



ICT'S TIBET ROUNDUP — ISSUE 9

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ICT's Tibet Roundup is a twice-monthly compilation of curated news from various sources, including Chinese state media, official Chinese documents, briefings, information reported by Tibetans in Tibet and international commentary on Tibet. The roundup is organized in categories, including law, politics, culture, economics, climate and commentary. The focus is on presenting news and reports with limited analysis and editorializing.

POLITICS

1. Crackdown in Lhasa for dish antennae

On June 8 and 9, four Chinese authority agencies in Lhasa conducted a “special rectification and inspection of illegal satellite ground receiving facilities” to find dish antennae in Tibetan residential and commercial areas. The raid was jointly conducted by the Radio, Film and Television Bureau of the Tibet Autonomous Region, the Lhasa Cultural Comprehensive Administrative Law Enforcement Team, the Chengguan District Radio, Film and Television Bureau, and the Jebumgang (Chinese: Jibenggang) subdistrict Police Station.

In Tibet, Tibetans have access to broadcasts from the Chinese state media only. Chinese government policy prohibits exposure to non-state media broadcasts. Dish antennae to receive foreign media broadcasts are illegal.

According to the Deputy Director of Jebumgang police station, the inspectors went to 28 hotels, 56 residential compounds, six shopping malls, and three home appliance sales stores. During the inspection, the inspectors preached about relevant laws and regulations related to the illegality of possessing and operating satellite ground receiving equipment. They did not find any vendors selling the equipment. However, three sets of dish antennae installation were found, although [state media](#) did not specify where it was installed. The antennae were dismantled and confiscated immediately. The authorities have stated that it is part of their efforts to build a “Safe Tibet.” They plan to consolidate their joint working mechanisms and intensify market inspections to crack down on the sale, installation and use of satellite ground receiving equipment in accordance with the law.

From the information reported by Chinese state media, it can be concluded that the Chinese authorities have a tight grip on Lhasa society in terms of censorship and depriving the Tibetans of freedom of information and expression.

2. Xi whitewashes Chinese expansion and assimilation as integration, inclusivity and strong uniformity

Xi Jinping in a lengthy [speech](#) during a meeting on cultural inheritance and development on June 2 described Chinese civilization as “characterized by strong uniformity, which is why different ethnic cultures of the Chinese nation are integrated ... Chinese civilization is inclusive, which fundamentally determines the historical orientation of the Chinese nation featuring exchanges and integration.” Deploying ethical language in his speech, Xi defends and projects Chinese expansion and colonization as the integration and inclusivity of Chinese civilization.

3. Party members also take CCP knowledge examination

On June 7, more than 80 party members and leading cadres from the United Front Work Department of the District Party Committee took [examination](#) for their knowledge on Xi Jinping’s socialist ideology with Chinese characteristics for the new era, the constitution of the CCP and the spirit of the 20th Congress of the CCP.

The CCP periodically conducts such examinations within its rank and file to ensure adherence to and implementation of the CCP’s ideologies and policies.

DEVELOPMENT

4. Rural party school for rural revitalization strategy

Chinese state media reported that the [first rural party school](#) (common people’s classroom) was officially unveiled in Chuga Village, Namnying Township, Khangmar county in Shigatse prefectural-level-city. The party sees the establishment of rural party schools as a significant step toward implementing the strategy of rural revitalization and strengthening the training and education of farmers and herdsmen with party credentials. As the initiative gains momentum in Khangmar county, it is anticipated that these schools will play a crucial role in promoting rural revitalization and strengthening the party’s presence at the grassroots level.

5. Lhasa’s Gonggar airport upgrade project

Chinese [state media](#) on June 10 reported the upgrade project at Lhasa’s Gonggar Airport to increase transport capacity. After the transformation, T1 will have increased capacity for domestic flights and T2 will cater to

international flights. The T1 project is scheduled to be completed by mid-November and T2 by the end of the year. The full project is expected to be completed by the end of June 2024.

