



The 8th Press Conference on Xinjiang-Related Issues





On April 29, 2020, the Information Office of the People's Government of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region held the 8th press conference on Xinjiang-related issues. The press conference invited Spokesperson of the Information Office of the People's Government of XUAR Elijan Anayit, Director of the Xinjiang Islamic Institute and President of the Xinjiang Islamic Association Abdurekhip Tumniyaz, Director of the Ethnic Affairs Commission of XUAR Mehmud Usman, Deputy Director of the Public Security Department of XUAR Yalkun Yakufu, Director of the Ethnic and Religious Affairs Bureau of Kashgar Prefecture Abudulimit Yusyun, to answer questions from the press.

Moderator: Dear friends from the press, good morning. Welcome to the 8th press conference on Xinjiang-related issues. The invitees of today's press conference are the Spokesperson of the Information Office of the People's Government of XUAR Elijan Anayit, Director of the Xinjiang Islamic Institute and President of the Xinjiang Islamic Association Abdurekhip Tumniyaz, Director of the Ethnic Affairs Commission of XUAR Mehmet Usman, Deputy Director of the Public Security Department of XUAR Yalkun Yakufu, Director of the Ethnic and Religious Affairs Bureau of Kashgar Prefecture Abudulimit Yusyun. They will answer questions from you.

Now the floor is open for questions. Please identify your media outlet before asking questions.



Reporter
from Xinhua News
Agency:

Ethnic unity is the lifeline of all ethnic groups. What has Xinjiang done to promote ethnic solidarity and what results have been achieved?

Moderator: This question goes to Mr. Mehmet Usman.



Xinjiang fully implements the ethnic policies of China and upholds ethnic equality. United and working together for common development and prosperity, all ethnic groups in Xinjiang have been committed to the Family of Ethnic Unity program and other campaigns for advancing ethnic solidarity and progress, earnestly promoting all ethnic groups to live in harmony, work together with one heart and develop harmoniously.

First, we have upheld ethnic equality and shared the benefits of reform and opening-up. Throughout Xinjiang, all ethnic groups, regardless of their population, development and religious belief, are equal and entitled to all legal rights, including participating in management of national affairs, the freedom of religious belief, receiving education, using their ethnic spoken and written languages, carrying on their traditional ethnic cultures. We insist that all ethnic groups equally enjoy the economic and social development achievements,

earmarking 70% of the general annual fiscal revenue for guaranteeing and improving the people's livelihood through an array of projects for benefiting people in employment, culture, education and medical care. On the employment front, a dynamic mechanism has been put in place to ensure at least one member of zero-employment families employed. On the education front, we have been pushing for integrative development of rural-urban education and the enrollment rate of school-age children for compulsory education has reached 99.9%. On top of the universal nine-year compulsory education regionwide, all students in southern Xinjiang enjoy extended free education: the three-year preschool education plus 12-year elementary education. Regarding health and medical care, yearly free physical examination has been provided to all residents in Xinjiang, and the participation rates of basic medical insurance, old-age pension and major illness insurance for impoverished people have all reached 100%. From 2014 to end of 2019, Xinjiang lifted a total of 2.9232 million people in 737,000 households out of poverty, and the poverty headcount ratio dropped from 19.4% in 2014 to 1.24%. By 2020, all the poverty-stricken rural population will be lifted out of poverty by current standards so as to build a moderately prosperous society in all respects.

Second, continuous efforts have been made to deepen programs for ethnic unity and solidarity. Since 2016, people of all ethnic groups in Xinjiang have carried out extensive activities to promote solidarity among various ethnic groups such as the campaign of "Family of Ethnic Unity," in which more than 1.1 million officials have paired up with over 1.6 million families of different ethnic groups as friends and "relatives" to actively guide the people to change outdated ideas, broaden ways to increase income, and to help them solve difficulties in seeing doctors, employment, schooling and other aspects of life and work. Over the past three years, the paired-up officials have donated more than 987 million yuan and over 51.12 million items to their "relatives," and done more than 18.77 million practical and good deeds for them, winning wide recognition of the people of all ethnic groups. Many of the people expressed that "Since we paired up with good 'relatives' like these officials, we have got someone to help us when we have difficulties and to listen to our minds. We are just like one family. We need such relatives."

However, some overseas media blatantly slandered and attacked Xinjiang's campaign of "Family of Ethnic Unity" as "targeting at monitoring the Uyghur people," "asking ethnic Han men to sleep with local women in the same room." This is sheer nonsense, and fully reveals the despicable and gloomy psychology of these media outlets. Here, I would like to share two stories with you. Please watch the video.

Third, a wide range of activities have been carried out to promote ethnic unity



在这个坐到了宽敞明亮的教室里面上学
Seeing her study in the bright classroom



不愁吃不愁穿 能挣钱 有技能 有车有房
adequate clothes and food. With the skills,



我把他当自己的孩子给他做了被子
And I have made quilts for him like he is my own son.



