

# **Spectacles on the Snowy Plateau**

**Tremendous Changes in Tibet  
Over the Past Thirty Years**



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## **Tremendous Changes in Tibet Over the Past Thirty Years**

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# 1. Millions of Serfs in the Old Days Have Become Masters of Their Own Lives Today

The practice of full regional national autonomy within the framework of the Constitution of the People's Republic of China is both a basic policy of the Chinese Communist Party for solving domestic ethnic problems and an important political regime of China. The Common Programme of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference which was enacted in 1949 and once served as the provisional constitution stipulated that regional national autonomy was to be adopted in places with a high concentration of ethnic minorities. Later, the state Constitution contains even clearer provision that regional national autonomy should be practiced in places mainly inhabited by ethnic minorities and that autonomous organs should be set up to exercise autonomous power. The Law on Regional National Autonomy based on such basic principles of the Constitution includes specific articles defining the autonomous power of autonomous ethnic regions, giving expression to the respect and guarantee that the state provides to the right of ethnic minorities to manage their own internal ethnic affairs.

Article Three of the Agreement on the Methods for the Peaceful Liberation of Tibet signed by the Chinese central people's government and the Tibetan local authorities on 23 may 1951 clearly provided that in accordance with the ethnic policy contained in the Common Programme of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference and under the unified leadership of the central people's government, the Tibetan people have the right to exercise regional national autonomy. That principle received the support of the Tibetan people from all social strata. In 1956, the preparatory committee of the Tibet Autonomous Region was set up. In September 1965, the Autonomous Region was formally established. That symbolized effective guarantee of the right to regional national autonomy and other democratic rights given to the Tibetan people by the Constitution. Since then, the 2 million Tibetans have together with the people from other ethnic groups in China embarked on a road of equality and unity for the development of socialism.

## **Tibetans From All Social Strata have Extensively Participated in Deliberating and Administering State Affairs**

Profound changes have taken place in the years since the peaceful liberation of Tibet in 1951, and especially since the establishment of the Autonomous Region in 1965. The most fundamental and profound change is that the Tibetan people have turned from serfs into masters of their own lives.

The old Tibet before democratic reform was a society of feudal serfdom. The three major estate – holders, i.e., local administrative officials, nobles and upper – ranking lamas in monasteries owned almost all of Tibet's means of production though they accounted for less than 5% of the Tibetan population. The serfs and slaves who made up the overwhelming majority of the population did hard work and lived in abject poverty from generation to generation. Serf – owners literally regarded serfs as private property to be bought and sold, exchanged, mortgaged and tortured at will. They had absolute power over the life and death of serfs.

**Tsering lhamo a national model worker and former serf, used to serve as vice chairman of the people's congress of the Autonomous Region. She is now retired.**





The democratic reform conducted in Tibet in 1959 eliminated the feudal serf system. At present, the Tibetan people, like the other people in China, enjoy all the legitimate rights of citizens entrusted by the Chinese Constitution. They can act in various ways and by various means to administer state affairs, manage economic and cultural undertakings and operate social activities. They are entitled to the freedom of religious belief, speech, the press, assembly, association, procession, demonstration and all the other special rights and freedoms enshrined in the Chinese law on regional national autonomy.

Mr. Rag - sde who is currently chairman of the standing committee of the people's congress of the Autonomous Region grew up from a serf. Recalling his past experience, he says that he could have turned from a poor child of herdsman into a senior leader of the Autonomous Region only because of training and education given by the Communist Party and state.

Mr. Rag - sde was born into a poor herdsman's family in northern Tibet in 1938. In the old days, he had a most miserable life. As a child, poverty forced him to leave his family to be a beggar and a serf, suffering from all kinds of discrimination. Even today, he still has scars left over from those days. What is more, one of his brothers starved to death at that time. It was the peaceful liberation of Tibet that gave him a new life and lifted him out of poverty to become a master of his own. In 1959, Rag - sde was sent to study at the central cadre school for political and legal affairs. Three years later, he returned to Tibet and devoted himself to its economic development. He served successively as secretary of the Communist Party committee of the Nagqu region, chairman of the disciplinary committee of the Tibet Autonomous Region, vice chairman of the standing committee of the regional people's congress, chairman of the regional political consultative conference, chairman of the standing committee of the regional people's congress and first deputy secretary of the regional Communist Party committee. Many economic achievements and major decisions of Tibet over the years were partly the result of his hard work.

In Tibet, there are countless people like Rag - sde who have entirely different lives in old and new societies. In 1994, there were over 40,000 Tibetan cadres in Tibet, most of whom are descendants of former serfs or slaves in the old days. It would have been impossible for them to assume any leading post in old Tibet because the Code that old Tibet followed for hundreds of years

clearly provided against any role by slaves and women in military and administrative affairs.

Mr. Rag - sde says that taking part in deliberating and administering state and local affairs through the people's congress has become an important means for the Tibetan people to exercise their power as masters. With the founding of the Tibet Autonomous Region in September 1965 and the convocation of the first people's congress of the Autonomous Region in Lhasa, the system of the people's congresses was formally established in Tibet. That marked the beginning of the era when Tibetans and other ethnic groups in Tibet become masters of their own lives. A new page was turned in the annals of Tibetan history.

Under the Law on Regional National Autonomy, the Tibet Autonomous Region enjoys very extensive autonomous power, mainly including the following:

- the right to implement state laws and policies in light of the actual conditions of Tibet;

- the right to enact autonomous provisions and separate regulations in light of the political, economic and cultural characteristics of the local ethnic groups. These regulations can become effective upon ratification by the standing committee of the National People's Congress;

- the autonomous right to manage local financial affairs and to independently arrange and operate local economic development plans and projects;

- the right to independently administer local educational, scientific, technological, cultural, health and sports affairs, and to collect and protect ethnic cultural heritage, and develop and enrich ethnic culture;

- the right, with approval by the State Council, to organize local public security troops aimed at safeguarding public order;

- the right to decide to use one or more locally common languages by autonomous organs in their performance of public duty.





**A religious ritual – Religious believers chant sutras plously during the Sa-ga-zla-ba Festival.**

For thirty years, the system of people's congresses and the policy of regional national autonomy have served as the basic system and policy of Tibet. The deputies to various levels of people's congresses who represent the Tibetan people have fully exercised their power as masters of the country and made huge contributions to the modernization of Tibet. Between 1980 and 1994 alone, the standing committee of the people's congress of Tibet promulgated altogether 50 pieces of local legislation covering political, economic, cultural, educational, scientific, ethnic, religious and other fields. The enactment of these local regulations gives full expression to the ethnic characteristics of Tibet, crystallizes the right of regional national autonomy and provides a legal rationale for the realization of the various ethnic rights of the Tibetan people, the development of economic and cultural affairs of Tibet and the settlement of certain special issues arising in the Autonomous Region.

The views and motions of the deputies to the people's congresses at all levels of Tibet have attracted much attention. At the first session of the sixth people's congress of the Autonomous Region held in 1993, the deputies put forward 224 suggestions, criticisms and comments. By the first half of 1994, 219 cases had been concluded, accounting for 97.8% of the cases put forward.

Since the establishment of the Autonomous Region, people from all walks of life have taken an active part in administering social issues. In the past, there was no working class, only a small number of artisans or butchers who lived at the bottom rung of the social ladder and whose lives were dismissed as worthless. Nowadays, more than 200, 000 members of the dynamic working class in Tibet actively participate in discussing and running state and local affairs. Since 1992, enterprises in Tibet have held more than 2, 000 meetings of workers' congresses at all levels, approved 1, 500 motions tabled by their workers and staff members. Up to now, 1, 489 workers' unions have been set up in Tibet with a total membership of 107, 100.

In the countryside, exemplary autonomous activities have been intensified among the villagers. Starting from 1992, such activities have been launched in 38 townships and 250 villages. At present, a network has roughly taken shape in which the Autonomous Region has an exemplary county, a prefecture has an exemplary township and a county has an exemplary village. This has promoted the stability and economic development in the rural areas. Through this activity, the Dra nang and Snevu - gdong counties set up villagers' offices in all their 115 villages, and improved all kinds of rules and regulations, thus gradually regularizing and legalizing the villagers' committee to better help the rural residents as masters of their own lives.

## Making Great Efforts to Train and Use Tibetan Cadres

Under the Chinese Constitution, the chairman (or vice chairman) of the standing committee of the people's congresses of the autonomous ethnic regions shall be citizens from their main ethnic groups and that the chairman of the people's government of the autonomous ethnic regions shall be citizens from ethnic groups that exercise regional autonomy.

Since the formal founding of the Tibet Autonomous Region in 1965, five persons have successively served as chairman of its government, and they are Ngaphod ngawang Jigmed, Tianbao, Dorji tshedan, Dorji tsheren and Rgyamtsan and who is now the current chairman of the people's government. Three persons have served as chairman of the standing committee of the regional people's congress and they are Ngaphod ngawang jigmed, Yang Dongsheng, Rag-sde, all Tibetans.

The Tibet Autonomous Region has under its jurisdiction 75 counties or county-level offices as well as two cities of Lhasa and Xigaze. All the county magistrates or city mayors are Tibetans. In

**Mme. Garma, a woman magistrate of the Nagqu county of Tibet.**



1994, over 70% of the 60,000 cadres in Tibet are Tibetans.

