

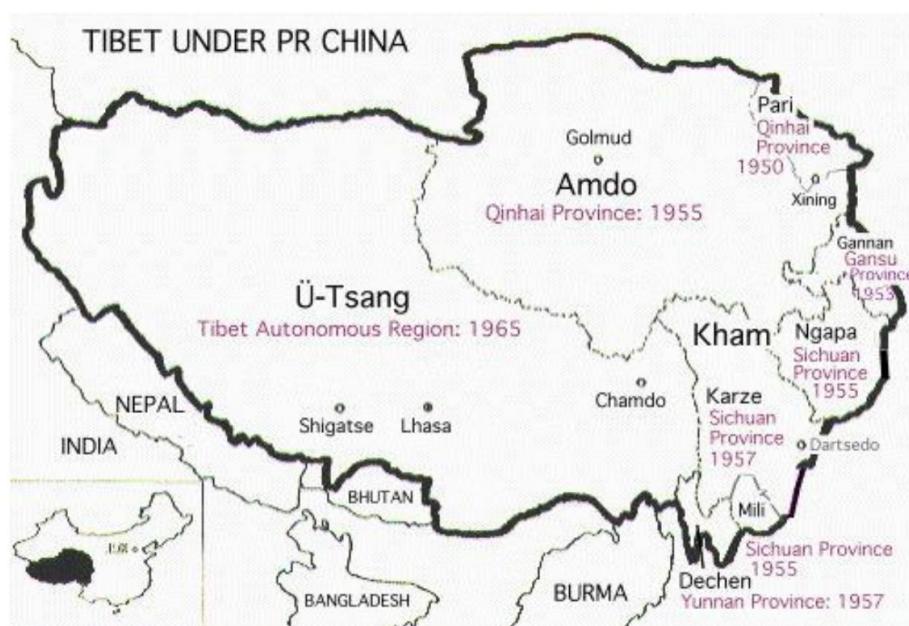
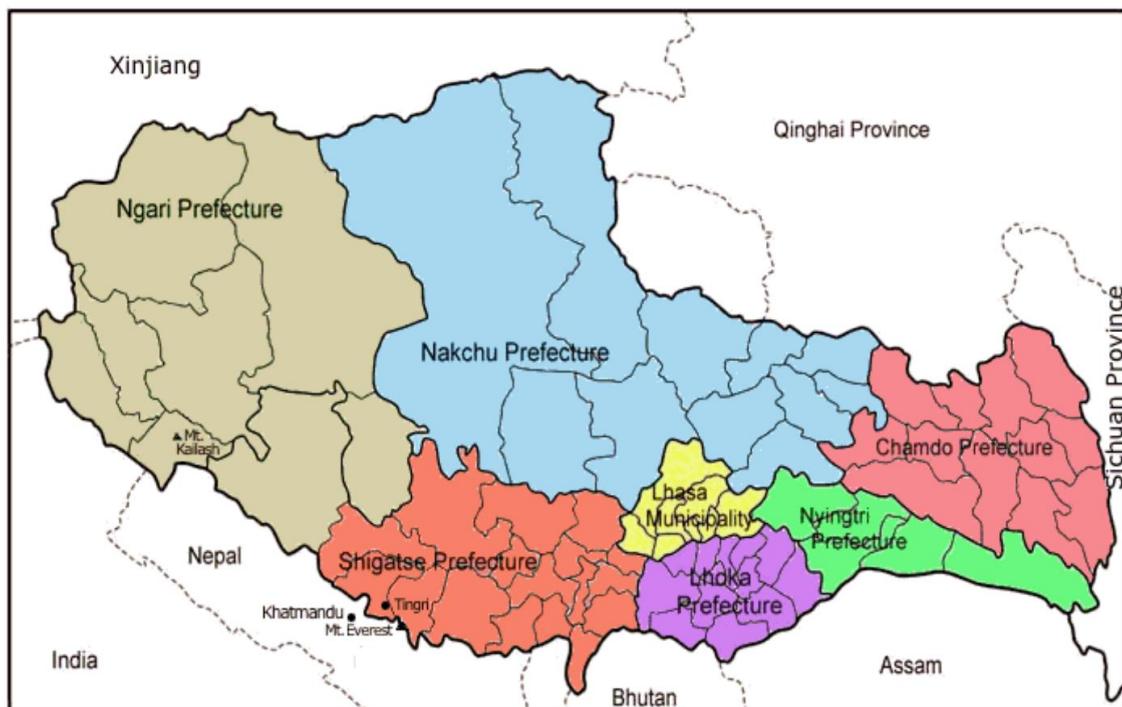


