



ICT'S TIBET ROUNDUP — ISSUE 15

SEPTEMBER 1-15, 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.

POLITICS

1. Removal of barriers to urban settlement in Nyingtri encourages settlers

The Chinese government has announced that [barriers to urban settlement in Nyingtri \(Chinese: Linzhi\) City will be removed](#) to adjust “national population policy,” according to state media reports on Sept. 15. The Nyingtri City issued a new “Implementation Rules for Comprehensive Relaxation of Urban Settlement Restrictions in Linzhi City (Trial)” to do away with urban settlement restrictions and to create a household registration management model with liberalized policies for the settlers. This in effect opens the gate for Chinese migrants in Nyingtri to settle permanently. Chinese state media quoted Mr. Li, a settler in Nyingtri, as saying “I have been working in Linzhi for many years and have always planned to settle in Linzhi. Now the government department has issued relevant policies, making it very convenient.”

Nyingtri is strategically important to Beijing as symbolized by Chinese President Xi Jinping making it his first stop in July 2021 en route to Lhasa. Beijing has planned the world's largest hydropower dam in Nyingtri, which also borders India in the controversial “eastern sector” of the India-China border dispute.

The recently announced removal of barriers to urban settlement in Nyingtri opens settlement to all who are over 18 years old and work and live in Nyingtri. According to Chinese media it is a “low threshold” for settlers. It only requires filling in the “Settlement Application Form” and “those who meet the settlement conditions will be accepted on the spot.”

2. Tibet Military Region Party Committee commits to ‘make new and greater contributions to Tibet’s long-term stability and high-quality development’

The first plenary session of the 11th Tibet Military Region Party Committee recently convened in Lhasa, featuring significant addresses and directives from Wang Junzheng, secretary of the Party Committee of the Autonomous Region and first secretary of the Party Committee of the Tibet Military Region, according to a [state media](#) report on Sept. 11.

Wang Junzheng emphasized the unwavering commitment to implementing “Xi Jinping’s Thought on Strengthening the Army.” This guidance serves as a crucial foundation for the military’s development and operations.

A core objective outlined was the commitment to make fresh and substantial contributions to the Tibet Autonomous Region’s long-term stability and high-quality development. The military’s role in safeguarding regional stability and supporting socio-economic progress in Tibet was underscored.

Wang Junzheng commended the accomplishments of the Party Committee of the Tibet Military Region over the past five years. These achievements encompassed active participation in local economic and social construction, fostering unity between the military and the government, and defense of national sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The imperative of political army-building was emphasized, emphasizing absolute loyalty to the party. Leaders were urged to exemplify this commitment by adhering to political army-building principles and placing loyalty to the party at the forefront.

The military was called upon to strictly adhere to military strategic guidelines tailored for the new era. This entails an intensified focus on training, troop stationing, border security and development, alongside expedited reserve forces construction.

The military was urged to deepen the rule of law within its ranks. This includes strengthening the application of legal thinking and methods in military operations and governance.

The session also featured speeches by key figures, including Yin Hongxing, secretary of the Party Committee and political commissar of the Tibet Military Region, and Wang Kai, deputy secretary of the Party Committee and commander of the Tibet Military Region.

RELIGION

3. Drepung Monastery monks ordered to adapt Tibetan Buddhism to a socialist society

Pasang Tsering, secretary and director of the CCP Leadership Group of Drepung Monastery Management Committee, instructed the [monks of Drepung Monastery](#) in Lhasa at the conclusion of the "2023 Comprehensive Religious Knowledge Examination" to adhere to the party's guidance and embrace the "four standards" for exemplary monks as a fundamental element of the "three consciousness" campaign. The "three consciousness" encompasses national consciousness, citizenship awareness and a respect for the rule of law.

Tsering also emphasized the significance of safeguarding the unity of the motherland and national harmony. Monks were told to observe the party and government's legal regulations, abide by religious group rules, uphold social morality to foster cohesion with the party and align with China's trajectory, thus nurturing a robust sense of community for the Chinese nation.

Furthermore, he highlighted the commitment to adhere to the party's principles and China's religious policies, advocating the embrace of socialist core values and the adaptation of Tibetan Buddhism and Tibetan Buddhists to a socialist society.

4. Government-backed Dechen Prefecture Buddhist Association expects religious figures to generate 'patriotism and love for religion'

The [second meeting](#) of the seventh session of the Dechen (Diqing) Prefecture Buddhist Association, held on Sept. 8, 2023, saw government officials and religious leaders addressing various aspects of religious practice and governance.