Most of the posts in the Tibetan autonomous organs are also assumed by Tibetans or cadres from other ethnic minorities. From the third through the sixth people's congresses of the Autonomous Region, more than 80% of the deputies are from the Tibetan or other ethnic minorities, and chairmen of people's congresses at all level are all Tibetans. In the 1993 elections for county and township people's congresses, the 1.2 million voters of the region directly

**Basang (second to the left), vice chairman of the people's political consultative conference of Tibet, is attending a meeting.**



voted by secret ballot 6, 411 deputies to the county people's congresses, with those from Tibetan and other ethnic minorities accounting for 92. 62% of the total; the percentage is 99. 92% among the 31, 650 deputies to the township people's congresses. A large number of citizens from the Tibetan and other ethnic minorities are thus able to participate in deliberating state affairs, making major decisions and directly managing the affairs of the ethnic regions.



Mme. Tshering drol kar who is now vice chairman of the government of the Tibet Autonomous Region is the first vice chairwoman of the region in its history. Before the democratic reform, poverty and early death of mother forced her who was not even seven to work five years in another household in the same town, fetching water, cooking meals, washing clothes and baby – sitting day after day. In 1955, the People's Liberation Army set up a medical team in Zedang area and the 13 – year – old Tshering drol kar became one of the first Tibetan medical workers. In early summer 1957, she was sent for advanced studies to the Chinese hinterland. In August 1963, she graduated from the Medical Department of the Northwest Nationalities College and was allocated to work in the health division of the preparatory committee of the Tibet Autonomous Region. Before taking up the post as vice chairwoman of the region, she had worked many years as a leading official in the Tibetan health department. In early 1971, the then 27 – year – old Tshering drol kar was appointed deputy director of the health department of Tibet and promoted to be its director in 1980.

Since its founding, the Tibet Autonomous Region has taken a number of measures to train and educate cadres so as to raise the quality of the cadres from ethnic minorities. At present, the Autonomous region has set up a complete network of party schools and administrative colleges at the regional and prefectural levels, and these schools have become the base for training ethnic cadres. The colleges and universities of Tibet also have cadre training departments. In addition, secondary vocational schools have a role to play in on – the – spot training, technical training and general education of cadres. Some of the departments of the region have set up their own cadre schools, staff schools, training centres or spare – time universities. Today, a network has gradually taken shape in Tibet composed mainly of party schools and administrative colleges.

The training of Tibetan cadres has received vigorous support from the relevant central departments and other regions. In 1980, the Central Party School began to run a training course for Tibetan cadres, and successfully trained a large number of leading officials for Tibet. Starting from 1993, Tibet has annually sent scores of ethnic cadres to the other economically developed regions for training.

Through persistent education and training, the overall quality of Tibetan ethnic cadres has been remarkably improved. In the past ten years, the participation by cadres in self – education exams



exceeded 25, 000 person – times, with 4, 800 person – times receiving certificate for a single discipline, 2, 700 persons receiving certificate for a single discipline in secondary schools, 325 persons receiving diploma for secondary and higher education, and a number of cadres receiving diplomas from various correspondence universities. The percentage of cadres who have a below – junior high school – education has dropped from the 57. 3% in 1981 to the present 41. 7%, while the percentage of cadres who have a secondary school education or above has increased from 54% in 1986 to 60%. In these ten years, altogether 30, 000 cadres from the Tibetan and other ethnic minorities have received training.

## The Tibetan People Enjoy the Freedom of Religious Belief

Under the Chinese Constitution, citizens have the right to freedom of religious belief and Tibet is no exception. At present, the Tibetan people enjoy full freedom in conducting normal religious activities under the protection of the state Constitution and laws. Almost every believer has a small Buddhist shrine in his or her home. Every year, millions of believers go to Lhasa to pay

The Habu mountain of Bsamyasdongpa temple is to the south of the bsamyasdongpa temple. This is the place where lamas go on a pilgrimage. Every May on the Tibetan calendar, people would come from everywhere for pilgrimage at this temple.





Arguing about sutras.

pilgrimage. Everywhere in Tibet can be seen religious offerings given by believers. Within and outside some famous temples such as the Vphral – snang Temple, there are always believer who kowtow, chant sutras and pay homage.

Tibet is a reputed region in China where Buddhism is popular. The Lamaism, which is a uniquely Tibetan Buddhism, has different schools. As Mr. Rgya mtsan norbu, chairman of the government of Tibet puts it, people in Tibet have the freedom of religious belief and the freedom to believe in different sects. They also have the freedom not to believe in any religion. However, religion must not be allowed to interfere with education, judiciary, administration and marriage.

Mr. Rgya mtsan norbu says that the existing temples, shrines and religious sites can basically satisfy the needs of religious believers. By 1994, temples and religious sites in Tibet had reached 1,425, with 34,000 monks and nuns. In Tibet, all normal religious activities can be conducted and all major religious festivals of various sects can be celebrated. Religious personages are highly respected. Over the past ten years, the Chinese Government has put more than 200 million yuan into the maintenance of temples alone.



**The Incarnation ceremony of the 17th Karma – pa Living Buddha is held in Tibet.**

Those funds have gone into the repair and maintenance of the Vphrul – snang Temple which was built in the seventh century, the Bsam yasdongpa Temple which was built by the Tibetan king in the eighth century and the four famous religious temples of the Gelug of Tibetan Buddhism, i. e., Bras – spungs, Se – ra, Dgav – Idan, Tashithunpo. For the repair of the Potala Palace alone, the state allocated 40 million yuan at a time. In 1984, the central government allocated 6.7 million yuan, 111 kgs of gold, 2,000 kgs of silver and large amount of jewels to renovate the holy stupas and memorial halls of the fifth to ninth Panchen Lama under the personal supervision of the tenth Panchen Lama.

At the same time, the government respects and protects the traditional religious activities and customs of various sects. In accordance with the rituals and historical practices of Tibetan Buddhism, the death Living Buddha is reincarnated. On 25 June 1992, the central government approved the reincarnation of the 16th Karma – pa Living Buddha. In 1994, the young Living Buddha, the 17th Karma – pa living Buddha came to visit Beijing and was warmly received by President Jiang Zemin and other state leaders. Other activities such as the annual Congregation in Lhasa, the traditional practice of riding around snow mountains, etc., also receive much





attention and personal attendance by local government leaders. Traditional customs in people's marriages and other religious habits are fully respected.

In Tibet, many religious personages have been elected to the people's congresses, political consultative conferences and Buddhist associations or served in government departments at all levels. Numbering more than 600, they, like other citizens, take part in discussing and administering local and state affairs for the development of Tibet.

In recent years, Tibetan religious groups have also independently organized all kinds of religious activities. The Tibetan branch of the Chinese Association of Buddhism established the Tibetan College of Buddhism in 1983 and run sutra courses in a number of temples, enrolling nearly 3,000 students.

Since the beginning of reform and opening - up, the Tibetan branch of the Chinese Association of Buddhism and some temples and shrines have organized goodwill visits by religious personages to other countries for study tours and academic exchanges. They have also hospitably hosted visits, pilgrimages and study tours by groups or individuals from scores of countries, with a total of 10,000 visitors.

## Material Living Standards and Cultural Levels have been Raised by a Large Margin

Before the democratic reform, Tibet was a feudal serfdom society where most of land and other means of production were monopolized by the three estate – owners. The serfs and slaves lived in abject poverty and toiled all year round, only to have half of their yields taken away by the estate – owners who made up less than 5% of the total population.

All serfs must also provide various burdensome services to the estate – owners. In order to survive, serfs often had to borrow debts, which usually could not be paid back for generations. Take

A bumper harvest is gathered in the Nianchu river valley in Tibet. Farmers in the suburbs of Xigaze are turning over highland barley.





the Tibetan capital of Lhasa, there were only 20,000 people in the city before the democratic reform, and yet there were over 1,000 households of poor people or beggars who lived in tattered tents outside the city. The sight of shackled prisoners begging along the streets was quite commonplace.

The democratic reform has brought fundamental changes into the lives of the Tibetan people. By 1993, the per capita national income reached 1,660 yuan on a regional basis and 515 yuan in the countryside, with per capita grain production standing at 280 kgs. The per capita income in the Nying Chi area reached 1,028 yuan, and per capita grain reached 585 kgs. The net income of herdsman in the Anduo county in northern Tibet also topped 1,338 yuan, far above the national rural income level.

According to the development plans of the Autonomous



A Tibetan photographer,



A herdsman from the Nagqu township is riding a motorcycle.



Region, the grain and edible oil production of Tibet shall reach 1 billion kgs and 50 million kgs respectively by the end of the century. At that time, meat and milk production shall also reach 140 million kgs and 250 million kgs respectively, bringing the output value of agriculture and animal husbandry to 3.11 billion yuan, and the per capita net income over 1,200 yuan.

In mid-August 1994, the total savings deposits by urban and rural residents exceeded the 1 billion yuan mark to reach 1.05467 billion yuan, or 4,400 times that in 1952.

The rich and happy life is fully reflected in every aspect of the daily activities of the Tibetan people. Today, Tibet has very brisk and well-supplied urban and rural markets. In the trade fairs of Lhasa, all kinds of meat and vegetables are available. Some of them are produced locally and some come from the neighbouring

Sichuan Province, the coastal areas or even from abroad. In addition to greater variety of food supply, ordinary Tibetan families have bought modern household appliances such as colour TVs, refrigerators, tape recorders and telephones.

Today, the clothes of Tibetans have likewise changed a lot, robes made with lamb and beaver skin, ornaments made with jade and traditional hats embroidered with gold and silver ribbons have become daily costume of the Tibetans. As shown by Tibetan fashion designers, modern Tibetan fashion has both ethnic characteristics and many innovations. It is usually a combination of the past and the modern, the Tibetan or Chinese and the foreign. Such fashions have gradually become favorites of the Tibetans, especially the young people. At the same time, western suits and jeans are popular among the Tibetans.

