few others have returned to Nepal. The Chinese are said to be keen to rebuild Khasa, and bring in mainlanders to live there.

“It is understood that China wants to establish a new settlement at Khasa, and we are going to be relocated to Xigatse,” a Khasa-based businessman told Kantipur.

Nepal’s Consul General in Lhasa Hari Prasad Basyal confirmed that China wants to rebuild the town as a modern and well-planned area and work has already started. “The reconstruction of roads has been done and they may start with the houses next,” he said, denying that this was a forcible relocation. “I think they will let the ones who don’t want to move stay back.”

The border trading town of Khasa has remained closed following the earthquake. The Nepal Army and the Chinese Armed Police Force had cleared the road a few times but it was blocked again by landslides. Many container trucks with goods bound to Nepal are still stranded there.

Locals claim the resettlement plan is to discourage the illegal trade China believes has grown in the area because of the close ties between Nepalis and residents of the area. Officials say that even though China has security concerns it is also wary of the Tibetan refugees in Nepal.

The Chinese officials who have visited Nepal have always stressed the historic importance of the trade point and assured of developing the trade point that links the two countries. After the earthquake, China has pledged the highest amount for reconstruction.

China helps Pakistan build world’s largest solar farm

Zofeen T Ebrahim
September 7, 2015

Chinese companies are building a massive solar power station in the Punjab desert, but is the project the most effective way of solving Pakistan’s escalating energy crisis?

Once complete the 1,000 MW the Quaid-e-Azam solar park will be the world’s largest (Photo courtesy of QASP)

Some 400,000 solar panels, spread over 200 hectares of flat desert, glare defiantly at the sun at what is known as the Quaid-e-Azam Solar Power Park (QASP) in Punjab, named after Pakistan’s founding father.

The 100 MW photovoltaic (PV) solar farm was built by Chinese company Xinjiang SunOasis in just three months, at a cost of around US\$131 million and started selling electricity to the national grid in August.

This is the first energy project under the US\$46 billion China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, a key part of China’s ‘new silk roads’, linking the port at Gwadar in southern

Pakistan with Kashgar in China’s western region of Xinjiang.

The 100 MW plant is the pilot stage of a more ambitious plan to build the world’s largest solar farm. Once completed in 2017, the site could have capacity of 5.2 million PV cells producing as much as 1,000 MW of electricity – equivalent to an average sized coal-fired power station and enough to power about 320,000 households. Construction of the next stage is already underway, led by Zonergy, another Chinese company.

Eighteen months ago, the site was nothing more than wilderness. Now a mini city has emerged in the middle of the desert, with over 2,000 workers accompanied by heavy machinery, power transmission lines, blocks of buildings, water pipes and pylons.

to read the full article please click here: <http://fnvaworld.org/?p=17802>

US asks China to rethink about restrictions on Tibet

The Economic Times
PTI
Sep 1, 2015

WASHINGTON: The US has asked China to reassess its policies which impose restrictions on religious freedom in Tibet, days after a top American diplomat concluded his visit to the Communist nation and discussed issues of human rights’ violations and religious freedom with the Chinese officials.

Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom David Saperstein was on a 8-day visit, starting from August 20 to China.

Saperstein raised a number of ongoing concerns of the US regarding the Chinese government’s human rights violations pertaining to religious freedom during his visits to Beijing, Shijiazhuang, Shanghai, Hangzhou, and Hong Kong, a statement said.

He called for an end in the ongoing campaign church demolitions in Zhejiang province and harassment of members from unregistered religious groups.

“He urged Chinese authorities to reassess counterproductive policies, including restrictions on the religious practice of Tibetan Buddhists and Uighur Muslims,” a statement said, adding that Saperstein also conveyed the US government’s deep concern over the recent detentions of many human rights defenders and religious leaders.

In meetings with government officials, Saperstein noted positive developments, including the growth of religious communities in China.

He also recognised the significant increase in the contributions of faith-based organisations to Chinese society, especially in the provision of social services, the statement said.

Commentaries

The Tibetan Argument for Autonomy

The Diplomat
Tenzin Norgay
September 30, 2015

Fifty years after the creation of the Tibet Autonomous Region, it is time for Tibet to have true autonomy.