CCAS

Centre for China Analysis & Strategy

中国分析及策略中心

Tibet Insight, January 1-15 2019



TAR NEWS

TAR Party Committee held Plenary Meeting

January 09, 2019

TAR Party Secretary Wu Yingjie presided over the fifth Plenary Meeting of the TAR Party Committee in Lhasa on January 9. The meeting was attended by, among others, Lobsang Gyaltzen, Qi Zhala, Ding Yexian, Zhuang Yan, Danke, Jiang Jie, Penpa Tashi, He Wenhao, Pema Wangdui and Liu Jiang.

The Plenary session pointed that since the third Plenary session, the TAR Party Committee has been thoroughly and vigorously implementing ‘Xi Jinping’s Socialism with Chinese Characteristics in the New Era’, the ‘General Secretary’s guidelines on regulation of borders’, ‘Governance on Tibetan Buddhism’, and promotion of social stability. Wu Yingjie, who presided over the meeting, tabled the undernoted points:

- i) He asked officials to ‘firmly, resolutely’ support and trust the CCP CC, safeguard the ‘core’ position of General Secretary Xi Jinping, have clear political norms, implement fundamental political requirements, educate party members, cadres, ethnic groups, on the “Four consciousness, strengthen three ‘self-confidences’ and unify their thinking.
- ii) Citing his own example, he said that he had studied and understood ‘Xi Jinping’s thoughts on socialism with Chinese Characteristics in the New Era’ and the ‘spirit of the 19th Party Congress’ thoroughly, which had helped him achieving productive results. He urged the attending officials to do the same.
- iii) He emphasized that ‘safeguarding the Motherland’s reunification and consolidating national unity’ should be a priority and that all should work meticulously to maintain long-term stability, prevent ‘chaos,’ manage religious affairs in accordance to ‘law’ and use all resources including visual images to promote national unity.
- iv) Wu Yingjie reiterated the importance of improving people’s livelihood through poverty alleviation programs and subsidies and implementation of the rural revitalization strategy including constructing border area infrastructure.

Propaganda campaigns in rural areas

January 18, 2018

After the launch of a propaganda campaign known as the ‘five rural areas,’ the TAR Cultural, Law, Science and Technology, and Health Committee held ‘Patriotic Education’ in rural areas in Lhasa on January 17. Books, medicines, school supplies, wall charts, umbrellas and other materials were distributed to the villages including Health check-ups for villagers at a cost of 400,000 Yuan.

‘Preference’ was given to peasants, herdsmen and farmers from pastoral areas. Agricultural and animal husbandry supplies were distributed along with ‘free’ medical check-ups. Zhang Gan, Secretary of the ‘Five Rural Areas’ campaign said they reached out to the head of each village, supplied technologies, and provided health facilities so as to bridge the gap between the masses, monks and nuns and the Party. Zhu Yanli, Head of the TAR Women’s Federation said the Women’s Federation bought 2,000 books, 100 umbrellas, 250 pens, 100 environment-friendly bags, 200 ‘sleeveless skirts and 150 ‘sleeved skirts’ for distribution to the masses. The campaigners also performed propaganda performances for the farmers and herdsmen.

First, air-route from Tibet to Finland to open in April

January 15, 2018

Tibet Airlines announced that the first air route from Tibet to Finland will commence on April 8 via the Jinan-Lhasa route. The estimated flight time is 10 hours.

(Comment: The Tibet Airlines fleet has 31 aircraft and more than 60 routes, including 30 in Tibet and 3 international routes. Tibet Airlines is the first high-altitude airline.)