EDUCATION

6. Tibetan children in Beijing for political indoctrination

Coinciding with China's Children Day on June 1, 40 Tibetan children from Yulshul (Chinese: Yushu), Golog Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, were given a [propaganda tour of Beijing](#) to inculcate loyalty to China and indoctrination as a Chinese. Pan Yue, who holds concurrent titles as the Director of the National Ethnic Affairs Commission and Deputy Minister of the United Front Work Department and a member of the party's Central Committee, met with the children at the National Mongolian and Tibetan School in Beijing.

Pan Yue told the Tibetan children to not waste the educational opportunity provided by the party and the country. He told the children to learn well for the cause of Chinese revolution and construction of a strong country and China's rejuvenation. Prior to meeting with Pan Yue, the children were taken to Tiananmen Square to experience the hoisting of the Chinese national flag.

The visit to Beijing was jointly organized by China News Agency and the Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture People's Government of Qinghai Province in coordination with the relevant departments of the Beijing city government and the relevant departments of the central government.

7. Ethnic Unity indoctrination in Lhasa kindergarten

State Media [Lhasa Daily](#) on June 13 carried a report on Jiangsu Experimental Kindergarten in Lhasa. The assimilationist experimental kindergarten is modeled on Xi Jinping's policy of forging consciousness of the Chinese nation community, reported the Lhasa Daily state media outlet. The report states that ethnic unity education is incorporated into the key tasks of the kindergarten to implant the awareness of ethnic unity in the hearts of Tibetan children from an early age. The kindergarten strives to realize the educational mission of "educating people for the party and talents for the country," reports the Lhasa Daily.

The Daily quotes Dong Shiwen, director of the Jiangsu Experimental Kindergarten in Lhasa, as saying, "General Secretary Xi Jinping pointed out that strengthening national unity is based on doing a good job in national unity and progress education. For a long time, our kindergarten has regarded strengthening national unity education as the sole project for cultivating the next generation, which runs through early childhood education. In the whole teaching process, the consciousness of the Chinese nation community can really enter the textbooks and classrooms, let the concept of national unity penetrate into the blood and soul, and strive to be the 'vanguard' in the effort to create a model area of national unity and progress."

8. College entrance examination in Chinese, 5 minutes extra time for Tibetans revoked

Nearly 13 million students sat for the college entrance examination this year in China. A total of 33,000 candidates sat for the examination in the officially designated Tibet Autonomous Region, which concluded on June 9, according to [Chinese state media](#). While the state media did not provide an ethnic data disaggregation of the candidates, the number of Han Chinese students taking their examination in Lhasa is seemingly significant as evident in Han Chinese students with their family pictures being highlighted in state media reports. Besides the Han Chinese settlers in Tibet, mainland Chinese parents also faked their household registration in the past for their native Chinese speaking children to compete with the disadvantaged Tibetan students to secure a college seat. The college entrance examination, which is conducted in Mandarin, leaves many Tibetan students at a disadvantage.

US based [Radio Free Asia](#) reported that this year marked the first time the examination was conducted solely in Mandarin. So-called “minorities,” including Tibetans, had been allowed to take the test in their native language in the past.

Speaking to RFA anonymously, a Tibetan said, “Due to the sudden shift on the Chinese government’s education reforms, Tibetan students are not as well prepared and proficient enough in Mandarin to compete with [Mandarin native speaker] students who have always been learning in Mandarin ... This is a disadvantage for Tibetan students over [native Mandarin speaking] students who score more easily and get admission in college. Hence, many Tibetan students will not get into good colleges.”

Another anonymous person told the RFA Tibetan service that the five minutes extra time for “ethnic minority” students has been revoked this year. As part of the systemic approach to Sinicizing Tibetan children, an anonymous Tibetan said, “In 2022, the Chinese government imposed the Model 2 Education System under which Mandarin was made the primary medium of instruction in all the primary and secondary schools across Golog, Kardze and Qinghai.”

