

CHINA-LHASA-WELFARE SCHOOL-HANDICRAFTS-PRINCIPAL ZHANG LI (CN)



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Title

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Caption

(110420) -- LHASA, April 20, 2011 (Xinhua) -- Photo taken on April 4, 2011 shows Ngocer Nyima casting a statue at Tibet Pende Targye Vocational Technical Welfare School in Lhasa, capital of southwest China's Tibet Autonomous Region.

Located in a common residential area in eastern Lhasa, the classrooms and dormitories of Tibet Pende Targye Vocational Technical Welfare School are scattered in five corners of the community. Now the school is home for about 80 Tibetan children, who are orphans or from poverty-stricken families in Tibet Autonomous Region and adjacent Sichuan, Qinghai and Gansu provinces. They are divided into five classes, each studying one kind of Tibetan handicraft, such as thangka painting, carpet weaving, metal carving, brass molding, etc. At daytime, students learn different handicrafts, and in the evening, they have classes of Chinese and Tibetan language. All their expenses at school, including boarding cost, medical treatment, studying materials, are all free of charge.

Though single and childless, Zhang Li, a 1970's girl from southeast China's Fujian Province, is the guardian of the 80 children. As the school principal, for half a year, she lives in the school with her students, whom she called "my children", for the rest of the year, she frequently shuttles between big cities like Beijing, Shanghai, Shenzhen to do projects of real estate consultation and management, which is her previous profession and now the main source of money supporting her school. Zhang used to own two real estate consulting companies in Hangzhou and Xiamen. Then, earning a lot from the profitable business, she lived a delicate and wealthy life of a typical urban girl, wearing clothes of luxury brands. But she always felt a sense of emptiness, no matter how hard she worked. In 2000, she took a trip to Tibet and instantly fell in love with it.

Deeply appealed to the beauty of this land and the faith of Tibetan Buddhism, she wanted to do something for Tibet wi

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