



## ICT'S TIBET ROUNDUP — ISSUE 8

**MAY 1-15, 2024**

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. Top Chinese leader stresses ethnic unity during Guangxi tour**

Wang Huning, a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CCP) Central Committee and chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, repeated the CCP's signature policy of ethnic unity and the Chinese nation community during an inspection tour in [Guangxi Zhuang](#) Autonomous Region from May 6 to 8.

Although hundreds of miles away from Tibet, Guangxi and Tibet have the same "autonomous region" designation in the People's Republic of China and share some similarities in terms of "ethnic policy" implementation. Wang was accompanied by Shi Taifeng, member of the Central Committee Political Bureau and head of the CCP's United Front Work Department, and Wang Dongfeng, secretary-general of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, during the inspection visit.

During his visit, Wang reiterated the need to deeply study and implement Xi Jinping's thoughts on ethnic work. He called for forging a strong sense of community for the Chinese nation as the main guiding principle for the Party's work in ethnic regions. In Guangxi, a model region for ethnic unity and progress, Wang stressed sustained efforts to implement the sense of community for the Chinese nation and implement the Party Central Committee's policies for construction of the model region for ethnic unity, social stability and border revitalization and stability for all ethnic groups' identification with the motherland, nation, culture, the Party and socialism.

## **2. Tibet party chief instructs youth to embrace innovation, socialist values**

Wang Junzheng, the Communist Party chief of Tibet Autonomous Region, has instructed youth representatives to embrace innovation while strengthening ideals rooted in socialist values and Chinese culture, [state media](#) reported.

During a Party Day event themed "Party Discipline Learning and Education, Actions with Me" at Lhasa Normal College, Wang exhorted the young participants to bolster their beliefs in Marxism, socialism with Chinese characteristics, and the Chinese Dream of national rejuvenation, according to the official report.

Instructing the youth to draw from traditional Chinese virtues, Wang told the representatives to "consciously establish and practice socialist core values, be good at drawing moral nourishment from the traditional virtues of the Chinese nation," state media quoted him as saying.

He told them to "closely combine correct moral cognition, conscious moral cultivation, and positive moral practice" to "temper personal morality, enhance social morality, enhance professional ethics and promote family virtue."

The Party chief emphasized the need for the Tibetan youth to dedicate themselves to the construction of a modernized socialist region while embracing innovation to meet development needs.

Such meetings between the Communist Party leadership and Tibetan youth representatives should be viewed in the context of the party's assimilation policies aimed at having Tibetan minors identify more with Chinese rather than Tibetan culture and values.

## **3. China extends visa-free policy for 12 countries until end of 2025**

China has extended its [visa-free policy for short-term visits](#) from 12 countries until the end of 2025, according to Chinese government announcement on May 7.

Citizens of France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Malaysia, Switzerland, Ireland, Hungary, Austria, Belgium, and Luxembourg holding ordinary passports will be allowed visa-free entry into China until December 31, 2025.

Under the extended policy, nationals from these 12 countries can enter and stay in China for up to 15 days without a visa for purposes such as business, tourism, visiting relatives and friends, and transit.

The announcement comes after Chinese leaders pledged to facilitate visa-free travel during recent visits to Europe, including France, in a bid to boost people-to-people exchanges and economic cooperation.

However, [European citizens of Tibetan ethnicity](#) are most likely to continue being barred from visiting Tibet or China taking advantage of the visa-free policy for short-term visits. In recent months, four EU passport holders of Tibetan ethnicity from Belgium, France, and Germany, who attempted to take advantage of the short-term visa-free policy, were subjected to long hours of interrogation before allowing two to visit family in their native hometowns, while the other two were deported.

Despite the visa-free extension for the 12 countries, Beijing appears to maintain restrictions on Tibetan diaspora members, which amounts to discriminatory practices and limitations on freedom of movement for European citizens of Tibetan ethnicity.

#### **4. Lhasa hosts speech contest to foster sense of Chinese national identity among youth**

To inculcate a "sense of Chinese national identity" among the younger generation through propaganda and public events aligned with the CCP's ethnic policies, the Lhasa municipal CCP leadership recently organized the finals of a speech contest on "national unity."

The speech contest promoted the conclusions of the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China held in October 2022 and the Party's ethnic policy to have Tibetans identify themselves as Chinese rather than Tibetans.

The event, according to [state media](#), was jointly organized by Lhasa city's propaganda department, united front work department, government, youth league, and education bureau, saw 23 contestants from across Lhasa's counties and districts, compete after preliminary rounds.

The event served as a platform to promote the Chinese nation's unified identity through the process of "forging a strong Chinese national community."

#### **5. China bans use of Tibetan language in schools**

Chinese authorities have imposed a ban on students and teachers from using the Tibetan language when communicating with each other in schools across Nyagchu (Yajiang) county in Sichuan province.

The sources told the U.S. based [Radio Free Asia](#) that elementary, middle, and high schools in the Tibetan-populated county now require the use of only Mandarin Chinese for all communication.

Last year, a similar ban on Tibetan language classes was imposed in schools across the Kardze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Sichuan. Since 2020, Beijing has further tightened restrictions on language rights in Tibetan areas, forcing the closure of private Tibetan schools and intensifying Chinese-language education in the name of promoting uniformity in textbooks and instructional materials.

In 2021, Chinese authorities prohibited Tibetan children from participating in informal Tibetan language classes or workshops during winter breaks, further limiting opportunities for Tibetan language education. The same year, several private Tibetan schools, including Phende School, Chaktsa Tevey Private Elementary School, Sengdruk Taktse School, and others in various counties, were shut down by the authorities.

## RELIGION

### 6. United Front continues to push Tibetan Buddhist monastics to embrace Chinese identity through tours

Beijing's efforts to deepen the integration of Tibetan Buddhist monastics into the overarching Chinese national identity through propaganda campaigns and exposure programs continue unabated. In one such recent endeavor, a senior official from the Nang (Lang) county in Nyingtri (Linzhi) United Front Work Department, Migmar Dhondup, led a group of Tibetan Buddhist monks and nuns from Nyingtri City on a tour aimed at fostering a stronger sense of community and national identity among the religious figures.

The group was taken to key Chinese sites related to the Communist Party and the Chinese nation, including the Great Wall, Chairman Mao Memorial Hall, the Palace Museum, and Tiananmen Square in Beijing. Besides the capital, they were also taken on an exposure tour to Yunnan's Shangri-La City, where they were taken to the Dechen Red Army Long March Museum.

According to officials, the tour aimed to broaden horizons, resonate spiritually, enhance cognitive understanding, and foster emotional identification with the Chinese nation among the Tibetan monastics.

While Chinese [state media](#) self-proclaimed that the tour effectively transformed what the religious delegates saw, felt, and understood into practical actions to "safeguard national unity, cherish ethnic unity, and enhance the 'five identities'", the effects of such tours are likely limited despite the coercion to participate in these political indoctrination programs. The tours' emphasis on sites associated with the Communist Party and Chinese nationalism highlights Beijing's agenda to subsume Tibetan Buddhist identity under the overarching Chinese national identity.

We welcome your feedback! Send any thoughts about ICT's Tibet Roundup and ideas for future changes to [research@savetibet.org](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:info@save-tibet.eu)