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TIBETAN CENTRE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY

## Monthly Translation and Analyses Digest

A compilation of selected stories, translation and analyses of Chinese government media reports that are otherwise available only in Chinese and Tibetan language.



Yalong River Gorge [Credit: Michael Woodhead, Flickr.]

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**And Much More . . .**

### **More than 70 big and medium-sized hydropower plants displacing Tibetans in Kardze Prefecture**

More than 70 large and medium-sized hydropower plants have been built and are under construction in Kardze (Ch: Ganzi) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan Province, reported the official *Sichuan Daily* on 25 September.

The spurt in dam building has been triggered by China's 13th Five-Year Plan (2016-2020) that calls for large-scale expansion of hydropower projects in the ecologically fragile Tibetan areas in Sichuan, Yunnan and Qinghai.

The report indicated that the hydropower plants are concentrated in and around the Nyagchu (Ch: Yalong) River, Drichu (Ch: Jinsha) River, Gyarong Ngulchu (Ch: Dadu) River) and their tributaries. It added that the estimated hydropower reserves in the prefecture were about 50 million kilowatts, out of which 41.3 million kilowatts could be exploited.

The dam building spree has predictably caused the displacement of local Tibetans who are now forced to live in resettlement camps and rely on government handouts. Although the exact number of relocated population remains unknown, the report noted that a number of resettlement camps have been built in various counties such as Dartsedo (Ch: Kangding), Chaksam (Ch: Luding), Rongdrag (Ch: Danba), and Gyesur (Ch: Jiulong). The prefecture authorities have so far spent 9.1 billion yuan on relocating local residents.

The report further claimed that the Ganzi Prefecture Hydropower Migrants Unit, under the guidance of the Ganzi Party committee and the government as well as the Provincial Poverty Alleviation and Development Bureau, has been “serving the [hydropower] migrants, promoting project construction, developing the reservoir area, and ensuring social stability”.

Since the dam building began, provincial and national highways totaling more than 230 kilometers in the prefecture have been repaired to support the infrastructural development necessary for massive hydropower expansion plan, although the report maintained it was done to ease travel for local people.

Local authorities claimed that since the beginning of the 13th FYP, the prefectural authorities have spent 8.33 million yuan in providing “technical” and “practical” training skills to displaced people including “employment skills transfer training”, “cooking and chef training” as well as providing skilled manpower in the development of rural tourism for “hydropower migrants” in the Dadu River Basin and the Yalong River Basin. There are also claims that displaced people have been provided other financial support and jobs in the hydropower enterprises.

While the actual condition of the displaced people cannot be independently assessed, the fact that Chinese authorities have gone ahead with its plan to build a series of dams the ecologically-fragile Tibetan plateau is deeply concerning. China had pledged to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through ‘clean energy’ sources for about 20 percent of its primary energy consumption by 2030. Clearly, the pledge is being fulfilled, exploiting the hydropower resources of the Tibetan plateau, the source of Asia’s major rivers, and ignoring the serious environmental risks caused by big dam projects.

## **200,000 nomads and farmers relocated in less than four years in Qinghai**

More than a year before the expiration of the 13th Five-Year Plan period (2016-2020), Chinese authorities have completed its target of relocating 52,000 nomadic and farming households consisting of 200,000 people in the Tibetan areas of Qinghai Province.

China's major state TV broadcaster *CCTV* claimed on 12 September that the relocation program has improved the economic conditions of rural population after the former nomads and farmer engaged in rural tourism projects of running homestay business, peddling souvenirs, and running amusement wharfs and eating joints.

Among the relocated in Qinghai includes 251 nomadic and farming households from 30 "poverty-stricken" villages in 7 towns and townships in Malho (Ch: Huangnan) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture. They were relocated in 2016 to the resettlement site of Dekyi ('Happiness' in Tibetan) Village in Chentsa (Ch: Jianzha) County in the prefecture. The 251 relocated households moved here in 2016 came from more than 30 poverty-stricken villages in 7 nearby towns.

The report said that two years after the relocation, local authorities selected 30 households in Dekyi Village for a pilot experiment to open homestay business as part of the overall goal to develop the rural tourism industry.

