

03.06-A new railway to Tibet

A new railway to Tibet Doubling down

Plans for a new railway line into Tibet **pose a huge technological challenge**—and a political one

May 21st 2016 | LITANG | From the print edition

Vocab

1. pose a challenge 构成挑战

Sentence

and a political one. 这里 one 指代 challenge

“A **COLOSSAL roller-coaster**” is how a senior engineer described it. He was talking about the railway that China plans to build from the **lowlands** of the south-west, across some of the world’s most forbidding **terrain**, into Tibet. Of all the country’s railway-building feats in recent years, this will be the most remarkable: a 1,600-kilometre (1,000-mile) track that will pass through **snow-capped** mountains in a region **racked** by earthquakes, with nearly half of it running through tunnels or over bridges. It will also be dogged all the way by controversy.

Vocab

1. colossal adj. extremely large 巨大的；庞大的

e.g. The singer earns a colossal amount of money. 那歌手现在可赚大钱了。

2. roller-coaster n. a track at a **FAIRGROUND** that goes up and down very steep slopes and that people ride on in a small train for fun and excitement (游乐场的) 过山车，环滑车

3. lowland adj. **compare: highland** connected with an area of land that is fairly flat and not very high above sea level 低地的

4. terrain n. used to refer to an area of land when you are mentioning its natural features, for example, if it is rough, flat, etc. 地形；地势；地带

5. snow-capped adj. (of mountains and hills 山) covered with snow on top 顶部被雪覆盖的

6. rack v. to make sb suffer great physical or mental pain 使痛苦不堪；使受折磨

7. dog v. 困扰；折磨；纠缠 If problems or injuries **dog** you, they are with you all the time.

8. controversy n. public discussion and argument about sth that many people strongly disagree about, disapprove of, or are shocked by (公开的) 争论，辩论，论战

9. all the way 自始至终

Sentence

Of all the country’s railway-building feats in recent years 这里表示从所有的中国铁路建设来看...

of all: denoting the least likely or expected example

• [表示最不可能或最料不到的事例] 在所有...中 (编编，就连，居然)

It will also be dogged all the way by controversy.

这个句子有意思，all the way 有自始至终的意思，所以，这句话可以解释为，它将会自始至终都受争论的折磨。该句话表明这项工程褒贬不一

Chinese officials have **dreamed of** such a railway line for a century. In 1912, shortly after he took over as China's first president, Sun Yat-sen called for a trans-Tibetan line, not least to help prevent Tibet from **falling under** the **sway** of Britain (which had already invaded Tibet from India a decade earlier). Mao Zedong revived the idea in the 1950s. In the years since, many exploratory **surveys** have been carried out.

Vocab

1. **dream v.** 这里做动词, **dream of** 组成词组, 意为梦想, 渴望: 梦想; 渴望 If you often think about something that you would very much like to happen or have, you can say that you **dream of** it.

e.g. As a schoolgirl, she had **dreamed of** becoming an actress...她上学时曾梦想成为一名女演员。

2. **fall under** 归入...项下:

e.g. This falls under the heading of scientific research. 这属于科学研究的领域。

3. **sway n.** power or influence over sb 统治; 势力; 支配; 控制; 影响

e.g. Rebel forces **hold sway** over much of the island. 该岛很大一部分控制在叛军手里。

4. **exploratory adj.** done with the intention of examining sth in order to find out more about it 探索的; 探究的; 探测的; 勘探的

Sentence

shortly after he took over as China's first president 这里主语 he, 动词 took over 解释为: 他当上中国的第一任总统后不久(shortly after)

But it is only after building the world's second-longest railway network—including, in the past few years, by far the biggest high-speed one—that China's government has felt ready to take on the challenge. It had a **warm-up** with the construction of the first railway into Tibet, which opened in 2006. That line, connecting Lhasa with Golmud in Qinghai province to the north (and extended two years ago from Lhasa to Tibet's second city, Shigatse), was **proclaimed** to be a huge accomplishment. It included the **highest-altitude stretch** in the world, parts of it across **permafrost**. It required **ingenious** heat-regulating technology to keep the track from **buckling**.