Earlier this month, Beijing marked the fiftieth anniversary of establishment of the Tibet Autonomous Region with a mass spectacle in Lhasa designed to showcase its powerful grip on Tibet. Dalai Lama's proposal for a renewed agreement on autonomy was firmly rejected at the start of the year as stealth independence. Maintaining an absolute stance of forced unity as the only option, Beijing declared Tibet's autonomy a success. This raises two questions: First, what aspect of autonomy is contentious for Tibetans and second, why might real autonomy still remain the solution for the Sino-Tibetan relationship.

From the outset, it needs to be recognised that viewing autonomy as a legal right is misleading, as autonomy is a concept in neither international law nor constitutional law. Invariably, international norms are the metric against which a state's claim that it has granted autonomy to its minorities is measured. Professor Hurst Hannum, a distinguished authority on autonomy and self-determination, has nominated as criteria that a fully autonomous territory possesses a locally elected legislative body, executive and judiciary with independent

powers. The operating words here are "independent powers." In China's authoritarian system with centralised power, devolution of power to the minority governments is stifled by structural default. For central authority, which enjoys extremely broad powers, granting independent powers for regional autonomy is out of the question.

To read the full article click here: <http://fnvaworld.org/?p=17883>

Forgotten Tibet

The Washington Times
Maura Moynihan
September 30, 2015

China ensured Washington heard nothing from the muzzled vassal state

Chinese leader Xi Jinping's state dinner at the White House last week received fulsome coverage — about the fashion, the food and tech giants in attendance. The voices of protesters who gathered at the White House were muted by China's media might. Xinhua, the official mouthpiece of the Chinese Communist Party, has a \$50 million headquarters in Washington D.C., a privilege never granted to TASS, which regurgitated propaganda for the Soviet Union during the Cold War. The collapse of the Berlin Wall nullified the rationale for "constructive engagement" with Communist China, but Beijing's dictators still get red-carpet treatment from the Western bloc, even as the Chinese state careens toward chaos.

Gordon Chang, author of "The Coming Collapse of China" states: "The dominant narrative — that the U.S. has to accommodate a rising Chinese state — is obsolete now that the Communist Party is facing its worst crisis since the Beijing Spring of 1989. Money is pouring out of the country. Xi Jinping is in a race with time."

This is a critical moment to tell the story of how China's rape and pillage of Tibet — which comprises a third of China's landmass — threatens stability in Asia, but the Office of Tibet in Washington was silent during Xi Jinping's visit. Lobsang Sangay, the representative of the Tibetan exile government, has shocked many by openly declaring his support for Chinese rule in Tibet, and for never addressing China's massive hydro dam construction on Tibet's rivers, which flow into South and Southeast Asia — one of the most important issues of the 21st century.

To read the full article click here: <http://fnvaworld.org/?p=17881>

Decorated Chinese author opens up about censorship

The Chronicle
Claire Ballentine
September 28, 2015



Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

Chinese author Yan Lianke gave a talk at the John Hope Franklin Center Friday. The topic of censorship is especially relevant at Duke because of its campus in Kunshan, China.

For Chinese author Yan Lianke, the chance to speak openly about the censorship of his work is a rare occasion.

Yan—one of China’s most celebrated authors—gave a talk entitled “Literature and Censorship in Contemporary China” Friday at the John Hope Franklin Center. The recipient of the 2014 Franz Kafka Prize, Yan’s most famous books include “Dream of Ding Village,” “The Four Books” and “Serve the People!” With the aid of a translator, he discussed the political, social and cultural dimensions of censorship in China and recounted the personal experiences of his own works being censored.

“Politics determines everything, so our language and literature is determined by politics,” he said.

Yan noted that he has experienced many rejections in his career because editors feared that his writing would cause controversy. Although he put great emotion into his work, he said he was rejected nine out of 10 times. Eventually, he realised that if he wrote something of quality, it would be published—adding that he is now “the champion of receiving rejections.”

To read the full article click here: <http://fnvaworld.org/?p=17757>

China’s growing reach could stir tension in India

Stars and Stripes
Seth Robson
September 24, 2015

Economic, diplomatic moves eyed closely by giant neighbour



A Chinese military plane taxis near a U.S. Air Force jet in Kathmandu during May earthquake-relief operations in Nepal.

SETH ROBSON/STARS AND STRIPES

While flexing its military muscle to the east and the south, China is pursuing a softer approach toward its western neighbours, using humanitarian aid and investments to expand its influence and to pursue natural resources.

In time, that strategy could raise tensions with Asia’s other giant, India.

