

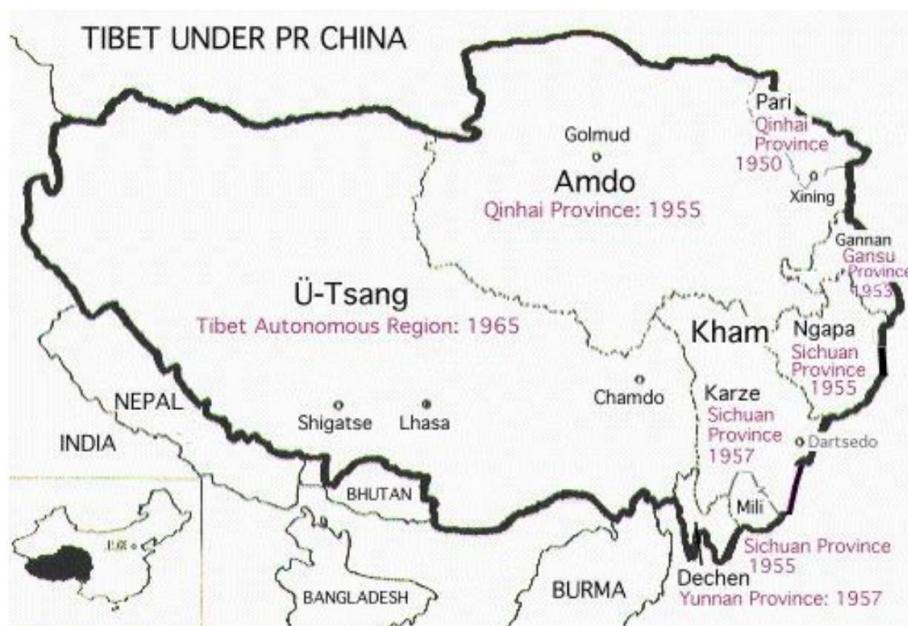
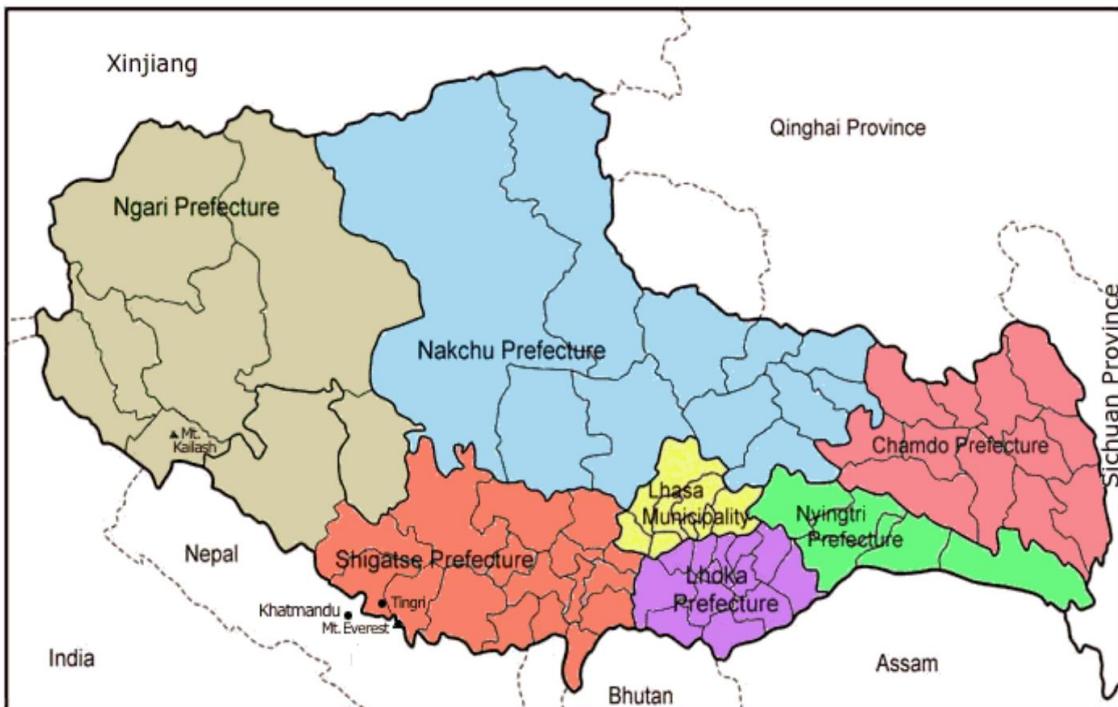


