



Chinese President Xi Jinping holds talks with leader of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea Kim Jong Un, in Dalian, northeast China's Liaoning Province, in May (XINHUA)

A deeper connection

Chinese President Xi Jinping, also General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC), met with Kim Jong Un, Chairman of the Workers' Party of Korea (WPK) and Chairman of the State Affairs Commission of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), in Dalian, northeast China's Liaoning Province, on May 7-8, the second meeting between the two leaders since March. The following is an edited excerpt of a Xinhua News Agency report:

In a cordial and friendly atmosphere, Xi and Kim had an all-round and in-depth exchange on China-DPRK relations and major issues of common concern.

"Comrade Chairman made a special trip to China to meet with me again after just some 40 days at a crucial time when the Korean Peninsula situation is undergoing profound and complex changes," Xi said. This embodies the great importance that Kim and the WPK Central Committee have placed on the relations between the two parties and the two countries and to their strategic communication.

"After the first meeting between me and Comrade Chairman, both China-DPRK relations and the Korean Peninsula situation have made positive progress. I'm very happy about that," Xi said.

The Chinese President said he was willing to meet Kim again to make joint efforts to push the healthy and stable development of China-DPRK relations, realize long-lasting peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula, and promote regional peace, stability and prosperity.

For his part, Kim said both the DPRK-China friendship and the Korean Peninsula situation have undergone meaningful progress since March.

"These are the positive outcomes of the historic meeting between me and Comrade General Secretary," he said. At a critical moment when regional conditions are developing rapidly, Kim said he came to China again to meet with Xi to inform him of the situation, hoping to strengthen strategic

communication and cooperation with China, deepen the DPRK-China friendship and promote regional peace and stability.

Xi commented that at their historic first meeting in Beijing in March, he and Kim held long and in-depth talks and reached principled consensus on four aspects of developing China-DPRK relations in the new era.

First, the China-DPRK traditional friendship has been a precious treasure for both countries. It is an unswerving principle, Xi said, and the only correct choice for both countries to develop friendly and cooperative China-DPRK relations.

Second, both China and the DPRK are socialist countries, and their bilateral relations are of major strategic significance. Both sides need to enhance unity, cooperation, exchanges and mutual learning.

Third, high-level exchanges between the two parties play an irreplaceably significant role in guiding bilateral relations, Xi said. The two sides should maintain frequent exchanges, strengthen strategic communication, deepen understanding and mutual trust and safeguard common interests.

Fourth, Xi said that cementing the foundation of people-to-people friendship is an important channel to advance the development of China-DPRK relations. The two sides should, by multiple means, enhance people-to-people communication and exchanges to create a sound base of popular will for the advancement of China-DPRK relations.

Xi added that with concerted

efforts from both sides, all of these agreements are being implemented well.

In little over a month, he and Kim have met twice and they have been keeping in close contact, Xi said, adding that he is willing to work together with Kim to continue to guide relevant departments on both sides to soundly implement the consensus they have reached, promote the continuous advancement of China-DPRK relations, benefit the two countries and two peoples, and make positive contributions to the peace and stability of the region.

Xi also extended sincere gratitude to Kim for his great attentiveness and earnest attitude shown after a major road accident in the DPRK resulted in casualties from both countries.

Kim said comrade-like trust and friendship between the elder generations of leaders from the two parties and countries form the close bond and solid foundation for the traditional friendship between the DPRK and China.

"Comrade General Secretary and I have carried on this fine tradition to hold the historic meeting with fruitful outcomes, and promoted the unprecedentedly vigorous development of DPRK-China relations," he said.

Kim said that he believes his second meeting with Xi will deepen mutual trust and push the friendly and cooperative DPRK-China relationship to achieve an even closer development across the board in line with the demands of the new era.

Talking about the situation on the Korean Peninsula, Xi said he and Kim fully exchanged views and reached important consensus during their first meeting, adding that Kim has recently made active efforts to promote dialogue and the easing of tensions on the peninsula with constructive progress being made.

He noted that with joint efforts from relevant parties, the momentum of dialogue and the alleviation of tensions on the peninsula are being consolidated in a direction that is conducive to a political solution.