黄妈妈去机场接我 我很开心
Mother Huang greeted me



(通过) 联系基金会 在网上筹款等方式
she contacted foundations and raised funds online.

and progress. We have included advancement of ethnic unity and progress into overall arrangement and implementation of socio-economic development plan, and the task of heightening public awareness of ethnic solidarity and progress into the whole process of educating the nationals, the officials and the society. Consistent efforts have been made in ethnic unity education and promotion activities in government agencies, villages, communities, schools, enterprises, military camps, regiment farms and at religious venues. All these aim to make the awareness of ethnic unity and progress as well as the concept of

a community of shared future for the Chinese nation take root in all trades and fields, and enhance close ethnic unity and solidarity. So far, nine prefectures and cities in Xinjiang have been named by the National Ethnic Affairs Commission as “national model prefectures (cities) for ethnic unity and progress,” 59 units and 14 bases have been named as “national model units and educational bases for ethnic unity and progress.” Through the promotion endeavors, we have enhanced contacts, exchanges and interactions among different ethnic groups and strengthened their bonds. People from all walks of life, including officials, workers, farmers, soldiers, students and community residents, have all started from their own words and deeds to attentively cherish and pass on the value of ethnic unity and the philosophy that the Chinese nation is of one family. Next, please watch a video about the ethnic unity promotion activities of Guyuan Alley Community in Urumqi.

Moderator: Thank you, Mr. Mehmet Usman, for your answer. Next question, please.



几年来两人已亲如母女
A few years on, they are now like mother and daughter.



最美的还是我们新疆
but the most beautiful one is our Xinjiang



**Reporter from
People’s Daily:**

What concrete measures has Xinjiang taken in terms of cultivating and employing ethnic minority officials? Some overseas media claim that “ethnic minority officials are marginalized in Xinjiang.” Is it true?

Moderator: This question goes to Elijan Anayit.



China has always attached great importance to selecting, cultivating and employing ethnic minority officials and professionals. Since the establishment of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, we

have cultivated a large number of excellent officials from ethnic minority groups through training, study, grass-root practice, exchange programs between different places, position swap and other forms, thus providing strong intellectual support for the regional economic and social development. Since 1954, the central government has specially launched training sessions for Xinjiang-native ethnic minority officials, which have already trained 4,635 officials at or above county-head/division-chief level. Among them, 2,771 are ethnic minorities, accounting for 60% of the total. Since 1992, the central government has also launched a special program on cultivating key science and technology talents of ethnic minorities in Xinjiang. As of 2019, the program had trained a total of more than 5,900 medium-to-high level ethnic minority technology professionals urgently needed in the region. In recent years, Xinjiang selected and sent 1,483 officials in 29 batches for secondment in national institutions at all levels and relatively developed areas. Among them, 758 are ethnic minority officials, accounting for 51.1%.

Statistics by the end of 2019 shows that Xinjiang has a total of 427,000 ethnic minority officials who play important roles in administration, economy, education, science and technology, public health, culture and other fields. At present, the governor of Xinjiang, heads of ethnic autonomous prefectures and heads of ethnic autonomous counties are all served by citizens from the ethnic group exercising the autonomy in the area concerned. The vast majority of commissioners of prefectural administrative offices, mayors, county heads and district heads are served by ethnic minority officials, too. A number of ethnic minority officials also work as the Party secretary of CPC organizations at all levels in the region. Moreover, a group of ethnic minority officials hold leading positions in the central and state organs. Ethnic minorities take up 64.2% of the total number of deputies to the 13th Xinjiang Regional People's Congress, and 46.7% of the 13th CPPCC (Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference) Xinjiang Committee. The so-called allegation that "ethnic minority officials are marginalized in Xinjiang" is all calumny and slander with ulterior motives.

Moderator: Thank you, Mr. Elijan Anayit, for your answer. Next question, please.



**Reporter from
CGTN:**

What work has Xinjiang done in respecting and protecting the customs of all ethnic groups? Some overseas media claim that Xinjiang “forbids ethnic minorities to wear their ethnic costume, compels them to celebrate the Spring Festival, and forces removal of all ‘Muslim’ signs.” Is it true?

Moderator: This question goes to Mr. Abudulimit Yusyun.



The *Constitution of the People’s Republic of China* and the *Law on Regional Ethnic Autonomy* both prescribe that all ethnic groups have the freedom to maintain or reform their customs and habits. Xinjiang strictly follows the constitutional and legal provisions and fully protects the dietary, celebration, wedding and funeral rituals, and other customs of all ethnic groups. In order to ensure the special food supply for ethnic minorities, especially that for Muslim minorities, we have taken a series of measures, such as requiring all big and medium sized cities as well as small towns where there are Muslim people to maintain certain numbers of Muslim restaurants, building Muslim canteens or restaurants on main roads and in organizations that have ethnic minority employees, supplying Muslim people with beef and lamb that are butchered and processed according to Muslim habits, and stored, transported and sold separately. As all ethnic groups have their own traditional festivals, they can also enjoy legal holidays and special festive food supply on their festivals such as Corban Festival and Id al-Fitr. Among ethnic minorities who have the habit of burial, the government does not promote cremation, instead it takes specific measures to protect their habit, such as allocating special land for cemeteries. The government also has no restrictions on ethnic customs of wedding and funeral ceremonies, circumcision and giving Islamic names.