**CCAS**

**Centre for China Analysis & Strategy**

**中国分析及策略中心**

## TIBET INSIGHT, 1-15 APRIL 2020



## TAR NEWS

### **China-appointed Panchen Lama says ‘cooperation shown by the monks and nuns is the style of Buddhism in the new era’**

February 7, 2020

The China-appointed Panchen Lama, Gyaltsen Norbu, issued a statement (April 7) claiming that the cooperation and compassion shown by the monasteries and temples are the styles of Buddhism in the new era. He said that as “commanded” by Xi Jinping himself that the people of the whole country to fight against the epidemic, the Buddhist community has also responded well to it. He also publicised a ‘thangka’ with the calligraphy of his prayers for China’s return to normalcy. Gyaltsen Norbu encouraged the Buddhist communities and others to express themselves in the form of calligraphy, painting, poetry, etc. to consolidate and inspire the people under the leadership of the Party and government to prevent and fight the epidemic. He also made a personal donation of 500,000 RMB in addition to other donations from his monastery.

### **TAR Propaganda Department Head convenes annual meeting**

April 10, 2020

Director of the TAR Propaganda Department, Deputy Secretary of TAR PPCC, and Deputy Chairman of TAR Party Committee, Danke convened a meeting of the TAR United Front Work Department (UFWD) on April 10 to reiterate the Department’s key political responsibilities, regulations, and the need to have ‘disciplined’ educational activities. Sonam Rinzin, Vice Chairman of TAR PPCC, Secretary of the Tibet Branch of the Chinese Buddhist Association and Executive Vice-Chairman of TAR UFWD presided over the meeting.

Speaking at the meeting Danke, Director of the TAR Propaganda Department, stressed the following:

- i) All should “unite around the CCP CC with Xi Jinping at the core”, under the “strong leadership” of the TAR Party Committee and shoulder major political responsibilities of governing the party, not forgetting the original intention of the party and keep working hard in building a strong party, strong United Front Work Department;

- ii) Strengthen political responsibility, ‘four consciousness’, ‘two maintenance’ and being loyal to the Party;
- iii) Build an accountable, corruption-free and ‘clean’ government; and
- iv) Strengthen grassroots party building measures and implement ‘not to forget the old heart but remembering new mission’ campaign through various propaganda educational activities.

Danke also emphasised that the TAR UFWD had worked hard despite many challenges especially in fighting against the COVID-19 pandemic. He stressed that 2020 is the last year of the 13th Five Year Plan and that every department should make sure all tasked projects are completed successfully. He signed a letter specifying the targets and responsibilities of the UFWD and the TAR Discipline Inspection and Supervision Committee.

At another meeting chaired by Sonam Rinzin and Sukhang Thupten Khedup, Vice Chairman of TAR PPCC and Executive Vice President of the Tibet Branch of the China Buddhist Association respectively, in Lhasa on April 8, Danke spoke on the theme “Follow standards to become advanced and exemplary monks and nuns in 2020”. The meeting was attended by the Leading Group on the ‘Four Standards’, Monastic Management Cadres, officials of the TAR UFWD, Tibet Branch of China Buddhist Association, in TAR Religious Affairs Bureau. The meeting discussed the need to strengthen political leadership, delegate key tasks and propagate ‘stronger educational campaigns’. Danke reiterated Xi Jinping’s statement made at the 19th Party Congress: “Govern the nation by governing the borders; govern the borders by first stabilizing Tibet; ensure social harmony and stability in Tibet and strengthen the development of border regions” and asked officials to comply. He also added “under the great leadership of TAR Party Committee, TAR People’s Government, TAR People’s Congress, the Monastic Management Committees have worked together, responded and participated actively in the ‘educational activities’ undertaken by TAR UFWD.”