The business only available during the tourist season during which the entire family of a household become reportedly busy preparing food, cleaning the bedding, and entertaining tourists.

**" The resettlement village has now become a "new tourist village" and residents uprooted from their ancestral lands are expected to find news sources of livelihood in the so-called 'cultural tourism industry'."**

The massive relocation was carried out under the controversial poverty alleviation and ecological conservation programs implemented with an iron hand all over the Tibetan plateau. Despite government propaganda churning out alleged success stories, these programs have impoverished the lives of many rural Tibetan residents, in addition to disrupting their food security and taking away their land tenure security.

## China announces acceleration of pilot national park system in Qinghai

Chinese provincial authorities announced a three-tier process to accelerate the national park pilot system aimed at turning Qinghai into a “model province with national parks as the main body of the nature reserve system, which will provide reference for the future construction of the national parks,” reported the *Guoxin Net* quoting the Chinese State Council Information Office on 4 September.

The announcement was made by Wang Jianjun, the provincial party secretary and director of the Standing Committee of the provincial People's Congress at a press conference organised by the State Council on 4 September in Beijing. Liu Ning, provincial deputy party secretary and provincial governor also addressed the press conference that was held to highlight “earth-shaking changes” in the province to mark the PRC’s 70th founding anniversary.



Wang Jianjun

Wang said that the basic framework of the nature reserve management system with the national park as the main body would be built by 2020. By 2022, the protection and management system mechanism will be improved and a nature reserve management system with national parks as the main body supplemented by all kinds of nature parks will be initially established. The third step, to be completed by 2025, will turn the nature reserve system with national parks as the main body into an “model of nature reserve with international influence”.

Wang was further quoted as saying that the province currently has the largest number of wetlands and 217 nature reserves of all kinds in which 90% of the land is “restricted and prohibited”. Two of the 10 pilot national parks announced by China are located in the Tibetan areas in Qinghai. The Sanjiangyuan National Park spanning an area of 123,100 square kilometres occupies more than 50 percent of the Tibetan inhabited areas in Qinghai. The Qilian Mountains (Tibetan: Dola Riwo) National Park covering 50,200 square kilometres straddles Qinghai and Gansu Province, where the Kanlho (Ch: Gannan) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture with an area of 40,898 square kilometers is located.

China’s nature reserve management system has long attracted much criticism for its failure to protect the environment and livelihood sources of traditional owners of the land such as Tibetan nomads and farmers.

Despite claims that the introduction of pilot national parks will fix the broken nature reserve system,

**" Tibetan residents continue to bear the brunt having lost access to ancestral pastures, deprived of nomadic livelihood sources and forced to live in resettlement camps where employment opportunities are few and far between and relocated residents face an uncertain future. "**

On the other hand, a flurry of existing and planned hydropower projects continues to wreck havoc on the fragile Tibetan environment, in addition to displacing the Tibetans from their ancestral lands. As Wang announced at the press conference that Qinghai's "clean energy" capacity has exceeded 12 million kilowatts and the province is now building the 1,587 km long world's first ultra high-voltage channel specially designed to transmit renewable energy from Tsolho (Ch: Hainan) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture to Zhumadian prefecture in Henan province traversing the provinces of Qinghai, Gansu, Shaanxi and Henan. The primary beneficiaries of this massive power transmission from the Tibetan Plateau are the wealthy and densely populated Chinese cities and towns.

## **400 Chinese cadres take posts in 21 Tibetan schools under controversial educational aid program**

Four hundred teachers from 17 Chinese provinces and municipalities have begun their stints as teachers and administrators in 21 schools located in Tibet Autonomous Region under the so-called 'Group-form' educational aid program.

The current group represents the ninth batch of the program among which 86 are principals, deputy principals, academic directors, and moral education directors and the remaining 314 are full-time teachers in primary, middle and high schools, reported the official *Lhasa Daily* on 11 September.

The TAR Education Department, under the guidance of the Organization Department of the TAR Party Committee, has drafted the "Implementation Plan for 'Group-form' Tibet aid work" and is in the process of revising the "Administrative Measures for the Tibet-based Aid Cadres".

