



60 YEARS OF PROGRESS MARKED

Significant strides in economic and social development highlighted at autonomous region's founding anniversary event

By MO JINGXI and PALDEN NYIMA in Lhasa

President Xi Jinping joined around 20,000 local officials and people from all ethnic groups and all walks of life in a grand gathering on Thursday at the Potala Palace square in Lhasa to mark the 60th founding anniversary of the Xizang autonomous region.

Xi, who is also general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, arrived in the regional capital on Wednesday with a central delegation to attend the festivities.

It was the first time in the history of the Party and the country that a leader attended such an event in the capacities of general secretary of the CPC Central Committee, Chinese president and chairman of the CMC.

The gathering commenced at 10 am, with all attendees standing to sing the national anthem. The bright five-starred national flag was hoisted solemnly at the site.

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A congratulatory message from the CPC Central Committee, the National People's Congress Standing Committee, the State Council, the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference National Committee and the CMC was read out.

Wang Huning, chairman of the CPPCC National Committee and head of the central delegation, then presented a plaque bearing Xi's inscription, "Jointly building a community for the Chinese nation, writing a new chapter for a beautiful Xizang," as a congratulatory gift.

Cai Qi, director of the General Office of the CPC Central Committee, was also present at the gathering.

Addressing the event, Wang said the founding of the Xizang autonomous region in September 1965 marked an epoch-making event.

Over the past six decades, Xizang has made significant strides in economic and social development, fully demonstrating the strong leadership of the CPC and the clear political strength of China's socialist system, he said.

Wang said that since the 18th CPC National Congress in 2012, Xizang has entered its best period of development and made the most substantial progress, with people of all ethnic groups benefiting more than ever before.

He emphasized that Xizang is an inalienable part of China, and its affairs are purely China's internal affairs, which brook no interference from external forces.

Any attempt to split the motherland and undermine Xizang's stability is doomed to fail, he said.

Wang also called for efforts to consolidate and develop ethnic solidarity, promote high-quality socioeconomic development, and continuously improve people's well-being to advance common prosperity in Xizang.

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Top: President Xi Jinping, who is also general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, attends a grand gathering on Thursday at the Potala Palace square in Lhasa, capital of the Xizang autonomous region, to mark the region's 60th founding anniversary.
Above left and right: Residents at a mass parade during the grand gathering in Lhasa on Thursday.
Below: Thousands take part in the celebrations with the Potala Palace in the background.

PHOTOS BY XINHUA, YAN YAN / XINHUA AND TENTSEN SHINDEN / FOR CHINA DAILY

REPORTER'S LOG

Discovering truths about happiness on roof of world

By MO JINGXI in Lhasa
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Earlier this week, I arrived in Lhasa to cover the 60th founding anniversary of the Xizang autonomous region. It was my third journey to the plateau, and as always, I was reminded of the same piece of advice: Walk slowly, speak slowly.

But as I interacted more and more with the locals, I discovered that while their steps may be measured, their words are quick, direct and utterly unadorned.

At the Potala Palace square on Thursday morning, after the grand celebration, I spoke briefly with a student who had been waving national flags so enthusiastically that she kept them raised even as we talked.

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XIZANG BORDER TOWNSHIP THRIVES THANKS TO ADVANCEMENTS, PATRIOTISM

Once a family of three patrolled isolated Yulmed, which today is a prosperous, modern area

By CUI JIA in Yulmed, Xizang
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When Pasang Tsering took a teaching job at the school in Yulmed, Xizang autonomous region, in 2007, he was warned by many people that the living conditions in the township located in the southern foothills of the Himalayas were very tough.



But he was still surprised by the reality of everyday life in what was once the least-populated township in China.

"Surrounded by mountains on three sides at an average altitude of more than 5,000 meters, it took me about four days to get to the township from the county seat of Lhunze due to the poor condition of the road," Pasang Tsering said. "I literally had to traverse steep slopes and rugged paths on foot to get to Yulmed. I will never forget that trip."

With an unstable electricity supply from a small hydropower station, even watching TV was a luxury back then. In Yulmed, located in the remote area near the China-India border, communication with the outside world was often cut off, he added.

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Vol. 45 — No. 14122



国内统一连续出版物号:
CN 11-0091
国际标准连续出版物号:
ISSN 0253-9543 代号: 1-3

