

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT
CONFIDENTIAL/SECURITY

Date: Nov 52

COUNTRY India/Tibet

SUBJECT Ladakh (Kashmir) - Tibet/Proposed Organization of 1950 Lobchag Mission

1. "The frontier district of Ladakh, the most mountainous north-eastern area of the Kashmir State, is in unique juxtaposition between India on one side and Central Asia and Tibet on the other. The foreign trade of Ladakh is with Sinkiang and Tibet; the life of Ladakhis depends a great deal on this unique carrying trade even though traders engaged in this trade are from either Hoshiarpur or Sinkiang. For Ladakhis carry on independent trade only with Tibet across Kashmir's border with the Changthang areas of northwest Tibet.
2. "Ladakh's trade with the Central Asia was a most flourishing intercourse till recently 1946. Some of the most precious items of Sinkiang's foreign trade came to Ladakh on their way to India and other countries of the world. Carpets and namdas, gold and silver ingots and silk yarns found their way out of Sinkiang to world markets through Ladakh, one of the oldest land routes out of Central Asia over the Karakorum passes. Chakmen and Kham (superior and coarse khaddar) and cups and bangles of jade from Sinkiang constituted Ladakh's items of exports to Tibet. the recent political change in Sinkiang has brought this important trade to a dead end except for its

stray flow by Yarkandi refugees. And most of the Hoshiarpuri traders have either already left for their homes or sitting idle in Leh in lack of business. Charas, which was once the chief and most valuable item of this trade, slackened long ago with the spread of Russian influence in Eastern Turkistan and stopped completely after World War II.

3. "Ladakh's trade relation with Tibet is as important and old as her cultural and political connection. The aggregate volume and value of Ladakh's trade with Tibet has been flourishingly enormous heretofore in spite of the non-availability of regular statistics in this connection. For in the Tibetan countries even Lamas and lamaseries engage themselves in trade. The Lobchag Mission, Lhasa Zhungthsog and private traders from Ladakh and Tibet have always profitably carried on this transaction for their countries. The following figures reveal how profitable this intercourse has been both for matters of trade and goodwill between Kashmir and Tibet. After 1946, only the present year has the bearings of normality respecting administration in Ladakh. Years 1947-49 were a disturbed period owing to the Balti raid in these areas. Hence the non-availability of trade statistics for the period. The raid however brought in a new set of traders in the field from India. Lahulis, who came here as transporting agents for the Indian Army which came to the rescue of this country, have now settled here as permanent traders and seem to be taking the place of the Hoshiarpuris.
4. "Kashmir's chief items of export to Tibet, as revealed from the following figures, are apricots, saffron, shawls and a few Yarkandi commodities. Tibet's requirement of apricots is about 2,000 maunds annually, which Kashmir can conveniently afford to send to Tibet. For Ladakh's own production of apricots, from occupied Kargil (exclusive of Skardo tehsil) is about 2,500 maunds annually. As regards saffron and

shawls, Kashmir can supply as much as needed by Tibet. the present setback in Ladakh's trade with Sinkiang does not substantially disturb Kashmir's trade with Tibet. For lot of fine Khaddar goes to Tibet from Garhwal and Kumaun districts of northern India; and the people of Changthang (across the Kashmir border) whose main wearing apparel are from their indigenous wool, do not need it from Ladakh. And people of Central Tibet no more like the Yarkandi cups and bangles of jade as the stone used for these items these days is no longer of hard and superior quality. Kashmir can sell large size carpets and goods to Tibet, which bought these previously from Yarkand via Ladakh.

5. "Principal goods that Ladakh imports from Tibet, as revealed from the following figures, consist of China brick-tea, wool, pushmina and lambskins, etc. There is a marked fall in tea imports due to its non-supply from China. Ladakh's own supply of wool from the Kargyam, Pangong and Rupshu areas is only 1,000 maunds annually, not enough even for local needs. This item of Ladakh's imports from Tibet is very important for Kashmir's famous Wool Industry. The Karan Wool Mills Ltd., Srinagar, alone buys more than 3,000 maunds from Ladakh annually in normal times, Kashmir also needs quite a large quantity of the Tibetan lambskins and other furs for its Fur Industry. The import of Tibetan Khadbans (superior carpets) is meant for use in the private houses and lamaseries in Ladakh. Besides, this is also meant for re-export to Lahul and Zanskar.
6. "The Lobchag Mission which the Kashmir Government has been sending to Tibet from the old days, every 3rd year, for exchanging letters and presents of goodwill with the government in Lhasa is due this year (1950). The reciprocal Tibetan Mission – Lhasa Zhungthsang – has already visited Ladakh. The Lobchag Mission 1950 should be availed of for getting for the government of Kashmir the following

data, other than the exchange of goodwill messages, so essential under present political trends in the Central Asian countries across the borders of the Kashmir State:

- a. Information bearing on the strategic aspects of the Ladakh-Tibet (Changthang) border in view of the recent political change in Chinese Turkestan; information on the repercussions of the New China on Tibet; and information on present political trends in Tibet.
- b. Report on deliberations by the proposed Lobchag Mission with the government of Tibet, if the government of Kashmir so desires, on the conduct of such missions between Ladakh and Tibet in future.