China supports the DPRK's adherence to the denuclearization of the peninsula and backs dialogue and consultation between the DPRK and the United States for resolving the peninsula issue, Xi said.

"China is willing to continue to work with all relevant parties and play an active role in comprehensively advancing the process of the peaceful resolution of the peninsula issue through dialogue, and realizing long-term peace and stability in the region," he said.

Speaking highly of Xi's speaking vision and extraordinary wisdom, Kim expressed his gratitude to China for its long-standing and significant contribution to realizing the

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denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and safeguarding peace and stability in the region. It has been the DPRK's consistent and clear position to achieve denuclearization on the Korean Peninsula, Kim said. As long as relevant parties abolish their hostile policies and remove security threats against the DPRK, there is no need for the DPRK to be a nuclear state and denuclearization can be realized, he added.

Kim expressed his hope that the DPRK and the United States would build mutual trust through dialogue. He said the relevant sides would take phased and synchronous measures in a responsible manner so as to comprehensively advance the political settlement of the Korean Peninsula issue and eventually achieve denuclearization and lasting peace on the peninsula. Kim also briefed Xi on the latest developments in the DPRK, including party building.

Xi said that Third Plenary Meeting of the Seventh WPK Central Committee advanced a strategic line of concentrating all efforts on socialist economic construction, and announced the decision to discontinue nuclear tests and intercontinental ballistic rocket test-fires and dismantle its northern nuclear testing ground. This showed the great importance Kim attaches to developing the economy and improving people's livelihood, along with his resolute determination to safeguard regional peace and stability.

China appreciates the move, Xi said, and supports the DPRK in shifting its strategic focus to economic construction and taking a development path suitable to its own national situation.



Xi Jinping (R), general secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and Chinese president, holds talks with Kim Jong Un, chairman of the Workers' Party of Korea (WPK) and chairman of the State Affairs Commission of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), in Dalian, northeast China's Liaoning Province, on May 7-8 (XINHUA)

Man of the moment

The theories of Karl Marx remain invaluable 200 years after the German philosopher's birth

By Lu Yan



A conference marking the 200th anniversary of the birth of Karl Marx takes place in Beijing on May 4 (XINHUA)

Two centuries on, despite huge and profound changes in human society, the name of Karl Marx is still respected all over the world and his theory still shines with the brilliant light of truth," said Chinese President Xi Jinping at a grand gathering in Beijing to celebrate the 200th anniversary of Marx's birth on May 4.

Multiple events, including art exhibitions, seminars and reading groups, have been held across China to honor the life and work of the renowned philosopher, economist, historian, political theorist, sociologist and journalist.

"Today, we hold this grand gathering with great veneration to mark the 200th anniversary of Marx's birth, to remember his great character and historic deeds and to review his noble spirit and brilliant thoughts," said Xi, also General Secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and Chairman of the Central Military Commission.

Illuminating thoughts

Born the son of a lawyer on May 5, 1818, Marx aspired to work for the greater good of people from a young age, writing in a high school essay *On the Choice of a Profession* at the age of 17 that "If we have chosen the position in life in which we can most of all work for mankind, no burdens can bow us down, because they are sacrifices for the benefit of all; then we shall experience no petty, limited, selfish joy, but our happiness will belong to millions, our deeds will live on quietly but perpetually at work, and over our ashes will be shed the hot tears of noble people."

Marx is the "teacher of revolution for the proletariat and working people all over the world," said Xi.

With noble ideals and no fear of difficulty or adversity, throughout his life Marx devoted himself to striving for the liberation of humanity, scaling the peak of thought in his pursuit of truth, and the unremitting fight to overturn the old world and establish a new one, according to Xi.

The most valuable and influential spiritual asset that Marx has left us is the scientific theory named after him—Marxism. Like a spectacular sunrise, the theory illuminates the path of humanity's exploration of the law of history and humanity's search for its own liberation, Xi said.

"The thought and theory of Marx are of his times and go beyond his times," Xi said. "They are the essence of the spirit of those times, and the essence of the spirit of all humanity." Xi went on to describe Marxism as a scientific theory that reveals the rule of human social development in a creative manner.