Inheritance and Promotion of Tibetan Buddhism rest ‘ourselves’ says Chinese Panchen

January 19, 2019

At the opening ceremony of a seminar entitled ‘Interpretation of Tibetan Buddhist Doctrines’ the Chinese-appointed Panchen Lama, member of the CPPCC Standing Committee and Vice-President of the Buddhist Association of China Gyaltsen Norbu, said the Central Party Committee attaches importance to ethnic and religious affairs and hence the Party’s policies are ‘preferential’ to Buddhist followers. He added that Buddhism, unlike many religions in

the world, had survived and the credit goes to “our ancestors.” He urged followers to preserve Buddhism with the “good paths and platforms” provided, or being provided, by the CCP CC United Front Work Department.

Handicrafts at Ngari Border

January 09, 2019

The TAR Party Committee recently advertised border trade in the Burang County of Ngari (Ch: Ali), which has Mount Kailash (Tib: Gang Rinpoche) and Lake Manasarovar (Tib: Mapham Yumtso) in its administrative jurisdiction. Burang County is located at the intersection of “China’s Tibet,” India and Nepal in a total area of 12,497 sq kilometers, and at average height of 4000 meters. At the border market, all kinds of Indian and Nepalese products, especially handicrafts, and different kinds of handmade products and fruits and edibles from the mainland are available. It urged people to make it a ‘must visit’ place in their travel itinerary.

Tibet to link all villages by road in 2019

January 17, 2019

TAR aims to build and upgrade 4,500 km of rural roads to link all its townships and villages by the end of 2019. According to the Regional Department of Transport, this is expected to contribute to the ongoing poverty reduction campaign, especially in Tibet's one township and 12 villages that still lack access to roads. The department said Tibet was committed to using improved infrastructure to boost the development of agriculture and animal husbandry and raise the income of local farmers and herdsmen.

The region invested 37.29 billion yuan (about US\$ 5.5 billion) in its rural road projects last year, including building and upgrading 13,000 km of rural roads. By the end of last year, the region's rural roads totalled 68,863 km. A total of 34 townships and 533 villages gained access to asphalt or concrete roads. About 244,000 farmers and herdsmen were engaged in road construction last year, which increased their income by a total of 6.94 billion yuan. A total of 180,000 people were lifted out of poverty in Tibet last year with the region's all-out poverty relief efforts. The region aims to lift 150,000 more people out of poverty and eradicate absolute poverty this year.

TAR People's Government Annual Executive meeting

January 16, 2016

As mandated by the CCP CC and TAR Party Committee, the annual executive meeting of TAR People's Government meeting was held from January 15-16, in the presence of TAR Discipline Inspection Commission, and Organization Department officials. Deputy Secretary of TAR Party Committee, Chairman of TAR People's Government Qi Zhala, chaired the meeting. He reviewed the progress made in 2018 and outlined the government's work for 2019.

The official Global Times reported (January 11) that Qizhala, Chairman of the TAR Regional Government said in his government work report to the second session of the 11th People's Congress of the Tibet Autonomous Region on January 10, that TAR's GDP in 2018 was estimated to have exceeded 140 billion yuan (US\$ 21 billion). He said a total of 180,000 people in Tibet were taken off the list of the poor, defined as per capita annual income of 2,300 yuan at 2010 prices. The regional government also vowed to lift the last 150,000 people out of poverty and eradicate absolute poverty this year, which marks the 60th anniversary of "democratic reforms" in the region. Xiong Kunxin, an ethnic studies professor at Tibet University in Lhasa, told the Global Times on January 11, that "the biggest change in Tibet during the past century is that residents now identify themselves as citizens, instead of slaves after the liberation from slavery in 1951." He added that 'support by the State and Party policy also empowered residents to strive for a better life, which also gave them a stronger sense of belonging in the region.' The Global Times said 'Tibetan officials also warned that the "hypocritical" side of the 14th Dalai Lama, who was regarded as a separatist and fled into exile 60 years ago, should be clearly noted. A commentary published by Tibet Daily on December 13, observed that 'the 14th Dalai Lama ignored the remarkable progress made in such a short period and his remarks that Tibet has "no human rights and religious freedom" are complete nonsense. Hu Shisheng, Director of the Institute of South and Southeast Asian and Oceania Studies in Beijing, told Global Times (January 11) "No matter what kind of noises the 14th Dalai Lama makes, his narrative is losing the market and his support in international society has hit a record low as the Chinese central government's policy in the region has proven to be beneficial to residents." He added 'As a result of effective management of social and religious affairs, there are no major political accidents or self-immolations in Tibet since the deadly March 14 riot in Tibet in 2008.' He also said 'Though

some US politicians might continue to play the Tibet card against China in 2019 on issues like human rights, China should ignore those political tricks and focus on exploring diverse development approach to the region.'

