



INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

ICT'S TIBET ROUNDUP

AUGUST 1-30, 2026

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. Propaganda drive for Beijing's ethnic unity law

Chinese authorities in the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) have launched a sweeping propaganda campaign to enforce the so-called "Ethnic Unity and Progress Law," framing political assimilation as legal education. According to an August 22 report by China's "Rule of Law Daily," officials announced at a press conference hosted by the so-called Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) government that nearly 1,900 propaganda activities had reached over 258,000 people, with mobilization teams dispatched to villages, schools, and local communities. The report does not clarify whether these activities were carried out since the start of the year or were concentrated between July and late August 2026.

Coordinated across party propaganda, justice, education, and United Front departments, the drive systematically embeds the "five identities" (identification with the great motherland, the Chinese nation, Chinese culture, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), and socialism with Chinese characteristics), along with state-approved "correct" views of history, ethnicity, culture, and religion, into grassroots governance. This ideological effort is being institutionalized through online platforms and multi-year strategic plans running through 2030. With the mandates of "enhancing commonality" and fostering a cohesive "sense of community of the Chinese nation," Beijing actively prioritizes loyalty to the state over the preservation of Tibetan historical memory, language, and unique religious identity. By merging efforts to popularize legal education with national security education and mandatory grassroots political sessions, this campaign effectively weaponizes the local bureaucracy, turning it into a tool for enforcing state ideology. Consequently, any independent expression of Tibetan distinctiveness is framed as political disloyalty. In practice, therefore, the Chinese state's promotion of progress and unity systematically constricts the space required for authentic cultural survival, perpetuating a long-standing pattern of control masked by the rhetoric of rule of law and harmony.

2. Han Officials Dominate Key Posts in Tibet's Lhundup County

The Standing Committee of the 14th People's Congress of Lhundup (Chinese: Linzhou) County in Lhasa on August 19 appointed 19 new bureau directors to head key administrative departments, including public security, finance, education, justice, and natural resources. The disclosed names indicate a stark demographic imbalance: approximately 13, or 68.4%, of those appointed to these leadership roles are Han Chinese and only six are Tibetans.

Notably, the critical post of head of the Public Security Bureau was assigned to a Han Chinese cadre named Bai Jintao.

The predominance of Han officials in [local executive positions reinforces long-standing concerns over systematic demographic and administrative engineering in Tibetan areas](#). Concentrating key decision-making power in the hands of non-Tibetan officials systematically dilutes meaningful Tibetan representation in leadership roles.

RELIGION

3. State-backed research center politicizes Tibetan reincarnation system

A recent [commentary](#) published on August 27 by a director of the Religious Research Institute of China Tibetan Studies Research Center argues that the reincarnation of Tibetan Buddhist leaders must strictly adhere to religious rituals, historical Qing-era practices like the Golden Urn lottery, and, ultimately, approval from the Chinese government. The author characterizes any declarations by the Dalai Lama about the reincarnation process, as well as all independent support for it from the exile community and the West, as direct attacks on Buddhist doctrine and social stability.

While the author invokes karma and traditional lineage identification, the commentary subordinates these spiritual elements to state power by elevating Chinese imperial regulations and the 2007 Party-state administrative measures as non-negotiable mandates. It selectively cites historical disputes and the Golden Urn to justify contemporary oversight, despite historical evidence that Tibetan institutions carried out the succession process independently. By framing government intervention as protective rather than intrusive, the author sidesteps fundamental questions of religious freedom. The continuity of the Tibetan religious tradition in its true form rests with the monastic community and recognized spiritual authorities, not political certification. Presenting state supervision as the guardian of a “healthy inheritance” reduces a living Tibetan religious system to a mere instrument of Chinese national sovereignty and politicizes the Tibetan Buddhist reincarnation system.

4. Chinese-appointed Panchen Lama advances party control over Tibetan Buddhism in Lhasa

The Chinese government-recognized 11th Panchen Lama, Gyaltzen Norbu, spent several days in Lhasa in August, combining administrative responsibilities at the local branch of the Buddhist Association with religious ceremonies and state-sanctioned “social research.” According to state media [Tibet Daily](#), he chaired a series of association meetings, symposiums dedicated to “learning laws and regulations” and doctrinal interpretation, and a ceremony marking the branch’s 70th anniversary. Throughout his visit, he called for absolute loyalty to the CCP, championed the “sense of community of the Chinese nation,” and advocated for the Sinicization of Tibetan Buddhism. He also publicly endorsed Beijing’s so-called “Ethnic Unity and Progress Law,” calling for a more rigorous, rule-of-law framework to manage religious affairs.

The Chinese-appointed Panchen’s Lhasa visit is a classic example of the execution of United Front Work Department’s (UFWD) religious management tactic: Gyaltzen Norbu is required to project a facade of patriotic, modernized Tibetan Buddhism while integrating party political directives into sacred and institutional spaces.

5. County party secretary inspects Lhading monastery for political control

The Party Secretary of Tsomed (Cuomei) County Party Committee in Tibet on August 12 inspected the Lhading monastery, accompanied by the head of the county's UFWD. The inspection focused on expanding Party-building initiatives within the monastery's administrative apparatus, tightening financial and tax oversight, intensifying the ideological indoctrination of monastics, and strictly enforcing state regulations on religious affairs.