## **TAR donates COVID-19 medical supplies to Nepal**

April 10, 2020

The TAR People's Government donated medical supplies to Nepal to fight the Coronavirus at a ceremony in Lhasa on April 10. Pema Yangzom, in-charge of Foreign Office of TAR and Gobinda Bahadur Karki, General Consular of Nepal in Lhasa along with the staff of Foreign Office Department and representatives from Nepal attended the ceremony, when 50 boxes containing N95 masks, virus sampling tubes, protective gears, detection kits, temperature guns, and 75% alcohol disinfection wipes were handed over.

Pema Yangzom, Director of the TAR Foreign Affairs Office, said that with the successful state visit of Chinese President Xi Jinping to Nepal last year, Sino-Nepal relations had been elevated to a ‘new historical height’. He said at present the domestic epidemic situation in Nepal is in a critical period and China is willing, as good neighbours who depend on each other in good and bad times, to work together with Nepal to contain the spread and to ease its urgent needs.

Karki, Consul General of Nepal in Lhasa, expressed his gratitude to the TAR Party Committee and Government for their generous assistance to Nepal. He said that Nepal and China are ‘good neighbours, good friends, and good partners who are linked by mountains and rivers, and the TAR has always maintained economic, cultural, and historical connections with Nepal for many years. The donation will help to win against the epidemic and will be a testimony to the deep friendship between Nepal and China’. The items will be transferred to Nepal by land.

## **TAR PPCC investigates Ethnic Affairs Management in Lhasa**

April 14, 2020

Members of TAR People's Political Consultative Conference (PPCC) conducted an investigation in Lhasa's Chengguan District on April 11-12 to check if the Ethnic Affairs Committee of the District is complying with the laws. The investigation was headed by Vice-Chairman, Lobsang Jigme. The investigating team convened a meeting and listened to the District Ethnic Affairs Committee's work report. The team visited Lhalu Neighbourhood Committee, Jiri Street Office

and Hebalin Neighbourhood Committee to examine whether they are complying with the ‘national Constitution, laws and regulations concerning ethnic groups’ and whether or not any ‘in-depth unity education’ has been carried out in the district. The team pointed out the need for more focus on ‘Organizational security,’ and need to carry out more ‘in-depth activities’, strengthen ideological and political position, adhere to ‘Xi Jinping’s thoughts on socialism with Chinese characteristics in the New Era’ and lay a solid foundation for long-term stability in Tibet.

## NGARI NEWS (CH: ALI)

## First study session on ‘Measures on the Management of the Reincarnation of Living Buddhas’ in Ngari

April 13, 2020

The first study session on ‘Measures on the Management of the Reincarnation of Living Buddhas’ was held in Tsochen (Tib: ཐྲྲྲ བྱାନ୍ རྩྰྩ) County of Ngari for monks and concerned officials in the County. Yang Hongbing, Deputy Commissioner and Secretary of the Ngari County Party Committee attended the opening session and gave a speech. The study session was attended by Yesi Sangpo, second-level investigator of United Front Work Department (UFWD) of Ngari (Ch: Ali) Party Committee, Head of Ngari Buddhist Association, and Dhondup, Deputy Secretary of Tsochen County Party Committee and Chairman of Ngari People’s Congress and monks of the county. Tashi Dawa, Head of the Ngari UFWD presided over the meeting.