In recent years, Tibetan girls have more and more hairdos. Most of the customers in the nearly one hundred beauty parlours of Lhasa are Tibetans. The owner of one beauty parlour who came from the Sichuan Province said that she did a dozen kinds of hair style for scores of customers every day. Indian eyebrow pen, Paris perfume, American soap and other cosmetics produced domestically and in other countries are seen everywhere in Lhasa.

Early summer in May is the best time for outing for the Tibetan people. Whole families would go out with food and tents, and they would walk or drive to suburban grassland and forests to spend their holidays and relish the beauty of nature.

Along with the improvement of the Tibetan people's material living standards, people are more eager to move to a higher cultural level. The state and the Autonomous Region attach great importance to the cultural development of Tibet and has made constant investment into it. At present, the region has dozens of modern multi-functional mass culture palaces, county culture palaces, county libraries and township culture sites, supplemented by over 160 spare-time art troupes.

In Tibet, mass culture palaces, libraries, culture stations, film projection teams, spare-time art troupes and children's art troupes are mutually supplementary. Films are shown free of charge in all of the agricultural and pastoral regions. The film company of the Autonomous Region has a department on film-dubbing in the Tibetan language, producing 25 programmes a year and more than



500 copies, which can be used to show films in Tibetan language for over 100,000 sessions, thus enriching people's cultural lives.

The press and publication work has also made great strides. A multi-level network for publication, printing and distribution has basically come into being. In contrast, "There was no publication industry in the modern sense in old Tibet," said Mr. Lozang phuntsog, Director of the Information Department of Tibet.

Now, Tibet has 15 newspapers, 37 periodicals, 73 specialized magazines and 2 audio-video companies. There are 8 Tibetan language presses, 2 of them are in Tibet. According to incomplete statistics since the 1970s, Tibet has published nearly 20,000 books, with a total distribution volume of 60 million copies, of which Tibetan book account for about 85%.

## 2.A Modern Tibetan Economy Takes Off on the Roof of the World

In people's memory, Tibet of the olden days was a primitive, backward and barren wilderness. It was a land with slash – and – burn agriculture and next – to – zero industry, a land where transportation was carried out on human or animal backs. People lived a miserable and poor life...

Now, after several decades of economic development, the Tibet of today has leaped from a feudal serfdom society into a modern civilized society, its economy has turned from purely primitive agriculture into one characterized by dramatic growth of modern industry, agriculture and tertiary industries. The Tibetans are no longer serfs dependent on feudal serf owners, but have become masters of society with the quality of their life much improved. The ancient snowy plateau is full of vitality and dynamism.

Such splendid and rapid economic expansion achieved by the Tibet Autonomous Region in the 30 years since its founding is inseparable from the huge human, financial, material, technological and policy support from and special allowances made by the Central Government. Over the past 40 years, the Central Government has provided Tibet with over 20 billion yuan in terms of financial subsidies and infrastructure investment. At present, the state gives Tibet more than 1 billion yuan in subsidies every year, which is the largest amount on a per capita basis among all the provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities. In addition, the Central Government adopts a number of preferential policies in Tibet such as a low tax policy, a no – ceiling policy for loans issued to this region, preferential interest rates and a 100% retention rate for its own export earnings.

With arduous efforts made by the Tibetan people and with huge investments and support from the Central Government, the Tibetan economy has witnessed rapid expansion. Tts GDP has grown for several years running topping 3.2 billion yuan in 1993, an increase



of 9.6% over 1992. It is expected that by 1997, the GDP of the region will reach 4.8 billion.

Economic development over the past 30 years, especially the policy of reform and opening – up that has been underway for 15 years, have gradually transformed the Tibetan economy from a "blood – transfusion" type into a "blood – creation" type. Since 1988, when the Tibetan financial revenue registered positive results for the first time ever, It has been growing drastically with every passing year. In 1992, it topped the 100 million yuan mark for the first time, and in 1993, it shot up to 194 million yuan, showing a 37% increase over the previous year.

Looking back at the history of the development of Tibet, we can see that this region experienced altogether four unprecedented waves of economic expansion in the 40 years starting from the peaceful liberation in the 1950s, through the founding of the Autonomous Region in 1965, and right up to the 1990s. Each wave of development has brought along a take – off of the Tibetan economy, thus laying a solid foundation on which Tibet has marched into a modern civilized society.

During the first wave of development in the 1950s, the poor transportation of Tibet was fundamentally improved with the completion of the Sichuan – Tibet Road that goes from east to west, the Qinghai – Tibet Road that goes from north to south, the Sino – Nepal Road linking Tibet with South Asia as well as the Gongga Airport of Lhasa. In the mid – 1980s, the implementation of 43 projects in the so – called Golden Keys Programme, Invested by the Central Government and assisted by nine provinces and municipalities, ushered in the modernization drive of Tibet. The construction and completion of a number of modern projects characterized this second wave of development. That at the turn of the 1980s and 1990s, the state invested over 3.2 billion yuan into a number of extraordinarily large infrastructure projects and the comprehensive harnessing of the middle reaches of "one river (Yarlung Zangbo River) and two riverlets", thereby launching the third wave, which focused on energy and transportation and remarkably improved the infrastructure of Tibet.

Even when the third wave was still in full swing, the fourth already began. This wave needed more investment, involved more

projects, covered wider areas and had a greater significance than all the three previous waves.

The fourth wave was initiated at the Third Meeting on Work in Tibet, held by the Communist Party Central Committee and the State Council in late July of 1994. This meeting decided that the Tibetan economy should maintain an annual growth rate of 10% for a time to come. For that purpose, the Central Government together with 29 provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities will invest 5 billion yuan into 62 projects in Tibet, with half of the investment coming from the Central Government.

The Bayl Woolen Mill In Nyng Khri of Tibet.





The waiting room of the newly – completed Lhasa long – distance bus station.

Today, the whole Tibet, from the green pasture in the north to the wheat fields in the south, is moving into the fourth wave of large – scale economic development. A number of important projects are under construction, bringing not only tangible benefits to the average people, but also earth – shaking changes to this ancient land.

## **Modern Agriculture has Taken Shape on the Plateau**

Mr. Chisgrolma is an ordinary farmer from the Pomi county of Tibet. In the old days, his parents worked as slaves for the serf lords and led a miserable life with barely enough to eat. He said, "Poverty in those days plagued the the livelihood of my forefathers and the early days of myself."

Today, as one of the farmers who have contracted to cultivate large tracts of land in Tibet, Mr. Chisgrolma is famous for his richness. As he puts it, the democratic reform and the establishment of the Autonomous Region has enabled me to shake off the shackles of slavery and become master of my own life. Those sad days are gone for ever. Especially after the introduction of the household contract system in 1984, his whole family devoted itself to intensive land cultivation. They have been handsomely rewarded for their hard work with a rich life.

Born in 1943, Mr. Chisgrolma is sturdy and strong. He wears Tibetan costume and has a Tibetan dagger by his side. A felt hat rests on his tanned forehead. He said further that since then he felt that one could get rich even by growing grains. He then worked out and put into practice two "family five - year plan" through which his family would set up modern agriculture and achieve prosperity.

During he first five - year plan period, Mr. Chisgrolma put most of his income into purchasing farm tools such as tractors, combines and thrashers so that he could reclaim barren arable land on a massive scale. As a result, cultivated land under his name increased from 40 mu to 200 mu. His family agricultrue became mechanized and turned out over 25, 000 kgs of grains annually, bringing total revenue over the 10, 000 yuan mark every year.

During the second five – year plan period, he and his children devoted more energy into raising unit yield and developing animal husbandry. In 1991, he sent his son to the county school of science and technology for agriculture to learn agricultural techniques. After taking the courses offered, he acquired some conventional techniques such as mixing grain seeds with medicine and the effective spreading of fertilizer. The family took the lead in using fine grain seeds on a large scale and utilized rich local resources to develop all kinds of side – line production.

With the completion of the two five – year plans, the family of Chisgrolma can produce over 450 kgs of edible oil and more than 35,000 kgs of grains annually. What is more, they turn over 20,000 kgs of grains and fine seeds to the state and gather an annual income of 20,000 yuan. With all this done, he built for his family nine new houses, and bought TVs, tape recorders and Tibetan trunks so as to raise the quality of life.

Actually it is quite commonplace for Tibetan farmers like Chisgrolma to use science and technology to develop agriculture and get rich. The Tibet of today has bid farewell to the backward, slash – and – burn agriculture and primitive animal husbandry of the past and embarked on a path of promoting agriculture and animal husbandry through science and technology. A modern agriculture and animal husbandry based on science and technology has taken shape on the plateau.

Before the peaceful liberation, Tibetan agriculture was characterized by "ploughing with two oxen and a wooden plough" and thrashing with human or animal power. A few places even had slash – and – burn agriculture, with no agricultural science and technology to speak of.

Today, agricultural production in Tibet has been gradually mechanized. The total power used for agricultural purposes has topped 500,000 kws, or 0.6kw on a per capita basis, almost equal to the level in other parts of rural China. Nearly 25% and 65% percent of land is mechanically ploughed or sowed, a level roughly the same as in other parts of China.

Before the peaceful liberation, there were but a few water ditches in Shannan and Xigaze throughout Tibet while most of the agricultural production depended on weather conditions.

At present, production conditions for agriculture have been remarkably improved after many years' work. By the end of 1993, the autonomous region had completed 20,000 water conservancy projects, which included 5,000 reservoirs and dams, 136 pumping stations and over 400 small hydropower stations. A total of 1.95 million mu is under effective irrigation, accounting for 60% of the total cultivated land in Tibet.

Before the establishment of the Autonomous Region, there were no agroscientists or technicians, only primitive cultivation. When there were pests or plant diseases, all people could do was to invite lamas to chant sutras.