Since 2013, China has been pushing ahead with a raft of ambitious infrastructure projects known as the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road. A \$1 billion hydropower plant in Pakistan will be the first major project paid for by China’s new \$40 billion Silk Road Fund. Eventually, China hopes to build a 1,860-mile economic belt and trade corridor linking China’s Xinjiang Uighur autonomous region to the Arabian Sea, according to Britain’s Telegraph newspaper.

The Chinese economic and diplomatic moves — which included a large and very visible aid effort after Nepal was devastated by a magnitude-7.8 earthquake earlier this year — are being watched closely in India.

The rivalry between China and India — the world’s most populous countries, with more than 1 billion people each — hasn’t resulted in armed conflict since a brief border war in 1962. That could change as their needs intensify.

China, for instance, is trying to develop a deep-water port in Bangladesh — a largely Muslim nation that borders India to the east — and it recently negotiated an agreement to manage the Pakistani port at Gwadar, according to Alys Ayers, a former India hand at the State

Department during the Obama administration and now a research fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations.

To read the full article please click here: <http://fnvaworld.org/?p=17821>

Victims of China's Religious Liberty 'Crackdown' Appeal to Obama. But Will He Help?

The Daily Signal
September 24, 2015
Madaline Donnelly

Earlier this week, as devout American Catholics took to the streets of Washington to celebrate the arrival of Pope Francis, four Chinese human rights activists sat in a small, plain congressional office room on Capitol Hill.

There were neither barricades nor the glaring lights of news camera crews at the press conference hosted by China Aid, an international Christian human rights group.

Two translators were on hand to assist non-English-speaking panelists in telling their stories.

"During the Ramadan of last year, August of 2014, in the town of Yarkand [in Xinjiang region], China's security forces broke into a house of Uyghur families and started shooting," said Rebiya Kadeer, president of the World Uyghur Congress, via a translator. "Including a 7-year-old, 12 people were killed."

According to Kadeer, whose flat palm tapped rhythmically against her leg throughout the event, the Uyghur people—a Muslim, Turkic ethnic minority within China—have faced increasingly violent persecution by a Chinese government that fears radical ties to extremist groups like ISIS. The Washington Post reported that, also during last year's Ramadan holiday, Chinese authorities forced Uyghur university students to break fast.

"Uyghur villagers from three different villages took to the streets to protest against such brutality," Kadeer continued, her small stature accented by two long, gray braids winding down her back. "We learned from villagers that the Chinese government used armed helicopter gunships to attack the villages, killing many."

To read the full article please click here: <http://fnvaworld.org/?p=17783>

Why Tibet Could Be the Best Opportunity for Xi Jinping

The Huffington Post
Matteo Mecacci
September 22, 2015

Co-authored by Bhuchung Tsering, Vice President, International Campaign for Tibet

On September 24 later this month, China's President Xi Jinping will arrive in Washington to meet President Obama for an important state visit. The context is a growing alarm about China's less than peaceful rise, and provides a rare opportunity for the president to give an important message on Tibet.

It has been noted in Washington that President Xi's self-proclaimed "China Dream" — a vision of a peaceful and rising China on the world stage — has become a Kafkaesque nightmare for many.

China's government has been publicly blamed for major cyber attacks suffered by US federal institutions and businesses over the last months and more sanctions seem to be in preparation to target some of its officials. US and EU business leaders are now openly expressing concern for the safety of their work in China; fears that were previously reserved for political dissidents, Tibetan religious leaders, lawyers and journalists targeted by Beijing. CEOs and others are obviously concerned about the purge and targeting of city workers in China after the recent downturn of the financial markets.

There has been an unprecedented attack on Chinese civil society, resulting in the arrests of civil rights lawyers and peaceful activists. In Tibet, writers and artists have been tortured and imprisoned for singing about the Dalai Lama or expressing their views in literary journals.

The expansion of outposts in the South China Sea has unnerved China's neighbors and US allies in the region and revived the debate about increasing US military spending to push back against what are perceived as Beijing expansionist aspirations in the Pacific.

To read the full article please click here: <http://fnvaworld.org/?p=17738>

India China LAC face-Off – Analysis

Niti Central
Claude Arpi
september 21, 2015



[Daulat Beg Oldie: Brigadier JKS Virk of India and Senior Colonel Chen Zheng Shan of People's Liberation]

After a swift victory, Julius Caesar is said to have bragged in the Roman Senate: “Vini, Vidi, Vici” (I came, I saw, I conquered). These historic words need to be adapted for the recent intrusion of the Chinese Peoples’ Liberation Army (PLA) in Ladakh: “they came, they saw, they built a tower, but they did not come.”