State Religious Affairs Bureau Order No. 5, officially known as the Measures on the Management of the Reincarnation of Living Buddhas mandates that a Reincarnation Application must be filed by all Buddhist temples in that county before they are allowed to recognize individuals as ‘tulkus’ and Rinpoches (reincarnated teachers) and that approvals of such individuals must be done by the CCP.

Yang Hongbing, Deputy Commissioner and Secretary of County Party Committee pointed out that the participants, mostly monks, must study ‘religious rituals, historical customs, laws and regulations of the reincarnation management of living Buddhas’ and that everyone must have a deep understanding of the methods of the reincarnation system. He emphasized that Tibetan

Buddhism should adapt to socialism, and “never allow Tibetan Buddhism’s Religious Affairs to go under the control of the Dalai Group.” He stressed “the participants are required to resolutely follow the religious rituals, feel the Party's gratitude, listen to the Party's words, and follow the Party, safeguard the unity of the motherland, have a clear political position, oppose separatism.”

Yesi Sangpo, gave a detailed explanation of the content and context of the speech given by Danke, Head of TAR UFWD during the ‘First Reincarnation Training session of all the Religious Head of TAR, and the ‘Administrative Measures of the Reincarnation of the Living Buddhas’ and told participating monks to abide by the ‘four standards’ and carry forward patriotism in accordance with the Party’s policies, laws and regulations.

(Comment: The measures are applicable to all regions of Tibet, but Ngari is the first county noticed to have started seriously convening sessions to study the measures.)

### NYINGTRI NEWS (CH: LINZHI)

#### Nyingtri's Chayu County bans fishing for 10 years

April 2, 2020

The People’s Government of Chayu County, Nyingtri, held its first plenary meeting of 2020. Du Yuanwen, Deputy Secretary of the county party committee and county head presided over the first plenary meeting of the county government in 2020 on April 1. Heads of the relevant departments attended the meeting. The conference recalled the ‘spirit’ of the Linzhi government’s 2020 work plan and gave an update about epidemic prevention, industrial project plan, resumption of production, and wildlife protection. The meeting described 2020 as an extraordinary year and stressed that the county should build a well-off society and complete the "13th Five-Year Plan" at the same time as the country. It said the ‘the time is tight, and the task is heavy’. Especially after the outbreak of the new corona pneumonia, the county 's economy and social development have had a certain impact, and the situation is more difficult, and there is a need to re-analyse and re-focus on key works and find out ways to complete the annual target tasks. Nyingtri has imposed a ten years fishing ban under the wildlife and epidemic prevention and control. Strict orders were

issued for the prohibition of wildlife hunting and farmers and herdsmen were ordered to stock limited meats particularly pork.

The meeting also addressed on poverty alleviation, where they discussed that to achieve the goal of poverty alleviation, it is important to build a well-off society from all fronts and inspect data on time and rectify according to the need. 'Three monitoring' system was to be followed to succeed this, monitoring all the dangerous old buildings, monitoring all the people who have returned home, and monitoring the dedication of the people. If any project fails to resume their work before April, there will be legal actions, and the person responsible will be under strict investigations. It also mentioned that border Xiaogang villages are near to competition, in the 14th five years, the focus will be on non-border Xiaogang villages. The development of non-border Xiaogang is vital for meeting the well-off society requirement of the county and city. He concluded by emphasizing to the adherence to the bottom line thinking and enhance the awareness of overall danger in the county.

### **Milin tunnel of Lhasa-Nyingtri section completed**

April 7, 2020

The Milin Tunnel, the last tunnel section of the Lhasa-Nyingtri railway of the Sichuan-Lhasa railway, was completed in the first week of April. The tunnel is located in Milin county of Nyingtri, and is 11,560 meters long, with an average elevation of 3,100 meters above sea level. It's the 47th and the last tunnel in the section. The tunnel is considered the "hardest nut to crack" for railway contractors, and its success will provide a valuable reference for the Ya'an-Nyingchi railway - the complex section of the Sichuan-Tibet railway - which is expected to begin construction this year.

