



ICT'S TIBET ROUNDUP — ISSUE 10

JUNE 16-30, 2023

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.

LAW

1. Proposed new legislation on “patriotic education” aimed at younger generation

Chinese lawmakers are considering a new law aimed at promoting “patriotism” among the younger generation. The [38-article proposed legislation](#), submitted to the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, covers various aspects such as the official version of ideology, history, national symbols and the deeds of heroes, reported state media outlet [Xinhua](#) on June 26.

Xinhua reported that: “The law specifies that schools at all levels should integrate patriotic education into the entire educational process, including quality ideological and political theory courses and integrating patriotic education content into various subjects.” The draft encourages the protection, management and utilization of resources related to the revolutionary history of China to promote patriotic education for all citizens with a specific focus on children and young people.

The law is concerning as an instrument to stifle dissenting opinions, limit access to diverse viewpoints and undermine cultural autonomy. The requirement for internet service providers to produce and disseminate patriotic content also raises concerns about increased surveillance and censorship.

2. China adopts law formalizing foreign affairs framework and strengthening party's leadership

China enacted a new law on June 28 that establishes a legal framework for its foreign policies while reinforcing the leadership of the Communist Party in all foreign affairs. [The law](#) codifies existing policies and practices, outlining the authority and responsibilities of institutions, and providing clarity on legal obligations and pathways to pursue foreign relations and interests. The 45-article law comes into force from July 1, 2023.

Article 9 designates the central leading body for foreign affairs as responsible for policymaking, coordination and strategic decision-making, effectively placing the Central Foreign Affairs Commission at the apex of the foreign affairs system's hierarchy.

Moreover, the law underscores the party's paramountcy over foreign affairs. Article 17 identifies the primary objective of China's foreign policy as upholding its system of socialism with Chinese characteristics, which centers on the leadership of the Communist Party. As a result, the law legally solidifies the fundamental purpose of Chinese foreign policy as sustaining the CCP-led regime.

POLITICS

3. East Turkestan (Xinjiang) delegation in Tibet

A party and government delegation from the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region made a visit to Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR). The delegation, consisting of representatives from Xinjiang (which Uyghurs know as East Turkestan) and the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps, attended a work symposium alongside officials from the Tibet Autonomous Region, which spans about half of Tibet. During the symposium, Ma Xingrui, the Party Secretary of Xinjiang Autonomous Region, and Wang Junzheng, the Party Secretary of Tibet Autonomous Region, discussed economic and social development, strategic cooperation, strengthening ties between the two regions and jointly guarding the border for national security, reported [State Media](#) on June 21.

Ma Xingrui expressed gratitude for TAR's support, but his emphasis on implementing the party's strategy for governing Xinjiang and Tibet raises concerns about human rights violations. The call for cooperation in areas such as border management, economic development and cultural tourism should be closely scrutinized, as it may further entrench government control and undermine the rights and autonomy of Tibetan people.

The delegation's visit to various sites in Tibet could be seen as an attempt to showcase development and cultural preservation. However, it is crucial to consider whether these projects respect the rights and aspirations of the local Tibetan population, especially given the Chinese government's track

record of suppressing cultural expression and infringing upon religious freedom. The participation of leaders from both regions, including those from Xinjiang's contentious Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps, raises concerns about the potential sharing of oppressive policies and practices.

4. Theoretical knowledge examination on anti-terrorism

In an attempt to emphasize the implementation of anti-terrorism measures, the Lhasa City Anti-Terrorism Leading Group Office recently organized an examination to assess theoretical knowledge on anti-terrorism prevention on June 25. The examination included 88 candidates from various sectors, including the public security system, education system and energy companies, reported [state media](#).

While the test aimed to enhance understanding and skills related to anti-terrorism, it is essential to consider its implications from a human rights perspective. The focus on anti-terrorism measures should be approached with caution, as such initiatives have often been associated with human rights abuses, particularly in regions like Tibet. It is crucial to ensure that the implementation of anti-terrorism measures respects fundamental rights, such as freedom of expression, association and privacy, and does not disproportionately target specific ethnic or religious groups. Additionally, transparency and accountability in the process should be prioritized to prevent potential misuse of anti-terrorism efforts for political purposes or suppression of dissent.

DEVELOPMENT

5. No compensation for nomads for their grassland

The Chinese government has begun operating the first phase of the Kela photovoltaic (PV) power station in eastern Tibet, which is considered the world's largest and highest-altitude hydropower and PV complementary power station. However, the local nomadic Tibetans and other residents whose grassland was taken for the project complain that they were not compensated, [Radio Free Asia](#) said, citing Tibetans impacted by the mega project in Nyagchu County in Kardze prefectural-level-city. The nomadic Tibetans, who used to graze their cattle in the area now covered by solar panels, were forcibly displaced without receiving any compensation. The local Tibetans were not even informed about the project beforehand, and police were stationed near the power plants to prevent them from approaching. Despite promises that the power plants would benefit livestock and pastures, the Tibetan nomads have been pushed away to other locations, and their complaints to the Chinese government have been disregarded.