Having developed the materialist conception of history and theory of surplus value, Marx showed how humanity would leap from the realm of necessity to the realm of freedom and the road for the people to realize freedom and liberation, Xi said.

Marxism, the first ideology for the liberation of the people themselves, is a theory of the people.



A statue of Karl Marx donated by China is unveiled in his birth town of Trier, Germany, on May 5 (XINHUA)

"Marxism, for the first time, explored the path to humanity's freedom and liberation from the stance of the people, and pointed out the direction, with scientific theory, toward an ideal society with no oppression or exploitation, where every person would enjoy equality and freedom," Xi said.

Stressing that practicality is a prominent characteristic of Marxism that makes it different from other theories, Xi said that Marxism is a theory of practices that directs the people to change the world. It is an open theory that is constantly developing and always stands at the frontier of the times. "That is why it is always relevant and able to explore new issues in the development of the times and respond to new challenges for human society."

Xi said that over the 170 years since the publication of *The Communist Manifesto*, Marxism has been spread around the world, unrivaled in the history of human ideology in terms of the breadth and depth of its influence.

After World War II, a large number of socialist countries were established, Xi said, stressing that the founding of the People's Republic of China in particular has greatly increased the strength of socialism across the world.

"There might be setbacks in the development of socialism in the world, but the overall trend for human social development has never changed, and it will never change," Xi said.

"Marxism has not only profoundly changed the world, but also China," Xi said.

The reverberations of the October Revolution in Russia brought Marxism-Leninism to China, indicating the way forward, offering a new choice for the Chinese people in their struggle to survive and setting the scene for the birth of the CPC.

Since its founding, the CPC has combined the fundamental principles of Marxism with the reality of Chinese revolution, transforming the Chinese nation from "the sick man of East Asia" to one able to stand up by uniting and leading the people through long-term struggle.

"This tremendous transformation serves as proof that only through socialism can we save China," Xi said.

Since reform and opening up, the CPC has combined the fundamental principles of Marxism with the reality of China's reform and opening up, and the nation which stood up has grown rich.

"This tremendous transformation serves as proof that only through socialism with Chinese characteristics can we develop China," Xi said.

In the new era, the CPC has again combined the fundamental principles of Marxism with China's contemporary reality, uniting and leading the people in "undertaking the great struggle, building the great project, advancing the great cause and realizing the great dream."

The Chinese nation has come to embrace a great change, as the one who grew rich is now becoming strong.

"This tremendous transformation serves as proof that only by adhering to and developing socialism with Chinese characteristics can we realize national rejuvenation," Xi said.

"It is perfectly right for history and the people to choose Marxism, as well as for the CPC to write Marxism on its own flag, to combine the fundamental principles of Marxism with China's reality, and to continuously adapt Marxism to the Chinese context and times."

The CPC uses Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought, Deng Xiaoping Theory, the Theory of Three Represents, the Scientific Outlook on Development, and Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era as its guides for action, according to the Party Constitution revised and adopted at the 19th CPC National Congress in October 2017.

Contemporary significance

"I feel motivated after listening to the General Secretary's speech and want to learn more about Marxism," said Pan Xuexi, a student of the School of Public Administration at Inner Mongolia University, who watched the commemorative event on television. "Now I notice that there are more young people like me who read works written by Marx."

Li Shuting, a journalism major at Lanzhou University, said that she learned about working for the public from Marx. "I want to devote myself to the development and people of the underdeveloped western region of China after graduation and contribute my own share to the construction of my country," she said.

"With Marxism as an ideological guidance, the CPC can better lead Chinese people to work for social development and progress," said Liu Haitao, Executive Dean of the School of Marxism at the Party School of the CPC Central Committee.



Visitors appreciate works of art at an exhibition to honor Karl Marx in Beijing on May 5 (XINHUA)

Pearls of wisdom

Political party dialogue facilitates the exchanges necessary for a cooperative world

By Deng Yaqing



Chinese President Xi Jinping (6th R, front) poses for a group photo with other leaders and guests ahead of the 18th Meeting of the Council of Heads of Member States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in Qingdao, east China's Shandong Province, June 10, 2018. Xi chaired the meeting and delivered a speech (XINHUA)

With the aim of further promoting regional peace and development, the First Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Political Parties Forum was held in Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, on May 26, marking the establishment of a brand new mechanism.

