



INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

Drinking death of provincial Tibetan leader raises concerns about behavior of CCP cadres

<http://www.savetibet.org/drinking-death-of-provincial-tibetan-leader-raises-concerns-about-behavior-of-ccp-cadres>

May 5, 2023

The revelation of a senior provincial Tibetan leader's death due to excess drinking during a Chinese Communist Party-organized event in Qinghai has raised Chinese public concern about discipline and morality among the cadres. Talking about the incident, one commentator posted on Chinese social media, "It is like a mirror, clearly reflecting the current ecology of the CCP's officialdom."

The incident happened in December 2022 but was not made public until an official notice in February 2023, that too only mentioning the death of a prefectural leader in Qinghai without any reference to the cause of his death. On Feb. 9, 2023, the Standing Committee of the Tsojang (Chinese: Haibei) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture's People's Congress in Qinghai issued a cryptic announcement (No. 7) saying, "Dorjee (Duo Jie), a deputy to the 15th People's Congress of Tsojang Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture elected by Menyuan County, passed away." Dorjee was not only a deputy of the prefectural People's Congress, but more importantly, the Party Secretary of Tsojang prefecture and a member of the Qinghai Provincial Party Committee.

News from the prefecture in early 2023 only mentioned an acting head of the prefectural government, Shawo Kyab (Xia Wujie), another Tibetan, who was appointed in March 2023 as the Party Secretary replacing Dorjee.

However, the unusual nature of Dorjee's death came to light only after the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection, China's top disciplinary watchdog, issued a statement on April 27, 2023 saying it had investigated an incident that took place on Dec. 11, 2022 and was expelling Shi Cunwu, Qinghai Party Secretary-General, from the party and removing the other four provincial leaders from their positions.

Incident

The incident happened when leading Qinghai officials were brought together for a training course on studying and implementing the 20th Party Congress. On the evening of Dec. 11, 2022, Shi had arranged for a drinking session with five of his colleagues, including Dorjee, in the student dormitory of the Provincial Party School.

In addition to Shi and Dorjee, the others who were at the drinking session were Li Qingchuan, Director of the Provincial Department of Agriculture and Rural Affairs; Wang Xuewen, Director of the Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism; Hong Tao, Director of the Provincial State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission; and Tao Yongli, Chairman of the Provincial Communications Holding Group Co., Ltd. Shi commanded the Party School's canteen to provide food, while Li was the one who brought the liquor. The commission's statement said, "6 people drank 7 bottles of liquor that night," adding, "The next day, Shi Cunwu was absent from relevant provincial

meetings due to drunkenness, and a cadre was found dead in the student dormitory,” without identifying that the deceased was Dorjee.

Shi and others were given varying degrees of punishment for violating the Eight Point Regulations announced in 2012 that called for austerity and discipline by party members. The commission’s statement, however, did not mention any punishment being meted out to Dorjee, leading people to conclude that he was the one who died. Multiple other social media reports subsequently identified Dorjee as the victim.

Study sessions

State media reported that the training course began on Dec. 9, 2022, and participants were party and government officials at the provincial and county levels, members of the leadership team of provincial universities and provincial-run enterprises, etc. Such study sessions were part of the overall push directly made by Chinese President Xi Jinping.

During the first group study session of the Political Bureau of the 20th CCP Central Committee on Oct. 25, 2022, state media reported that Xi pointed out that “to study, publicize, and implement the spirit of the Party’s 20th National Congress is a top political task for the entire Party and the whole country at present and for some time to come. The Political Bureau of the [Communist Party of China] Central Committee should take the lead and set an example in this regard and endeavor to make the spirit of the congress deeply and widely understood and grasped by officials and the general public.” That was followed by provincial-level study sessions, of which the one in Qinghai was one.

Ironically, a report on the study in Qinghai Daily, a state media outlet, on Dec. 10, 2022 in fact had a subheading that said, “Strive to create new achievements that are worthy of the Party and the people and worthy of the times.”

Drinking deaths

Even after the 2012 regulations, over the years excessive drinking by officials have been reported despite the clampdown on information flow. In July 2014, Shao Junde, the former director of the Construction Bureau of Wen’an County, Langfang City, in Hebei Province died following excessive drinking with some party colleagues. The subsequent commission report on the incident said, “The root cause is still ideological slippage.”

In April 2015, a female party official in Yongzhou city of Hunan Province died due to excessive drinking during an extravagant official dinner. The mayor and other officials were reprimanded.

In 2014, state media outlet People’s Daily reposted an opinion from the China Jiangsu Network with this headline: “When will the sudden death of an official overdrinking end?”

One report in February 2017 said that since the 18th National Congress in 2012, at least 21 officials had died abnormally after drinking illegally.

About Dorjee

Dorjee was born in May 1966 in Tsoshar (Haidong) prefecture. A look at his career history indicates that he began in 1986 as a researcher, moving on to the party’s cadre training department, where he spent the majority of his time. In March 2021, he was promoted to a deputy secretary of the Tsojang prefecture, becoming the head of the prefectural government in April 2021. He was made the prefectural Party Secretary in August 2022.

Some commentators are also opining that Dorjee’s family may have the legal right to seek compensation as he lost his life during an official training. A posting on the popular Chinese language website www.163.com on May 2, 2023 even said Dorjee’s family could legally seek compensation as the “death caused by drinking alcohol during training and study counted as a work-related death.” The writer referred to Dorjee as “a dignified high-ranking official” whose “death caused great harm to his family” and concluded, “I think Dorje's family members can apply for industrial injury compensation, and they can also claim compensation from other people who drank at the same table.”

Following the death of a party official in 2014, the Commission said in a statement: “The occurrence of this case revealed that there are still some problems that cannot be ignored in the work style construction of a small number of localities and some party members and cadres.” The latest death of a high-ranking Tibetan party official in Qinghai makes it clear that the situation has not changed much since then.



International Campaign for Tibet (ICT) | 1825 Jefferson Place NW | Washington, DC 20036 | United States of America
Phone: (202) 785-1515 | Fax: (202) 785-4343 | info@savetibet.org

ICT Europe
Funenpark 1D | 1018 AK
Amsterdam, The Netherlands
Phone: +31 (0)20 3308265
Fax: +31 (0)20 3308266
icteurope@savetibet.nl

ICT Deutschland e.V.
Schönhauser Allee 163 | 10435
Berlin, Germany
Phone: +49 (0)30 27879086
Fax: +49 (0)30 27879087
info@savetibet.de

ICT Brussels
11, rue de la linière | 1060
Brussels, Belgium
Phone: +32 (0)2 609 44 10
Fax: +32 (0)2 609 44 32
info@savetibet.eu