



## INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

### China dismisses 5 officials in Tibet for “inadequate” COVID prevention work

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Five officials in Shigatse city in southwestern Tibet have been dismissed in connection with the ongoing COVID-19 outbreak in the region.

In an admission of a botched response to the COVID outbreak in Tibet, Chinese state media reported Aug. 12 that Chinese Communist Party cadres in Samdruptse (Chinese: Sanzhuzi), Kyirong (Jilong) and Drongpa (Zhongba) counties have been removed from their posts for “inadequate implementation of the novel coronavirus epidemic prevention and control work.”

Those counties have had COVID cases in the past few days and have been designated as either high-risk or medium-risk areas.

### State media report translation

Below is an English translation of the state media report.

***Five people including the deputy director of the Shigatse Municipal Health Commission in Tibet were dismissed***

Source: CCTV

*CCTV News: CCTV news: According to the WeChat public account of the "Shigatse News Center", five leading cadres were dismissed due to the inadequate implementation of the COVID-19 epidemic prevention and control work. They are Deng Ke, Secretary of the Party Group and Deputy Director of the Health Committee of Shigatse City, Tibet, Bhutse (Chinese: Puci), Deputy Secretary and Director of the Party Group of the Health Committee, Bhuchung (Puqiong), Deputy Secretary and District Chief of Samdruptse (Sanzhuzi) District Committee, Bhuchung, Member of the Party Leadership Group and Deputy County Chief of Kyirong (Jilong) County Government, and Pedron (Bai Zhen), Member of the Party Leadership Group and Deputy County Chief of Drongpa (Zhongba) County Government.*

*In order to consolidate the territorial responsibility for epidemic prevention and control, and further increase the efforts of epidemic prevention and control, after research and decision by the Tibet Autonomous Region Party Committee, Ge Qingmin, Deputy Secretary of the Municipal Party Committee, Secretary of the Political and Legal Committee, and Secretary of the Party Committee of the Municipal Public Security Bureau, concurrently serves as the Secretary of the Samdruptse District Party Committee. Nominated Pasang Wangdu (Basang Wangdui) as the candidate for the mayor of Samdruptse District; after research and decision by the Shigatse Municipal Party Committee, Chen Gang, member of the Standing Committee of the Municipal Party Committee and Secretary-General, concurrently served as Party Secretary and Deputy Director of the Municipal Health and Health Committee, and Pasang Phendo (Basang Pianduo) was nominated as the director of the Municipal Health and Health Committee. Nominate Dhekyi (Deji) as the candidate for the executive deputy mayor of Samdruptse District.*

## COVID in Tibet

According to state media, since four positive COVID cases in the western Tibetan town of Purang (Pulan) county in Ngari (Ali) on Aug. 6, more cases have been detected so far in Shigatse, Nyingtri (Linzhi), Lhoka (Shannan) and Tibet's capital of Lhasa.

Authorities placed the entire population of 800,000 in Shigatse under a three-day complete lockdown. Authorities have also imposed partial lockdowns in Lhasa, Nyingtri and Lhoka. As of Aug. 11, there were more than 25 positive cases.

## Tibetans' frustrations

While authorities required the public to undergo mandatory mass COVID testing in the wake of the outbreak, there were not enough venues and facilities for testing. As a result, people complained of having to waste time standing in long lines for the mandatory tests.

One post on Chinese social media on Aug. 9 reflected the situation at a testing site, saying: "It was chaotic and disorderly. Some Tibetans really like to cut the queue, and there was a Han woman who also cut the queue. . . My feeling of anger even cured my altitude sickness. Nucleic acid personnel are very irregular, gloves are not sterilized, and they touch everyone's lips. . . Then hand-copy the ID number for registration." A video clip shared on Twitter shows a long queue of Tibetans in Lhasa waiting for administration of the mandatory testing on the morning of Aug. 8.

Some on social media have also pointed the finger at Chinese tourists as the possible cause of the outbreak in Tibet. Although China almost never allows journalists, diplomats and tourists from other countries to visit Tibet, it has encouraged Chinese tourists to travel to the region as part of Beijing's intensifying campaign to assimilate Tibet into Chinese society.



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