RELIGION

9. Chinese Panchen extols the party, pushes for Sinicization of Tibetan Buddhism

The CCP-appointed [Panchen Lama](#) extolled the party during a Kardze (Garze) Prefecture symposium on “Adhering to the Sinicization of my country’s Religions” held in Kardze’s Dhabpa (Daocheng) county on May 31. Popularly known as the Chinese Panchen, Choekyi Gyalpo holds concurrent titles as member of the Standing Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference, vice chairman of the China-designated Buddhist Association of China and chairman of the Tibetan branch of the government-

installed Tibetan Branch of the Buddhist Association of China. Shen Yang, secretary of the prefecture party committee, presided over the meeting.

The symposium echoed the Chinese government's push for the Sinicization of religions, particularly Tibetan Buddhism. The event aimed to promote the alignment of religious beliefs with political ideologies. The symposium began with the Chinese Panchen expressing his support for the Communist Party of China's leadership and its efforts in uplifting the Chinese nation. Chinese state media quoted him as saying, "To resolutely support the leadership of the Party Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at its core, firmly follow the path of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and adhere to the direction of sinicization of religion in our country is not only a political choice for the Buddhist community, but also a practice of faith." The Chinese Panchen highlighting perceived similarities between the CCP's goals and the pursuit of Buddhism goes against the fundamental principle of international law that political ideologies should not be forcibly intertwined with religion.

The push for Sinicization, as advocated by the Chinese government, has significant implications for religious freedom. Sinicization requires religious communities to conform to the values and practices endorsed by the Chinese Communist Party, infringing upon the autonomy and integrity of religious traditions. This approach disregards the diverse cultural and religious heritage of Tibetan Buddhism, as well as the rights of individuals to freely practice their faith. The Chinese government's push for religious figures to align their teachings with socialist values and active participation in socialist modernization, and its imposition of political ideologies on religious institutions, dilute the spiritual essence and compromises the integrity of the Tibetan Buddhist faith.

10. Minister for Qinghai United Front Work Department instructs Sinicization of Tibetan Buddhism

The United Front Work Department of the Qinghai Provincial Party Committee conducted a religious policy study session for representatives of Tibetan Buddhism, according to a [United Front communication](#) on June 11. Palgo (Banguo), Minister for the Qinghai United Front Work Department, during the study session emphasized the Sinicization of Tibetan Buddhism and adherence to Xi Jinping's assertion that "Tibetan Buddhism is the product of the Sinicization of Buddhism."

The Minister instructed the representatives of Tibetan Buddhism to strictly implement the CCP's "Management Measures for the Reincarnation of Living Buddhas of Tibetan Buddhism" and to comply with the government-installed Buddhist Association as the authority for recognition of the reincarnation of Tibetan religious figures.

The Minister also emphasized the monastics to abide by the "four standards" policy launched by the Chinese authorities in 2018. The four compulsory standards—"political reliability," "profound in religious knowledge," "moral integrity capable of impressing the public" and "to play an active role at

critical moments”—require the monks and nuns to embrace socialism with Chinese characteristics.

11. Monks tested for absorption of political indoctrination

As a periodic test for the monastic communities' absorption of political indoctrination, the Chinese authorities in Lhoka (Shannan)—the United Front Work Department of Lhoka (Shannan) Municipal Party Committee, the Civil and Religious Affairs Bureau, and the Municipal Office of the “Three Consciousness” Propaganda and Education Leading Group—conducted a test for the monastic community in a quiz competition format. [State media](#) reported that 13 teams and 39 contestants participated in the quiz competition. The monks were quizzed about the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China and the party's ethnic and religious policies.

We welcome your feedback! Send any thoughts about ICT's Tibet Roundup and ideas for future changes to research@savetibet.org.



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