The allegations that Xinjiang “forbids ethnic minorities to wear their ethnic costume, forces them to

celebrate the Spring Festival, and forces removal of all ‘Muslim’ signs” are ridiculous, and are intended to destroy solidarity and create estrangement and misunderstanding among different ethnic groups. In Xinjiang, everyone has the right to freely choose their clothing without any interference from outside. You can see people of all ethnic groups wearing colorful ethnic costumes singing, dancing or strolling everywhere. The Spring Festival is a traditional festival of the Chinese nation, and all ethnic groups in Xinjiang are members of the big family of the Chinese nation, so it is only natural that we celebrate the festival together, which is also the common wish of the ethnic minority groups in Xinjiang. On the Spring Festival, all ethnic groups in the region paste the Spring Festival couplets, make dumplings and set off fireworks with overflowing joy. How come the claim of forcing the people? We have taken active steps to regulate the Muslim food production and operation. All restaurants that meet the Muslim food management regulations hang “Muslim food” signs. There is no such thing as “forcing removal of all ‘Muslim’ signs.” Anyone who has visited Xinjiang knows that Muslim restaurants can be seen everywhere in the streets. Next, please watch a video.

Moderator: Thank you, Mr. Abudulimit Yusyun, for your answer. Next question, please.





我们的生活更加富裕更加幸福
we will live a more prosperous and happier life.



Yulong Kashi Town, Hotan City
Aynur abudurexit

今天的联欢会真的太精彩了
Today's get-together was wonderful.



春节是我们中华民族的传统节日
The Spring Festival is a traditional festival for our Chinese.



Laskui Town, Hotan City
Aili Maituson

大家新年快乐 万事如意
I wish everyone all the best for a happy new year.



**Reporter
from Global Times:**

What measures has Xinjiang taken to ensure various ethnic groups' rights of using and developing their own languages? It has been heard that the purpose of promoting learning and using standard Chinese is to assimilate ethnic minorities. What is your comment on this?

Moderator: This question goes to Mr. Mehmet Usman.



It is prescribed in the Chinese *Constitution* and the *Law of the People's Republic of China on the Standard Spoken and Written Chinese Language* that Chinese citizens have the right to learn and use standard spoken and written Chinese language, and the country should provide conditions to facilitate learning and using the standard Chinese language while fully protecting ethnic minorities' rights to use and develop their own languages.

Currently, ethnic minority languages are extensively used in education, judicature, administration and social public affairs in Xinjiang. For example, there are ethnic minority language subjects in primary and middle schools to teach Uygur, Kazak, Kirgiz, Mogolian and Xibe languages.

Multi-language signs and texts can be seen everywhere in Xinjiang, such as in business signboards, postal and telecommunication service, medical and health care institutions, public traffic signs, etc.

When governmental organs at all levels perform official duties, both standard spoken and written Chinese language and the spoken and written languages of the ethnic group who exercises ethnic autonomy in the area concerned are used at the same time.

Xinjiang People's Broadcasting Station offers 12 frequencies of radio programs in five languages, namely Uygur, Chinese, Kazak, Mongolian and Kirgiz. Xinjiang TV Station offers programs in 12 channels, respectively in Uygur, Chinese, Kazak and Kirgiz languages. All of these provide great convenience for the production, life, work and study of various ethnic groups in Xinjiang.

We've noticed that some American and Western

politicians and media outlets smeared Xinjiang, saying that promotion and use of standard Chinese language is to dilute the local ethnic minorities' national awareness. This is absolute nonsense. It may well be asked, there are many people around the world learning Chinese, English or other foreign languages, and have they forgotten their own mother tongues and cultures? Next, please watch a video.

Moderator: Thank you, Mr. Mehmut Usman, for your answer. Next question, please.



**Reporter
from China News
Service:**

What are the measures of protecting and developing excellent traditional cultures of ethnic minorities in Xinjiang in the process of Chinese culture promotion? Are there situations of assimilation or alienation of ethnic minority cultures?

Moderator: This question goes to Mr. Abudulimit Yusyun.



The various ethnic groups of China have created a long history and a splendid culture together. Various ethnic cultures of Xinjiang, with their roots in the fertile soil of the Chinese civilization, have not only advanced their own cultural development but also enriched the overall culture of China. Since the founding of the People's Republic of China, various ethnic groups in Xinjiang have appreciated, influenced,

absorbed and integrated with each other, and thrived together in language, cuisine, costume, music, dance, painting, architecture and other aspects of social life, culture and art. Xinjiang is often praised as the hometown of songs and dances; and its people are good at singing and dancing with deep affection for their hometown, people and great motherland in their blood. “Our Motherland Is a Garden,” “Xinjiang Is a Wonderful Place” and other Xinjiang classic songs are sung around China; “Visitors on the Icy Mountain,” “Uncle Kurban Visits Beijing” and other quality films produced in the region have become widely known and regarded as the spiritual treasure created and shared by all ethnic groups.

While promoting and carrying forward the Chinese culture, we have always attached great importance to the protection and development of traditions and cultures of ethnic minorities.

Firstly, culture heritages of various ethnic groups have been protected. A group of famous architectures and historical culture heritages of Uygur, Mongolian, Hui and Xibe, such as the Apak Khoja Mazar (mausoleum) in Kashgar City, Tughluq Temur Khan Mazar in Huocheng County, Lama Temple in Zhaosu County, Mongolian Lord Mansion in Hejing County, Tohlak Manor in Qiemo County, etc., have all been given prompt and proper repair and protection. Uygur Muqam and Kirgiz epic *Manas* have been included in the “UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity” and “List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding.”

