

# Local Industry Advances in Tibet

by Cheng Wen

**T**IBET on the "roof of the world" has made rapid advances in industry since liberation, particularly since the beginning of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution.

The Tibet Autonomous Region now produces coal, electricity, machines, chemicals, building materials, paper, textiles, leather, matches, soap and several dozen other products. About 100 medium and small hydroelectric power stations are in operation and some others are under construction. Lhasa, Shigatse, Nagchuka, Loka and Chamdo have their own plants to make and repair farm machines. Supplied with an increasing number of pumps, machines to process agricultural produce and transport equipment, Tibet's agriculture and animal husbandry have forged ahead in the past few years.

Industry was non-existent in Tibet before liberation, when it was under the reactionary rule of the serf system. Even a match, a simple pick or a screw had to be sent in. There were only a small number of blacksmiths doing simple repairing of farm tools. Farming was done by the primitive slash-and-burn method.

Under the leadership of Chairman Mao and the Communist Party of China, the emancipated serfs of Tibet, as masters of the new society, participated in socialist industrial and agricultural production with revolutionary ardour. Given help by various provinces and municipalities, the autonomous region had by 1964 set up 67 medium and small plants including farm tool and cement plants, tanneries, lumber mills and motor vehicle repair shops, laying a preliminary foundation for Tibet's industry.

Progress, however, was thwarted by the counter-revolutionary revisionist line pushed by the renegade, hidden traitor and scab Liu Shao-chi and his agents in Tibet. They opposed the revolutionary spirit of self-reliance and hard struggle in developing industry, and they closed down many plants and mines on the pretext that Tibet was "special" and "backward."

The people of various nationalities in Tibet have studied Mao Tsetung Thought in earnest since the beginning of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. They hit hard at Liu Shao-chi's counter-revolutionary revisionist trash and widely propagated Chairman Mao's proletarian revolutionary line on running enter-

prises. Tibet's local industry began to develop rapidly once again. The plants and mines opened in the past four years are many more than all set up in the previous 15 years.

In the winter of 1966 a number of workers of Han nationality and herdsmen of Tibetan nationality, carrying *Selected Works of Mao Tsetung*, braved wind and snow to climb a mountain over 5,000 metres above sea level in order to start the Machala Coal-mine. The evening they arrived, they lit a bonfire and sat around it to study Chairman Mao's "three constantly read articles" and his teachings on self-reliance and hard struggle. This gave them tremendous strength. Early the next morning they started to work. They felled trees for timber and used chisels instead of pneumatic drills. The miners devised safe methods for drilling blast holes and setting off explosives. This raised efficiency greatly. Overcoming one difficulty after another, they built the world's highest coal-mine.

A small carpenter and smith shop succeeded in producing three kinds of equipment for hydroelectric power stations and its success became a popular story among the people. The shop has some 20 workers most of whom are Tibetans. With three ordinary lathes it formerly produced only simple farm tools. To help develop hydroelectric power generating equipment, the workers trial-produced generators, motors and water turbines. A technical innovations group composed of veteran workers, technicians and leading cadres was formed. Unacquainted with the skill, the group boldly made repeated experiments while sending personnel to learn from other enterprises. In processing the castings they renovated a lathe so as to be able to cut parts of big diameter. Thus they produced generators, motors and water turbines and put them into serial production.

With the vigorous progress in local industry the first generation of Tibetan workers has increased to tens of thousands. A large number of activists in the living study and application of Mao Tsetung Thought have come forward and many outstanding workers of Tibetan nationality tempered in the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution have become leading members of revolutionary committees at all levels. The Tibetan workers have become a vigorous force in the socialist revolution and socialist construction in the autonomous region.