China Railway Construction Group on April 7 reported that reported that all 47 tunnels on the section have been completed, and 119 of its 120 bridges have also been constructed. Track-laying work will be finished by the end of this year.

(Comment: The Lhasa-Nyingchi section of the Railway is 435 kilometers long and 75 percent of it comprises bridges and tunnels. The electrified railway section is designed for trains running at

an average speed of 160 kilometers per hour and is scheduled to become operational in 2021.)

### **Nyingtri extensively establishes ‘New Era Civilization’ Practice Centre**

April 10, 2020

Nyingtri (in Chinese: Linzhi) reports that they now have a total of approximately 498 ‘New Era Civilization Practice Centres’ across counties and districts. Seven were completed this week. These centres/stations are run by the ‘Municipal Civilization Office’.

The New Era Civilization Practice Centres in each county will have to carry out a 'daily practice and management system' in their county or district. On April 9, 545 groups comprising Party members, cadres, farmers, herdsmen, registered in response to the Party's call to all the skilled people to participate as volunteers. There are a total of 12,431 people in the 545 groups.

The main objective of this initiative is to spread the Party's ideology by going door to door, which is called making people ‘inherit the new era civilization’. It preaches about the Party and Party policies through direct individual door-to-door contact as well as other means like propaganda films, dramas, and cultural activities, particularly in the countryside.

(Comment: The initiative represents a new effort by the Party at penetrating the daily lives of people while possibly enhancing surveillance in Tibet.)

### **LHOKA NEWS (CH: SHANNAN)**

#### **Zedang County, Lhoka organizes meeting of Ministers and senior officials**

March 31, 2020

On March 30, Lhokha (in Chinese: Shannan) organized a meeting of Ministers, senior cadres, and Directors at Zedang County on 30th March. Zhang Dingcheng, a member of the Standing Committee of the Municipal Party Committee and Minister of the Organization Department, addressed the meeting. He pointed out that in 2019, Lhoka city put political construction as the

priority and laid special stress on the new campaign of 'not forgetting the initial heart and remembering the new mission.' He stressed the need for improving grassroot governance systems and Party building in cities, villages and border areas. He said the need for deepening and promoting team leadership and cadre teams is increasing.

Zhang Dingcheng also emphasised that the goal of building a well-off society should be 'attacked' from all fronts and the new era exposition of 'President Xi and the socialist ideology with Chinese characteristics' should be followed. He expressed confidence that it should be possible 'to achieve long-term integration of thought and practice and build a loyal and clean high-quality team of cadres to strengthen grassroot party building and the management system of Party members'.

### SHIGATSE NEWS (CH: XIGAZE)

#### Shigsatse Party Secretary inspects Kyirong and Nyalam Counties

April 07, 2020

Zhang Yanqing, Party Secretary of Shigatse and Vice Chairman of the TAR Party Committee conducted on-site inspection from April 4-6, of the construction of border defence villages, poverty alleviation relief projects, epidemic control measures and forest fire prevention controls. He was accompanied by Padruk, member of Shigatse Municipal Party Committee and Secretary of Kyirong County Party Committee.

Zhang Yanqing, emphasised the need to accelerate construction of well-off border villages as per Xi Jinping's exposition on stabilising Tibet's borders. He said people living in the border areas must be "happy and live in peace" which, he said, will help build a well-off society. Departments at all levels must keep a close eye on the mission and time period of each project and ensure quality and that the task is completed within the prescribed time. He added "the construction of the border well-off village should be organically combined with the rural revitalization strategy and integrated planning." He visited homes and interacted with several families in Kyirong.

Hearing the work report at a 'self-correction' meeting in Nyalam County on April 5, Zhang Yanqing pointed to the need to 'unify thinking, understand the significance of carrying out self-

examination, self-correction and political responsibility.” In the course of his visit, he observed an emergency drill for prevention and control of outbreaks at Zangmu Port.