Under the theme of Pooling Wisdom of Political Parties, Promoting the Shanghai Spirit and Building a Global Community with a Shared Future, the forum was hosted by the International Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and attended by around 200 representatives from more than 30 political parties in 18 SCO member states, observers and dialogue partners.

"As the forerunners and guides of national development, political parties play a leading role in building a global community with a shared future and making the world a better place. Promoting exchanges between SCO political parties is sure to boost its future development," said Song Tao, Minister of the International Department of the CPC Central Committee, in a keynote speech at the opening ceremony.

According to Song, the CPC is willing to make every effort to advance the construction of an SCO community with a shared future featuring equality, mutual support and solidarity together with other SCO members.

Learning together

"As a regional organization whose member states account for approximately half of the world's population, the SCO has become a model for peaceful development and cultural exchange," said Sergey Zheleznyak, Deputy Secretary of the General Council of the United Russia Party, during the forum.

"Political parties are the most active forces in political life. When we get together under the framework of the SCO for dialogue, we can exchange our experience of managing parties

and nations, which could open a new chapter in SCO cooperation," Zheleznyak said.

"The forum is productive and pragmatic, and under the framework of SCO cooperation, it is necessary for all political parties to conduct exchanges and promote partnerships in security, economic and cultural development, education, and tourism," said Nariman Umarov, President of the Adolat (Justice) Social Democratic Party of Uzbekistan.

Anirban Ganguly, Special Representative of the president of the Bharatiya Janata Party of India, noted that the successful conclusion of the forum signifies the efficient partnerships among member countries under the SCO framework, and that endeavors should be made to further exchange experience of governance and promote mutual learning.

"It is the shared desire of all attendees to learn from each other's experience of governance at the party and national level, and bilateral and multilateral relations will inevitably benefit from the sharing of ideas on development and party construction and governance," Ganguly said.

Following the discussion, consensus was reached on maintaining the Shanghai Spirit, striving to build an SCO community with a shared future, strengthening coordination on action plans and promoting the institutionalization of the forum, according to Guo Yezhou, Vice Minister of the International Department of the CPC Central Committee, at a news conference held after the conclusion of the forum.

"The forum helped create a positive and friendly atmosphere for the upcoming SCO Summit," which will be held in Qingdao, Shandong Province, in June, said Guo.

As the philosophical underpinning of the SCO, the Shanghai Spirit espouses reciprocal trust, mutual benefit, equality, two-way consultation, respect for cultural diversity and the pursuit of common development.

Terrorist, separatist, and extremist behaviors

are in violation of these principles, and cooperative multilateral initiatives such as the Belt and Road and the Eurasian Economic Union should be further strengthened according to Zheleznyak, who believes the key to pushing forward these initiatives lies in the Shanghai Spirit.

Representatives were in agreement that the Shanghai Spirit is a dynamic set of practical values applicable at any time and in any region, and that it is the source of strength and the foundation of cooperation within the SCO, fundamental for all political parties to build consensus.

A shared future

Attendees agreed that exchanges between political parties under the framework of the SCO not only facilitate cooperation and communication, but also contribute wisdom and effective approaches toward the building of a community with a shared future for mankind.

"The SCO has developed into a unique regional organization and an important guarantee for security and stable development in the Eurasian region," said Muratbek Imanaliev, former Secretary General of the SCO.

"Under the SCO framework, guided by the Shanghai Spirit, the platform for dialogue and communication between political parties will press ahead with the establishment of a new type of international relations and propel the building of a community with a shared future for mankind," Imanaliev said.

Representatives noted that the Belt and Road Initiative is the most practical approach to achieving this goal.

"The Belt and Road Initiative has brought about hope and well-being for people in the developing world, and it is the only road which can lead the people of Asia and the world to common prosperity," Pakistani Senator Mushahid Hussein said.



The first Shanghai Cooperation Organization Political Parties Forum was held in Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, on May 26 (XINHUA)

Political parties' representatives praise China's reform, opening-up

China's reform and opening-up has not only yielded top results, but also provided valuable experience to the world, according to attendees of a meeting held in Shenzhen on May 27.