Today, Tibet has over 30,000 agroscientists and technicians and nearly 70% of its land is sown with fine grain seeds. These are almost as good as in other parts of China. Patterned cultivation, regulated planting, pilot planting of large tracts of land to achieve bumper harvests as well as other projects of high-level modern agricultural science and technology have been popularized on the "Roof of the World". The valley of River Nianchu is a major grain production base of Tibet, and its grain production now accounts for nearly 50% of the whole Autonomous Region, or more than 500 kgs on a per capita basis, after many years' scientific cultivation.

**Herdsmen going to festival activities by tractors. In the Tibetan countryside, it is now quite common for one or a small group of families to buy agricultural machines such as tractors.**





The first seminar on the work in Tibet held by the Communist Party Central Committee in 1980 decided on two long-term policies, one being that land should be used by individual households through independent management" and the other being that animals are owned and husbanded by individual households through independent management". These two policies have greatly mobilized the initiative of farmers and herdsmen who make up 80% of the Tibetan population and resulted in bumper harvests for years running. Compared with 1952 when Tibet was peacefully liberated, the total agricultural output value of Tibet shot up from 180 million yuan to 2.32 billion yuan, its total grain output increased from 150,000 tons to 620,000 tons, its per capita grain possession grew from 90 kgs to 300 kgs and the total number of animals increased from 9 million to 23 million. In particular, the preferential policy of tax and fee exemption for farmers and herdsmen facilitated the noticeable improvement of their lives, bringing their per capita income up to 521 yuan, more than double that in 1980.

In order to further improve the conditions for agriculture and animal husbandry in Tibet, the state is going to invest 2 billion yuan in the 1990s in a number of major projects for the comprehensive development of agriculture along the Yarlung Zangbo River, the Lhasa River and the River. The whole project includes 40 subprojects and, upon completion, will benefit 45.6% of the cultivated land in Tibet, 450 hectares of pastures and 28,700 hectares of forests. By the year 2000, the 50,000 square kms of land along the three rivers will have become an important base of commodity grains, vegetables and side-line produces as well as of light and textile industries and for the spread of science and technology. As Mr Jiabao, director of the committee for the development of the three rivers said: "This project will lay a solid foundation for the economic development of Tibet."

As the wind of market economy sweeps across the entire plateau, the Tibetan farmers who no longer suffer from starvation have begun to develop other trades and embarked on a new road of setting up township and village enterprises. With the constant deepening of reform and opening-up, frequent economic exchanges and diversified operations, township enterprises have become the

Manager Qiang Jiu, who is credited with Famous National Township Entrepreneur, the hotel will give dividends to shareholders every year and try to increase dividends while further raising its economic efficiency.

In 1984, there were less than 400 township enterprises in Tibet while in 1994, that number increased to 4,000, employing more than 50,000 people and turning out 3000 million yuan in output value. In order to speed up their development, the government of the Autonomous Region promulgated the Decision on the Energetic Development of Township Enterprises, according to which efforts would be made starting from 1992 to raise funds through all channels and an annual investment of 40 million yuan will be made so that every township in Tibet has an enterprise.

Diversified operations and marked expansion of township enterprises have not only offered more opportunities for farmers and herdsmen, changed their previous mono - type operation and promoted the development of a market economy in Tibet, but also raised income of the ordinary people and become a main source of revenue for counties and townships. In 1993, over 40% of the income of farmers and herdsmen came from diversified operations and township enterprises.

## Growth of the Industry

Compared with agriculture, industry was almost nonexistent in Tibet before the 1950s. There were only a small hydropower station with an installed capacity of 92 kws. a small munitions factory and small mint factory, with a total work force of 100. Today, Tibetan industry has witnessed rapid expansion and gradually developed the rudiments of a modern industry with a unique national characteristic. The Autonomous Region now boasts more than 10 industries including power generation, coal mining and chemical, mechanical and textile industries. The number of modern industrial enterprises has increased from 10 in 1965 to more than 300 in 1994.

In 1965 when the Autonomous Region was just set up, its total industrial output value stood at a mere 1.7 million yuan. In the five years between 1988 and 1992, its accumulated industrial output value reached 1.9 billion yuan while between January and June of 1994, that figure topped 210 million yuan, an increase of 7.1% over the corresponding period of the previous year.

At present, modern enterprises have sprung up one after another on the roof of the world. They have not only written new chapters in the annuals of the industrialization on the plateau, but also set numerous records for the industry in Tibet and even in China.

In Norbosa which is located in Chusum County in southern Tibet, the largest chromium mine of China is under construction. Norbosa means "the land of treasures" in Tibetan language. Here are rich deposits of chromium. The construction began in 1986, involving an investment of 85.6 million yuan. The designed open-cast mining capacity in the first phase is 50,000 tons per year, and the total underground mining capacity in the second phase will reach 100,000 to 120,000 tons. The Norbosa mine now possesses fixed assets and funds worth nearly 100 million yuan.



Mme. bde - chen - chos - sgron (center), director of the Ka dan (cushion) factory of the SNeu - gdong county, and Mme. tshe - ring - chung - da (right), deputy director of the factory, are sisters. With their capable management, the factory has been able to constantly improve the quality of its products and sell the products abroad to the United States, Japan and Nepal.

On the grassland of Yang - pa - can in northern Tibet where there used to be only sheep and yaks, the largest trial thermopower plant has been basically finished. In the past few years, the state has invested over 200 million yuan into this Modern thermopower station, which sets a good precedent in making industrial use of thermopower. Its power generation now accounts for 50% of electricity supplied to Lhasa.

In addition, Tibet and Hubei Province jointly set up Tibet's Largest modern borax chemical enterprise in August 1994. This enterprise has made extensive use of advanced domestic and foreign technology. Its total output will increase to 3 million tons in 1997, realizing an output value of 100 million yuan. Its goal is to become the largest borax chemical base of its kind in China within five years.

Cloth weaving.



The Lhasa Cement Factory which has annual production capacity of 103,000 tons ends Tibet's history of producing no cement. The products of the Sino - German Lhasa Leather ware Factory, one of the Firstjoint - ventures in Tibet, sell well on the domestic and international markets.

Tibet is a region endowed with rich natural resources. Its timber deposits are among the first in China, totalling 2,084 billion cubic meters. Of the 164 kinds of mineral deposits, 94 are found in Tibet in over 1,700 places and 11 deposits are among the top five in the country. The deposits of chromium, borax, crystal are number one in China while the deposits of marble are significant by national standards.

In the past, Tibet could not achieve economies of scale because of its backward economy and low level of mining



techniques. Now, its rich mineral resources are being translated into economic advantages. Mining has become one of the important pillars of the Tibetan industry. Its total output value reached 70 million yuan in 1993 and its percentage in the total industrial output value jumped from 6.8% in 1986 to 30% of today. Tibet has recently set up 120 new mines, supplemented by over 200 privately-run mines. Even when it is still under construction, the Norbosa mine turned over 30 million yuan in profits and taxes, becoming one of the biggest taxpayers of Tibet.

The rapid progress of industrialization has not swept away centuries old traditional arts and crafts. On the contrary, Tibet has developed a largescale national industry with unique national characteristics. By 1994 Tibet had set up over 90 major ethnic enterprises in 10 industries that produce everything from carpet, gold and silver ornaments to pottery and souvenirs. The number of people employed in this field exceeded 6,000 and there were over 1,700 varieties. A number of light and textile enterprises have sprung up and sold their products abroad. According to statistics, their output value reached 109 million yuan in 1993, earning 1.3 million US dollars through exports.

The products of Tibet ethnic industries are not only popular among domestic consumers but are also well received by overseas customers. In 1993, the Tibetan carpet industry produced over 20,

**Rural women from southern Tibet are buying Tibetan-style hats at trade fairs.**



000 carpets that have a very rich and unique ethnic style, and most of them were exported to more than 10 countries and regions such as the U. S. , Japan, Germany and HongKong. All of the exports were of high quality.

The protective policy adopted by the state for the ethnic industries is an important reason for their development. In addition to those protective measures, the state also makes an annual allocation of 2.7 million yuan for this specific purpose, and has helped Tibet train more than 3,000 craftsmen and technicians.

Mr. Drashiolser is a very famous craftsman. He is reputed as a "whizman" because of his exceptional techniques. However, he led a miserable life in the old Tibet.

Mr. Drashiolser who is now 70 recalls that he became an assistant to his father when he was still young, forging ornaments and copper and iron wares for others. Apart from work, however, he had to be a beggar in order to survive. As he became more and more skillful, he had an increasing stream of customers. Nevertheless, in the old Tibet, iron smiths were regarded as black to the bones by the serfholders and they were discriminated against just like butchers and hunters.

Nowadays, with the policy of protecting ethnic arts and crafts, Mr. Drashiolser has become a much respected master craftsman who can fully display his talents and skills. Working in his processing factory in the Nagqu region, he turns out silverware weighing more than 7,000 grams annually. The Buddhist boxes, fire sickles, rings and ear rings that he makes are very popular and have attracted orders from people at home and abroad. Two of his waist wallets were on display at an exhibition of ethnic products of the Autonomous Region, graded as "excellent", and sent to an exhibition in Japan.



Woolen blankets woven by women from the Chengguan district of Lhasa have been exported to many countries and regions.

Comfortable and stable life as well as good payment make it possible for him to devote himself to the study of splendid ethnic craftsmanship skills of Tibet. By summing up his experience gained through years of practice, he has written a long book on Tibetan ironware skills, recording in words for the first time ever the traditional Tibetan skill of making ironware (as well as gold and silver ornaments). At the same time, he has been invited to work as teacher of the Nagqu handicraft School, training his successors among the younger generation. Mr. Drashiolser who is now member of the Nagqu regional political consultative conference, said that this kind of honour would never have been given to an ironsmith in old Tibet, nor would it have been possible for the book on Tibetan ironware techniques to be written.