The county Party Secretary mandated a deeper study of Xi Jinping's directives and the national regulations on religious affairs, alongside a more active party organizational presence within the monastery. He ordered the normalization of the "Three Consciousnesses" (national, civic, and legal consciousness) education campaign, as well as one-on-one home visits to closely monitor monks' political thinking, and tighter restrictions on monastic mobility and control over daily operations.

DEVELOPMENT

6. Tibet mega-dam advances as China extracts plateau power for eastern Chinese cities

Chinese [state media China Tibet Network](#) hailed the successful installation of an 840-tonne rotor at the Zhala Hydropower Station in Tibet on August 11 as a world-class engineering milestone. Located on the Yuchu River, a major tributary of the Salween, the dam is presented as the backbone of Beijing's ambitious "Tibetan Power Outgoing" initiative. Once fully operational, the project is expected to transmit nearly four billion kilowatt-hours of "clean" electricity annually to the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area via ultra-high-voltage transmission lines. State officials have used the milestone to emphasize technological self-reliance, substantial carbon emissions reductions, and the establishment of a "Chinese model" for global green energy transition.

7. Beijing intensifies educational assimilation drive in Tibet

A high-level [conference](#) on educational assistance to Tibet was convened in Lhasa on August 13, bringing together China's Minister of Education Huai Jinpeng, regional Party Secretary Wang Junzheng, and other senior central officials. While hailing past achievements, the Chinese policymakers called for deeper, more systematic support throughout the upcoming 15th Five-Year Plan period. Their speeches underscored the importance of leveraging education to "forge the sense of community of the Chinese nation," implement Xi Jinping Thought, and align the school system with the Party's broader strategy for governing Tibet. The Chinese central authorities instructed mainland provinces, universities, and administrative cadres to expand "group-style" assistance programs, optimize regional school distribution layouts, intensify ideological training, and integrate educational resources directly into major development projects.

Although framed as a benevolent effort to improve Tibetan livelihoods and academic quality, the initiative systematically prioritizes national identity formation and allegiance to the state over the preservation of the Tibetan language, historical memory, and cultural transmission. The continuous deployment of mainland educators and state-mandated curricula accelerates the Sinicization of classrooms, progressively displacing distinct Tibetan educational practices. The Chinese state's claim and marketing of supportive counterpart-aid programs, presented as educational assistance, functions in practice as a long-term, institutionalized mechanism for reshaping the worldview of Tibetan youth and solidifying Beijing's political control through the school system.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

8. China stages “Seeing Tibet” propaganda event in Nepal to whitewash human rights record

The China Society for Human Rights Studies, Tribhuvan University, and the National Human Rights Commission of Nepal on August 19 hosted a “Seeing Tibet” story-sharing forum in Kathmandu, Nepal that drew over 300 attendees. The event, part of Beijing’s soft-power and United Front outreach in South Asia, sought to export the Chinese state’s official narrative of Tibet as a triumph of “peaceful liberation,” rapid economic development, ecological preservation, and ethnic harmony.

Jiang Jianguo, a senior Chinese political adviser, portrayed the 75 years since Tibet’s “peaceful liberation” as a human rights success story, asserting that the CCP has consistently prioritized the Tibetan people’s fundamental rights to survival and development. The chairman of Nepal’s National Human Rights Commission and the Chinese ambassador echoed these claims and calls for closer bilateral cooperation. Co-organized by the China Society for Human Rights Studies, the event featured four carefully curated narrative segments that presented an “open, vital, beautiful, and green Tibet,” complemented by a photography exhibition and a favorable testimony from a Nepali official who had recently visited Tibet under Chinese sponsorship.

By partnering with prominent Nepali rights institutions, Beijing seeks to gain international legitimacy for its tightly managed narrative while constricting the political and advocacy space available to the Tibetan refugee community in Nepal and gradually shifting regional public opinion in China’s favor.

9. Weaponizing Tibetan cultural heritage to reinforce Beijing’s claim on Arunachal Pradesh

A Chinese government-aligned cultural body in Tibet issued a strongly worded rejection of India’s recent standardization of 27 place names in Arunachal Pradesh, which Beijing refers to as “southern Tibet” or Zangnan. On August 20, the Tsayang Gyatso (Gangyang Jiacao) Cultural Research Association [declared](#) India’s administrative changes “illegal and invalid,” asserting that the historical border areas of Monyul, Loyul, and Lower Tsayul have “belonged to China since ancient times.” The association dismissed the McMahon Line and the legitimacy of Arunachal Pradesh as lacking historical or legal foundation, arguing that traditional Tibetan place names serve as definitive proof of Chinese sovereignty. Highlighting the region as the birthplace of the Sixth Dalai Lama, Tsangyang Gyatso, the group pledged to compile historical archives to “safeguard territorial integrity.”

By acting through an organization named after the Sixth Dalai Lama, Beijing advances maximalist territorial claims over Indian-administered Arunachal Pradesh. Invoking historical Tibetan administrative jurisdiction, classical texts, and the spiritual legacy of the Sixth Dalai Lama’s birthplace in Tawang allows the association to cloak a rigid geopolitical sovereignty claim in the language of Tibetan cultural heritage. In reality, such associations within China operate under strict CCP supervision, serving state foreign policy objectives rather than genuine, independent Tibetan scholarship. Beijing thus co-opts Tibetan heritage to serve nationalist territorial ambitions while severely restricting that same heritage when Tibetans inspire for a distinct Tibetan identity or religious allegiance.