## **TAR leader inspects ‘poverty alleviation’ sites in Shigatse**

March 29, 2020

Jampa visited a Chicken Breeding Cooperative Society in Lhatse County, the Dawa Highland Wine Industry in Rinbung County, National Culture and Handicraft Development Corporation in Shethongmon County, Chicken Farming in Namling County and the construction sites of industrial projects in resettlement areas and afforestation sites near rivers. While visiting these sites, Jampa asked concerned officials to complete poverty alleviations projects well and encourage the local population to participate in the process so they can also “earn money and get employed at their doorsteps.” He said it is necessary to verify proper utilisation of poverty alleviation funds so that they do not have problems. During his visit to afforestation areas close to the two rives (names of rives not mentioned), he emphasised that afforestation must follow laws of nature like, hydrology, soil quality and weather adaptability. He urged construction of nurseries with the use of technology and scientific methods.

## DEVELOPMENTS IN TIBETAN ETHNIC AREAS OUTSIDE TAR

## Forest fire in Dechen Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Yunnan

March 31, 2020

There is an increasing incidence of forest fires in various parts of Tibet. In the first week of April, administrative units in Ngaba, Ganzi, Dechen, and Lhoka held meetings and workshops to discuss pre-emptive and preventive measures for curbing forest fires. On March 28, the Muli district of

Dechen Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Yunnan, had a fire, which lasted for several days. The area falls under the Shangri-La Economic Development Zone. In addition to the Yunnan Forest Fire Brigade, the Lijiang and Baoshan Forest Fire Brigades joined in the effort bringing the total rescue team to more than 2,000. Three helicopters were deployed to extinguish the fire. Ganzi and Ngaba (Aba) also extended their help.

There was a similar forest fire in the same district around the same time in 2019, when 31 people lost their lives. Most were fire brigade personnel. Ironically, a commemoration remembering those who died last year and calling them martyrs was held just before this year's fire incident.

### **Ngaba Prefecture, Sichuan, opens scenic spots for tourists**

April 1, 2020

China had placed an upper cap limit on the number of tourists to Tibetan areas as part of ecological conservation measures and banned visits to many sacred mountains for locals as well. But China recently opened its parks and scenic spots for tourists causing concern to Tibetans. The daily limit of tourists is quite high e.g. in Aaranang (in Chinese: Shuangqiao Valley) the daily limit is 9,000 persons. However, it received only 167 tourists the first day. For other areas like Jiuzhaigou and Huanglong Scenic Area the daily limit is 10,000 and 3,000 respectively. Hotels and restaurants are open but only for domestic tourists, with general restrictions because of the epidemic.

### **Earthquake in Sershul County, Sichuan**

April 3, 2020

Sershul (in Chinese: Shiqu) in Ganzi Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan, was hit by a magnitude of 5.6 earthquakes on the first day of April. The epicentre was monitored at 33.04 degrees north latitude and 98.92 degrees east longitude. It caused damage to house of over 790 households in 84 villages affecting more than 4,000 people. The economic loss was estimated at 79.83 million (US\$ 11.28 million) according to the local authority. The provincial government had to evacuate people from the epicentre and set up emergency tents. No causalities have been reported so far.

## **Ngaba local authority suspends Tibetan as medium of instruction in schools**

April 9, 2020

As schools resumed at the beginning of April, schools in Ngaba (in Chinese: Aba), were told that from the end of 2020, Tibetan as a medium of instruction would be replaced by Mandarin. While no ‘Official Red letter’ had been received till April 9, sources from inside the Tibetan area said the instruction was clearly mentioned in the meetings of heads of schools, which includes primary and secondary schools. Public opinion on this move has been sought.

