



# INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

## ICT'S TIBET ROUNDUP — ISSUE 8

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*ICT's Tibet Roundup is a 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 presentation of information in the roundup should not be construed as amplifying Chinese political rhetoric but as a catalog of information from Chinese state media discourse for deeper research to uncover the truth. 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. Chinese youth dispatch to Tibet**

On July 29, 2025, over 1,200 university volunteers from 22 Chinese provinces, including 124 graduate teaching members, gathered in Lhasa for dispatch ceremony under the Western Plan Volunteer Program, as reported by [China Tibet Net](#). These volunteers, deployed to grassroots roles across the China designated Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), pledged to serve in areas such as rural education, healthcare, and border defense for stints of one to three years. While presented as a noble initiative, the deployment of predominantly non-Tibetan volunteers prioritizes state control and imposing state-driven agendas over genuine grassroots development in Tibet. Under the Western Plan, China has been dispatching Chinese graduates to Tibet over the years with nearly 30% of them settling in Tibet after their stay according to Chinese state media.

#### **2. Chinese experts discuss Tibet's border governance at second symposium in Lhasa**

On July 15th, the Second Academic Symposium on Contemporary Border History was held in Lhasa, Tibet, it was co-organized by the Institute of Borderland Studies (Chinese Academy of Social Sciences), the Tibet Autonomous Region Academy of Social Sciences and the Institute of Contemporary China Studies. Over 90 researchers from more than 30 Chinese institutions, including Beijing Foreign Studies University and the Central Academy of Socialism, participated.

The [symposium](#), themed “Contemporary Border History and Border Governance,” purported to foster multidisciplinary discussions on Tibet's historical and modern role in China's border governance strategies, while serving to reinforce state-sanctioned narratives, they frame Tibet's absorption as a seamless success, but this is a false narrative.

#### **3. New batch of Chinese workers arrive in Tibet**

On July 27th, the [11th group](#) of Chinese “Aid-Tibet” workers arrived in Tibet for a three-year stint. Comprising 2,156 workers from 17 Chinese provinces and cities, as well as central government agencies and state-owned enterprises—including 76 public organizations, one central financial institution, and 27 central enterprises—the group will work in education, healthcare, science and technology, agriculture, and industry across the China designated TAR. This in conjunction with the Chinese youth “volunteer” dispatch this month brings more

than 3300 Chinese workers into Tibet to sinicize Tibet. While China's central government claims the project advances Tibet's economic and social development, "Aid-Tibet" program reflects Beijing's broader strategy to tighten control over Tibet and integration into China's national framework, at the expense of Tibetan autonomy and cultural identity.

#### **4. Stepping up Chinese external propaganda on Tibet**

On July 30th, the "Witnessing China, Spreading Globally" [event](#), organized by the All-China Journalists Association, concluded in Tibet after a nine-day program where nearly 30 Chinese-language media representatives from 18 countries discussed strategies to promote Beijing's narrative on Tibet. According to state media, the event garnered unanimous support for a permanent cooperation mechanism to boost the global influence of Chinese-language media and amplify China's perspective on Tibet. Launched in August 2013, CCP General Secretary Xi Jinping's "[telling China's story well](#)" initiative has pushed state and affiliated private media to enhance China's "international discourse power" through external propaganda. The Tibet event represents the latest effort in this over-decade-long campaign to align global Chinese media with Beijing's agenda.

#### **5. Ancient Tibetan Texts Used to Promote Chinese State Narrative**

On July 30th, an [exhibition](#) of ancient Tibetan books and archives, organized by the Lhasa City Archives, was held at the Tibet Cultural Museum, with Tang Zuyi and Hu Qizhen from the Chinese Academy of Tibetan Studies officially launching the event. The exhibition, which serves as a tool of Chinese state propaganda, claimed to celebrate Tibet's cultural heritage, while entrenching narratives of Beijing's control over Tibet, particularly by emphasizing "integration" during the Tang, Yuan, Ming, and Qing dynasties. Just ahead of the impending 60th anniversary of the establishment of TAR in September, the exhibition appears to be a calculated propaganda event to legitimize China's governance amid ongoing criticisms of cultural suppression and human rights violations in Tibet.

#### **6. Tibetan singer arrested**

In a crackdown on Tibetan cultural expression, Chinese authorities in Ngaba County, Sichuan Province, arrested Tibetan singer Tsuktey a.k.a A-sang for commemorating the Dalai Lama's 90th birthday, according to [Tibet Times](#) on July 18th. A-sang and Palchung, both from Kashul Village, Barma Township, Ngaba County, were arrested around July 6th, the Dalai Lama's birthday, for reperforming another singer's cover song "Shidey Gyalsey" (Prince of Peace), honoring the Dalai Lama. Following A-Sang's arrest, the Chinese government has deleted his social media accounts.