Some highlights of the report are:

- Tibet's GDP is expected to grow by 10 percent and top 140 billion yuan (US\$ 21 billion) in 2018. Major industries in TAR include agriculture, tourism and culture, green industry, modern services, and high-tech and digital industry.
- Average per-capita disposable income in rural areas is expected to increase by about 13 percent, and that for urban dwellers by 10 percent in 2019.
- The region created 54,000 new jobs for urban residents in 2018 and its urban unemployment rate stood at 2.83 percent.
- About 14.49 billion yuan (about 2.1 billion U.S. dollars) was spent to fund the resettlement of 218,000 people from less inhabitable areas.
- Tibet launched more than 700 poverty alleviation projects, trained 36,000 poverty-stricken farmers and herdsmen, and provided 47,000 new jobs in ecological protection.
- Tibet received 33.68 million tourists, up 31.5 percent. Tourist revenue reached 49 billion yuan (about 7 billion dollars), up 29.2 percent.
- The installed capacity of Tibet's clean energy is expected to reach 3.33 million kilowatts. The region sends 870 million kilowatt-hours of electricity to 14 provinces and regions in China.
- Border trade volume in 2018 was 4.8 billion yuan (about 700 million dollars).
- A total of 10.7 billion yuan (1.5 billion dollars) was spent on environment efforts. New trees were planted on 74,000 hectares of land. Forests cover 12.14 percent of land in Tibet.
- Around 33 percent of the people live in urban areas in Tibet.
- Tibet targets 10-pct economic growth in 2019. About 50,000 new jobs will be created in cities and towns this year.

China claims success in preventing unauthorised border crossings into TAR

January 19, 2019

China said (January 17) that it launched a stringent drive in July 2018 to crack down on illegal entry and exit into the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), resulting in a 79-percent decrease in the number of cases compared with the first half of the year. It said reacting to an increase in the number of illegal exits and entries along the TAR border during the first half of 2018, the region's departure and entry inspection station launched the drive and strengthened cooperation with the People's Liberation Army (PLA) stationed along the border.

The report said a total of 100,000 vehicles and 500,000 passengers were inspected, resulting in nearly 1,000 people being refused entry to Tibet for not completing entry and exit formalities. The report also said that more than 16,000 police officers visited 21,000 households along the border areas and to register 48,000 people coming from other provinces or regions. Seven residents were awarded a total of 84,000 yuan for their contributions in safeguarding border security.

DEVELOPMENTS IN TIBETAN ETHNIC AREAS OUTSIDE TAR

No more Tibetan Instruction in China's Oldest University for Tibetan Students

January 01, 2019

Radio Free Asia (RFA) reported on January 1, that Tibetan instruction in the classroom in the Tibetan Minzu University has been abolished. The Tibetan Minzu University was formerly established in 1958 as a Tibetan public school in Xianyang city , Shaanxi province. It was renamed as the Tibetan Minzu University in 1965. RFA quoted a local source as saying the school has a current enrollment of over 6,000 students, around half of whom are Tibetans. The RFA Tibetan service described the move as 'asserting the dominance of Chinese culture' and disadvantaging large numbers of native speakers of the language in the university. One Tibetan resident student reported "Eleven areas of specialization are taught at the university, but all these courses are taught only in Chinese, which is a problem for us Tibetan students". Currently there is only one Tibetan language class offered as a second language, and one scholarship offered for Tibetan studies in the whole school."

