

Human Rights in Xizang in the New Era (I)

新时代西藏人权事业的发展与进步(上)

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Introduction

It is a common human aspiration for every individual to fully enjoy their human rights. This is also the goal of the Chinese people of all ethnic groups, including those in the Xizang Autonomous Region.

The Communist Party of China (CPC) and the Chinese government have always attached great importance to their work related to Xizang, and have constantly refined and expanded their guidelines for governing the region. They have implemented effective measures to develop the economy, improve living standards and people's wellbeing, promote ethnic unity and progress, and protect the basic rights of all the people in the region.

Since the 18th CPC National Congress in 2012, the CPC Central Committee, with Xi Jinping at its core, has made respecting and protecting human rights an important part of its guidelines for the governance of Xizang in the new era. This commitment is reflected in all aspects and stages of work related to the autonomous region. The CPC has maintained a people-centered approach to human rights and a commitment to ensuring human rights through development, and has vigorously promoted whole-process people's democracy. It has strengthened legal protection of human rights, and coordinated efforts to increase people's civil and political rights as well as economic, social and cultural rights, so as to achieve well-rounded development and common prosperity for all people from all ethnic groups. As a result, human rights cause in the region has made all-round and historic progress.

Today Xizang enjoys political stability, ethnic unity, economic development, social harmony, and amity among different religions. Its environment is sound, and its people are content in their work and daily lives. This progress represents a remarkable achievement in protecting human rights on the snowy plateau.

前言

实现人人充分享有人权，是人类社会的共同追求，也是包括西藏各族人民在内的全体中国人民的奋斗目标。

中国共产党和中国政府始终重视西藏工作，不断丰富和发展治藏方略，采取切实有力举措，发展经济，改善民生，增进人民福祉，促进民族团结进步，充分保障西藏各族人民的基本权利。

党的十八大以来，以习近平同志为核心的党中央，坚持把尊重和保障人权作为新时代党的治藏方略的重要内容，融入西藏工作的全过程各方面，奉行以人民为中心的人权理念，坚持以发展促人权，大力推进全过程人民民主，不断加强人权法治保障，协调增进公民权利和政治权利以及经济、社会、文化权利，努力促进人的全面发展和各族人民共同富裕，推动西藏人权事业取得全方位进步、历史性成就。

今天的西藏，政治安定、民族团结、经济发展、社会和谐、宗教和顺、环境友好、人民安居乐业，创造了雪域高原上的人权保障奇迹。

一、西藏人权事业波澜壮阔的发展历程

西藏人权事业的发展，与当代中国发展进程相

I. Remarkable Progress in Human Rights in Xizang

Advances in human rights in Xizang are part of the development of contemporary China and a natural result of the progression of socialism with Chinese characteristics. Since the peaceful liberation of Xizang in 1951, the CPC has united the people of all ethnic groups in the region and led them in an unremitting fight to institutionalize, respect, protect and expand human rights. Their rights to subsistence and development and all other basic rights have been guaranteed and are being progressively improved.

—Peaceful liberation laid the foundations for human rights in Xizang.

Before its peaceful liberation in 1951, Xizang was one of the worst regions in the world for human rights violations. Serfs and slaves were afforded no human rights: no protection of life, no personal freedom, no property, and no freedom of thought. Theocratic feudal serfdom, imperialist invasion, and schemes and activities designed to enslave people and foment “Tibet independence” made the people’s right to subsistence insecure and their right to development impossible.

Feudal serfdom under theocracy trampled on human dignity and stifled social vitality. Serfs and slaves, who made up more than 95 percent of the total population, possessed nothing. They were forced to be dependent on serf owners, and would be required to unconditionally obey their orders and satisfy their demands. Serf owners could trade, transfer, bestow and exchange serfs and slaves as they pleased, and would impose excruciating acts on them, including gouging out eyes, cutting out tongues, and cutting off hands or feet. Serfs and slaves were controlled by serf owners in all aspects of their lives, from marriage to movement. They were burdened with heavy taxes and usurious loans, and forced into unpaid labor, and in spite of their year-round toil they would not be provided with sufficient food or clothing.

After the Opium Wars in the mid-19th century, the United Kingdom invaded Xizang on two occasions, posing a significant threat to China’s sovereignty and territorial integrity. This violated and damaged the rights of the local people, including their right to subsistence and their social and economic rights. Later, imperialist forces interfered in China’s internal affairs by concocting the idea of “Tibet independence” and propped up local separatist forces who defied the central government. The history of the region demonstrates clearly that “Tibet independence” is a product of imperialist aggression against China.