The meeting, with the theme "Reform and opening-up holds the key to the destiny of contemporary China," was held in the southern Chinese city on Sunday. More than 500 representatives of over 200 political parties from over 100 countries attended.

This year marks the 40th anniversary of China's reform and opening-up. Guangdong Province, where Shenzhen is located, is the birthplace of the policy, and the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone is one of its landmark achievements, said Li Xi, secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Guangdong Provincial Committee.

Mushahid Hussain Syed, Chairman of Pakistan's Senate Foreign Affairs Committee, visited Shenzhen 40 years ago as a journalist.

"Shenzhen was a small fishing village at that time. However, it has become an international metropolis with nearly 1,000 buildings exceeding a height of 100 meters," he said.



Song Tao, head of the International Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC), addresses a meeting with the theme "Reform and opening-up holds the key to the destiny of contemporary China" held in Shenzhen, south China's Guangdong Province, May 27, 2018 (XINHUA)



Li Xi, secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Guangdong Provincial Committee, addresses a meeting with the theme "Reform and opening-up holds the key to the destiny of contemporary China" held in Shenzhen, south China's Guangdong Province, May 27, 2018 (XINHUA)

Lineth Guzman, vice president of the Senate of Bolivia, said China's reform and opening-up has offered huge opportunities to other countries.

Guzman said she believes the Chinese government will achieve its goal of eliminating rural poverty by 2020, and Bolivia, which shares similar goals in terms of poverty reduction, is willing to adopt China's experience in pulling people out of poverty.

Representatives also expressed their willingness to learn about governance from the CPC.

Gustavo Rene Hein, chairman of the Republican Proposal Party in the Entre Rios Province of Argentina, said he was very impressed by China's development under the leadership of the CPC, including its long-term planning.

According to Hein, China's rapid development has attracted increasing attention from the world. At the same time, China's opening has made its achievements visible to other countries, which can learn from them.

China's achievements in the past 40 years through reform and opening-up is truly remarkable, and they have answered many questions, said Sergey Zheleznyak, deputy secretary of the General Council of the United Russia Party.

(Xinhua News Agency, May 27, 2018)



The briefing was attended by members of 200 political parties from 100 countries and regions (Courtesy of IDCPC)

Clicking off poverty

How Internet Plus tourism has spread rural Tibet's wings

By Li Nan



Phuntsok, a family inn owner in Nyingchi, southwest China's Tibet Autonomous Region, promotes his inn by live streaming on June 8, 2017 (ZHAO FEI)

Phuntsok, a 70-year-old family inn owner in Nyingchi City, southwest China's Tibet Autonomous Region, is remarkably web savvy. On his business card, there is a QR code for tourists to scan to see the virtual reality (VR) panorama of his guesthouse in Tashi Gang Village, Lhulang Town.

"Many tourists decide to stay at my inn when they see the VR presentation," he said proudly. The veteran-turned-entrepreneur was the first Tibetan to offer accommodations to tourists in Lhulang starting in 1998.

Along with VR, Phuntsok also promotes his guesthouse on Weibo, the Chinese equivalent of Twitter, and WeChat, China's most popular messaging app; and through live streaming. He has more than 1,780 contacts on his WeChat account, most of whom were previous guests. Whenever a newcomer asks him about the specific location of the inn, the elderly man expertly shares his position through his cellphone, guiding guests with the help of cyber maps.

Things were different when Phuntsok first started his business. Having not attended school, he had no idea how to use the Internet to promote his homestay. But since 2016, with the help of the local government, free Wi-Fi has been available in rural Nyingchi. A specialized online platform for promoting the city's tourism was also established in the same year and a free training course on how to use online marketing was offered to family hotel owners. This was grist to the mill for Phuntsok, who ran with these promotional tools.

Now, Phuntsok's guesthouse has become one of the most popular inns in Nyingchi. Celebrities and backpackers queue for a room in advance of the peak season. In 2017, he received nearly 7,000 guests, a surge of 133 percent in two years, with a yearly income of 350,000 yuan (\$55,840).

Internet Plus tourism

"I could never enjoy my good life today without the good policies," Phuntsok said, referring to the local government's commitment in recent years to pulling herders and farmers out of poverty with Internet Plus tourism.

