



China Reform Monitor No. 1432

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CHINA ENDS MONGOLIAN-LANGUAGE EDUCATION

Hundreds of Mongolian teachers in Tongliao and Ulaanhad, Inner Mongolia have been called to "urgent, secret meetings at primary and secondary schools" and ordered to switch their primary language of instruction from Mongolian to Chinese starting September 1st. To quell dissent against the new language policy, authorities have shut down Bainuu, a popular Mongolian-language social media platform, and censors are deleting any comments against the new policy on WeChat. State security police have visited hundreds of households to warn families not to resist the new measures. (Radio Free Asia, August 24, 2020)

SIGNS SUGGEST XI PLANS TO "REIGN FOR THE ULTRA-LONG TERM"

At the end of July, the Politburo made the unexpected decision to convene the 5th plenary session of the CPC's 19th Central Committee session in October to discuss "the 2035 plan," which are "preparations for Xi to reign for the ultra-long term." It is also noteworthy that while the annual Beidaihe leadership conference was not announced as usual, there were no media reports on the six top Politburo Standing Committee members in the first half of August – suggesting a leadership gathering was underway. Meanwhile, state media reported that three next generation leaders said to be contending for Xi's job were all in province: Hu Chunhua, 57, was on an inspection tour in Tibet, while Xi proteges, Chongqing party Secretary Chen Min'er, 59, and Shanghai party Secretary Li Qiang, 61, were both pictured conducting local duties. (Nikkei Asian Review, August 20, 2020)

\$50 BILLION IN CRYPTOCURRENCY MOVES OUT OF CHINA IN PAST YEAR

Over the last twelve months, amid trade wars and a devaluation of the yuan, \$50 billion in cryptocurrency moved from China-based digital wallets to other parts of the world. This means Chinese investors are probably using cryptocurrency to transfer assets out of the country in excess of the legally allowed sum of \$50,000 per year. Wealthy Chinese had long circumvented limits on foreign investments using real estate and other assets, but the government has cracked down on the practice of late. In 2017, Beijing banned fundraising via cryptocurrencies known as initial coin offerings and local bitcoin exchanges. But since then, Xi has backed the underlying technology known as blockchain, and China's central bank, the People's Bank of China, has begun developing its own digital currency. (CNBC, August 21, 2020)

CHINA, SWITZERLAND EXPLORE RENEWAL OF "SECRET" EXTRADITION DEAL

An unpublished 2015 agreement between China and Switzerland allows PRC officials to enter the Alpine country without official status for up to two weeks to investigate Chinese citizens staying illegally, and deport them. Those affected include rejected asylum seekers, illegal travelers, and PRC citizens without proper ID. China has contacted the Swiss about renewing the agreement, and negotiations are currently underway. There is pushback, however; Swiss Parliamentarian Fabian Molina said the agreement with China was "absolutely unacceptable" and should not be renewed. In 2016, the agreement was used to deport a delegation of 13 Chinese, including four asylum seekers, back to China. Tibetan and Uighur asylum seekers are not affected by the agreement and would not be sent back to China due to the threat of persecution they face, said a spokesperson for Swiss State Secretariat for Migration. (Swiss Info, August 23, 2020)

CHINA LAUNCHES NEW ADVANCED WARSHIP FOR PAKISTAN NAVY

The Hudong Zhonghua Shipyard in Shanghai has held the launch ceremony for the first of four Type-054A/P frigates – the "most advanced" warships China has ever built for Pakistan. The state-of-the-art vessels, which cost about \$350 million apiece, are equipped with surface and subsurface sensors and anti-air weapons. China is expected to deliver all four units to Pakistan by 2021, which state media said would "double the combat power" of Pakistan's fleet. China and Pakistan, which are both engaged in border tensions with India, are producing various military-related hardware together, including the JF-17 multirole combat aircraft. (VOA News, August 23, 2020)