On May 23, 1951, in Beijing, the plenipotentiaries of the Central People’s Government and the local government of Xizang signed the Agreement of the Central People’s Government and the Local Government of Xizang on Measures

统一，是中国特色社会主义发展的必然结果。以西藏和平解放为起点，中国共产党团结带领西藏各族人民为争取人权、尊重人权、保障人权、发展人权不懈努力，西藏人民的生存权、发展权和其他各项基本权利保障不断向前推进。

——和平解放奠定西藏人权事业发展根基

1951年和平解放之前的旧西藏，是世界上侵犯人权最为严重的地区之一。广大农奴和奴隶生命安全得不到保障，没有人身自由、财产自由和思想自由，根本谈不上做人的权利。政教合一的封建农奴制以及帝国主义侵略、奴役西藏和煽动“西藏独立”的图谋与行径，使西藏人民的生存权得不到保障，发展权难以实现。

政教合一的封建农奴制粗暴践踏人的尊严，严重窒息社会生机和活力。占总人口95%以上的农奴和奴隶一无所有，只能依附于农奴主，无条件服从命令和要求。农奴主可以随意买卖、转让、赠与、交换农奴和奴隶，也可以对他们施加剜目、割舌、砍手、剃足等酷刑。农奴和奴隶的生死、婚姻、迁徙等都受到农奴主的控制，承受着沉重的赋税、劳役和高利贷盘剥，成年累月辛勤劳动，却连温饱也得不到保障。

近代以来，英国两次武装入侵西藏，严重破坏中国的主权和领土完整，践踏西藏人民的生存权，损害西藏人民的经济社会等各项权利。帝国主义势力一手炮制所谓“西藏独立”问题，干涉中国内政，扶植西藏地方分裂势力，对抗中央政府。历史证明，所谓“西藏独立”问题完全是帝国主义侵略中国的产物。

1951年5月23日，中央人民政府和当时的西藏地方政府全权代表在北京签订了《中央人民政府

for the Peaceful Liberation of Xizang, also referred to as the 17-Article Agreement. This agreement marked the peaceful liberation of the region, freeing Xizang from imperialist aggression and political and economic control. It effectively safeguarded the national sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of China, and created the necessary conditions for Xizang to progress and develop along with the rest of the country, laying firm foundations for the region's human rights cause in the process.

—Democratic reform enabled the people of all ethnic groups in Xizang to become masters of their own destinies.

After the peaceful liberation, the central government provided Xizang with a huge input of fiscal, material and human resources that helped to propel the region's economic, social and cultural development. However, local upper-class reactionary forces opposed any reform in the region, in an attempt to preserve serfdom and sustain their vested interests and privileges. These forces plotted a series of activities to split Xizang from China, in blatant violation of the 17-Article Agreement, and their actions ultimately led to a full-scale insurrection on March 10, 1959. To safeguard China's national unity and the fundamental interests of the people of Xizang, the Central People's Government, together with the local people, took decisive measures to quell the insurrection and implemented democratic reform in the region, effectively eradicating feudal serfdom.

Reform in Xizang resulted in the annulment of theocracy and the separation of religion and government—a fundamental change in Xizang's social system. The right of feudal serf owners to own the means of production was abolished, and private ownership by farmers and herdsman was established. Personal bondage of serfs and slaves to officials, nobles and upper-ranking monks was abolished, and they were instead awarded personal freedom and equal legal status. A general election was held across Xizang, in which agencies of state power and governments at various levels in the region were elected. For the first time, former serfs and slaves were no longer regarded as “talking tools”, but instead as the masters of their own destiny and of the new Xizang.

In September 1965, the Xizang Autonomous Region was founded, signifying a historic shift from theocratic feudal serfdom to socialism characterized by people's democracy. The region began to exercise comprehensive regional ethnic autonomy, and a large number of liberated serfs and slaves earned leading posts in agencies of state power at various levels of the region. This democratic reform was an epoch-making event shaping Xizang's social development and human rights cause and a significant advance in human civilization and global human rights.

—Reform and opening up has provided a powerful driving force for human rights development in Xizang.

Reform and opening up has helped not only unleash and

和西藏地方政府关于和平解放西藏办法的协议》（简称《十七条协议》），宣告西藏和平解放，使西藏摆脱了帝国主义势力的侵略及其政治、经济羁绊，有力维护了中国的国家主权、统一和领土完整，为西藏与全国一起实现共同进步和发展创造了基本前提，为西藏人权事业的发展奠定了坚实基础。

——民主改革实现西藏各族人民当家作主

和平解放后，中央对西藏投入大量财力、物力和人力支持，推动了西藏经济、社会、文化事业发展。然而，西藏反动上层为了维护农奴主阶级的既得利益和特权，根本反对改革，企图永远保持封建农奴制，蓄意破坏《十七条协议》，策划实施了一系列分裂祖国的活动，并于1959年3月10日发动全面武装叛乱，图谋把西藏从祖国分裂出去。为维护国家统一和西藏人民的根本利益，中央人民政府采取果断措施，与西藏人民一道坚决平息了叛乱，并进行了一场彻底摧毁封建农奴制度的民主改革运动。

民主改革废除了政教合一制度，实现了政教分离，西藏社会制度发生了根本性变化；废除了生产资料封建领主所有制，确立了农牧民个体所有制；废除了对“三大领主”的人身依附，农奴和奴隶获得人身自由和法律上的平等地位。随后西藏各地开展普选，选举产生了基层各级权力机关和政府，广大农奴和奴隶彻底改变了昔日“会说话的工具”的地位，第一次获得了当家作主的民主权利，成为新西藏的主人。1965年9月，西藏自治区成立，西藏实现从政教合一的封建农奴制转向人民民主的社会主义制度的历史性跨越，开始全面实施民族区域自治制度，大批翻身农奴和奴隶担任