Tibet aims to become an international tourist destination and an all-in-one tourism demonstration zone in China. In May 2015, it rolled out a plan to build 20 distinctive towns with complete Internet infrastructure and digital public service platforms, including Phuntsok's hometown of Lhulang.

Located along National Highway 318, Lhulang town is known as China's most beautiful passage linking Sichuan Province and Tibet and has long been a tourist stop. Local residents have always offered accommodations or sold native products to tourists. But there was never a specialized online platform to connect tourists with guesthouse owners.

"On the one hand, many tourists wanted to experience the traditional rural Tibetan lifestyle, but few knew where to go before 2016. On the other hand, farmers-turned-homestay managers knew little about marketing and promotion," Tenzin Samdrup, head of the Nyingchi Tourism Development Commission (NTDC) told *Beijing Review*.

The changes began in 2016, when the town was renovated with 3.8 billion yuan (\$601 million) of investment from China's southern Guangdong Province. A paved road network was built to make scattered villages more connected and accessible. Public infrastructure, such as a water supply station, a garbage transfer station and a sewage treatment plant were erected. Villages were cleaned up and old guesthouses renovated. Up to 90 percent of the town was covered by a mobile communication network. The once simple town was transformed into an international tourist destination with a traditional Tibetan atmosphere.

Since its trial run in 2016, Lhulang town has received over 300,000 tourists, creating many great business opportunities and generating 1,000 local jobs.

Besides the offline facelift, the Nyingchi government teamed up with a private enterprise to digitalize its rural tourism system. An online platform called Nyingchi Smart Tourism (NST) was established, offering tourists specific information about Nyingchi's resorts, restaurants, hotels, travel agencies, dynamic tourist flows, traffic reports and weather forecasts. With a simple click, tourists can now easily find out where to go, where to eat and where to sleep in the region, even when they are in remote highland pastures.

"In the past, when guests came to my inn, I had to pick each of them up. Thanks to the well-developed Internet, tourists now book rooms online and come to my house by themselves with the help of online maps," said Phuntsok.

What's more, an online marketplace called 7782, sells local products such as dry yak meat, mushrooms and Tibetan herbal medicine. This enables local farmers and herders to sell their products to buyers online.

To encourage more local residents to promote their family hotels and products online, staff from the Nyingchi Smart Tourism Development Co. Ltd. (NSTD) went door to door teaching farmers how to use the platform and provided them with free tablet computers.

Data from the NTDC shows that after the platform was launched, the number of guesthouses in Nyingchi went up from 308 to 570, increasing by 85 percent. According to Qin Lei, NSTD General Manager, the platform has amassed over 3 million registered users, generating a turnover of 14 million yuan (\$2.23 million) in less than two years.

"Local residents can now receive orders without stepping out of their doors," said Tenzin Samdrup. "And tourists can enjoy a cashless trip across Nyingchi with a cellphone."

Nyingchi residents are not the only beneficiaries of the information highway in Tibet. In the past five years, the autonomous region has grown into the first ethnic region in China where all towns are covered by the Passive Optical Network (PON). To date, PON is accessible to 2,055 villages, or 40 percent of the region's rural areas.

Selling farm produce online has become a common practice in rural Tibet. By February, 14 counties in Tibet were named national level e-commerce demonstration counties, including Tsole County in Ngari Prefecture, a remote county with an average altitude of 4,700 meters. Abounding in farm produce and cashmere products, Tsole failed to find a market as a result of poor telecommunications in the past. When it got access to broadband in 2015, however, it established an e-commerce association and opened online and offline stores to engage villagers in e-commerce. In the first six months, over 120 farmers and herders from 21 villages took part, bringing each of them an additional income of nearly 1,000 yuan (\$159.37) per month.

"Nowadays, Tibet has taken on a new outlook. Modern infrastructure is improving and mobile payment is feasible even in border hamlets," said Qizhala, Chairman of the Tibet Autonomous Region, on March 27.



