

Larung Gar demolitions and evictions recommence

[17 February 2017] Following a short winter break, Chinese authorities have recommenced demolitions and forced evictions at the Larung Gar Buddhist Institute in eastern Tibet. Those evicted have been forced to sign pledges never to return and are subject to political re-education classes. In addition, local authorities have introduced new restrictions for those wishing to study at the Institute.

Demolition of Larung Gar recommences

The destruction of Larung Gar stopped temporarily at the beginning of January due to the onset of winter conditions (picture right, from RFA taken in December). Initially, it was expected the work teams would return in April in order to complete the demolitions and evictions by September, as set out in the original government order. However, according to Radio Free Asia, Chinese officials have decided to expedite the work and have set a new completion date of 30 March. Demolitions were expected to recommence on 10 February.

Demolition work and forced evictions at Larung Gar began on 20 July 2016, following a government order to reduce the resident population to 5,000 persons by September 2017. Officially, the population of Larung Gar was said to be 10,000, however unofficial estimates believe the population to be considerably higher.

It is unclear exactly how many monks and nuns have been forced to leave so far as the Chinese authorities have not provided any official information. In mid-December, a Radio Free Asia source estimated 9,000 people had already been forcibly expelled from Larung Gar.

Evictees forced to pledge never to return

Evicted monks and nuns are being forced to sign documents vowing to never return to Larung Gar. According to Radio Free Asia, the documents also contain pledges to "uphold the unity of the nation" and not to engage in behaviour opposing government policy in the area.

Many of those evicted are also subject to political re-education classes upon their return home. Such classes usually involve pledging allegiance to the Chinese Communist Party and denouncing the Dalai Lama.

New entry restrictions introduced

Chinese officials have introduced new restrictions on those wishing to study at Larung Gar. Students must now complete a political exam and obtain approval from the local authorities.

According to Radio Free Asia, individuals "wanting to study Tibetan Buddhism [at Larung Gar] must now pass a "political examination" administered by the police." If passed, a permit can then be applied for from the Serthar county government. However, it is believed only monks and nuns from the local area will be considered for entry.

Further reading: Radio Free Asia - 23 Jan | 9 Dec | 4 Nov | 31 Oct

Tibet Post - 4 Nov

Previous Tibet Society reports on Larung Gar

[China expelling half the population \(10 Aug 2016\)](#)

[Three nuns commit suicide \(6 Sept 2016\)](#)

[Nuns told to leave or face ban \(11 Oct 2016\)](#)

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