## The Tertiary Industry has Become an Economic Pillar

Along with the vigorous development of industry and agriculture, the tertiary industry based on commerce, foreign trade, tourism, transportation, telecommunications and private economy has made a rapid resurgence in Tibet and become a pillar in the Tibetan economy. This has helped to optimize the industrial structure of Tibet and lay a solid foundation for future development.

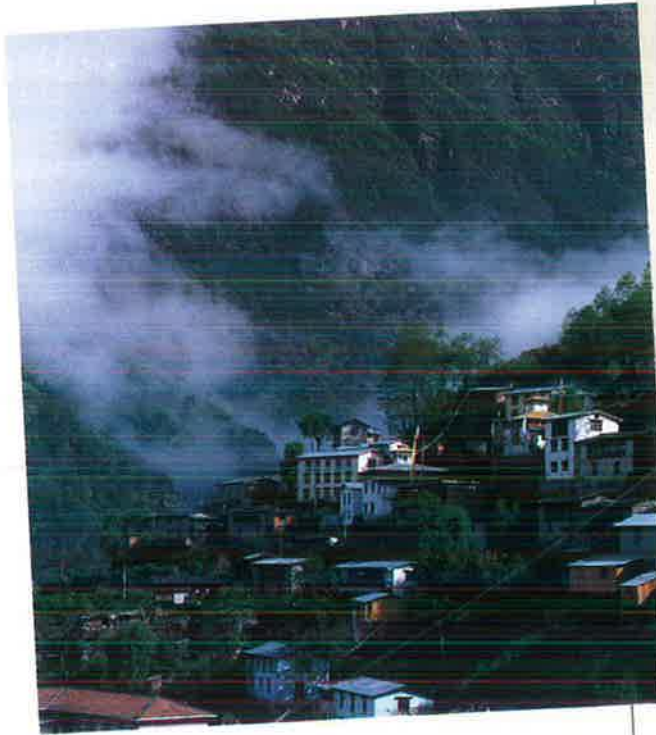
In recent years, the tertiary industry in Tibet has registered an average annual growth rate of over 10%. There are now 2,000 tertiary enterprises (not including private and individual businesses), with a total registered capital of 2 billion yuan, accounting for 73% and 57% respectively of the total number of enterprises and capital in Tibet. Tertiary industry now makes up 47% of the total industry.

What has happened to the commercial markets of Tibet reflects the profound changes in Tibet since the establishment of the Autonomous Region. The production in old Tibet was basically mired in a state of natural economy characterized by poverty in people's livelihood, an extremely underdeveloped commodity economy, very weak purchasing power and an almost primitive barter trade. Today, in contrast, the ancient city of Lhasa has witnessed the appearance of futures brokers and securities exchanges. From the extensive network of shops and stores, people can buy many famous-brand, new and quality goods that are even hard to get in other parts of China. The scarcity of commodities that used to prevail in the past is long gone in Tibet.

In the wake of the peaceful liberation of Tibet in 1951, the Central Government set up a state-run "Tibetan Corporation of Trade", marking the beginning of modern commerce in Tibet. After the establishment of the Autonomous Region in 1965, its commerce department was soon set up. During this period, state-run commerce had strengthened its presence in all the towns, cities and major areas above the county level. There were a total of 700 supply-and-sales cooperatives, with 1,290 employees.

After thirty years' development, Tibetan commerce has achieved unprecedented prosperity. There are now not only state-run, collective and individual businesses, but also other trade forms such as selling by enterprises themselves, selling by craftsmen, joint venture between industry and commerce and cooperative project between agriculture and commerce. The Autonomous Region has over 6,000 institutions and businesses in its commercial system. Each county and township has its own retail and wholesale network, employing more than 20,000 people. The variety of goods that they sell has increased from less than 1,000 to over 10,000 kinds. In 1990, state-run commerce registered a total sales volume of 710 million yuan, 30 times that in the early days of the peaceful liberation of Tibet. In 1993, that figure further shot up to 1.9 billion yuan.

In order to speed up the development of the market system,





Tibet has in recent years invested more than 25 million yuan into building and renovating 100 markets of all kinds with a total floor space of 100, 000 square metres. This has proceeded smoothly according to plans and with due emphasis on key projects. In 1993, trade volume of urban and rural trade fairs of the whole region reached 900 million yuan. At present, Tibet has not only opened a whole set of trade fairs, but has also developed some specialized markets, markets for capital goods and comprehensive markets. The markets for traditional Chinese herbal medicine, animal products, timber, steel and automobiles have yielded rather good economic results. The markets for securities and real estate have also got off ground.

In parallel to the growth of commerce, foreign trade of the Autonomous Region has likewise been expanded. In the thirty years since its founding, the Autonomous Region has completely put



The Gran border point.

behind its closed and backward past, accelerated its opening to the outside world and rapidly developed its trade with other countries and regions.

As a border region of China, Tibet has four major traditional points for conducting foreign trade along its 1,000 km – odd boundary line, and they are. In 1993, Tibet's foreign trade volume reached 103 million US dollars, exceeding the 100 million US dollar mark for the first time ever. It was 1.8 times that of the accumulated volume in the 27 years between 1953 and 1979, and an increase of 5.2 times over that in 1980. In the first five months of 1994, the total import and export volume of Tibet reached 44.9 million US dollars, 24% more than in the same period of the previous year.

In recent years, the border trade between Tibet and Nepal has been very active and gained a strong momentum. The commodities that Tibet exports to Nepal number 2,000 and mainly include cloth, wool, goat, salt and goods from other parts of China such as handicrafts, tea, quality cloth and colour film, etc.. Among the nearly 100 major commodities that Nepal exports to Tibet are timber, woolen blanket and rice. The volume of border trade has been on the rise. In 1987, it stood at 300 million rupees while in 1993 it shot up to over 700 million rupees, more than double the 1987 figure.

In order to build Tibet into a gateway for China's trade with South Asia, the competent departments have formulated a number of preferential policies. By early 1994, in addition to the four main border points, Tibet had set up 28 border trade markets of all kinds through which it could trade with the surrounding countries such as Nepal, India, Bhutan and Sikkim. Furthermore, it has over 20 seasonal border trade points and has set up border trade zones in a dozen counties along the border. Border trade between the average people or through border points as well as economic and trade cooperation with the outside world are now in full swing. Some of the border points have an increasing ripple effect on not only the rest of the Autonomous Region but also the other provinces, thus turning Tibet into a channel for China's trade with South and Southeast Asia.

Statistics from the Lhasa customs show that at present, external trade of Tibet is moving from the previous small – scale and simple barter trade to a trade form that is large – scale and multifarious. The exports of Tibet have changed from the previous

primary products based mainly on animal products to more intensively – processed goods. Its external markets have expanded from Nepal and India to more than 20 countries and regions such as Japan, Korea, Singapore, Hong Kong and other countries in Europe and America. Its foreign trade has developed to an unprecedented scale.

In Tibet's tertiary industry, tourism has received much attention. The improving transportation infrastructure has laid a solid foundation for the growth of tourism. The Tibet of today is no long the preserve of a small number of adventurers and tourists. In 1993, the Autonomous Region received more than 23, 000 overseas tourists in organized groups, bringing an income of 106 million yuan and earning tens of millions of US dollars.

The tourist resources of Tibet have received worldwide attention. United Nations Development Program (UNDP) has sent two missions to Tibet for survey and study, and then put out a 240, 000 US dollar bid in the world to work out a medium and long – term tourism plan for Tibet covering the period between 1991 and 2005. In June 1990, nine foreign experts including those on economics, cultural heritage and sociology won the bid and went into Tibet to work on the plan. The final plan points out that Tibetan tourism has

Free market on the Barkhor Street In Lhasa.



great potentials. In 1995, Tibet can receive as many as 40,000 organized overseas tourists, and earn 20 million US dollars in foreign exchange. By 2000, it could receive 75,000 organized overseas tourists, earning 52 million US dollars in foreign exchange. Experts believe that tourism will play a vital role in revitalizing the economy of Tibet.

Private economy is also an important component of the Tibetan tertiary industry. Its development is thus a major engine to promote the regional economic expansion. By 1993, Tibet already had 50,000 private and individual businesses, employing more than 60,000 people all over Tibet. They now account for 40% of the regional retail sales volume, absorb 59% of the regional workforce and turn over 25% of the entire regional taxation. The private sector has now expanded from commerce, handicrafts trade and construction into industry, transportation, information, technology service and scientific development, thereby enriching the economic and social structure of Tibet. This, together with the rather relaxed economic policies of the government, will help the private economy contribute more to the economic growth of Tibet.

After more than ten years of reform and opening - up, many Tibetans have got rich by running their private businesses. Mr. Phuntshog tshering from the Stod - Lung - bde - chen county is one of them. When talking about how he got rich, the 52 - year old Phuntshog tshering exuded with pride and said that in the mid - 80s, the central government adopted a more and more liberal policy toward Tibet, allowing the development of private economy. He opened a small restaurant in Lhasa, earning 3,000 yuan in the same year. In 1987, he opened a shop on the business street of Lhasa in joint venture with a company from Chengdu. The accumulated profits



Courtyard of Tsering Lhamo who used to be a serf.

over the years have reached 200,000 yuan.

With increasing capital in his hand, Mr Phumtshog tshering saw huge profits in the transportation market of Lhasa. He then bought a minivan which brought him more than 30,000 yuan every year. Having savoured success in doing business, he realized that he should start his own industrial business. He therefore set up a hada mill and invested in a car repair factory. In order to achieve greater success, he goes to visit some factories outside Tibet every year to learn from their experience.