Tenzin, founder of a Tibetan tapestry cooperative in Gyangze County, southwest China's Tibet Autonomous Region, innovates the old craft with 3D design styles (YANG JIA)

Craftsman's spirit

Lhobsang Kandrol, professor with the Tibetology Institute at the Minzu University of China, told *Beijing Review*, "Tibet's tourism development depends on its natural, cultural and religious resources. Therefore, protecting these resources is the prerequisite for Tibet's long-term tourism development." Thus he confirmed that Tibet's thriving Internet-driven tourism is good for its cultural and environmental protection.

Last year, 25.6 million tourists from home and abroad visited Tibet, an increase of 10.6 percent year on year. Their trips propped up the sales of local handicrafts and artwork, including Tibetan tapestry and Thangka paintings. The Tibetan tapestry industry, with an output value of 350 million yuan (\$55 million) in 2015, has grown into a leading handicraft industry in the region.

Turkish carpets, Persian silk rugs and Tibetan tapestry are the top three carpet brands in the world. Gyangze County in south Tibet has been famous for its masterful tapestry-making for over 600 years. In the past, nearly every household in Gyangze could make Tibetan tapestry.

But the industry struggled in the early 2000s as a result of low market demand, a limited portfolio and manufacturing difficulties. Many young people flocked to big cities for jobs rather than take up tapestry at home. But with the surging market demand for Tibetan tapestry these years, more people—especially millennials—are now willing to inherit and develop the old craft.

In his mid-20s, Tenzin from Gyangze County is one of them. After graduating from Tibet University in 2014, he accepted a job offer as a civil servant in the local government. But he quit the decent job after three months and started up a cooperative to produce hand-made Tibetan tapestry and Thangka paintings with wool and natural dye in Niandui town, Gyangze County.

Tenzin invited Tibetan tapestry masters to teach him and his employees and to preserve the traditional techniques. He also made some innovations by designing 3D patterns, which diversified his product portfolio and make tailored tapestry possible.

"Tibetan tapestry made in Gyangze is a handicraft that well represents the unique Tibetan culture. As an architect, I combined what I learned in university with the traditional tapestry-making craft, adding a 3D flavor," Tenzin told *Beijing Review*. In addition, the young man combined Tibetan tapestry with Thangka, creating a new product called tapestry Thangka.

Tenzin's innovations have proven successful. In 2016, the volume of sales from his workshop totaled 1.2 million yuan (\$189,800), creating 65 jobs for the small town. In June 2017, his tapestry Thangka won the International New Product Trend Award at the 2017 China (Qinghai) International Carpet Exhibition. But Tenzin has bigger dreams. "I hope that new techniques and new designs can rejuvenate the old Tibetan tapestry-making craft, enabling Tibetan tapestry to go global," he said.

In fact, the regional government has provided funds and worked out preferential policies to buoy the development of the Tibetan handicraft. Both product value and young practitioners of the industry have increased. For example, regional figures through April 2018 indicate that there are now about 3,000 professional Thangka painters in Tibet. They consist mainly of artists from the ages of 30 to 40, making them much younger than their predecessors.



Nima Tsering (front) and his fellow forest rangers from Barka Village, Bomi County, walk their beats in the Yarlung Tsangpo Grand Canyon on March 27 (XINHUA/DAWA)

From hunter to ranger

One of Tibet's major attractions is its natural plateau landscape. Tourism has filled the pockets of Tibetan farmers and herders, which further impels them to make greater efforts to protect their environment. As Chinese President Xi Jinping said, "Lucid waters and lush mountains are invaluable assets."

For decades, 50-year-old Nima Tsering and fellow residents of Barka village, Bomi County,

Major events in May

May 1: China removes import tariffs on all cancer drugs

Keywords: Import tariff; drug

China on May 1 has exempted import tariffs on all common drugs including cancer drugs, cancer alkaloid-based drugs, and imported traditional Chinese medicine. Value-added tax on the production and import of drugs will also drop.

May 7: CPC pledges to fully incorporate core socialist values in legislation

Keywords: CPC; socialist values; legislation

The Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee on May 7 announced a plan to "fully incorporate core socialist values in legislation" in the next five to 10 years.

May 8: Chinese premier arrives in Tokyo for official visit, China-Japan-ROK Leaders' Meeting

Keywords: Li Keqiang; Tokyo

Chinese Premier Li Keqiang arrived in Tokyo on May 8 for an official visit to Japan and the 7th China-Japan-Republic of Korea (ROK) leaders' meeting.