It is at least what Hong Lei, Ministry of Foreign Affairs’ spokesman affirmed in Beijing: “As far as I know, there is no such ‘face-off’ between China and India in the border area.”

And of course, he added, China is committed to maintaining peace and tranquility on the border area.

Let us look at the facts from this side of the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

As it happened before the visit of Premier Li Keqiang to India in April/May 2013 and also when President Xi Jinping arrived in Ahmedabad in September 2014, on September 11, the Chinese People’s Liberation Army (PLA) intruded on India’s territory.

The next day, it was reported in the Indian press that a face-off had occurred in Burtse area, a few miles east of Daulat Beg Oldie (DBO), where the 2013 confrontation had occurred.

According to The Times of India, “the bone of contention is a surveillance structure being erected by the PLA very close to the LAC.”

The Indo-Tibetan Border Police apparently objected to the construction of the structure and, with the help of the Army, stopped the PLA.

Subsequently, the PLA called for reinforcements, followed by a massing of more Indian forces in the area.

On September 12, The Times of India said:

“The two forces are still locked in an eyeball-to-eyeball confrontation and efforts are being made to defuse the situation.”

To read the full article please click here:

<http://fnvaworld.org/?p=17710>

Tibet anniversary celebrations conceal a far darker reality

South China Morning Post
Verna Yu
September 15, 2015

Coverage to mark the formation of the region’s government presented a rosy picture of its achievements and painted over the cracks

Marking the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Tibet autonomous region, the mainland media was abuzz over the past week with articles lauding the “miraculous transformation” of Tibet, thanks to Chinese rule.

Dozens of articles in the state media invariably painted a bleak picture of the “old” Tibet before it was “peacefully liberated” by the Communist Party in 1950.

Comparing then and now, photos of the old Tibet with muddy roads and shabbily clothed people were placed next to those of gleaming paved roads, flyovers and bridges and colourfully-dressed dancers across state media websites.

The Communist Party is portrayed as the liberator who rescued the Tibetan people from the dark age of dire poverty, slavery and backwardness and brought modernity to Tibet.

“In the 1950s, Tibet was still a society ruled by feudal serfdom under a theocracy. Having existed for centuries, this system stifled human rights and destroyed human qualities. Serfs suffered cruel political oppression and had no personal freedom or fundamental rights,” said an English-language Xinhua report last Sunday, citing a Chinese government white paper issued last month.

“Tibet has [made] historic leaps and bounds in its economic and social development,” it said. “The Tibetan people... are [now] masters of their own destiny.”

Other reports boasted about how modernity has transformed Tibet. An article on the China Radio International website said monks were now able to watch television in rural areas and they have access to computers, smart phones and even iPads.

A People's Daily commentary on Wednesday headlined "Witnessing a miraculous leap forward" said Tibetans used to eat only turnips, potatoes and cabbage, but families were now exploring all kinds of culinary delights.

State media pointed out that under Chinese rule, roads and public squares were built across Tibet, electricity and piped water were laid on and free education was provided.

To read the full article please click here: <http://fnvaworld.org/?p=17556>

Fifty Years Later, Tibet is Still the Hottest of Political Potatoes

America Magazine
Steven Schwankert
September 12, 2015

Following China's massive military parade in Beijing on Sept. 3, celebrating the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II, and its role in defeating Japan, People's Army soldiers paraded again on Sept. 8. This time they marched to mark the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the Xizang Autonomous Region, more commonly known in the West as Tibet. Fifty years after it established, or re-established, control over the area and ended the Buddhist theocracy that has ruled it, Tibet and its level of autonomy or independence remains the most sensitive of issues for China's government.

Although the removal of crosses in coastal Zhejiang province has generated significant attention to issues of religious freedom in China recently, it is Tibet that remains the lightning rod for that topic. Supporters of Tibetan independence argue that China is a colonising and occupying force, accusing the government of trying to destroy Tibetan culture. China's government maintains—not entirely without merit—that it has held suzerainty over the region for centuries and that Tibetans were freed from abject serfdom when the People's Liberation Army drove out the Dalai Lama in March, 1959.

The sensitivity of the issue manifested itself again this week. The first scheduled in concerts in Shanghai and Beijing by multi-platinum rock band Bon Jovi, slated for September 14 and 17, respectively, were abruptly cancelled. The group apparently used an image of the Dalai Lama during a concert about five years ago.