#### **7. Cyber-attack on Dalai Lama's birthday**

Ahead of the Dalai Lama's 90th birthday on July 6, 2025, a China-nexus cyber espionage group targeted the Tibetan community through two sophisticated campaigns, dubbed Operation GhostChat and Operation PhantomPrayers, according to a Zscaler ThreatLabz [report](#). The attackers compromised a legitimate website, redirecting users to malicious links that installed either the Gh0st RAT or PhantomNet backdoor. In Operation GhostChat, a fraudulent site mimicking [tibetfund.org/90thbirthday](#) offered a fake TElement chat app capable of extensive surveillance including keylogging and webcam recording. Operation PhantomPrayers used a deceptive "90th Birthday Global Check-in" app to deliver PhantomNet, a backdoor that stealthily communicates with a command-and-control server using encrypted traffic. These attacks aimed to gather sensitive information from the Tibetan diaspora.

## RELIGION

### 8. China Demolishes Over 300 Buddhist Stupas and Sacred Statues in Tibet

In a sweeping crackdown on Tibetan Buddhism, Chinese authorities demolished over 300 Buddhist stupas and a statue of Guru Padmasambhava at Lungrab Zang-ri near Janggang Monastery in Draggo County, Sichuan Province, in late May 2025, citing violations of regulations and government land use, according to a July 22 report from the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) on [Tibet.net](#). The destruction, which also included a statue of Khenpo Jigme Phuntsok, founder of Serthar Buddhist Institute, left no trace of the structures and deeply traumatized local Tibetans, with Khenpo Tenga, who oversaw the constructions, placed under severe restrictions. This follows a pattern of religious suppression in Draggo, where authorities previously demolished sacred statues and prayer wheels in 2021, and coincides with intensified controls under Decree No. 22, effective January 1, 2025, mandating strict government oversight of monasteries.

### 9. New law entrenches state control over Tibetan monastics

On June 30, 2025, the Buddhist Association of China, under the oversight of the CCP, adopted the "[Measures for the Certification of Qualifications for Tibetan Buddhist Clergy](#)," a targeted legal framework to regulate Tibetan Buddhist monks and nuns as announced by the Kardze (Ganzi) Prefecture Buddhist Association. These measures reinforce state control over Tibetan Buddhist monastics, to ensure loyalty to the CCP, China's national policies, socialist values, and sinicization, while standardizing certification and discipline processes. According to the measures, applicants aged 20 and above, must undergo a rigorous multi-level review process, including a one-year preparatory assessment, to obtain a five-year renewable monastic certificate.

## DEVELOPMENT

### 10. Ground broken for the world's largest political dam in Tibet

China broke ground on July 21st on what will become the world's largest dam on Yarlung Tsangpo (Brahmaputra) in Tibet that underscores China's dual ambitions of securing energy independence and solidifying geopolitical leverage over one of Asia's most important rivers originating in Tibet. According to the [Institute for Energy Research](#), it's unclear how successful the project will end up being; since the Yarlung Tsangbo River is fed by glacial meltwater, flows are highly seasonal, leading to an unstable power supply. Chinese officials have likely considered these factors and still went ahead with the project. The IER opines that it is possible that China cares more about the leverage the dam gives it over downstream countries India and Bangladesh than its energy-producing potential.

### 11. Draining of glacial lake in Tibet triggers deadly flood at Nepal-Tibet border

A catastrophic flash flood, triggered by a permafrost collapse and the draining of a glacial lake in Tibet, struck the Kyidong (Gyirong) Port area on July 8, 2025, destroying the Friendship Bridge—a critical trade link between Tibet and Nepal—killing at least nine people, leaving 19 missing in Nepal and 11 unaccounted for on the Tibet side, while displacing 350 people, according to multiple media reports from July 8-10. The surge in the Donglin Tsangpo and Bhote Koshi rivers swept away roads, bridges, stranding dozens of trucks and made the 111 MW Rasuwagadhi and 60 MW Trishuli hydro power plants inoperable. Satellite imagery from the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) [confirmed](#) the flood's origin north of Nepal's Langtang Himal range in Tibet, highlighting the region's escalating vulnerability to climate-driven disasters like glacial lake outbursts.



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