Secondly, the folk traditions and cultures have been preserved. Traditional ethnic cultural events, such as the Uygur Meshrep, the Kazak Aytes, the Kirgiz Komuz Ballad Singing Fair, the Mongolian Nadam Fair, the Xibe Westward Migration Festival, and the Han people’s Lantern Festival, have all been widely held. A number of excellent dramas reflecting the great changes of the times with rich ethnic and regional characteristics have been staged, such as the Uygur play “Gherip and Senem,” the Kazak “Aytes,” Kirgiz *Manaschi* ballad singing “*Manas*,” etc.

Thirdly, traditional sports of various ethnic groups have been developed. We have resumed 280 traditional ethnic sports games in Xinjiang. Ethnic sports games in various forms are held across the region in slack farming season. During ethnic minorities’ traditional festivals, traditional sports games and performances with strong ethnic features are also held, such as wrestling, swinging, goat-snatching, horse racing, and dawaz (tightrope walking), etc. The people will all participate in the events for competitions and exchanges regardless of their ethnic backgrounds.

Numerous facts have proved that the brilliant Chinese culture is created by all ethnic groups of China. Cultures of various ethnic groups in Xinjiang are well preserved,

protected and promoted in the big garden of Chinese culture. There is no such thing as the so-called assimilation or alienation of ethnic minorities' traditional cultures in Xinjiang.

Moderator: Thank you, Mr. Abudulimit Yusyun. Next question, please.



Reporter

from Xinjiang Daily:

Respecting and protecting freedom of religious belief is a basic policy of the Chinese government. What has the government done to protect the citizens' right to freedom of religious belief?

Moderator: This question goes to Mr. Elijan Anayit.



According to the *Constitution of the People's Republic of China*, "Citizens of the People's Republic of China enjoy freedom of religious belief," "The state protects normal religious activities," and "No state organ, public organization or individual may compel citizens to believe or not believe in any religion; nor may they discriminate against citizens who believe or don't believe in any religion." These stipulations serve as the legal basis for protecting citizens' rights to freedom of religious belief, administering religious affairs in accordance with the law, and building a positive and healthy religious relationship. Xinjiang has also made local regulations on religious affairs to protect freedom of religious belief of all ethnic groups. In Xinjiang, all citizens enjoy equal political, economic, social and cultural rights. It is totally up to the citizens themselves to choose to believe or not believe in any religion. All normal religious activities including attending religious services, fasting and celebrating religious festivals that the believers conduct at religious venues or at home in accordance with customary religious practices are protected by law, independently managed by religious groups and the believers themselves with no interference from any organization or individual.

Xinjiang now has more than 24,000 mosques with 29,000 Islamic clergies, one mosque for every 500

Muslims, thus effectively meeting normal religious demand of the Muslim people. Religious classics and books have been translated and published, including the *Koran* and *Irshad al-Sari li Sharh Sahih al-Bukhari*, in Chinese, Uygur, Kazak and Kirgiz languages. Channels for believers to gain religious knowledge have been expanded. We have established the Xinjiang Islamic Institute and its eight branches that train reserve imams, thus ensuring healthy and orderly inheritance of Islam. Since 1996, the Xinjiang government has arranged chartered flights to Mecca in Saudi Arabia every year for organized Hajj trips of the local Muslims, and offered services and assistance to the Hajj groups, such as medical and translation services. Up to now, it has organized more than 50,000 local Muslims to make pilgrimages to Saudi Arabia. Now, please watch a video clip.

Moderator: Thank you, Mr. Elijan Anayit. Next question, please.





Reporter
from China Daily:

Could you please elaborate on how Xinjiang manages religious affairs in accordance with the law and ensures orderly conduct of normal religious activities?

Moderator: This question goes to Mr. Mehmet Usman.



In accordance with laws and regulations and the principle of “protecting lawful activities, curbing illegal actions, containing extremism, resisting infiltration, and preventing and punishing crimes,” Xinjiang manages religious affairs, protects people’s freedom of religious belief, and ensures that normal religious activities proceed in an orderly way. Xinjiang has sped up local legislation by promulgating and amending a series of regulations, including the *Regulations of the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region on Religious Affairs*, the *Provisional Regulations of the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region on the Administration of Sites for Religious Activities*, the *Provisional Regulations of the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region on the Administration of Religious Activities* and the *Provisional Regulations of the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region on the Administration of Religious Staff*, which define the rights and obligations of religious organizations, religious staff and venues for religious activities.

Religious venues in Xinjiang shall go through registration formalities with the government in accordance with the law, and they get legal status once registered. The venues enjoy the right to establish democratic management organizations, manage their internal affairs, organize and conduct religious activities, receive donations, manage and use property, and initiate public welfare programs. The legitimate rights and interests of the venues are protected by law, and no infringement or intervention by any organization or individual is allowed. Anyone that

enters the venues must follow the management regulations and respect the religious staff and believers. Normal religious activities in Xinjiang are protected by law. Religious organizations are responsible for coordinating internal religious affairs, and the government shall not interfere. Clerics in Xinjiang enjoy the right to preside over religious activities and ceremonies, and may receive social and individual donations. The Chinese government prohibits any organization or individual from splitting the country, disseminating extremist religious thoughts, inciting ethnic hatred, undermining ethnic solidarity, disturbing social order, or impairing citizens' physical and mental health in the name of religion, and punishes illegal and criminal activities in the guise of religion according to law.