Bon Jovi certainly isn't the first Western act to run afoul of the Tibet taboo. In July, pop group Maroon 5, also set to play its first live concert in Beijing this month, had that show cancelled, likely due to a band member's attendance

at an 80th birthday party for the Tibetan spiritual leader. Icelandic singer Bjork shouted "Tibet! Tibet" during a performance in Shanghai as part of her song "Liberate Yourself." Government officials made it clear afterwards that she would no longer be welcome in China.

To read the full article please click here: <http://fnvaworld.org/?p=17483>

After 50 years in Tibet, China sees no 'middle way'

UCANews.com
UCANews.com reporters
September 11, 2015

Beijing's Tibet policies point to legacy of distrust of religious groups



Thousands of people gather in front of Lhasa's Potala Palace on Sept. 8 for an event billed as marking 50 years since the founding of the administrative area of Tibet. (Photo by AFP)

Late on Aug. 27, frantic villagers tried to extinguish flames engulfing 55-year-old mother Tashi Kyi. By 3 a.m., on Aug. 28, she was dead.

Tashi self-immolated after authorities bulldozed houses that failed to provide the right paperwork in a small Tibetan village in China's Sangchu County.

Ten other Tibetans in Sangchu have self-immolated over the past three years, including Tashi's 18-year-old nephew, Sangay Tashi. In 2012, Sangay called for the return of Tibet's spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, before setting himself ablaze.

"His self-immolation was also an act of protest against the actions and brutalities of the Chinese government," Sangay's brother, Jamyang Jinpa, wrote in a letter published online in early September.

Tibet has been both the testing ground and the blueprint for Beijing's strategies for dealing with religious minorities

in other parts of the country — from Muslim Uighurs, to its long-running campaign against Christianity. And as China marks 50 years of governance in Tibet this week, Beijing continues to ignore complaints over its heavy-handed rule.

On Sept. 8, Beijing staged a huge set-piece anniversary event outside Lhasa's Potala Palace — the former residence of the Dalai Lama. As part of the event, a 65-member government delegation warned of an even tougher stance against Tibet's exiled spiritual leader.

"Tibet has entered a new stage of sustained stability after people of all ethnic groups together fought against separatism, successfully foiling attempts by the 14th Dalai Lama group and international hostile forces," Politburo member Yu Zhengsheng said in a speech at the ceremony where he dished out gifts, including electric blenders for making Tibetan yak butter tea.

All week, the Communist Party has presented a positive, unified message on Tibet.

Yu spoke of guaranteeing religious freedom. A new government white paper issued on Sept. 6 offered assurances that the Tibetan people would have the right "to participate equally in the management of state affairs".

State broadcaster CCTV screened a documentary juxtaposing Tibetan children studying in modern classrooms with the region's pristine, snowcapped landscape.

And a new museum exhibition, opened in Lhasa on Sept. 7, which displayed photos of development projects and one key economic statistic from Beijing: gross domestic product multiplied almost 300 times in Tibet since the Communist Party took over in 1965. GDP was valued at 92 billion yuan (US\$14.4 billion) last year.



Muslim Uighur men walk toward a mosque in Kashgar, in China's western Xinjiang region. China's strategy for dealing with Tibetans is reflected in its treatment of other religious groups, including Muslims and Christians. (Photo by Greg Baker/AFP)

Opaque development

Beijing has long justified its heavy-handed development in Tibet as a program that has raised living standards. But separating fact from fiction in Tibet has been difficult.

Access to Tibet is restricted — foreigners require special permits to travel to the area and are required to stay in groups, as in North Korea. And foreigners are not allowed in at all during March, the anniversary of one of many Tibetan uprisings under Communist Party rule.

After 50 years of Chinese rule, it's still "impossible" for outsiders to gain independent access to Tibet, said Michael Buckley, one of just a handful of overseas journalists to spend extended periods there.

"[You are] still blocked off from contact with Tibetans unless you have an interpreter and it's highly risky for Tibetans to be interviewed," he said.

Buckley's book, "Meltdown in Tibet," published in December 2014, paints a damning picture of the impact of China's development on the fragile environment, contradicting Beijing's upbeat narrative.

While party officials speak of the schools built in Tibet, Buckley counters that China spent more on the railway line to Lhasa completed in 2006 than on the entire health care and education budgets since invading Tibet in 1950.

"The railway is now expanding east and west of Lhasa," said Buckley. "These railways enable large numbers of Chinese migrant workers to come into Tibet, and enable large-scale exploitation of Tibet's resources economically."