The heads of schools were told by local authorities that the results of students were poor under the Tibetan medium of instruction, and there is a lack of qualified teachers at the senior secondary level. The instructions added that the performance of students is not to be blamed on the language, but rather, has more to do with the teaching proficiency of each teacher, and the limited periods for individual subjects. This is entirely against the Chinese constitution and bi-lingual policy for ethnic minorities. Sharing great concern for its long term impact on the Tibetan community and Tibetan language, it was felt by Tibetans that this will deny Tibetans job and language rights as there will progressively be fewer Tibetans who can read and work professionally with their own language.

## **DIASPORA TIBETAN NEWS**

### **Karmapa donates Rs. 28 Lakh towards India’s fight against COVID-19 pandemic**

April 12, 2020

The 17th Karmapa Uyghen Thinley Dorje, head of the Karma Kargyu sect of Tibetan Buddhism, shared his ‘concern and support of India’s fight against the COVID-19 pandemic’ and contributed Rs. 28 lakhs (US\$ 36,000). The Tsurphu Labrang, his office in Dharamsala, issued a press release: “His Holiness (the Karmapa) is very concerned about the outbreak of this deadly COVID-19 in India and around the globe, and appreciates the timely and untiring efforts made by the Government of India led by Honourable Prime Minister (Narendra Modi) and the State Governments in containing this deadly disease.”

At the Karmapa's direction, the Tsurphu Labrang and Kun Kyong Charitable Trust made a combined contribution of Rs. 12 lakh (US\$ 15,000) to the Prime Minister CARES Fund, and Rs 3,00,000/- (US\$ 4,000) each to the State Governments of Himachal Pradesh and Sikkim respectively. The Kagyu Monlam Trust, also under the Karmapa, contributed Rupees 5,00,000/- (US\$ 6,500) to the Prime Minister CARES Fund, and another Rs 5,00,000/- to the State Government of Bihar. The Kagyu Monlam Organisation has been coordinating with the District authorities in Gaya to provide essentials for needy people in the districts of Bihar.

(Comment: The statement, however, did not disclose the whereabouts of the Karmapa Uyghen Thinley Dorjee.)

#### **CTA calls on health care workers to volunteer during Covid-19 pandemic**

April 10, 2020

The Central Tibetan Administration issued (April 10) a statement "In view of continued emergency and deteriorating state of public health caused by Wuhan COVID-19 pandemic outbreak, the Department of Health, CTA requests doctors, nurses, medical staff and drivers stationed in Tibetan habitats in India and Nepal to render short term voluntary services as per the need of their locality." Deputy Secretary Namgyal Gendun told Phayul that so far five people have called the department in pursuance of the appeal. He said, "Anyone who wishes to volunteer can offer their services at the place of their residence, as and when their service is required".

Earlier, the exiled Tibetan government's Kashag (Cabinet) said it has sanctioned Rupees 30 lakh for the prevention and assistance of any task related to the Covid-19. Rupees 8 lakh have already been released to the Department of Health. Deputy Secretary Gendun said all hospitals and dispensaries under the department have been notified of the availability of funds to procure basics like PPE.

## **EU reaffirms opposition to China's interference in Dalai Lama reincarnation issue**

April 11, 2020

The European Union has reaffirmed its position that China should respect the Dalai Lama's succession in accordance with Tibetan Buddhist standards. The assurance was given on April 3 by Joesp Borrell, the EU Foreign Affairs Chief and Vice President of the European Commission. His written statement was quoted as informing MEPs: "The European Union has consistently indicated that it expects China to respect the Dalai Lama's succession, in accordance with Tibetan Buddhist standards. This position was also recalled at the previous meeting on 1 April 2019. The European Union will continue to express its position on this issue." The MEPs were Petras Auštrevičius, Aušra Maldeikienė, Hannes Heide, Francisco Guerreiro, and Petra De Sutter, all members of the Tibet Interest Group (TIG) of the European Parliament.

-----END OF REPORT-----