



## INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

### China rolls out new leaders in Lhasa - indicate continued clampdown in Tibet

<https://savetibet.org/china-rolls-out-new-leaders-in-lhasa-indicate-continued-clampdown-in-tibet>

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During the just concluded annual meetings of the People's Congress and the Political Consultative Conference, popularly called the "Two Sessions" (Chinese: Lianghui), of the Tibet Autonomous Region, the Chinese authorities announced the "election" of new leaders for the TAR government and the People's Congress while vowing to strengthen work "[for closer unity around the Party Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping](#) as the core" in the coming years.

This year's TAR Political Consultative Conference was held between January 18 and 21, 2025 while the People's Congress was held between January 19 and 22.

Chinese state media announced on January 23, 2025 that Karma Tseten has been elected on January 22 by the TAR PC as the new chairman of the TAR government and that Yan Jinhai as the chairman of the TAR People's Congress replacing Lobsang Gyaltsen. Given the course of promotion of Yan Jinhai last year, their selection this time was an expected one. Unlike the 10th Panchen Lama or Bapa Phuntsok Wangyal, who stood up for the rights of the Tibetan people even while working for the Chinese system, both Yan Jinhai and Karma Tseten have no such records in the positions they have held to date. Therefore, their assumption of the respective offices will not have any positive impact on the lives of the Tibetan people. Meanwhile, Lobsang Gyaltsen will continue his position as a vice chair of the National People's Congress in Beijing, making him the seniormost Tibetan leader at the national level of PRC.

However, there is no mention of a new chairman for the TAR Political Consultative Conference even though the octogenarian Phakpalha Gelek Namgyal, who continues to be the Chairman, was absent from this year's session. The customary report of the PCC Chairman was read at its inaugural session by Meng Xiaolin, one of the vice chairmen, and the session itself was presided over by another vice chairman Dorje Tsedrup. There were unconfirmed reports that Phapalha, who is the longest serving Tibetan official in the Chinese Communist regime, has been ill for some time.

Sonam Nyima, who was appointed head of the TAR United Front Work Department, was made one of the vice chairmen of the TAR PCC during its recent session. He is from Nangchen area of Kham in Eastern Tibet and was appointed to the United Front in 2024.

The Chinese authorities' intention to strengthen the clamp down on party cadres who are seen not fully supporting Xi Jinping's objectives, the TAR PC selected Jiang Wenpeng as the director of the Supervisory Committee. This position was earlier [held by Wang Weidong](#).

Jiang has worked in the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection for many years and was posted to Lhasa in October 2024 as a member of the TAR Party Committee and Secretary of the Discipline Inspection Commission. When referring to his posting in Lhasa in October 2024, a Chinese news outlet called him a "tiger hunting" cadre indicating that he has a record of investigating senior officials.

## Che Dralha is being investigated

Whether coincidence or not, Jiang's appointment to his new supervisory role in Lhasa came on the same day as the [Chinese state media](#) announcement that a senior Tibetan official, Che Dralha (Qi Zhala) was being subjected to investigation as he is "suspected of serious violations of discipline and laws." This is the usual vague charge that China levels against everyone subjected to such investigations. He is from Gyalthang in present-day Yunnan province and had also been posted as chairman of the TAR government. His then colleague in Lhasa, Wu Yingjie, was [similarly investigated in 2024](#) and subsequently expelled from the party in December 2024. ICT had in our [report on Wu Yingjie in July 2024](#) had opined that given his work connections with Che Dralha and also because the two of them were unexpectedly removed from their Lhasa positions, "It may be the case that Wu and Che Dralha were already being scrutinized by the Party."

This year's Two Sessions was yet another platform for the officials to rally the loyalty of the cadres and the public to Xi Jinping. In [its resolution, the TAR PCC](#) called on all its "members to unite more closely around the Party Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping as the core."



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