At present, Mr. Phumtshog tshering has over 1 million yuan in fixed assets. In his house, the 50 square metre sitting room is entirely decorated in rich Tibetan style. In the room can also be seen brand new Tibetan trunks and tables, new cushions on sofas, quite a number of gold and silver wares on the trunks, and colour TVs and tape recorders. He said that it was thanks to the favourable policy of the central government toward Tibet that he could get rich. He hoped that more people in Tibet could get rich fast like him.



## Infrastructure has Improved Constantly

Rope bridges, rattan bridges, string – like mountain paths and humans and animals carrying goods around represented a true picture of transportation in old Tibet. Before the peaceful liberation, there was only one two – km long road in Tibet between the Potala Palace and Norbo gling Ka that could allow the passage of cars. There was no bridge that could withstand cars to speak of . It was recorded that in old Tibet there was absolutely no vehicle for goods transportation. The only two cars purchased from other countries were transported to Lhasa on human and animal backs as parts and components and then assembled when they arrived. They were nothing more than a heap of scrap iron in a few years.

Now, thirty years after the founding of the Tibet Autonomous Region, its five national – level roads, i. e. the Sichuan – Tibet Road, Qinghai – Tibet Road, Xinjiang – Tibet Road, Yunnan – Tibet Road and Sino – Nepal Road linked the Roof of the World with the rest of China and fundamentally changed the backwardness and seclusion of Tibet. As a result, Tibet has 20, 000 kms of roads that can pass cars on more than 300 trunk and side roads. All the counties and 77 % townships of the Autonomous Region have roads. The convenient road network has woven together the urban and rural areas with the centre in Lhasa and radiating outside the region. This has cost more than 4 billion yuan in state investment.

The 2, 255 – km long Sichuan – Tibet Road and the 2, 100 – km long Qinghai – Tibet Road span the Roof of the World and are reputed as the "Grand Artery on the Roof of the World" and "Golden Ribbon". Upon completion in December 1954 by the People's Liberation Army, they created the most basic condition for the economic take – off of Tibet. To build these two roads, the central government mobilized 110, 000 people composed mainly of the PLA soldiers. More than 3, 000 people died during the construction, with one martyr along every km of the Sichuan – Tibet Road. Today,

over 80% of the means of livelihood and 90% of the means of production that Tibet needs every year are transported through the Sichuan – Tibet and Qinghai – Tibet Roads which are truly links between Tibet and the rest of the country.

Because of its vast territory, special geological conditions and complicated and bad weather conditions, Tibet is the only region in China that has no railways or river navigation. In light of this, while attaching importance to road construction, the central and regional governments are also paying attention to civil aviation. In 1956, China broke the "forbidden air zone" and opened an air route between Lhasa and Beijing, ending its history of no aviation. Today, Tibet has five air routes leading to over a dozen interior cities such as Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Chengdu. Moreover it has one international air route going directly to the capital of Nepal. Thirty years' development has enabled Tibetan transportation to leap from human and animal backs to car and air transportation. Gone are the days when Tibet was sealed off from the rest of the world by mountains and rivers. It now takes just a few hours to go back and forth once between Lhasa and the capital of the neighbouring Qinghai Province, a distance that used to take one whole year in the past.

For the purpose of completely solving the transportation problem of Tibet, the state started in the 1980s to make bigger investments into its infrastructure. At the end of 1993, the

The busy Lhasa airport.



expansion of the Gongga airport in Lhasa that involved 270 million yuan of state investment was completed and begun to serve as an air hub linking Tibet with the rest of China and with Nepal. The 250 – million – yuan Bangda airport in Changdu area that has the highest altitude in the world is also finished. In early 1994, a 180 – km long road led into the Muotuo county in the forest area of eastern Tibet, the last county that did not have road in the past. At the same time, the state invested billions of yuan to renovate the Qinghai – Tibet and Sichuan – Tibet Roads that are grand arteries leading to the rest of China.

In parallel to transportation expansion, energy and power generation has also witnessed much growth in Tibet.

In old Tibet, people never saw any power station and had no idea of electricity or its role. They would regard thunder and lightening as signs of the "anger of the gods". In the 1930s, the Tibetan rulers built a 92 kw small power station with foreign assistance but scrapped it in no time.

Since liberation, the central government has paid much attention to power generation in Tibet, enabling it to achieve remarkable results in a relatively short period of time. In 1955, the central government set up a 660 kw power station north of Lhasa, ending its history of having no electricity. In 1964, the Najin power plant in the east of Lhasa went into operation and provided ample electricity to the city. With that, people threw away their old oil lamps and began to turn to electricity. They also moved into a new era of using electricity as power to carry out modern industrialization.

In its thirty years' development, Tibet has mainly utilized hydropower, supplemented by thermopower. It has also actively developed solar and wind energy. As a result, it now has over 500 hydropower stations and has set up the second power plant of Yangs-ps-can which is the largest thermopower testing base of China. It has also put hundreds of millions of yuan into the construction of the Yanghu pumping power plant which has the highest altitude in the world. The total installed capacity has increased from several hundred kw to 170, 000 kw and the accumulated electricity generation over the years stands at 4 billion kw/hs. Energy development has begun to take off. Mr. Liao Ximing, director of the industrial electricity department of the Autonomous Region said that before the year 2000, a number of key hydropower plants and some small hydropower plants would have



Thermopower generating units at Yang - pa - can.

been completed with the help of the state. By that time, the total installed capacity of Tibet would approach 1 million kw and Tibet would no longer suffer from lack of electricity.

The development of post and telecommunications is also part and parcel of the infrastructure expansion of Tibet. It is said that post and telecommunications of Tibet have been developing by leaps and bounds.

In early 1994, when Mr. Ngaphod ngawarg jigned, Vice Chairman of the Chinese People ' s Political Consultative Conference, received a clear phone call from his remote home town of Gongbudajiang county, he could not believe his ears and said, "It is incredible, just incredible. Telecommunications of Tibet today are much more developed than in the past".

Those were heartfelt words. According to historical records, right before the peaceful liberation, couriers were passed throughout Tibet by means of the most primitive horse stations. Messengers rode horses on official roads carrying yellow bags on their backs. When they approached the destination, they would ring a bell on the horse and people would come to take their letters. In the 1950s, there were only 50 handle telephones on the 1.2 million square kms

of land of Tibet.

After the establishment of the Tibet Autonomous Region, great changes have taken place in the post and telecommunications of Tibet, putting an end to the past situation in which they served only officials sending out orders while neglecting the ordinary people who wanted to write to each other. According to statistics, the Ministry of Post and Telecommunications alone invested altogether 300 million yuan into this industry in Tibet since its peaceful liberation, and this does not include the hundreds of millions of yuan of subsidies that the Ministry has put into daily operations of Tibet. Between 1949 and 1995, total investment in fixed assets of Tibet will reach 300 million yuan.

In early 1994, Tibet had completed 41 satellite stations used for post and telecommunications purposes. Half of the counties now have IDD and DDDs, with the total number of telephones in this category reaching 28,000. Right now, people in Tibet can directly dial to any country or region in the world.

Along with rapid development of post, telecommunications and satellite stations, there has also been fast expansion of broadcasting and TV operations. At present, broadcasting can cover all the areas on the 1.2 million square kms of land in Tibet.





The number of satellite earth stations for broadcasting and TV purposes in the region has increased from only one in 1984 to 720 in 1994. Generally speaking, all the prefectures and cities can receive five TV programmes. The Tibetan TV station is also capable of sending out its own TV programmes which can be seen nationwide and worldwide.

Large – scale infrastructure has completely changed the outlook of the city of Lhasa.

For over ten centuries, there was no urban construction in the modern sense in the whole of Lhasa with the exception of a small number of temples and palaces. On the eve of the democratic reform of Tibet in 1959, the city proper of Lhasa was less than 3 square kms, had a population of less than 30,000 and a total floor space of all its buildings below 220,000 square metres. There were in fact few buildings in Lhasa, only some houses along the Octagonal Street and at the foot of the Potala Palace. There were even less decent buildings with the exception of the manors and temples where some upper – class people lived.

Now, in contract, the city of Lhasa is much more decent and magnificent. The previous narrow streets and roads that were dotted with potholes have been replaced by wide streets and



The Lhasa Bridge.

boulevards. The old cramped and dark mud houses have given way to modern spacious buildings. In planning, designing and building these houses, adequate attention has been paid to the local climate conditions and the living habits of the local residents. They have retained the ancient and unique Tibetan style and are very popular among the Tibetans. Between 1987 and 1994, the Autonomous Region invested altogether 70 million yuan to erect 200 Tibetan style buildings with a total floor space of 300,000 square metres. The new residential areas have combined rich ethnic characteristics with modern architectural technology. All the dirt roads in the old city have been changed into rock and slate roads. In order to further improve the living conditions in the old city, the government has invested 92 million to pave more than 100,000 square metres of asphalt roads, build a sewage system and laid 14,000 metres of sewage pipelines, thus providing clean running water for the residents and effectively disposing of their sewage.

In 1983, the State Council approved the Overall Plan for the City of Lhasa to regulate the urban construction of Lhasa. In 1984, the city finished 18 projects such as the Lhasa Hotel and Lhasa Theatre. After thirty years' development, the city proper now covers 42 square kms. It has 140 kms of roads and 1 million square metres of newly built residential areas of all kinds, or 9 square metres on the per capita basis. A modern city that boasts cultural, educational, recreational and commercial facilities has taken shape on the Roof of the World.