Vocab

1. **warm-up n.** a short practice or a series of gentle exercises that you do to prepare yourself for doing a particular sport or activity (体育运动等前的) 适应性活动, 准备活动; 热身练习

e.g. warm-up exercises 热身练习

2. **proclaim v.** =**declare** to publicly and officially tell people about sth important 宣布; 宣告; 声明

3. **stretch** 搭配词, 这里highest-altitude stretch 搭配成为 高海拔路段。area of land or water 陆地; 水域 **great, huge, large, long, open, vast, wide** 很大的一片; 一大片; 开阔的一片; 辽阔的一片

e.g. A great stretch of ocean lay beneath them. 他们下面就是一大片辽阔的海洋。

4. **permafrost n.** a layer of soil that is permanently frozen, in very cold regions of the world (寒带) 永冻土层; 永冻层

5. **ingenious adj.** very suitable for a particular purpose and resulting from clever new ideas 精巧的; 新颖独特的; 巧妙的

6. **buckle v.** (因受热或受力) (使) 弯曲, (使) 变形 If an object **buckles** or if something **buckles** it, it becomes bent as a result of very great heat or force.

Sentence

1. But it is only after building the world's second-longest railway network—including, in the past few years, by far the biggest high-speed one—that China's government has felt ready to take on the challenge.

主语 it, 谓语 is, only after building the world's second-longest railway network 作为宾语, —including, in the past few years, by far the biggest high-speed one 破折号后面做同位语, —that China's government has felt ready to take on the challenge. 这里可以理解成宾语从句, 该从句的主语是 government, 谓语 has fit

2. That **line**, connecting Lhasa with Golmud in Qinghai province to the north (and extended two years ago from Lhasa to Tibet's second city, Shigatse), **was proclaimed** to be a huge accomplishment.

主语 line, 谓语 was proclaimed 主干为: that line was proclaimed to be a huge accomplishment 中间 connecting.....second city 为主语的同位语, 修饰主语

China further **honed** its skills with the opening of a high-speed line across the Tibetan plateau in 2014—though in Qinghai province, rather than in Tibet proper. But neither track had anything like the **natural barriers** that the Sichuan-Tibet line will face. It will be just under half as long again as the existing line to Tibet, but will take three times longer to build. The second line's estimated cost of 105 billion yuan (\$16 billion) is several times more than the first one. Lhasa is about 3,200 metres (10,500 feet) higher than Chengdu, yet **by the time** the track goes up and down on the way there—crossing 14 mountains, two of them higher than Mont Blanc, western Europe's highest mountain—the **cumulative** ascent will be 14,000 metres. The existing road from Chengdu to Lhasa that follows the proposed route into Tibet is a narrow highway **notable** for the wreckage of **lorries** that have careered off it. Some Chinese drivers regard the navigation of Highway 318 as the ultimate proof of their vehicles', and their own, endurance.

Vocab

1. **hone** v. to develop and improve sth, especially a skill, over a period of time 磨练, 训练 (尤指技艺)

e.g. His body was honed to perfection. 他的身体锻炼得十全十美。

2. **natural barrier** 天然屏障

3. **by the time** 到...的时候

4. **cumulative** adj. including all the amounts that have been added previously 累计的; 累积的

5. **notable** adj. ~for = **striking** deserving to be noticed or to receive attention; important 值得注意的; 显著的; 重要的

6. **lorry** n. a large vehicle for carrying heavy loads by road 卡车; 货运汽车

7. **endurance** n. the ability to continue doing sth painful or difficult for a long period of time without complaining 忍耐力; 耐久力

e.g. He showed remarkable endurance throughout his illness. 他在整个生病期间表现出非凡的忍耐力。

Sentence

1. China further honed its skills with the opening of a high-speed line across the Tibetan plateau in 2014—though in Qinghai province, rather than in Tibet proper.

句子主干 china honed its skills.

with the opening of a high-speed line across the Tibetan plateau in 2014 这里 with 后面用来修饰这个 skills, 通过....