The religious affairs departments of governments above county level manage religious affairs within their jurisdiction according to law, while other administrative departments are responsible for administration related to religious affairs within the scope of their duties according to law. Whoever infringes upon lawful rights and interests of religious groups, religious activities, religious staff and religious believers shall bear corresponding legal liabilities. If the case constitutes a crime, criminal responsibility shall be investigated. The standing committees of the people's congresses at all levels supervise the administration of religious affairs in accordance with law.

We noticed that some politicians and media in the United States slandered that Xinjiang's legal administration over religious affairs has restricted the religious belief of Uygur people or Muslims. Hereby, I have to emphasize that it is standard international practice to manage religious affairs according to law. Practices have proven that our religious policy is in line with China's national conditions and the realities of Xinjiang. Freedom of religious belief prescribed by the *Constitution* has been fully implemented in Xinjiang. The situation of religious freedom in Xinjiang today is beyond comparison with any historical period in the past, and will not be denied by anyone who respects the facts. We firmly oppose politicizing religious issues and using religious issues as an excuse to interfere in the internal affairs of other countries.

Moderator: Thank you, Mr. Mehmud Usman. Next question, please.



Reporter

from Global Times:

It is learned that a lot of work has been done in cultivating and caring about religious staff in Xinjiang. Could any religious staff brief us on that?

Moderator: This question goes to Mr. Abdurehip Tumniyaz.



The government attaches great importance to the cultivation of Islam clergies. In September 2017, a new campus of Xinjiang Islam Institute completed construction. Besides, the institute also has 8 branches around the region, such as those in Yili, Urumqi, Hotan and Kashgar. We have helped improve the working and school conditions of these intuitions. In 2019 alone, more than 600 students graduated from Xinjiang Islam Institute and its branch schools, and their newly enrolled students reached over 1,000. It is fair to say that the systematic training in the religious institutions has cultivated a number of high-caliber students, thus ensuring sound and orderly inheritance of Islam in the region. As a religious staff grown up in Xinjiang where enjoys religious harmony, I have witnessed that all ethnic groups' right to freedom of religious belief has been fully respected and protected, and that religious activities have been carried out in an orderly manner. Please watch a video.

I heard recently that some politicians and media in the United States spread rumors that “Xinjiang



可以争取到每年4000元的奖学金和助学金
can win scholarship and grants of 4,000 yuan each year.



宗教课程有理论课和实践课
The religious courses comprise of theory course and practice course.

government detained unrecognized religious staff and some of them were even persecuted to death.” I want to clarify that our government has never persecuted anyone, let alone persecuting anyone to death. What the American politicians and media said was a sheer slander. Such groundless accusations fully expose their evil intentions to smear the image of China and instigate conflicts among different ethnic groups in Xinjiang by using religious issues. For instance, Iminjan Sadul, a retired teacher from Xinjiang Islamic Institute, was claimed to be “illegally detained” by overseas anti-China forces who deceived and used his daughter as a “witness.” But in fact, he has been living a free life, and he wants to say something to his daughter about the rumor. Recently a journalist interviewed him, and let’s watch a video clip about the interview.



I would also like to emphasize that the criminals who have been punished according to law are neither religious personages, nor religious teaching staff at all. They are criminals who spread extremism and engage in separation, infiltration, sabotage and terrorist and extremist activities under the banner of Islam. Exploiting people’s religious beliefs, they spread religious extremism and distort religious doctrines and canons. They have bound extremism to religion and incited followers to overthrow secular governments and establish theocratic states. They deny the concepts and achievements of modern secular civilization, inciting followers to “engage in a holy war and die for their beliefs in order to enter heaven,” and injuring and killing those they describe as “kafirs” and “renegades.” Normal religious activities in Xinjiang have been seriously disrupted, and upstanding religious individuals have been seriously ostracized, persecuted or killed. For many religious believers, the mental shackles imposed by religious extremism have become unbearable, disturbing their normal life and work. Social and economic development in the region has also suffered as a result. China is a country under the rule of law. All men are equal before the law. No man, no region and no religion can get away from the rule of law. Anyone, no matter which ethnic group

he belongs to and which religion he believes in, as long as he violates the law, he will be severely punished.

There is an old saying in Xinjiang that if you lie to the local people, they won't buy it. Some American politicians just hate to see peace and prosperity in Xinjiang and in China as a whole, so they keep popping up and spreading rumors, and maliciously slander China's legal fight against terrorism and extremism as "religious persecution." I can't help asking: Are those conducting violent terrorist attacks under the guise of religion in the US also deemed as suffering from religious persecution? Are those who launched September 11 Attacks also religious personages? The US has shown no mercy in its fight against terrorism, and even gone abroad to fight terrorists, which made life uneasy for several countries. Why has it completely changed its attitude when it comes to China's fight against terrorism? They not only made irresponsible remarks and spread rumors, but also even interfered in China's internal affairs. The reason lies in their double standards of counterterrorism. I have to reiterate that the history and facts of Xinjiang have clearly shown that any plot to distort the facts of religious situation in Xinjiang, impair religious harmony and undermine the peaceful and happy life of all ethnic groups in Xinjiang is a total delusion.

