

First original Tibetan cartoon to hit TV screens

Tibet's first original cartoon series will hit TV screens in May, featuring stories about legendary Tibetan folk hero Agu Dainba, a Nasreddin-like figure.

The Tibet Tianli Company will produce the cartoon, which will be broadcast via Tibetan media, including Tibet TV Station and Lhasa TV Station, over 52 episodes. The series will use puppet animation and be dubbed in the Tibetan language.

Agu Dainba, or Uncle Dainba, is a household name in Tibet. In Tibetan folklore, he is noted for his intelligence and helping free the poor from their feudal rulers.

The cartoon will retell over 20 stories about the wise man, known for his funny stories and anecdotes.

The producer will also publish a series of cartoon books and other related products to roll-out nationwide.

The folk figure appeared in Tibet's first comedy in 1983. Playwright Soinam Cering said that he had collected more than 200 stories about Uncle Dainba from local people.

Another cartoon production was launched in Tibet Autonomous Region last year, featuring Gesar, another Tibetan legend.

Based on "The Epic of King Gesar," a World Intangible Cultural Heritage item listed by UNESCO, the cartoon is still under production.

The masterpiece of Tibetan folk literature has been preserved by local singers and storytellers since the 12th century.

Tibet started a census on intangible cultural heritage in 2006 to preserve and promote traditional cultural resources. Over 1,000 forms of intangible cultural heritage, including music, dance, craftsmanship, medicine and folkways, were recorded in the census.

"The Epic of King Gesar" and Tibetan opera were among 89 items recognized as national-level intangible cultural heritage.