—though in Qinghai province, rather than in Tibet proper. with 后面的同位语, 指明这条 high-speed line 是在青海省, 而不是西藏

2. Lhasa is about 3,200 metres (10,500 feet) higher than Chengdu, yet by the time the track goes up and down on the way there—crossing 14 mountains, two of them higher than Mont Blanc, western Europe’s highest mountain—the cumulative ascent will be 14,000 metres

主干: Lhasa is about 3,200 metres (10,500 feet) higher than Chengdu

...there 这里的 there 是指 Lhasa, 同时, 后面的所有句子, 都做同位语, 修饰这个 there

Work on easier stretches of the railway line, closest to Lhasa and Chengdu respectively, began in 2014. Now the government appears to be getting ready for the tougher parts. A national three-year “plan of action”, adopted in March for major transport-infrastructure projects, mentions the most difficult stretch: a 1,000km link between Kangding in Sichuan and the Tibetan prefecture of Linzhi (Nyingchi in Tibetan). The plan says this should be “pushed forward” by 2018. It will involve 16 bridges to carry the track over the Yarlung Tsangpo river, known downstream as the Brahmaputra. Dai Bin of Southwest Jiaotong University in Chengdu says the Chengdu-Lhasa line could be finished by around 2030.

Sentence

1. Work on easier stretches of the railway line, closest to Lhasa and Chengdu respectively, began in 2014.

主干: Work began in 2014.

closest to Lhasa and Chengdu respectively 修饰 stretches

2. A national three-year “plan of action”, adopted in March for major transport-infrastructure projects, mentions the most difficult stretch: a 1,000km link between Kangding in Sichuan and the Tibetan prefecture of Linzhi (Nyingchi in Tibetan).

主干: “plan of action” mentions the most difficult stretch.

adopted in March for major transport-infrastructure projects, 这里可以理解为省略了 which?? 作非限定性定语从句。修饰 这个 plan

a 1,000km link between Kangding in Sichuan and the Tibetan prefecture of Linzhi (Nyingchi in Tibetan). 主语 a 1000km, 谓语 link,

In Litang, a town high up in Sichuan on that difficult stretch, a Tibetan monk speaks approvingly of the project, which will bring more tourists to the remote community and its 16th-century monastery (rebuilt since the Chinese air force bombed it in 1956 to crush an uprising). But the impact on Tibet of the Golmud-Lhasa line still reverberates. It fuelled a tourism boom in Lhasa that attracted waves of ethnic Han Chinese from other parts of China to work in industries such as catering and transport. The resentment it created among Tibetans, who felt excluded from the new jobs, was a big cause of rioting in Lhasa in 2008 that ignited protests across the plateau. The new line will cut through some of the most restive areas. Since 2011 more than 110 Tibetans are reported to have killed themselves by setting themselves on fire in protest at China’s crackdown after the unrest. Some of the self-immolations have happened in Tibetan-inhabited parts of Sichuan, including near Litang.

Vocab

1. **monk** n. a member of a religious group of men who often live apart from other people in a **MONASTERY** and who do not marry or have personal possessions 僧侣；修道士
2. **monastery** n. a building in which **MONKS** (= members of a male religious community) live together 隐修院；修道院；寺院
3. **bomb** v. to attack sb/ sth by leaving a bomb in a place or by dropping bombs from a plane 轰炸；对...投炸弹
4. **uprising** n. =**rebellion,revolt** a situation in which a group of people join together in order to fight against the people who are in power 起义；暴动；造反
5. **impact on** 对...产生影响
6. **reverberate** v. to have a strong effect on people for a long time or over a large area 有长久深刻的影响；产生广泛影响
e.g. Repercussions of the case continue to reverberate through the financial world. 这件事持续影响着整个金融界。
7. **fuel** v. to increase sth; to make sth stronger 增加；加强；刺激
e.g. Higher salaries helped to fuel inflation. 工资提高刺激通货膨胀。
8. **catering** n. the work of providing food and drinks for meetings or social events (会议或社交活动的) 饮食服务，酒席承办
e.g. Who did the catering for your son's wedding? 你儿子的婚宴是由谁承办的？
9. **resentment** n. a feeling of anger or unhappiness about sth that you think is unfair 愤恨；怨恨
e.g. She could not conceal the deep resentment she felt at the way she had been treated. 受到那样的待遇，她无法掩藏内心强烈的愤恨。
10. **Tibetan** n. a native of Tibet or a person of Tibetan descent • 藏族人；西藏人
11. **riot** n. a situation in which a group of people behave in a violent way in a public place, often as a protest 暴乱；骚乱
12. **ignite** v. 激起;使激动 If something or someone **ignites** your feelings, they cause you to have very strong feelings about something.
13. **protest** n. the expression of strong disagreement with or opposition to sth; a statement or an action that shows this 抗议；抗议书(或行动)；反对
14. **restive** adj. unable to stay still, or unwilling to be controlled, especially because you feel bored or not satisfied 难驾驭的；焦躁不安的；不耐烦的
15. **crackdown** n. severe action taken to restrict the activities of criminals or of people opposed to the government or sb in authority 严厉的打击；镇压
16. **unrest** n. a political situation in which people are angry and likely to protest or fight 动荡；动乱；骚动
17. **self-immolation** n. the offering of oneself as a sacrifice, especially by burning; such suicidal action in the name of a cause or strongly held belief • (尤指为事业或坚定的信仰而) 自我牺牲 (尤指自焚)