Subjects taught at Tibetan Minzu University include education, finance, information, engineering, sports, law, management, foreign language, ethnic studies, journalism, and Tibetan medicine. Even classes in traditional Tibetan medicine are now taught in Mandarin Chinese. The sudden shift in the medium of instruction of the course makes it difficult for Tibetan students specializing in Tibetan medicine. Study of ethnic nationalities is also taught in Chinese. Students are now denied the opportunity of taking specialized courses in Tibetan language. A local source said although Tibetan Minzu University was established at first as a school for Tibetan students, “there is an acute lack of platform to use Tibetan language in the university.” Tibetan students at the school are now “taking matters into their own hands by setting up a group for the study of Tibetan culture and language” and the group meets on weekends to talk and organize events. Language rights have become a particular focus for Tibetan efforts to assert national identity in recent years in various parts of Tibet, with informally organized language courses typically deemed “illegal associations” and teachers subject to detention and arrest. In May 2018, a court in China’s Qinghai province sentenced Tibetan shopkeeper and language activist Tashi Wangchuk to five years in prison for “separatism.

Qinghai owns the largest capacity wind power project

January 04, 2019

According to the National Electric Power Investment Group Huanghe Upstream Hydropower Development Co., Ltd., the 850,000-kilowatt Mohe wind farm funded and constructed by the company has successfully connected to the grid in Qinghai. The Mohe wind farm is currently the largest single-capacity wind power project in China. It is located in Gonghe County, Hainan Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai Province about 3,000 meters above sea level. It is equipped with a 330 kV booster station and a 204 km transmission line. It was started in May 2018. The power station is automated for the remote monitoring, regulation and big data analysis of the power station, which greatly improves the overall operating efficiency of the power station. After operations commence, the annual utilization time of the power station can reach 2000 hours or more, with an annual power generation capacity of 1.8 billion kWh. Compared with the traditional thermal power station, it saves the equivalent of 600,000 tons of standard coal, reducing the smoke and dust by about 0.76 million tons. Carbon dioxide emissions are about 1.8 million tons.

In recent years, Qinghai has focused on the transformation of energy structure, accelerated the

construction of two million kilowatt-class new energy bases in Haixi and Hainan, and comprehensively created a green energy demonstration province, which has enabled the rapid rise of solar energy and wind power generation industries. Qinghai's new energy installed capacity has surpassed hydropower to become the largest power source in Qinghai.

Kanlho Prefecture Officially Launched the Fourth National Economic Census Registration

January 4, 2019

On January 3, Wang Jianjun, head of the Kanlho (Gannan) Economic Census Leading Group, Deputy Governor and Director of the State Development and Reform Commission, and in-charge of the General Office of the Municipality, motivated the enterprises and merchants to carry out census registration work. He pointed out that the fourth national economic census was the first major investigation to find out the national situation and national strength after the 19th National Party Congress and new era of the socialism with Chinese characteristics. It will also see the comprehensive plan and basic work of building a well-off society and launching the new journey of building a socialist modernized country in an all-round way to benefit the people. The healthy and rapid development of the economy and society is inseparable from the strong support of the basic work of the economic census. In-depth development of the fourth national economic census will further consolidate the statistical basis, find out the state's power, and provide data support and scientific basis for accelerating the economic and social development of the whole state. Wang Jianjun demanded that economic census institutions and census enumerators at all levels should effectively improve their political positions, organize them in accordance with the requirements of work deployment, conduct extensive publicity, and conduct a general survey according to law to successfully complete the fourth national economic census mission of the state.

The main objectives of the census is to collect information on basic unit status, organizational structure, salary, financial status, energy production and consumption, production capacity, production and operation activities, investment in fixed assets, research and development activities, information and e-commerce transactions.

39 Tourism Demonstration Village in Dadu River Basin completed, Sichuan

January 6, 2018

In May 2018, the state government has officially launched the construction of the rural revitalization demonstration zone in the Dadu River Basin, Sichuan. This includes a series of rural tourism projects with unique characteristics are accelerating along the Dadu River, such as Luding, Kangding and Danba etc. The overall project plans to build 282 rural demonstration villages.

In 2018, the Gansu Dadu River Basin Rural Revitalization Demonstration Zone Construction Work Plan completed the work plan for the first batch of 24 tourism demonstration villages in Luding, Kangding and Danba. At the end of November, fifteen (15) more villages in the Nietun area of Danba County were also completed.