7. "The following personnel for the Lobchag – 1950 is suggested for the consideration of the government:

Members

Nono Thsetan Phuntsog-Leader

Professor R.N. Rahul-Adviser

Khwaja Abdul Haque-Trader

Nono Kalon Rigzin Namgyal-Trader

Servants

Cook

Bearers

The duration of the proposed mission is planned to be six months. The mission if approved by the government should leave Leh in the first week of October 1950 at the latest so as to coincide with the Losar – the Tibetan New Year – when people from different corners of Tibet congregate in Lhasa for the annual festival and darshan of the Dalai Lama, the temporal and spiritual head of Tibet.

8. "Previous practice concerning the Lobchag Mission used to be the granting of a loan of Rs. 10,000/- to a local trader who undertook to be an emissary for the letters and presents of the Government of

Kashmir to the Government of Tibet. While in Tibet, this trader concerned himself only with private trade transaction; he was not permitted to have any discussion whatsoever with the Tibetan government for and on behalf of Kashmir government. This year it is essential, under the political situation along the northern borders of Kashmir, that the Mission Lobchag is sent to Tibet on government level. Hence the need for change in the original nature and composition of the Lobchag Mission for the year 1950. The two traders for this year, however, should jointly meet (as in the past) the expenses of the Mission. But they should no more be bearers of the letters and presents of the Kashmir Government to the Government of Tibet. This latter task should be assigned, this year as well as in future, to the leader of the mission. The non-government member in the capacity of adviser to the Mission should be remunerated for his services to the government. As honourarium of Rs. 1,200/- is suggested, inclusive of all other privileges enjoyed by members of such missions."

"LADAKH (KASHMIR) – TIBET TRADE
1946 – EXPORTS

S. No.	Items of Export and Agencies	Quantity	Rate	Amount
I.	Apricots:			
	1. Lobchak Mission	100 mds.	Rs. 40 per md.	Rs. 4,000/-
	2. Lhasa Zhungthsong	200 mds.	Rs. 40 per md.	Rs. 8,000/-
	3. Local Traders	200 mds.	Rs. 40 per md.	Rs. 8,000/-
II.	Saffron/Kashmir:			
	1. Lobchak Mission)	400 tolas	Rs. 2/8 per	Rs. 1000/-
	2. Lhasa)		tola	

	3. Zhugthsong)			
III.	Shawls/Kashmir: 1. Lobchak Mission) 2. Lhasa Zhungthsong)	20 pieces	Rs. 100/- per piece	Rs. 2000/-
IV.	Misc.: (Yarkandi cups and bangles of jade, khaddars, carpets and Namdas, etc.)			Rs. 12,880/-

Grand Total: Rs. 35,880/-

1946 – IMPORTS

S.No.	Items of Import and Agencies	Quantity	Rate	Amount
I.	Brick Tea: 1. Lobchak Mission) 2. Lhasa Zhungthsong)	100 boxes	Rs. 6/- per brick	Rs. 38,400/-
II.	Wool: 1. Lobchak Mission) 2. Lhasa Zhungthsong) 3. Local Traders)	80 mds. 4920 mds.	Rs. 100/- per md. Rs. 100/- per md.	Rs. 8,000/- Rs. 4,92,000/-
III.	Pushmina: Local Traders	2,000 mds	Rs. 120/- per md.	Rs. 2,40,000/-
IV.	Tosa Pushmina: Local Traders	2 mds.	Rs. 200/- per seer	Rs. 16,000/-

V.	Tibetan Khabdans: 1. Lobchak Mission) 2. Lhasa Zhungthsong)	20pieces	Rs. 100 per piece	Rs. 2,000/-
VI.	Misc: a) China Silk) All b) B) Musk) three c) Lamb) Agencies	10 pieces	Rs. 30/- per yd.	Rs. 12,000/- Rs. 600/- Rs. 1,000/-

Grand Total: Rs. 8,10,000/-