Sentence

1. The resentment it created among Tibetans, who felt excluded from the new jobs, was a big cause of rioting in Lhasa in 2008 that ignited protests across the plateau.
主干 The resentment was a big cause.... 主语为 **resentment** 谓语为 **was**,
其中 The resentment it created among Tibetans 应该是省略了 **that**, 原句为 **The resentment (that) it created among Tibetans**, 译为：怨恨，它在藏族人中产生....
who felt excluded from the new jobs 非限定性定语从句，先行词为 **Tibetans**
that ignited protests across the plateau. 宾语从句，修饰 **a big cause**, 指出这个 **big cause** 是导致

暴乱的原因

2. Since 2011 more than 110 Tibetans are reported to have killed themselves by setting themselves on fire in protest at China's crackdown after the unrest.

主干 Tibetans are reported to have killed themselves

by setting themselves on fire in protest at China's crackdown after the unrest. 直译为：通过把他们自己放在火中（自焚）的方式，来抗议中国的镇压在骚乱之后

With spectacular views, the new line is sure to be a big **draw**. It is also sure to attract many migrant workers from Sichuan, a province of 80m people, to cash in on Tibet's tourism. The journey time from Chengdu to Lhasa is a **gruelling** three days by road, or more than 40 hours by train through Qinghai. The new line will reduce it to a mere 15 hours.

Vocab

1. **draw** n. =**attraction** a person, a thing or an event that attracts a lot of people 有吸引力的人（或事物）

e.g. She is currently one of the biggest draws on the Irish music scene. 她是目前爱尔兰音乐界最受欢迎的人物之一。

2. **cash in** v. to gain an advantage for yourself from a situation, especially in a way that other people think is wrong or immoral 从中牟利；捞到好处

e.g. The film studio is being accused of cashing in on the singer's death. 那家电影制片厂受到指责，说他们利用这位歌手的死来赚钱。

3. **gruelling** adj. =**punishing** very difficult and tiring, needing great effort for a long time 使人筋疲力尽的；折磨人的

e.g. a **gruelling journey/ schedule** 使人筋疲力尽的旅程；累人的计划

e.g2. I've had a gruelling day. 我一天下来累得筋疲力尽。

Sentence

1. With spectacular views 这里的 **with** 可以理解成 有，拥有(某种特征或所有物) Someone or something **with** a particular feature or possession has that feature or possession.

2. It is also sure to attract many migrant workers from Sichuan, a province of 80m people, to cash in on Tibet's tourism.

强调句，其中 a province of 80m people 为 Sichuan 的同位语
to **cash in** on Tibet's tourism. 这里 cash in 的解释见上

Officials see other benefits. The route will cross a region rich in **natural resources**, from **timber** to copper. It will also, to India's **consternation**, pass close to the **contested** border between the two countries. (China says India occupies "south Tibet", and **launched** a brief invasion of India there in 1962.) A Chinese government website, China Tibet News, said in 2014 that building the Sichuan-Tibet railway had become "extremely urgent", not just for developing Tibet but also to meet "the needs of national-defence-building".