The reportage mentions that, “The first batch of 39 rural demonstration village project started off well and became an important project of the rule revitalisation in Sichuan”. They have also pointed out 67 pilot villages for rural revitalization in the Jinsha River and Yalong River Basin. It involves some important water conservancy project in Batang, Tawu, (Daofu), Derge etc. The Gansu to Malay 110 kv power transmission and transformation project was also completed recently. The rural revitalisation development is said to be helpful in improving the agriculture and animal husbandry, and, the environment of farming and pastoral areas is getting more beautiful. This is an effort to build a model village and they plan to build 93 different key task state-level department and appointed 126 officials in implementing. For the first batch, they invested 145 million Yuan.

China imposed ban on releasing Fish in major Rivers in Yushu, Qinghai

January 7, 2018

Under the project titled Yangtze Economic Development, the Yushu government in the Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture banned local Tibetans from ‘sparing’ the lives of fish in the Yangtze (Drichu), Yellow (Machu), and Mekong (Zachu) river heads. Local Tibetans buy thousands of fish from the fisherman and release them into the rivers to ‘spare’ their lives particularly during the religious festivals as a deed of good ‘karma’. According to the latest notice, people are no longer allowed to carry out such activities either in big rivers or its tributaries or in nearby ponds.

The ban has been imposed under the law of fishery, wildlife protection and, protection of aquatic life to protect the environment, and save rare fish species in the area. The ban follows

one of Xi Jinping's speeches where he mentioned that the Yangtze is 'the mother of all the rivers in China' and it is necessary to have a larger economic development project plan in its surrounding areas. Under this new instruction, the local government has displaced more than 128 nomadic families from the Yangtze River valley to the southwest of Gormo town. They were instructed to renounce the nomadic life and become environment protectors. They are banned from using the pastureland and have been asked to find jobs in the town. In Ngaba, (Aba), Sichuan, the State Forest Public Security Bureau and the Aba County Environmental Protection and Forestry Bureau, the Industrial and Commercial Quality Technology and Food and Drug Administration, the Forest Public Security Bureau and other departments have carried out joint law enforcement inspections to protect wildlife. The focus is on the inspection of restaurants, hotels and vegetable markets in the area. In this operation, 46 business sites and 33 frozen warehouses were inspected, and 9 wild animals and their products were collected. They also issued 120 copies of the "Prohibition of illegal hunting, management, and use of wild animals", and the "Wild Animal Protection".

A Tibetan man was arrested after exposing corruption in Qinghai

January 9, 2019

A Tibetan man named Anya Sengdra was arrested in Golog after exposing the corruption of local officials responsible for the poverty alleviation projects. He was taken from his village Golog in Gade district to Xilling and denied any visits including by his wife and other family members until December 22. His wife Yangkey and lawyer Linji Li have made repeated appeals to allow family visits.

According to the local police order received on November 12, he was charged with inciting 'separatism and disunity in the community'. He would be detained till January 12, 2019. After his arrest in September last year, Yangkey petitioned the government for his release and, compensation of causing emotional distress and financial loss in the process. However, the government responded by saying that one who engages in illegal activities, doesn't follow law and order and does not obey the party representative should be dealt with strictly. He was also accused of distorting the truth and causing suspicion in the hearts and minds of villagers which could harm their trust for the party and its policies.

The Sisters of Yume as 'National Models of our Times'

January 13, 2019

The Central United Front Work Department, the Central Propaganda Department, and the National Civil Affairs Commission jointly issued the "Notice on Learning from the "Model of the Times", the two sisters Dolkar and Yangzom. They notified the entire country that the experience of these sisters must be studied, applied and spread far and wide.

Wu Yingjie, Secretary of the TAR Party Committee gave instructions to seriously study the requirements of the notice, formulate an implementation plan, and formulate the best method of the propaganda. The notice reiterated Xi Jinping's letter to the two sisters, Dolkar and Yangzom from Yumai Township, Lhunse County, Lhoka, in which he acknowledged their correct behaviour and their father for two generations. Xi Jinping stated "I express my gratitude to the comrades who have long loyalty to the motherland, and loyalty to the border, and encourage the farmers and herdsmen to take root and protect the country and build a good hometown".

The 'notice further stated that, since the 1960s, under the influence and leadership of their father, Sanjie Quba, the two sisters have always adhered to the firm belief that "the family is Yumai, the country is China, and protecting the border is their duty". On October 19, 2018, the Central Propaganda Department awarded the two sisters the title of "Time Model".