EDUCATION

6. Immersive military education for Tibetan kindergarten children in Chamdo

In a recent development, the Chamdo (Changdu) Military Division has organized an immersive national defense education program for 50 teachers and students from Chamdo Experimental Primary School and Karuo Town Central Primary School. The initiative aims to provide participants with firsthand experience of army life and foster a deeper understanding of national defense, according to state media outlet [Tibet Daily](#) on June 28. During their time at the military camp, the teachers and students will engage in various activities designed to familiarize them with the military environment and its atmosphere. While the state media report did not provide specific information about the age group of the children involved, the accompanying picture inserts strongly suggest that the participants were young children, likely in the age range typically associated with kindergarten-level education.

RELIGION

7. Chinese Panchen official tour in eastern Tibet

On June 12, the China-installed Panchen Lama visited the Jampaling Monastery in Chamdo, Tibet. Masquerading as a religious figure, the Chinese Panchen holds government titles as a member of the Standing Committee of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, Vice President of the Buddhist Association of China and President of the Tibet Branch of the Buddhist Association of China. During the visit, the Panchen Lama was greeted with elaborate rituals and a display of traditional Tibetan Buddhist customs. While this may seem like a solemn occasion, it is essential to acknowledge the underlying human rights concerns, such as restrictions on religious autonomy and the ongoing suppression of Tibetan culture and identity by the Chinese authorities. The Jampaling Monastery, a site of rich historical and cultural significance, was founded in the 15th century and holds deep spiritual importance for Tibetan Buddhists. However, the presence of the Chinese Panchen Lama, a religious leader appointed by the Chinese government, reveals state control over Tibetan Buddhism and the suppression of religious freedom.

According to state media reports, approximately 36,000 individuals received blessings from the Chinese Panchen Lama during his visit to Jampaling Monastery in Chamdo. Prior to this tour, the Panchen Lama also visited five counties in eastern Tibet. Reports from anonymous sources to the US-based [Radio Free Asia](#) reveal that the Chinese government incentivized attendance at these events by promising rewards of 100 yuan (\$14). Furthermore, significant efforts were made to stage the Panchen Lama's visit in Lithang and Bathang as grandiose and popular events, further emphasizing the state's manipulation of the narrative.

8. Shartsa Monastery monks coerced into renouncing ties with the Dalai Lama

Chinese authorities in Tibet have been conducting unannounced searches of monasteries and pressuring monks to sign documents renouncing any association with the Dalai Lama, the revered spiritual leader of Tibetan Buddhism. The searches have involved thorough inspections of monks' living quarters, shrines and personal belongings, including scrutiny of prayer manuscripts and books, and removal of prayer flags from shrines under the pretext of searching for fire hazards, reported the US-based Radio Free Asia on June 26, 2023.

Reports from Tibetan sources living in exile indicate that these intrusive searches and forced document signings have occurred in monasteries located in Shentsa (Chinese: Xianza) and Sog counties. Monks from the Shartsa Monastery were reportedly coerced into renouncing their connections with the Dalai Lama. Startling visual evidence obtained by [Radio Free Asia](#) shows monks being compelled to inscribe their names on a white board beneath a red slogan that reads, "Cherish ethnic unity and reunification of the motherland like you cherish your life and the pupil of the eye."

9. National security propaganda for monks

From June 6 to 11, the "Three Consciousness" Education Leading Group Office of the Religious Circles in Lhundrup (Linzhou) County, Lhasa City organized a tour and study activity for religious representatives. The tour primarily focused on strengthening national defense and national security education, while actively promoting patriotism and the role of religious representatives as guardians of the land. [State media](#) reported that the monks listened to the Chinese propaganda stars Dolker and Yangzom guarding the border at Yumai and visited sites associated with national defense.

The tour's emphasis on patriotism, loyalty to the Communist Party of China, defense and national security raises questions about the autonomy of religious figures and their ability to freely express their beliefs without state interference. The visit's purpose and the narrative presented during the activity align with the Chinese government's control over religious institutions and the suppression of dissenting voices.

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



ICT Europe
Funenpark 1D | 1018 AK
Amsterdam, The Netherlands
Phone: +31 (0)20 3308265
Fax: +31 (0)20 3308266
icteurope@savetibet.nl

ICT Deutschland e.V.
Schönhauser Allee 163 | 10435
Berlin, Germany
Phone: +49 (0)30 27879086
Fax: +49 (0)30 27879087
info@savetibet.de

ICT Brussels
11, rue de la linière | 1060
Brussels, Belgium
Phone: +32 (0)2 609 44 10
Fax: +32 (0)2 609 44 32
info@save-tibet.eu