Vocab

1. **natural resources** n. 天然资源;自然资源 **Natural resources** are all the land, forests, energy sources and minerals existing naturally in a place that can be used by people.

e.g. They are looking at ways of reducing the waste of **natural resources**. 他们正在寻找减少自然资源浪费的方法。

2. **timber** n. trees that are grown to be used in building or for making things (用于建筑或制作物品的) 树木, 林木; 用材林

3. **consternation** n. = **dismay** a worried, sad feeling after you have received an unpleasant surprise 惊愕; 惊恐

e.g. The announcement of her retirement caused consternation among tennis fans. 她宣布挂拍告退的消息引起了网球迷的震惊。

4. **contest** n. a dispute or conflict • 争论; 争辩; 争执; 冲突

5. **launch** v. 开展 (重大活动); 发起, 发动 (军事袭击等) To **launch** a large and important activity, for example a military attack, means to start it.

e.g. The President was on holiday when the coup was **launched**. 政变发动时, 总统正在度假。

Sentence

这一段结构很明朗, **总分的关系**。第一句引出其他好处。接着给出了第一个好处: 丰富的自然资源。然后通过这条线路还要经过的区域, 引出了第二个好处: 国防需要!

Communist party officials in Tibet hope that the new line will be just the start of a railway-building spree in the **once-isolated region**. On May 16th Tibet Daily, the government **mouthpiece** in Tibet, said that work would start in the coming five years on around 2,000km of track. It would include a line from Shigatse to Yadong (or Dromo), near the border with India and Bhutan, and another one to Jilong (or Gyirong), near the border with Nepal. China's railway chief talks of "the extreme importance of railway-building for Tibet's development and **stability**". The region's recent history offers **scant** evidence.

Vocab

1. **mouthpiece** n. (chiefly derogatory) a person or organization who speaks on behalf of another person or organization [主贬] 代言人; 喉舌

2. **stability** n. = **stable** the quality or state of being steady and not changing or being disturbed in any way (= the quality of being stable) 稳定 (性); 稳固 (性)

3. **scant** adj. hardly any; not very much and not as much as there should be 一丁点的; 微小的; 不足的; 欠缺的

e.g. I **paid scant attention to** what she was saying. 我没大注意她在说什么。

Sentence

once-isolated region 曾经封闭的地区

The region's recent history offers **scant** evidence. 耐人寻味的一句话...上文 railway chief 说 the extreme importance of, 然后说, 缺乏证据...

From the print edition: China

A new railway to Tibet Doubling down

通向西藏的新铁路: 孤注一掷

Plans for a new railway line into Tibet pose a huge technological challenge—and a political one.

新的铁路进藏计划面临巨大的技术挑战——以及政治挑战。

"ACOLOSSAL roller-coaster" is how a senior engineer described it. He was talking about

the railway that China plans to build from the low lands of the south-west, across some of the world's most forbidding terrain, into Tibet. Of all the country's railway-building feats in recent years, this will be the most remarkable: a 1,600-kilometre (1,000-mile) track that will pass through snow-capped mountains in a region racked by earthquakes, with nearly half of it running through tunnels or over bridges. It will also be dogged all the way by controversy.

“它是一个巨型过山车”，一位高级工程师这样形容道。他谈到了中国计划建设的铁路，它从西南部的盆地起始，跨越一些世界上最令人望而却步的地形，直入西藏。纵观近年来中国的铁路建设，这项工程的成就将史无前例：长达1600公里（约合1300英里）的轨道将穿越受地震肆虐的积雪覆盖的山脉，其中有一半里程将会是桥梁或隧道。而这项工程本身也将自始至终都饱受争议。

Chinese officials have dreamed of such a railway line for a century. In 1913, shortly after he took over as China's first president, Sun Yat-sen called for a trans-Tibetan line, not least to help prevent Tibet from falling under the sway of Britain (which had already invaded Tibet from India a decade earlier). Mao Zedong revived the idea in the 1950s. In the years since, many exploratory surveys have been carried out.

中国政府梦想着这样一条铁路已有一个世纪了。在1913年，在孙中山当选了第一任中国总统后不久，就提出要修建一条穿藏铁路，特别是要借此来使西藏摆脱英国的统治（此时距离英国从印度支那入侵西藏已有13年了）。（译者注：可能指的就是川藏铁路，早在1899年，孙中山就提出修建一条由江宁到成都再进西藏的铁路，除此之外还有青藏铁路和滇藏铁路。他希望通过这三条入藏线路，使西藏形成面向中国内地的扇形铁路网络，从而改变西藏因交通落后而与内地隔阂的状况。）毛主席在上世纪五十年代又重拾了这个想法。自此之后，许多勘探测量得以完成。

But it is only after building the world's second-longest railway network—including, in the past few years, by far the biggest high-speed one—that China's government has felt ready to take on the challenge. It had a warm-up with the construction of the first railway into Tibet, which opened in 2006. That line, connecting Lhasa with Golmud in Qinghai province to the north (and extended two years ago from Lhasa to Tibet's second city, Shigatse), was proclaimed to be a huge accomplishment. It included the highest-altitude stretch in the world, parts of it across permafrost. It required ingenious sheath-regulating technology to keep the track from buckling.