The notice emphasized that Xi Jinping's letter to the two sisters indicates the General Secretary and Central Party's commitment to the long-term development and stability of Tibet, good wishes to all ethnic groups in Tibet to live a happy life. It shows the important strategic thinking of the party, "To govern the country, one must rule and manage the border first", and also his firm determination of safeguarding the national sovereignty and territorial integrity". It says that 'the General Secretary's message is profound in thought, rich in connotation, has a long term focus. This is a call for the broad masses of cadres and masses to work together with the frontier people and officials'.

Keeping the border, building the border, and strengthening the border are of great significance for furthering national unity and social stability in the frontier ethnic areas, and for the long-term development and long-term stability of the Tibetan areas. The notice says, "Dolkar and Yangzom are the outstanding representatives of safeguarding national unity and building beautiful Tibet. They should learn from their firm ideals and beliefs, learn their dedication and spirit, and learn from their strong feelings in their home country."

It is necessary to attach great importance to the party members and cadres to conscientiously study and understand the important General Secretary letter, and to learn from the "time model" of the two sisters. For the advancement of this idea, the relevant departments should take the lead in carrying out various learning and publicity activities. The propaganda department should use multi-channel means to publicize the deeds of the two sisters, and play a leading role in the era of the times; the united front of the people's congress should thoroughly implement the Party Central Committee's decision-making spirit on united front work, strengthen national unity, promote religious harmony, and maintain social stability.

A video appeal from Tibet to send Negotiation Delegation, Qinghai

January 15, 2019

The previous head of Chamdha Dzong monastery, Samten Woeser of Amdo Golog, Qinghai, made a video appeal to send a delegation for resumption of the Tibet-China negotiation. According to the video circulated on the social media, abbot Samten Woeser filmed a short video in his monastic room on January 14, where he showed two pictures of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama. In the video, he made two main points: first, he requested a Tibetan delegation to Tibet for negotiations. Second, to have the Jonang sect represented in the parliament of the Tibetan government in Exile. A rough transcription of his message is:

"For this life and next, no one can be more grateful to us than the His Holiness the Dalai Lama, to His Holiness and all the brothers of sisters of exile and Tibet, I wish you a happy new year. The Chinese government has widely announced that they have opened the negotiation process, so I request to a send Tibetan exile representative for the talk every year. And an appeal to Sikyong Lobsang Sangay (who is the representative of all of us), and all exile administration, do elect two representatives of the Jonang sect this year in the Tibetan parliament as His Holiness the Dalai Lama has already recognized the Kalchakra Empowerment of the Jonang sect which is an immense blessing from him".