Moderator: Thank you, Mr. Abdurekhip Tumniyaz. Next question, please.



**Reporter
from China News
Service:**

What's the difference between religion and religious extremism?
How do you deal with the matters in your deradicalization work?

Moderator: This question goes to Mr. Elijan Anayit.



Religious extremism is an anti-human, anti-social and anti-civilization turbid current, which is fundamentally different from Islamic doctrines of patriotism, peace, solidarity, the golden mean, tolerance and good works. In Xinjiang, religious extremism under the banner of Islam runs counter to Islamic doctrines. It is not Islam. For a long time, separatists have tied extremism to religion, to religious believers, and to society as a whole. They incite the believers to resist government management. They advocate to deem all those who do not follow extremist practices as kafirs, renegades and scum, urging their followers to verbally assault, reject, and ostracize non-believers, Party members and officials,

and patriotic religious individuals. They deny and reject all forms of secular culture, preaching a life without TV, radio and newspaper, forbidding people to weep at funerals or laugh at weddings, imposing bans on singing and dancing, and forcing women to wear burqa. They over-generalize the “halal” concept, labeling food, medicine, cosmetics, clothing, etc. with halal signs. They turn a blind eye to the diverse and splendid cultures of Xinjiang created by all its ethnic groups, trying to sever the ties between the regional ethnic cultures and the Chinese culture.

Under the penetration and control of religious extremism, some of the most susceptible followers become terrorists completely under their mental control. Judging from the large number of violent terrorist cases that have been uncovered, all of them are under shadows of religious extremism. It can be said that religious extremism is the ideological basis of violent terrorism, as well as the source of the rising and frequent occurrences of violent terrorist activities in Xinjiang. Faced with severe and complex situation of frequent violent terrorist attacks over a period of time in the past, Xinjiang has stressed on both fighting and preventing terrorism, and taken forceful measures to crack down violent terrorist crimes on the basis of facts and law, while addressing the problem at its source through deradicalization, thus making the maximum effort in eradicating the soil and conditions for breeding terrorism and religious extremism.

In our specific work, we have upheld that deradicalization shall not be connected with any specific region, ethnic group or religion. On the one hand, the local government forbids any organization or individual from using religion to split the country, spread religious extremism, incite ethnic hatred, undermine ethnic unity, disturb social order, harm citizens’ physical or mental health, hinder the implementation of the country’s administrative, judicial, educational and cultural systems, or harm national security and interests, public welfare and the citizen’s legitimate rights and interests. It lawfully prevents and stops lawbreakers from using religion or religious activities to create chaos or commit crimes. On the other hand, Xinjiang also abides by the policies and stipulations in the *Constitution*, other state laws and administrative regulations concerning freedom of religious belief, fully protecting all ethnic groups’ freedom of religious belief. It is entirely the citizens’ own choice to believe or not believe in religion, and no organization or individual shall force the citizens to believe in a religion or not, nor shall they discriminate against religious believers or non-believers.

Xinjiang’s efforts in deradicalization are highly appraised by the international community. Since December 2018, more than 1,000 people from 90 countries have visited Xinjiang in over 70 groups, including UN officials, foreign diplomats, experts

and scholars, journalists from different media, and representatives of religious organizations. They have generally expressed that Xinjiang's deradicalization efforts have made an important contribution to the international community, and generated precious experience that is of great reference value.

Moderator: Thank you, Mr. Elijan Anayit. Next question, please.



**Reporter
from China Daily:**

We notice that a report issued by the website of "Uyghur Human Rights Project" claims that "China uses refusal to renew passports as a weapon to force overseas Uyghurs to return to China for extrajudicial detention or imprisonment." Is that the real situation?



Moderator: This question goes to Mr. Yalkun Yakufu.

In recent years, supported by some American non-governmental organizations, the "Uyghur Human Rights Project" has carried out so-called "Human Rights Investigation" and fabricated "Human Rights Report" to attack and blacken China's policy on Xinjiang in the guise of "academic research," aiming at promoting so-called "Uyghur Human Rights Movement" and engaging in anti-China separatist activities. By using interviews with individual so-called "claimants," they slander our passport management measures, and provoke misunderstanding and questioning on our Xinjiang-Related policy among Xinjiang-native overseas Chinese through despicable means with malicious intention. Their absurd accusation that "China uses refusal to renew passports as a weapon to force overseas Uyghurs to return to China for extrajudicial detention or imprisonment" is a complete rumor and gimmick.

China is a country governed by the rule of law with personal freedom and right of exit and entry protected by law. In accordance with *The Exit and Entry Administration Law of the People's Republic of China* and *The Passport Law of the People's Republic of China*, Chinese embassies and consulates protect the legitimate rights and interests of overseas Chinese including ethnic minorities from Xinjiang according to law. Anyone who is a Chinese

citizen without any law-breaking records and admits one's Chinese nationality can apply for a renewal or reissuance of passport in a local Chinese embassy or consulate.