但这项工程是在中国建设了世界第二长的铁路系统（译者注：世界最长的铁路系统在美国，美国的普通铁路系统还是很发达的。）之后才迟来的决定，尤其是过去几年中国还建立了世界最长的高铁系统——中国政府感觉自己已经准备好迎接挑战了。中国已经建设了第一条进藏的铁路作为热身，这就是2006年开通的青藏铁路。这条线路将拉萨向北和青海的格尔木连接起来（并且在两年前还从拉萨延伸到了西藏第二大城市日喀则），被称为是一项伟大成就。它包含了世界最高海拔的路段，有一部分还穿越了永久冻土。这个路段需要用到巧妙的热调节技术来防止轨道变形。

China further honed its skills with the opening of a high-speed line across the Tibetan plateau in 2014—though in Qinghai province, rather than in Tibet proper. But neither track

had anything like the natural barriers that the Sichuan-Tibet line will face. It will be just under half as long again as the existing line to Tibet, but will take three times longer to build. The second line's estimated cost of 105 billion yuan (\$16 billion) is several times more than the first one. Lhasa is about 3,200 metres (10,500 feet) higher than Chengdu, yet by the time the track goes up and down on the way there—crossing 14 mountains, two of them higher than Mont Blanc, western Europe's highest mountain—the cumulative ascent will be 14,000 metres. The existing road from Chengdu to Lhasa that follows the proposed route into Tibet is a narrow highway notable for the wreckage of lorries that have careered off it. Some Chinese drivers regard the navigation of Highway 318 as the ultimate proof of their vehicles', and their own, endurance.

中国已经通过建设一条穿行青藏高原的高铁线路进一步磨砺了技术，这条线路在2014年开通——虽然在青海，而不是真正的西藏。但没有一条线路遇到过川藏铁路将面对的自然屏障。它到两端城市的距离不到现在青藏铁路里程的一倍半，但建设需要花费的时间却要三倍于青藏铁路。第二条进藏铁路预估将花费的1050亿人民币（约合160亿美元）数倍于第一条线路。拉萨的海拔比成都高3200米（约合10500英尺），然而真正的沿途的路会高低起伏——要翻越14座山，其中两座比西欧最高峰勃朗峰还要高——所以累计爬升高度将达14000米。现有的成都去往拉萨的建议进藏路线是一条狭窄的公路，这条路因冲出路面而坠毁的卡车残骸而为人所知。一些中国司机把在318国道上行驶视为对他们爱车的质量，以及对自己耐力的终极检验。

Work on easier stretches of the railway line, closest to Lhasa and Chengdu respectively, began in 2014. Now the government appears to be getting ready for the tougher parts. A national three-year "plan of action", adopted in March for major transport-infrastructure projects, mentions the most difficult stretch: a 1,000km link between Kangding in Sichuan and the Tibetan prefecture of Linzhi (Nyingchi in Tibetan). The plan says this should be "pushed forward" by 2018. It will involve 16 bridges to carry the track over the Yarlung Tsangpo river, known downstream as the Brahmaputra. Dai Bin of Southwest Jiaotong University in Chengdu says the Chengdu-Lhasa line could be finished by around 2030.

最容易的路段建设开始于2014年，分别是最接近拉萨和成都的路段。现在，政府看上去已经对更艰难的路段做好了准备。一个关于主要交通基础设施建设的全国性的三年“行动计划”在三月正式实施，其中提到了最艰难的路段：1000公里长的连接四川康定和西藏林芝的部分。计划称这个路段修建计划应在2018年前被推动实施。它涉及到16座桥梁来运输铁轨跨过雅鲁藏布江，它的下游也就是我们熟知的布拉马普特拉河（译者注：在印度境内称为布拉马普特拉河，为南亚第二大河，仅次于恒河。）西南交大的戴斌说，成都到拉萨的整个路段预计在2030年左右建成。