The meeting stressed the role of religious figures in generating "patriotism and love for religion," governance of religions, interpretation of teachings, talent development and community service. The religious leaders are expected to lead believers to enhance their national awareness, citizen awareness, legal awareness and gratitude to the party.

The presence at the meeting of state leaders like Peng Shan, deputy secretary of the Party Committee, Yang Jinhua, party secretary and executive vice president of the Buddhist Association, and Kelsang Namgyal, member of the Standing Committee of the Party Committee and minister of the United Front Work Department of the Party Committee, signifies government engagement with religious communities.

5. Seminar on promoting the Sinicization of Tibetan Buddhism in Chamdo

To integrate Tibetan Buddhism to a socialist society, a seminar titled "Promoting the Sinicization of Tibetan Buddhism" was convened in Chamdo (Changdu) City on Sept. 7, according to Chinese [state media](#). The event witnessed the presence of 62 participants, including government officials, religious representatives and leaders from various administrative bodies.

The seminar underscored the critical importance of adhering to "Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era." This guiding philosophy serves as the compass for achieving the Sinicization of Tibetan Buddhism, aligning seamlessly with the spirit of the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China.

The seminar identified key tasks in the Sinicization process, including comprehensive "three consciousness" education, opposition to separatist ideologies, maintenance of societal stability, fostering a stronger sense of the Chinese nation's community, and strict adherence to laws and regulations governing religious activities, talent development, and the integration of political consciousness, cultural identity and social adaptation.

Emphasizing the collective effort required for a successful Sinicization endeavor, the seminar highlighted the essential role of party organizations, government cadres at all levels, religious communities and the Buddhist Association.

The seminar on Sinicization of Tibetan Buddhism in Chamdo City aims to alter traditional religious practices to contemporary socialist principles.

DEVELOPMENT

6. Relocation of high-altitude nomads continues

In continuation of nomad relocation programs, approximately 951 members of 196 nomadic families from Serte in Namtso (Chinese: Namco) Township in Damshung (Damxung) County were [relocated](#) to a relocation site in Toelung Dechen (Chinese: Doilungdêqên) district from Aug. 26-30. The "high-altitude relocation project" has been displacing Tibetan herders from their grasslands and compelling them to settle at poorly constructed relocation sites in remote areas against their wish.

COMMENTARY

7. Geneva-based diplomatic delegation visits Lhasa

Geneva-based diplomatic envoys from 11 countries visited Tibet from Aug. 27 to Sept. 2 at the invitation of China's foreign ministry. Ambassador Hashemi, the permanent representative of Pakistan, led the foreign delegation

comprising representatives of developing countries like Venezuela, Cuba, Nicaragua, Pakistan and Belarus.

Yan Jinhai, deputy secretary of the Party Committee and chairman of the officially designated Tibet Autonomous Region, met the [foreign diplomatic delegation in Lhasa](#). Chinese state media reported that Yan Jinhai showcased Tibet's achievements in economic development, living standards, national unity, cultural preservation and ecological efforts under the leadership of the Communist Party of China. However, the human rights situation in Tibet has been a subject of concern for various international organizations and observers. Genuine dialogue on the human rights situation in Tibet was ignored in favor of the foreign diplomatic delegation amplifying the propaganda of the Chinese party-state. Ambassador Hashmi and the delegation praised Tibet's "progress" during their visit, but it is important to note that such visits may not always provide a complete picture of the human rights situation, as China has a track record of quid pro quos with authoritarian regimes to avoid scrutiny for human rights abuses in their countries.

Despite economic growth, Tibetans have faced restrictions on religious and cultural freedoms, with allegations of religious repression, censorship and surveillance. There have been reports of human rights abuses, including surveillance, restrictions on the Tibetan language, limitations on religious practices and concerns over the forced relocation of Tibetan nomads.

It is crucial for international observers and organizations to continue monitoring and advocating for the protection of human rights in Tibet, ensuring that the rights and freedoms of all Tibetans are respected and upheld. While economic development is commendable, it should not come at the expense of fundamental human rights and freedoms.

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



International Campaign for Tibet (ICT) | 1825 Jefferson Place NW | Washington, DC 20036 | United States of America
Phone: (202) 785-1515 | Fax: (202) 785-4343 | info@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