Based on facts, Xinjiang administers entry and exit affairs in accordance with law, and strikes at terrorism and extremism. The *Counterterrorism Law of the People's Republic of China* stipulates that "Entry and exit permits issuing authority and border control authorities could prevent terrorism-related people or suspects involved in terrorist activities from entering or exiting, refuse to grant permits or revoke their permits." According to our knowledge, most passport renewal or reissuance requests by applicants from Xinjiang have been accepted and approved by Chinese embassies and consulates. Only a few of them were refused as their applications failed to qualify Chinese laws or they were suspected of being involved in terrorist activities. We sincerely hope Chinese citizens living overseas will not believe or spread rumors, but will trust the government and apply for passport renewal or reissuance according to law.

Moderator: Thank you, Mr. Yalkun Yakufu. Next question, please.



Reporter

from CGTN:

Recently, a PBS documentary named "China Undercover" attacked the Xinjiang vocational education and training centers as well as its ethnic religious policies. It alleged that Xinjiang suppressed ethnic Muslims such as Uyghurs by biological information like DNA, "facial recognition" and other monitoring means. How do you respond to that?

Moderator: This question goes to Mr. Elijan Anayit.



That so-called "documentary" is ridden with lies and fallacies. In order to catch eyes and blacken Xinjiang, they invited some "actors" with heaps of lies. They used groundless and distorted footage of interviews pieced together to churn out "stories," which had already been debunked. Let's take this opportunity to expose their absurd views and clumsy acting.

For example, the documentary alleged that "Xinjiang means 'new frontier.' About 250 years ago, the Qing Dynasty of China invaded Xinjiang and began to put Xinjiang under tight control." It is well known that Xinjiang has been a part of China since ancient times. From the Han Dynasty (206 BC–AD 220) to the middle and late Qing Dynasty (1616–1911), the vast areas both north and south of the Tianshan Mountains in Xinjiang

were called the Western Regions. Xinjiang was formally included in Chinese territory in the Han Dynasty. Later dynasties in the Central Plains, some strong, some weak, kept closer or looser contact with the Western Regions, and the central authorities exercised tighter or slacker administration over Xinjiang. But all of these dynasties regarded the Western Regions as part of the Chinese territory and exercised the right of jurisdiction over Xinjiang. It is noted that in the Qing Dynasty, the imperial court quelled a rebellion launched by the Junggar regime. It then adopted more systematic policies for governing Xinjiang. In 1884, it established a province and renamed the Western Regions as “Xinjiang,” meaning “land newly returned.” The so-called fallacies such as “Qing Dynasty invaded Xinjiang” signify their ignorance about Xinjiang’s history.

The documentary alleged that “The mosques of Xinjiang are dismantled. Religious believers dare not to go to the mosques for fear of troubles. Some are warned to give up their religious belief.” All of these are rumors with ulterior motives. I would like to respond their fallacies with a set of data. The total number of mosques in Xinjiang has increased to the present 24,000 from only 2,000 in early stages of reform and opening-up. Is it a reflection of religious freedom or result of “dismantling mosques”? In Xinjiang, it is totally up to the citizens themselves to believe, or not to believe in any religion. All normal religious activities that the citizens practice either at religious venues or at home according to religious customs, such as worships, fasting or celebrating religious holidays, are completely managed by religious groups or citizens themselves and protected by law. No organization or individual is allowed to interfere. For Western media outlets wearing tinted spectacles and practicing “double standards” on religious issues, I advise you to perceive Chinese religious policies and religious freedom correctly. Endless rumors will only cost your own credibility. Next, please watch the video.





For instance, the documentary claims that “Xinjiang is making use of surveillance technology including facial recognition to suppress Uygurs and other Muslims. Such practice is spreading to other countries, projecting global implications on human rights and democracy.” This is nothing but a preconception without any proof of the facts. Xinjiang lawfully installs surveillance cameras at its urban and rural main roads, transportation junctions and other public areas to improve its social governance and effectively prevent and strike crimes. These measures have strengthened people’s sense of security and thus are broadly supported by all ethnic groups in Xinjiang. Designed to protect our people, the system doesn’t target any specific ethnicity. Moreover, the surveillance equipment itself cannot automatically identify or target any specific ethnic group. Its goal is to protect the citizens. According to my knowledge, improving social governance through modern technological products and big data has been a common practice of the international community.

Back in 2010, Britain had installed 4.2 million surveillance cameras, covering all its streets, alleys and motorways, accounting for 25% of the world’s total. The urban surveillance system constructed by New York Police puts pedestrians and vehicles at every corner under its cameras, besides tracking and scrutinizing cellphone messages. Why the systems used by Western countries are considered as protection of human rights while that by China as a violation? They are the same thing. It is obvious double standard. Pretending to negotiate business deals with hidden motives, the production team of this so-called documentary resorted to underhand tricks like secret audio and video recording and coaxed words from the Leon Tech, calumniating that “Leon Tech has helped Chinese government accomplish the world’s most complete surveillance system.” Next, let’s watch a video clip and see what Leon Tech says.