Finding out whether the slew of hydropower dams and copper, iron and lead mines built in Tibet in recent years have benefited normal Tibetans is, again, challenging.

Tibet Mineral Development Company and China Gold International Resources Corp — both of which operate mines in Tibet — did not respond to emailed questions.

Similarly, campaign groups have complained that the more than one dozen Canadian mining companies operating in Tibetan areas have failed to give feedback on how their operations contribute to the livelihoods of Tibetans.

Often, only when tragedies occur has it been possible to pin down how many ethnic Tibetans work on the big infrastructure projects that dominate Beijing's GDP figures for the region. Of 83 miners killed in a huge landslide in March 2013 at a site operated by a state-owned company, just two were ethnic Tibetans. The rest were Han Chinese.

Anecdotal evidence suggests infrastructure projects in the world's highest region have devastated the environment, as noted in Buckley's book. But again, few independent studies exist separating China's impacts from the effects of global pollution.

Changing landscape

A Chinese priest who declined to be named for security reasons said the negative impacts on Tibet's environment were evident on repeat visits in recent decades.

"When I visited a Tibet county above 5,000 feet [1,500 meters] two years ago, it had changed so much. The snow on the mountain had melted and the water level had dropped," the priest said.

Like many visitors to Tibet, he noted that Chinese development remains dominated by projects that destroy the environment, raising tensions with ethnic Tibetans who consider the landscape sacred, a part of their Buddhist faith.

In the half-century that China has ruled Tibet, similar policies have been instituted in cycles targeting ethnic minorities and religions.

Elsewhere, the government has long suppressed the Muslim Uighur minority. A "strike-hard" campaign initiated in May has triggered a period of intense persecution against Uighurs.

In Zhejiang province, Christians have been devastated by a two-year cross-removal campaign. While the actions against Zhejiang Christians have been pushed by local authorities, many observers believe such a long-standing campaign must have tacit approval from Beijing.

Taken together, such actions underscore the Communist Party's fear of organised religion as a potential alternative power base to the party itself.

The severity of these actions has depended on the threat level perceived by Beijing, notes Fenggang Yang, director of Purdue University's Center on Religion and Chinese Society.

"At the minimum, the Chinese Communists in their gut have deep suspicion and distrust in religious leaders even if they seem to be amicable toward religious believers and leaders during the good times," he said.

Direct control

For Tibetans, this week's anniversary marking Chinese rule only brings more uncertainty.

In its Sept. 6 white paper, Beijing rejected a "middle way" approach, put forward by the Dalai Lama, which proposed more autonomy for Tibet.

While sidelining Tibet's exiled spiritual leader, Chinese authorities have further eroded religious freedoms, said Tsomo Tsering, director of the Tibet Center for Human Rights and Democracy in Dharamsala, northern India.

"It's ridiculous. Sometimes Tibetans will keep images of the Dalai Lama, and the simple act of keeping pictures of

their own spiritual leaders is criminalised," said Tsomo, who works with informants on the ground in Tibet.

Since 2011, authorities have replaced members of monastery management committees with officials who work directly for the government. Small police stations have been built inside some monasteries. This year, authorities ordered all Buddhist monasteries to fly Chinese flags and display pictures of party leaders.

"The problem is that the whole of religion is now directly controlled by the Chinese government," Tsomo said.

China's Claim of Successful Implementation of Regional Autonomy in Tibet Falls Short of Ground Reality

Tibet.net
September 10, 2015

On 6 September, the Peoples Republic of China's government issued yet another white paper on so-called Tibet Autonomous Region (which does not include all areas of the traditional Tibet). The white paper comes in the run up to the "celebration of the 50th anniversary of the so-called Tibet Autonomous region" claiming Tibet has entered its "golden age" citing numerous questionable statistics. Such report in addition to presenting a distorted interpretation of Sino-Tibetan relations is a vain attempt to whitewash its repressive occupation so long as independent journalists and rights groups are not given free access to Tibetan areas to judge for themselves.

Contrary to Chinese claims, the ground reality offers a drastically different situation with a complete lockdown and extreme security measures taken to orchestrate the anniversary celebration in Lhasa. In addition to massive deployment of security personnel, on 11th August 2015, the Chinese government issued another circular directing all postal departments to intercept all communications to and from so-called 'TAR' within 20 August to 5 September.