Zhao Yun, a member of the group from Beijing who now works as deputy principal at Lhasa Primary School no. 1, was quoted as saying that she would "try her best to build a communication platform between Beijing and Tibet, give full play to the role of Beijing's high-quality educational resources, and impart advanced teaching and concepts and methods to Tibetan teachers."

Zhao added that because of the program, “[T]he children in Lhasa, like the children of Beijing, can be trained as the builders and successors of the socialist cause who loves the party and patriotism.”

## **Stability in Tibetan Buddhist institutions top political task in the run-up to PRC’s 70th founding anniversary celebration**

As part of a propaganda program to promote ‘four standards’ and cultivate ‘advanced monks and nuns’, the TAR Party authorities stressed that the most important political task and responsibility was to ensure the security and stability of the PRC’s 70th anniversary celebration, reported the *Tibet Daily* on 6 September.

At the program held on 3 September in Lhokha (Ch: Shannan) Prefecture, Tenkho, who holds the multiple posts as the head of TAR United Front Work Department (UFWD), TAR Party standing committee member, and vice-chairman of TAR’s Peoples’ Political Consultative Conference, called on the religious bureaus of the UFWD at all levels to “strengthen the ‘four consciousnesses’, ‘four self-confidences’, and achieve ‘two maintenance’ in order to effectively enhance the overall situation of awareness, the sense of urgency and responsibility, and to unify thoughts and actions.”

The ‘Four Consciousnesses’ fundamentally require everyone to follow unquestionably “the ideology, political thinking and deeds of the CPC Central Committee, with president Xi Jinping.

Likewise, the “Four Confidences” demands confidence in the “path, theory, system and culture of socialism with Chinese characteristics”. In other words, the policies of the Chinese authorities under the leadership of Xi Jinping cannot be questioned or challenged in any form or manner.

Tenkho referred the “Guiding Opinions on Stability Maintenance in Monastic Institutions in TAR” and five other documents issued last year that strictly implement the “six liability system” to enforce stability in monastic institutions.

## **Tibetan reincarnated lamas ordered to “resolutely draw a clear line from the 14th Dalai Lama and Dalai Clique”**

More than a dozen Tibetan reincarnated spiritual leaders from Lhasa City have been told to “resolutely draw a clear line” from the current Dalai Lama and the ‘Dalai Clique’, a derogatory term used to refer to Tibetans loyal to the Tibetan spiritual leader, at a seminar held on 25 September at the Sera Monastery in Lhasa.

The seminar organised by the Sera Monastery Management Committee was also attended by Anu Tsering, standing committee member of the Lhasa Party Committee and head of the United Front Work Department (UFWD); Lin Sheng, vice chairman of the Standing Committee of the Lhasa People’s Congress; and Lhakpa Tsering, party secretary and director of the Sera Monastery Management Committee.

The theme of the seminar was

**" Tibetan Reincarnated  
Lamas Praise the  
Motherland,  
Commemorate the  
Legacy of  
Patriotic Love. "**

The *Lhasa Evening News* reported on 27 September that Anu Tsering called on the reincarnated lamas to "resolutely safeguard the unity of the motherland and national unity" by demonstrating "a clear stand on major issues that concern the Chinese nation"; "maintaining a clear vision in times of big winds and high tides", and drawing a "clear line from the 14th Dalai Lama and the Dalai clique".

The reincarnated lamas were further asked to represent their respective religious circles in the city to "strictly enforce politically reliable standards, monastic disciplinary rules"; "strengthen the 'four consciousnesses' and the 'four self-confidences'; "always maintain a high degree of ideological unity with the Party Central Committee as well as the party and the government in both deeds and sentiments."

They were required to "take the lead in practicing religious standards and actively guide religion to adapt to socialist society" by highlighting and interpreting contents of Tibetan Buddhist teachings that are conducive to official policies. Anu Tsering also emphasised the role of reincarnated lamas in strengthening the government's 'legal education' programs that ostensibly promote awareness of the country's laws and regulations among the monastic population. He added that the monastic population must "fulfil the obligations stipulated by the Constitution and other laws and carry out religious activities in accordance with the law."

**Sources:**

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