In Litang, a town high up in Sichuan on that difficult stretch, a Tibetan monk speaks approvingly of the project, which will bring more tourists to the remote community and its 16th-century monastery (rebuilt since the Chinese air force bombed it in 1956 to crush an uprising). But the impact on Tibet of the Golmud-Lhasa line still reverberates. It fuelled a tourism boom in Lhasa that attracted waves of ethnic Han Chinese from other parts of China to work in industries such as catering and transport. The resentment it created among Tibetans, who felt excluded from the new jobs, was a big cause of rioting in Lhasa in 2008 that ignited protests across the plateau. The new line will cut through some of the most restive areas. Since 2011 more than 110 Tibetans are reported to have killed themselves by setting themselves on fire in protest at China's crackdown after the unrest. Some of the self-immolations have happened in Tibetan-inhabited parts of Sichuan, including near Litang.

在四川理塘，这个艰难路段中处于高点的小镇，一位西藏的僧人对这个工程表示赞许，它将为这个遥远的小镇和其中16世纪的寺院带来更多游客（1956年因为中国空军镇压暴动而被空袭毁坏，后重建）。但是西藏的格尔木拉萨段的影响仍然余波未平。它引爆了拉萨旅游业的繁荣，它吸引了大批中国其他地区的汉族人到此从事餐饮和运输业。这使藏族人滋生了不满，他们觉得新工作将他们排除在外，这也是2008年拉萨骚乱的重要原因，而这也引发了遍及这片高原的广泛不满（译者注：此处《经济学人》引用的是达赖喇嘛的说法）。这条新铁路将穿过那些最不稳定的地区。自2011年开始，超过110名藏人被报道通过自焚的方式来抗议引骚乱招致的中国政府的镇压。一些自我牺牲者已经出现在了四川的藏族聚居区，包括在理塘附近。

With spectacular views, the new line is sure to be a big draw. It is also sure to attract many migrant workers from Sichuan, a province of 80m people, to cash in on Tibet's tourism. The journey time from Chengdu to Lhasa is a gruelling three days by road, or more than 40 hours by train through Qinghai. The new line will reduce it to a mere 15 hours.

凭着壮观的景致，新线路必定会颇具吸引力。同样可以确定的是，它将吸引来自8000万人口的四川省的许多打工仔，靠西藏的旅游业赚钱。从成都至拉萨如果走公路的话，那么需要熬人的三天时间，从青海坐火车也要超过40小时。而新线路则将时间缩短到仅仅15小时。

Officials see other benefits. The route will cross a region rich in natural resources, from timber to copper. It will also, to India's consternation, pass close to the contested border between the two countries. (China says India occupies "south Tibet", and launched a brief invasion of India there in 1962.) A Chinese government website, China Tibet News, said in 2014 that building the Sichuan-Tibet railway had become "extremely urgent", not just for developing Tibet but also to meet "the needs of national-defence-building".

政府还看到了其他好处。这条路线穿越了一个自然资源丰富的地区，从木材到铜应有尽有。让印度惊慌失措的是，它还将穿越靠近两国争议边界的地区。（中国称印度占领了“藏南”，于1962年在此地发动了一场短暂的入侵。）一个名为“中国西藏新闻”的中国政府网站，在2014年称修建川藏铁路已经变得“刻不容缓”，不仅是为了发展西藏经济，也是为了迎合“国防建设的需要”。

Communist party officials in Tibet hope that the new line will be just the start of a railway-building spree in the once-isolated region. On May 16th Tibet Daily, the government mouthpiece in Tibet, said that work would start in the coming five years on around 2,000km of track. It would include a line from Shigatse to Yadong (or Dromo), near the border with India and Bhutan, and another one to Jilong (or Gyirong), near the border with Nepal. China's railway chief talks of "the extreme importance of railway-building for Tibet's development and stability". The region's recent history offers scant evidence.

西藏的共产党人希望，新线路只是这个一度封闭的地区铁路建设盛况的序曲。中共西藏机关报《西藏日报》5月16日称，会在未来五年中启动大约2000公里的铁路建设。这包括一条从日喀则到亚东的线路，靠近与印度和不丹的国界，还有一条到吉隆，靠近与尼泊尔的边界。中国铁路总公司总经理谈到铁路“对于西藏的发展与稳定的极端重要性”，而这个地区最近的历史倒没能为此提供什么证据。