Despite the infrastructural investments and various socio-cultural projects cited in the latest paper, the fact remains that Tibetans are not free to fully exercise their rights, religious and otherwise. For example, movements by Tibetans, within the Tibetan plateau, are more than ever restricted with endless requirements for permits; monasteries are run by the Communist Party, nomads are forcefully removed from their traditional pasture, mining and dam building projects are carried out without local

consultation and participation. Since 2009, at least 142 Tibetans are known to have self-immolated as an act of protest against Beijing's misrule in Tibetan areas. The latest one being, Tashi Kyi, a mother of five from Labrang (Eastern Tibet) who set herself on fire on 28 August 2015.

The Central Chinese government's genuine concern for the welfare and happiness of the Tibetan people is questionable so long as it does not fulfil their aspirations for freedom and the return of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama to his homeland. This, for the Tibetan people, will truly be a 'golden age'.

The Central Tibetan Administration has reiterated the Middle Way Approach as a viable solution through its response to China's white paper.

Corruption, military and economy: The many hurdles in Chinese President Xi Jinping's race to reform

South China Morning Post
Cary Huang
10 September, 2015

By remaking pillars of the nation, the president hopes to secure the Communist Party's rule. But entrenched interests keep getting in his way

One of the surest signs came late last month.

On August 21, People's Daily said President Xi Jinping's wide-ranging reform push, covering everything from politics to the military, was meeting "unimaginably" fierce resistance.

It was unusually strong language for the Communist Party mouthpiece and was followed up the next day with a warning for officials to get behind the reform efforts or face demotion.

The commentaries raised eyebrows not just for the strength of the language but also for their timing – they came out right after the annual closed-door meetings in Beidaihe, where party and government elites should have reached consensus on major issues.

To analysts, it was as clear a sign as any that Xi's reform programme had upset both conservatives and liberals alike. By changing the rules of the game, by redistributing power and resources, he had undermined those with vested interests – and they weren't taking it lying down.

IN THE BEGINNING

When Xi came to office in late 2012, he quickly charted his own course by taking charge of a new agency to steer the national reform agenda – a task previously handled by the premier. He initiated ambitious overhauls of the economy, fiscal policy, governance, the military and the judicial system.

To read the full article please click here: <http://fnvaworld.org/?p=17424>

Can 'Mighty' China be peaceful?

Niti Central
Claude Arpi
September 9, 2015



[Beijing: Chinese President Xi Jinping, left, stands with from left, former Chinese President Jian Zemin, former Chinese President Hu Jintao and China's Premier Li Keqiang during a parade commemorating the 70th anniversary of Japan's surrender during World War II held in front of Tiananmen Gate, in Beijing, Thursday, Sept. 3, 2015. AP/PTI]

Soon after the mega parade for the commemoration of the 70th anniversary of victory over Japan in World War II was over, the blue sky disappeared again over Tiananmen Square; pollution was quick to return to the Chinese capital and so were President Xi Jinping's headaches.

Xi will have to forget the glamour of the Grand Parade and deal again with the fluctuating stock exchange, the poor figures of the Chinese economy and the 'reforms' not only in the financial sector, but also of the People's Liberation Army (PLA).

From the Rostrum of the Square, Xi declared:

"War is like a mirror. Looking at it helps us better appreciate the value of peace. Today, peace and development have become the prevailing trend, but the world is far from tranquil. War is the sword of Damocles that still hangs over mankind. We must learn the lessons of history and dedicate ourselves to peace."

But has China learnt the lessons of History?

The problem seems to be that Xi and his colleagues would like others to learn their lessons; as for them, China has always been on the right side of history.

To read the full article please click here: <http://fnvaworld.org/?p=17419>

Tibetans lose a haven in Nepal under Chinese pressure

Sentinel Source

Barbara Demick Los Angeles Times

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KODARI, Nepal — Tsomo escaped Tibet last year on a zipline that carried her into Nepal over a chasm of jagged rocks and a river.

The 23-year-old student remembers she was numb with terror as the smugglers fastened a thick rope through her legs and across her chest in a harness. It was the dead of night, but still she could hear the river roaring below her.

“It was like something out of a bad dream. I was so scared I peed in my pants,” said Tsomo, who is now a student majoring in English at a Tibetan school in India.

She was among the lucky few.

For decades, Nepal was the main station on an underground railroad for Tibetans fleeing China, which claims sovereignty over Tibet. After a long trek over the Himalayas, evading Chinese security, refugees would seek asylum in Nepal or move onward to India, where the Dalai Lama, their spiritual leader, lives in exile.