EXILE TIBETAN NEWS

Only 80 Tibetans fled Tibet in 2018: Senior CTA official

January 17, 2019

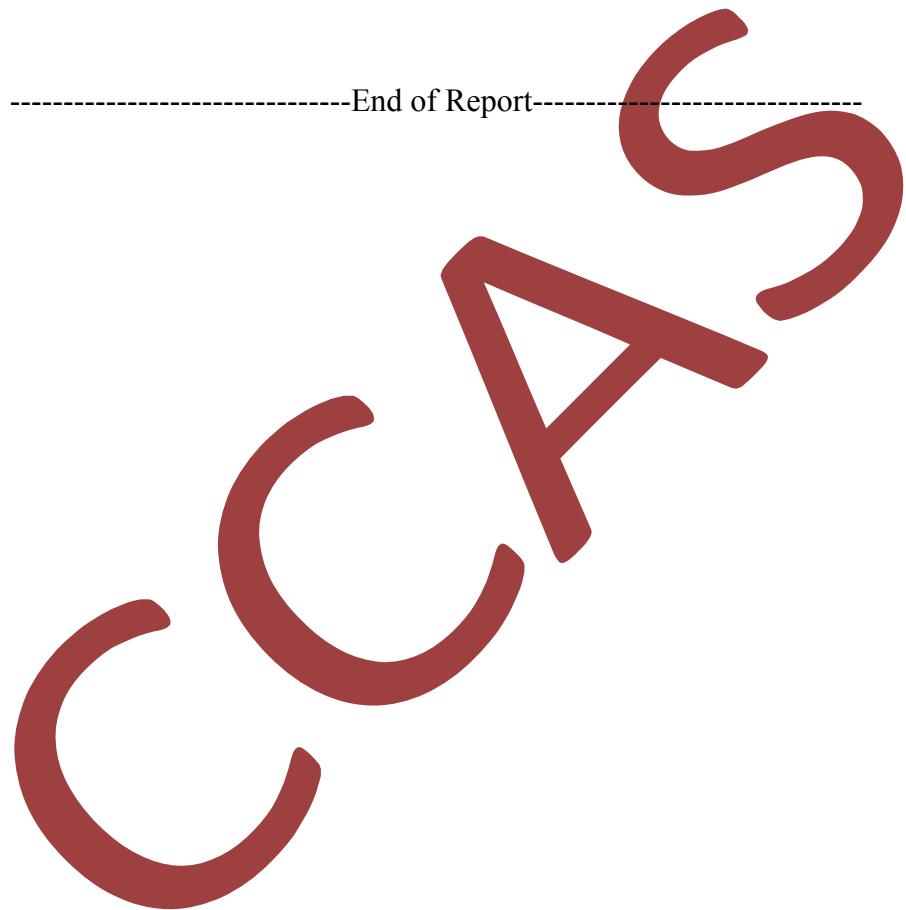
A senior official of the Department of Security of the Tibetan government in exile said on January 17 that the drastic clampdown at border regions linking Nepal and “occupied Tibet” is the main reason the number of Tibetans arriving into India has nosedived. Karma Rinchen, the Secretary of the Department of Security said “The total number of Tibetans that have been documented in the official list is just 80 in the year 2018 which is among the lowest in the past years.” Many of the rooms of the compound that the Tibetan authorities built for refugees here in Dharamshala now remain empty and unused as the number of refugees has dropped drastically in the last few years. The clampdown on the routes used by Tibetan refugees began post 2008 after the Pan-Tibet uprising. Nepal, where refugees initially arrive on transit to India, has proved to be hostile ground as the alliance between Kathmandu and Beijing grew stronger in the recent years. In July 2018, two Tibetan men fleeing “occupied Tibet”, Kunga, 25, and Lophankhu, 37, both residents of Lhasa, were held by Nepalese border security personnel at the Tatopani border point in Kodari in Sindhupal chowk district and later returned to Tibet. The Chinese government is pushing for joint security patrols along the Nepal-China border points to further choke the route for Tibetan refugees that seek to cross into freedom from Chinese rule. In September 30, 2006 Western climbers shot a footage of Chinese border police firing at Tibetans and killing a woman, crossing into Nepal. Increasingly militarised borders and strict deportation practices, among other factors, have meant that the number of Tibetans crossing into exile has dwindled drastically over the years. According to a source who wished to remain anonymous, less than 50 Tibetans crossed into exile and reached Dharamshala, the seat of the Tibetan government in exile in the year 2017 while less than 10 returned back to Tibet after fulfilling the extremely strict official vetting process.

Nyingma Tibetan Buddhists select Dzogchen Rinpoche as new head

January 18, 2019

The heads of the principal monasteries of the Nyingma tradition of Tibetan Buddhism have on January 15 chosen the 7th Dzogchen Rinpoche Jigme Losel Wangpo as their new leader. This followed the sudden passing away in November 2018 of Kathok Getse Rinpoche in Nepal. Kathok Getse Rinpoche was head of the Nyingma Sect for about a year. Jigme Losel Wangpo was chosen for the position during the 30th Nyingma Monlam held at Bodh Gaya, which concluded on Jan 16. The 54-year-old principal holder of the Dzogchen lineage will be the 8th

head of the Nyingma tradition of Tibetan Buddhism. He was not present at the gathering, so his selection is subject to his acceptance of that position. It was during a meeting of representatives of the top Nyingma masters at the same venue around the same time last year that Kathok Getse Rinpoche was made the head. It was also decided that the headship will rotate for three-yearly terms among the six principal Nyingma lineage holders, namely those of Kathok, Dzogchen, Sechen, Mindrolling, Dorje Drak and Palyul monasteries. Dzogchen Rinpoche, the newly selected head, was born in Sikkim in 1964 and was recognised as such by the 4th Dodrupchen Rinpoche Thupten Trinley Palzang and confirmed by the Dalai Lama.



-----End of Report-----