May 10: China "strongly dissatisfied" with EU trade practice

Keywords: China; EU; trade

China's commerce ministry said on May 10 that the country is "strongly dissatisfied" with the European Union's use of a "surrogate country" approach in probes against Chinese products.

May 15: CASS: China's economy to grow 6.7 pct in 2018

Keywords: CASS; economy; 6.7 percent

A recent report issued by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) forecast a 6.7 percent growth to the Chinese economy in 2018, saying there would be no "hard landing".

May 17: Book on Xi Jinping Thought published

Keywords: Xi Jinping Thought; New Era

A book to help the public understand Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era was released by Xuexi Publishing House on May 17.

May 21: SCO countries pledge to enhance political trust, safeguard stability

Keywords: SCO; political trust; stability

Chinese State Councilor and Minister of Public Security Zhao Kezhi on May 22 called on the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) countries to enhance political mutual trust and jointly safeguard regional stability and development.

May 31: Chinese FM dispels EU's worries over 16+1 cooperation between China, CEE countries

Keywords: Wang Yi; CEE; 16+1

Chinese State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi said on May 31 that the cooperation between China and 16 Central and Eastern European countries is conducive to European integration, and a divided, weakened EU is not in China's interests.

have been living off the virgin forest in the Yarlung Zangbo Grand Canyon. When Tsering was young, every household in the village had a gun hanging on the wall. "Wild animals were being scared off back then; hunters often came home empty-handed after days of wondering in the forest," he told *Beijing Review*.

But the situation was reversed gradually after measures were introduced to protect the forest as a national level nature reserve in 1984. Hunting is now prohibited and every one of the former hunters from 26 families in Barka Village was hired by the local government to act as a forest ranger. The job brings them an additional income of 13,000 yuan (\$2,053) annually.

The villagers are not alone in protecting the environment. In 2017, Tibet earmarked 6.17 billion yuan (\$973 million) for the hiring of 700,000 farmers and herders to act as environmental protectors.

After decades of protection, wild animals, such as bears, buffalo and monkeys have returned to the forest. In the process, Barka Village became a renowned regional natural destination. Since 2009, more and more tourists have traveled to the small village to enjoy the pristine forest and mountains and experience original Tibetan life. Villagers, including Tsering, started guesthouses to accommodate tourists, which help local residents earn significantly more money. In 2017, Tsering's income was 80,000 yuan (\$12,624), four times more than before 2008.

The villagers call the income hike a gift from the mountains and forest. "What the tourists love is the natural environment here. Once the environment is well-protected, the mountains will remain green, the water will stay clear and the sky blue. Then, we will be able to enjoy the gifts of the mountains and forest for a long time," Tsering said.

By the end of 2017, there were 47 nature reserves in Tibet, taking up 33.9 percent of the region's total area.

"Ecological tourism drew visitors to sleepy villages in the region, which has brought changes to the local residents' views on green development," NTDC's Tenzin told *Beijing Review*, adding that tourism, in his opinion, is a sustainable option for rural Tibet.

Regional statistics show that by developing rural tourism, green agriculture, handicrafts and border fairs, the per-capita disposable income of local farmers and herders climbed to 10,330 yuan (\$1,634), a 13.6 percent increase.

Challenges

But the Internet Plus tourism on the roof of the world is not without some obstacles, with lack of talent posing a major problem. "Tibet's high altitude puts some talent off. We are badly in need of Internet technicians," said Qin.

Incubation centers, including the Lhulang Startup Center, were launched to lure talent to Tibet. Opened in June 2016, the center aims to be both an incubation center and a brain bank. To date, a dozen enterprises have rooted themselves at the center. New entrepreneurs are given rent subsidies, accommodations and tax breaks. Attractive internship programs connected to five universities are offered to college students. "We rack our brains on how to retain hi-tech talent in Tibet, hoping that they will help enrich Tibet's brain bank," said Qin.

In the past year, the regional government made great efforts to amass talent, with a total of 105 PhD graduates settling in Tibet, outpacing most other provinces and autonomous regions.