### 3. Public Health, Culture and Education have Witnessed Rapid and Healthy Development

#### Population has Increased and Health Care Facilities are Adequate

The period from the peaceful liberation of Tibet until now is one that has seen the fastest growth in Tibetan population in thousands of years. According to historical records, the Tibetan population peaked in the seventh century at 4.6 million. Later, however, it dropped to 560,000 in the thirteenth century as a result of constant wars and plagues. In the eighteenth century, it picked up to 940,000.

After the peaceful liberation, Tibetan population has been increasing rapidly. Between 1950 and 1990, it registered a net increase of 1.196 million to reach 2.196 million, of which Tibetans increased from 1 million to 2.096 million. The average life expectancy has also increased from 36 in the past to the current 65.

The Shexing village, located in the stod - lung - bde - chen county dozens of kms from Lhasa is an old and new Tibetan village. It used to be a manor of Mme. bstan - vdzin - rgya - ntsho, mother of the Fourteenth Dalai Lama. It had only 22 households in the 1950s, 18 of them were serfs in the manor and 4 were vassals. Its total population was below 120. In 1992, the Shexing village had become a big village famous far and wide. It had 65 households, 354 people, both an increase of nearly 3 times over those forty years ago. It had 103 children under 17, accounting for one third of the total. Able-bodied men and women numbered 216.

"Such rapid population growth is a result of better living conditions where people have enough to eat and wear", said Mr. shis - gling - bo - bzang, head of the villagers' committee. That was a condition not only enjoyed by those families with land and children, but even by the 80-year old Mr. bkra - bsod who was a widower. Although he had no children, Mr. bkra - bsod lived a very happy life. Every year, the civil affairs department gave him 300



yuan in living allowances and 60 yuan as subsidies for meat and butter. It would also gave him clothes and quilts for all four seasons in the year. Likewise, the village gave him 500 kgs of grains free of charge and frequently organized villagers to cut firewood and fetch water for him. The old man said that it was thanks to the good care given by the Communist Party that he could live to this day.

In the serishing village, the cultural and educational quality of villagers has markedly improved along with the increase in population. One hundred percent of school – age children attended school and all men and women under 30 had received systematic basic education. It even had a female college student.

In 1993, the birth rate of Tibet was 2.34%, and its natural growth rate was 1.56% while the national figure was 1.1% during the same period. It is projected that the period between 1997 and 2000 will be a peak year in terms of birth. By 2000, the Tibetan population will have reached 2.5 million.



The lonely and elderly in Tibet are well taken care of by the government.

The rather relaxed birth control policy that the central government has adopted in Tibet is one of the reasons for its rapid population growth. The agricultural and pastoral areas of Tibet are the only places in China that did not have a birth control policy. At present, Tibetans make up 95% of the total Tibetan population. A Tibetan woman gives birth to 4.2 children on average.

In spite of this, the rise in their living standards in the 1980s has begun to change the ideas of farmers and herdsmen about children. Mrs. Dazhen in the gnyan - lam county in southern Tibet ran a small store in her village. She said that she wanted only one child because she believed that less children could give one more time to make money and provide a better life to whatever children one has.

The development of health care in Tibet is the major reason behind the increase in population and average life expectancy of Tibetans. In old Tibet, there were only three simple and small



official Tibetan clinics in Lhasa and Xigaze as well as a small number of private clinics, with a medical staff of less than 100. Even counting the 300 private Tibetan doctors in farming and pastoral areas, the total number was still under 400. That meant less than 0.4 medical staff for every 1,000 people. There was not even one decent medical institution in the whole region and diseases such as smallpox, malaria, VDs, typhoid, scarlet fever and tetanus were extremely rampant.

Since liberation, the medical facilities and health care conditions have become much better in Tibet. Starting from the 1960s, it gradually set up health care institutions at or below the county level. At present, every county has hospitals and quarantine clinics, some counties have also set up hospitals using traditional Tibetan medicine, and mother and child health care clinics. Over 70% of the townships have their own clinics and 30% of the villages have health care rooms. According to the statistics of Tibetan health departments, by the end of last year, the region had 1,070 health care institutions, 5,042 beds in hospitals and 9,683 medical professionals, or 5.8 times, 3.2 times and 4.3 times those in 1965 respectively. In addition, there are nearly 400 private doctors, nurses and mid-wives who directly serve the farmers and herdsmen. Right now, there are 2 hospital beds and 1.5 doctor for every 1,000 Tibetans.

For over forty years, the state has adopted a free medical care policy for Tibet. Under the Provisional Regulations Governing Free Medical Care in the Tibet Autonomous Region, those who can enjoy free medical care include: farmers and herdsmen, monks and nuns, Tibetans and people from other ethnic minorities who are urban residents but do not have fixed income, teachers in the farming and pastoral areas, local residents employed by township public institutions and students in the secondary vocational schools. Policies are even more preferential toward poor families, those who need relief, the handicapped and families of revolutionary martyrs.

According to statistics covering the past 40 years, the state has directly put 100 million yuan into developing the health care services of Tibet and provided free medical treatment worth 200 million yuan to the general public.

The Kaga village in Xietongmen county did not have healthy water sources. People there had to drink the hot water that flew from five springs near the village for generations. As a result, many of them suffered from fluoride poisoning complexes.

In 1990, the central government decided to make huge investments in the remaining ten years of this century to carry out comprehensive agricultural development of the valleys of the Yarlung Zangbo River and its two branches. The Xietongmen county of Xigaze that lies on the north bank of the river listed the provision of healthy water for the villagers and animals in Kaga as its No. 1 project.

After repeated inspection and survey by experts, a healthy water source was found about 2 km from the village. In May 1991, a water conservancy project involving 920,000 yuan was started and, upon completion, provided 150 tons of sanitary and safe water to the village. As Mr. tshe - ring, head of the village, said, in the two years since healthy water was channelled into the village, 60% of fluoride poisoning patients have recovered and fluoride poisoning has been put under control. He was apparently very proud of that achievement.

Tibetan medicine also occupies a very important place in Chinese medicine. It has a long history and is unique in its techniques. The central government has paid much attention to the development of Tibetan medicine and pursued a policy of preserving, developing, collecting and improving traditional medicine. By April 1994, Tibet already had 16 institutions devoted to the study and application of Tibetan medicine, with 350 hospital beds and employing 1,283 professional staff, an increase of 250 over that in 1990.

The Tibetan Medical Hospital of the Tibet Autonomous Region and the Tibetan Hospital in the Shannan area have both been included in the "Apricot Orchard Project" of the State Administration of Chinese Medicine. They have obtained 5.5 million yuan for their key projects, and their techniques for processing medicine have been improving all the time. One of its most precious medicines has won two gold medals at international traditional medicine conferences and another one has got state patent. In 1993, the

Ministry of Public Health convened the Chinese Seminar on the Standards of Tibetan Medicine, since which Tibet has worked out standards for 11 kinds of traditional medicinal herbs and 40 varieties of Tibetan medicine, thereby making key contributions to the promotion of Tibetan medicine .on the domestic and international markets.

The Autonomous Region has also collected and translated a



number of classical medical books such as the famous Medical Code of Tibetan Medicine. It also published some new books including the New Book on Tibetan Herbal Medicine and the New Book on Tibetan Medicine. The Tibetan University as a Tibetan medicine department, The Lhasa Tibetan Medical Hospital has offered some training courses and trained a large number of medical professionals.

Mr. Wphrin - las - chos - vphel (right), an old Tibetan doctor, is diagnosing for a German tourist by pulse - feeling.



## The Sanctuary of Education has been Set Up

The No. 1 primary school that the central people's government opened in 1952 in Lhasa could be viewed as a microcosm of the development of education in Tibet. At that time, it had only a dozen classrooms that were in disrepair and several dozens of pupils. Now it has five buildings and a total enrollment of over 2,000 pupils. Since its founding, the school has sent out 7,000 graduates who have become the mainstay in all fields of activities of Tibet. Mr. Changpa yang dzom, deputy director of the committee of science and education of Tibet was one of the first graduates of the school. A girl of carpenter who did not even have the freedom of person let alone the opportunity to study, she started her real life here.

The old Tibet had an education that was very backward and controlled by temples. It had only a few schools for religious officials and secular officials as well as some private schools. Each school had an enrollment of a dozen or, at most, several dozen students. The total number of students in the whole of Tibet was less than 3,000 at its peak. Serfs who made up 95% of the population were deprived of the right to education and less than 2% of school-age children were actually in school. After the peaceful liberation, and especially in the thirty years since the founding of the Autonomous Region, education has witnessed tremendous development in Tibet. It has gradually set up an educational network composed of kindergarten education, primary school education, secondary school education, vocational and technical education, adult education and higher education. By 1994, Tibet had 3,000 schools of all kinds, enrolling altogether 230,000 students. Sixty-five percent of school-age children were in school and there were 13,000 teachers at all levels. The literacy and semi-literacy rate has dropped from 95% before the peaceful liberation to the current 44.43%.



The state has invested huge amounts of money into the education work of Tibet, totalling more than 1.2 billion yuan. In recent years, investment in education by the central and local governments have been on the rise every year. It topped 21.9 million yuan in 1979 and reached 145 million yuan in 1990.

In the Tibet of today, free education is provided from the primary school all the way to colleges and universities. The state also provides free board and lodging accommodations and free clothes to those pupils in remote and faraway schools. In 1991, nearly 40,000 pupils enjoyed such free services and scholarships. The annual expenses of the government in providing such assistance are over 30 million yuan.

When Mrs. zla - ba - mtsho - mo just entered the Nying khri ethnic school from her remote home town of Metog, she was a farmer's girl who could neither read or write. Now she has received junior high school education. She said that children like her could never have an opportunity to study without the support and assistance of the government.