For example, the documentary defines satellite images that resemble construction sites as so-called “detention camps,” claiming that “around two million Uygurs and other Muslims have been locked up in the vocational education and training centers, some of whom suffered torture and persecution, some even committed suicide.” These are nothing but alarmist nonsense.

I would like to ask this producer: have you ever been to those construction sites on the satellite images? On what grounds can you define these sites as vocational education and training centers? Hereby I would like to stress that vocational education and training centers were law-based education and training institutions set up in the face of frequent terrorist incidents in Xinjiang to eradicate terrorism and religious extremism at the source. The centers had no essential differences from the “community corrections” program of the US, the DDP of Britain, and the “deradicalization centers” in France.

Complying with the spirit of rule of law and international principles on counterterrorism and deradicalization, Xinjiang’s vocational education and training work is built on solid legal basis and follows clear and definite procedures, targeting no locality, ethnicity or religion. Those who have visited the centers all know they are well-equipped educational institutions which helped the trainees free themselves from the control of extremist thoughts, and taught them standard spoken and written Chinese, laws and skills. Throughout the implementation, the centers strictly followed the constitutional and other legal provisions to prevent any

violation of the trainees' basic rights. The personal freedom of trainees at the education and training centers was protected in accordance with law. The centers employed a boarding education model which allowed trainees to go back home on a regular basis and to ask for leave to attend to personal affairs. The right of all ethnic groups to use their mother tongues and writing systems were fully protected at the centers. The regulations, curriculum and menus at the centers all used local ethnic languages as well as standard Chinese. The customs of all ethnic groups were fully respected and protected, and a variety of nutritious halal food was provided free of charge. The centers respected and protected the trainees' freedom of religious belief. Trainees who are religious believers could decide on their own whether to take part in legal religious activities when they get home. The centers also had free 24-hour medical facilities available to trainees, capable of treating minor ailments. In case of severe or acute illnesses, trainees would be sent to hospitals. Is there any "internment camp" or "concentration camp" like this in the world? Next, please watch another video and listen to opinions of former trainees.



The documentary stated its suspicion about the fact that all the trainees had graduated, saying they "highly suspect that the trainees are still monitored or have been transferred to forced labor camps." It is a complete reversal of the truth. I hereby have to reiterate what Mr. Shohrat Zakir, governor of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, announced at the Press Conference on Xinjiang's Stability and Development on December 9, 2019: "All the trainees attending courses on standard Chinese, legal knowledge, skills and deradicalization

at the vocational education and training centers have graduated. They have found stable jobs with the help of local governments, improved their quality of life, and are living a normal life. They are free workers and citizens who enjoy equal right to work. It's their own choice as to where to work and which industry to engage in. The trainees themselves are the most qualified to talk about whether they have been monitored or subjected to forced labor. Next, let's watch a video to listen to the trainees' views.



As for those actors, now let's see who they really are. First "actress," Gulziyan Taxmamat, is a member of "World Uyghur Congress," and has been in Germany since October 2010. She claimed that her sister was arrested after returning to China. As far as we know, her sister, Gulgina Taxmamat, who has come back from Malaysia, now teaches English at a training institution in Yining City, and lives a normal life with her family. Please watch this video.



Second “actress,” Gulzila Awarkhan, is a dishonest and unscrupulous woman. According to what we know, with 5 people as her guarantors, she applied for a loan of 40,000 yuan from Yining Rural Credit Cooperative. As she intentionally delayed paying off her loans after due date and still hasn’t paid back the interest until today, she was put on blacklist by the bank. She said, in an interview by The Globe and Mail, that her aim and dream was to bring up her children. But she has never given birth to any child. She got three step-daughters when she married her third husband. But she was very indifferent to them. She even asked her

step-daughter, Kunduz Tursunjan, to help her pay her debts. According to her two ex-husbands, Gulzila wasn’t faithful to their marriages. She kept cheating on her husbands during their marriages. Since we know what Gulzila is like, can we believe what she said? Now please watch a video.



The third “actress,” Rahima Xanba, is a total liar. She said she was arrested because she installed WhatsApp on her cellphone. She also said in the interview by The Globe and Mail that she was put into a detention house for 70 days with shackles around her hands and feet. But that is not the truth. The fact is that she was reported to the police because she stored and often watched terrorist and extremist audios and videos on her cellphone, so she was questioned by the local police in accordance with law. Considering her offense was minor and her repentant attitude, the police exercised leniency on her according to law after educating her. Her mother, Danixman Musa, said, “My daughter was indeed questioned in the police station on suspicion of committing offenses after being affected by religious extremism. But she came back just after 3 hours. There was no such thing as what she claimed that she was in detention for 70 days.” Please watch this video.



We have noticed those “actresses” showed up very often in some ill-intentioned Western media reports. I wonder: as there are so many people from Xinjiang living abroad, why do those media outlets always love to interview these ones? I think I have to come to this conclusion that they have run out of smears and slanders against Xinjiang, so they have to repeat these lies again and again.

In conclusion, the facts of stability, development and people’s happy life in Xinjiang will eventually scotch all rumors. Their despicable deeds will not blind the international community in getting a correct understanding about Xinjiang, but will be despised by all people of insight in the world.

Moderator: Thank you, Mr. Elijan Anayit. As time is limited, our press conference today will come to an end now. Thank you all.