Now the doors are slamming shut, as Nepal falls under the sway of China’s power and money.

Nepal is a case study in how a rising China has come to exert itself over its neighbours. Landlocked and impoverished, with a chaotic political system and recovering from natural disaster, Nepal has capitulated easily to Beijing’s will — and nowhere has that been more strongly expressed than in the fate of would-be immigrants from Tibet.

From 1991 to 2008, an average of 2,200 Tibetans came across annually, according to the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees. Only 171 made it in 2013, and fewer last year.

One reason is that a booming Chinese economy has persuaded many Tibetans to remain at home. Some are even returning to Tibet after years of exile. But the

dwindling number of Tibetan immigrants to Nepal also suggests strongly that the once-welcoming Nepalese government has been pressured by China to shut the door.

“Nepal has a weak government and the Chinese are able to exploit that,” said Yubaraj Ghimere, a Nepali political commentator and columnist.

Responding to demands from China, the Nepalese have installed heightened security on the border. A phalanx of undercover police and informants now makes it almost impossible for Tibetans to cross into Nepal, except by extraordinary means such as the zipline.

To read the full article please click here: <http://fnvaworld.org/?p=17174>

Inside the Quiet Lives of China’s Disappearing Tibetan Nomads

The Time

Rachel Lowry

September 4, 2015

Photographer Kevin Frayer follows an ancient nomadic people whose traditional way of life faces potential extinction.

For more than 10,000 years, the Tibetan nomads have roamed freely on the lush grasslands of China’s Tibetan Plateau, also called “the Roof of the World.” But with China’s resettlement programs pushing them out of their homeland, this rare cultural treasure could be the stuff of history books within this decade.

“Once it’s gone, it’s gone and all you have left is fancy dress and colour at local festivals for tourists from the big cities to come and see every summer,” says Kevin Frayer, the Getty Images photographer who was among the few granted access to the mountainous regions of China’s Qinghai province.

Frayer has been covering China’s ethnic minorities for more than two years now. In 2014, he documented the life of Uighur Muslims in the ancient city of Kashgar. The following year, he traveled to the mountains of northwestern China to capture the Kazakh Eagle Hunters. And last March, he observed a Buddhist prayer ritual at the edge of the Tibetan plateau. For his latest project, Frayer returned to the plateau to capture the habits, routines and customs of this enduring people. “I was drawn to these people on the fringes of this incredibly large, fast moving, fast changing, kind of difficult country,” he says.

In 2003, the Chinese government launched an initiative that forced the nomads to relocate to urban housing in newly constructed villages across the plateau. The policy was aimed at protecting the headwaters of Asia's three major rivers — the Yellow River, the Yangtze and the Mekong. These sensitive ecosystems contain rich natural resource deposits that are suffering under a large number of animals that graze in these areas, they claim. While some people see this as a way to protect the ecosystem, others see it as a way for the government to coax people off the land, citing environmentalists who have responded with counter studies that disprove such theories.

As settlements see an influx of Tibetans, the transition is difficult for these nomad-turned-villagers. The government offers herders access to employment, but adjustment is challenging when grazing skills are no longer useful. Education, too, poses cause for concern. Tibetan children are sent to schools that teach Mandarin instead of Tibetan. "Look at what is lost," says Frayer. "The children lose the history, the ability to sing, to read poetry, to understand folklore, to have an elder tell them a story that they will pass down for future generations."

It's not a uniquely Chinese experience. In the early 1930s, the Soviet government drove the Nenets and Khanty reindeer breeders on to newly established collective farms. British policy makers issued an order in 1951 to remove the Tanzanian minority ethnic group Maasai from their savannah rangelands to a conservation area. The Sri Lankan government, too, displaced more than 50,000 members of the country's minority Tamil population in the 1990s.

"Most minorities in quickly changing landscapes are at risk," says Frayer. "But it's happening in China now in 2015."

His stunning images remind the viewer that the traditions of Tibet's spirited, hardy people remain a thing not to be forgotten or displaced. While the daily life and background landscapes appear to the westerner as breathtaking, exotic even, it's rather ordinary for them, says Frayer. "This is something they have been doing for millennia and so for the Tibetan nomad, it's really quite a simple life."

For Frayer, a recipient of this year's Getty Images and Chris Hondros Fund Award, this is only the start of his documentation of the country's nomadic people. "You need weeks, even months out there," he says.

To read the full article please click here: <http://fnvaworld.org/?p=17230>