The Nying Khri ethnic school is located in the August First Town on the bank of Niyanghe river in the Nying Khri area. It was set up in 1989 with a 4.3 million yuan investment to provide education for children of farmers and herdsmen who were scattered in remote areas. At present, it has 230 students. Each student enjoys free food, housing and clothing. In addition, each one has nearly 100 yuan in all kinds of allowances every month.

The school mainly teaches courses in the Tibetan language. It offers such courses as Tibetan language, maths, English, history, chemistry, physics and other courses given by schools elsewhere in the country. Favourable teaching conditions and good teachers have enabled this school to educate many students for the remote ethnic areas of Tibet.

To further promote its education work, Tibet has drastically raised subsidies and allowances in five categories since 1994.

One, to improve the scholarship and free living system in primary and secondary schools, the monthly subsidy will be raised from 57 yuan to 95 yuan, thus basically meeting the basic requirements of those students. Scholarships have also been adjusted higher. Two, in light of the special circumstances in Tibet, it has markedly increased scholarships for students in institutions of higher learning and secondary vocational schools. Three, by providing subsidies and transportation fees, it encourages the children of farmers and herdsmen to go to study at institutions of higher learning in other parts of the county. Four, it has raised the subsidies for students studying in other parts of the country. The annual subsidy for an average secondary school student has been raised from 700 yuan to 1,050 yuan, and for a student in secondary vocational school from 778 yuan to 1,026 yuan. Five, it has raised the salaries of



teachers.

In order to drum up more support for education in Tibet, the "Hope Project" aimed at winning donations to provide financial assistance to the drop-outs has also been unveiled on a massive scale. In June 1992, the Tibetan "Hope Project" was formally launched under the theme of "Love on the Plateau — — Raising the Sun of Tomorrow". In the same year, donations reached 400,000 yuan. In 1993, the Tibetan Foundation for the Development of the Young issued Love Coupons throughout the region to enlist more support for the Hope Project and it brought in 600,000 yuan. Among the 2.2 million people in Tibet, over 300,000 took part in the above two activities. In July 1994, total donations in Tibet exceeded 2 million yuan which have since been used to set up 2



A teacher of English is coaching his students.

Hope Classes and build 8 Hope Primary Schools in Nagqu, Xigaze and chab – mdo. Another 7 Hope Primary Schools are still under construction. All this has helped more than 2,000 drop – outs.

In addition, for the purpose of training more professionals for Tibet, the state mandated the opening of 160 Tibetan classes and schools in 26 other provinces and municipalities since 1984. By 1994, they have enrolled a total of 13,000 graduates from Tibetan primary schools. In 1994, about 10,000 Tibetan students were studying in those schools, of which there were 3,000 studying in secondary technical schools and 600 studying in colleges and universities. Between 1992 and 1994, 2,000 graduates from those schools have returned to work in Tibet, playing a crucial role in the development of Tibet in all fields.

While developing education, the Autonomous Regions also pays much attention to protecting, inheriting and developing the ethnic culture of Tibet. The educational policy of Tibet stipulates that schools should enroll mainly Tibetan students, that the Tibetan language should be used to give courses in most of the primary schools and some of the junior high schools and that the Tibetan language should be taught as a required course in all kinds of schools. Thanks to the care of the governments at all levels, Tibetan language education has been widespread in Tibetan and the quality of education is steadily on the rise. In 1980, the Tibetan University set up a department on Tibetan language. Since then, most colleges, universities and secondary technical schools have opened departments on Tibetan language. A number of departments and schools on Tibetan medicine, arts and history have been set up. The Autonomous Region has also established the Administration of Translation of Teaching Materials which have compiled and translated hundreds of teaching materials in the Tibetan language. At present, the Tibetan language has become a required course in all kinds of schools and uniform textbooks have been introduced throughout Tibet.

The Xigaze Normal School trains primary school teachers for Xigaze and the Ali area. Its Tibetan language teaching group also has the responsibility of training teachers in the Tibetan language. The group has 7 graduates of the Tibetan language department of the Tibetan University and 7 among its 12 teachers are in charge of



Han and Tibetan staff members of the microcomputer room at the general hydrometric station in Tibet.

different classes respectively. Since 1981, the group has persisted in organizing its members in weekly study focused mainly on Tibetan language grammar, Tibetan language rhetoric and the study of religion and natural sciences. As Mr. tshe - wang - rdo - rje, headmaster of the school, said, "Compared with other subjects, we have an advantage in Tibetan language teaching. We have therefore all devoted ourselves to its research and study. Most of our students can skillfully use and teach the Tibetan language" A follow - up study shows that 90% of the recent graduates of the Xigaze Normal School are qualified to teach the Tibetan language to students from the first to the sixth grade, and quite a number of them have been selected to teach in junior or senior high schools.



## **The Protection of Traditional Culture has been very Effective and Fruitful**

The active and fruitful artistic creation and the dynamic and lively performance arts in the Tibet Autonomous Region has attracted much attention. Ten professional art troupes and 15 horseback performance teams with a total number of 1,200 professional artists have created and performed many programmes that both have rich ethnic characteristics and are strongly modern. In the Tibet of today, traditional and modern art forms are vying with each other for audience. Some senior artists and a new generation of artists have fully displayed their talent with music and songs. A number of good cultural performances have been created such as Song and Dance in Tibetan Costume, the play of Tangdombujie, the play of the Sad and Happy Dreams of Wangdu as well as some items that praise the reform and opening – up. These songs, music, dances, Tibetan plays and skits have been very popular among the Tibetan people. Since 1986, Tibetan cultural performances or artists have won 62 domestic awards and 2 international awards at all kinds of cultural festivals.

Last year, the Tibetan Art Troupe went to Austria and gave several traditional cultural performances such as the Black Hat Dance; Alili, the Song of Jamunian and Jaxixueba. Some famous Tibetan singers have sang songs in the Tibetan language. The audiences showed great interest in the traditional cultural arts of Tibet and gave frequent and warm applause to the wonderful performances. The songs, dances and other types of arts that the Tibetan people created with great talent to reflect the folk, palace and temple lives widened the vision of the audience who said that such performances have enhanced their understanding and knowledge of the history, culture and arts of Tibet.

The efforts to inherit and salvage ethnic cultural heritage have also borne rich fruits. Since 1986, the Autonomous Region has devoted huge human, material and financial resources into this work. It has sent people to all the 7 prefectures and cities and 60% of the villages, towns and temples to collect cultural and artistic materials. In 1987, the Tibetan Ancient Books Publishing House was established to excavate, collect and publish ancient Tibetan documents. It has since sorted out 200 kinds of old books and has been publishing 10 kinds every year. The most striking example is King Gesar, the longest epic in the world, whose 18 big sections and 18 small sections have all been sorted out and published. Tibet has staged 18 kinds of Tibetan songs and dances, and saved over

Foreign experts are attending a seminar on King Gesar in Lhasa.



50 kinds of folk and religious dances from all ethnic groups. It has also published some important books that are key projects on the state list such as the Tibetan volume of the compilation of Chinese folklore, of the compilation of Chinese folk proverbs, of the compilation of Chinese folk songs and of the compilation of Chinese plays.

Since the peaceful liberation, the state has vigorously protected cultural heritage. Especially since 1983, the Autonomous Region has conducted a nine - year survey of its cultural relics and found a large number of cultural sites that need protection, the relics from the Stone Age, ancient rock carvings, statues in caves and ancient tombs from the Tubo period. It has also collected more than 20,000 cultural relics scattered among the people and promulgated a whole series of rules and regulations on the protection of cultural relics.

The Potala Palace which was first built in the 7th century is the largest and best preserved ancient palace in Tibet. It has very high historical, artistic and scientific value. Before 1959, it had served as the place where the successive Dalai Lamas lived and conducted political activities. It has a large number of precious cultural relics.

Since the peaceful liberation of Tibet, the Communist Party and the people's government have attached great importance to the protection of the Potala Palace. In 1961, the State Council declared



it a key national cultural protection place and has allocated special funds for its maintenance annually. It also paid attention to the fact that the annual repair cannot preclude the possibility of damages done to the palace. Therefore it decided to set up a leading group on the repair of the Potala Palace and made financial allocations for comprehensive repair and consolidation so that this magnificent palace could last for ever.

On 11 October 1989, the grand inauguration ceremony of the repair project of the Potala Palace took place according to the traditional ethnic customs and religious rituals. In the next 6 years, the state devoted huge amounts of money to the project. The People's Bank of China specially allocated 15 kgs of gold and 40 kgs of silver for the palace. Excellent Tibetan workers and technicians worked in close cooperation with Han scientists and technicians. Strictly in accordance with the principle of respecting science, respecting tradition, respecting ethnic characteristics and respecting religious requirements, they were extremely careful in design, construction and decoration, and finished all the repair items with high quality. During the whole repair process, not a single cultural relic was damaged or lost and not a single accident happened. Finally a grand completion ceremony was held in Lhasa on 8 August 1994.



King Gesar, a traditional song and dance play.

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—Tremendous Changes in Tibet Over  
the Past Thirty Years

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Tibet stands in southwestern China, covering an area of more than 1.2 million square kilometers. Ninety-five percent of the 2,320,000 residents in the region are Tibetans. Sitting 4,000 meters above sea level, the Tibetan Plateau has been nicknamed the "Roof of the World". For a long time, its isolation by snow-covered mountains has led many people to view it as a strange and mysterious place.

As part of a multi-national China, Tibet is characterized by a long history, a brilliant culture, a unique religion, and a well-preserved biological environment. For the past 30 years, Tibet has made great improvements in economy, culture, public health, tourism, and people's living standard.

The opening-up program nationwide has also brought the enigmatic Tibet a step closer to the outside world. We hope this series, which introduces the Tibetan customs as well as its past and present, will serve as a key to the exploration of the mysteries of Tibet.

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