



TIBET

IN 2024 ELECTION MANIFESTO KEY TAKEAWAYS

- India's strategic reevaluation of its Tibet policy is imperative amidst escalating Chinese activities in the region, demanding urgent attention due to threats posed to national security by extensive infrastructure developments and military expansions in Tibet, necessitating an autonomous approach to safeguard national interests despite potential reactions from China. The Sinicization of Tibet poses a direct strategic concern to India, particularly in the Himalayan region with its deep religious and cultural affinities with Tibetans.
- FNVA emphasises the need for addressing the unresolved Sino-Tibet conflict, urging responsible Indian national parties to confront this issue and integrate Tibet into political discourse, aligning with India's commitment to regional peace and security. The inclusion of Tibet in election manifesto is viewed as crucial, signaling a forward-thinking approach that resonates with principles of compassion, justice, and democratic ideals.
- India's historical ties with Tibet, spanning from pre-Buddhist times to the present, are deeply rooted in cultural, philosophical, and educational exchanges. Beginning with contacts with the Zhangzhung kingdom, India's influence on Tibetan Buddhism and governance systems has been profound, shaping Tibet into a peaceful country for centuries. The exchange extended to medicine, with Tibetan medicine drawing from Indian heritage. Academic exchanges between Tibetan and Indian students flourished prior to the annexation of Tibet by the PRC, highlighting the interconnectedness of their cultures. Today, Tibetans hold India in high regard as the birthplace of Buddhism, emphasizing a spiritual guru-disciple relationship and recognizing India's pivotal role in preserving Tibetan culture and spirituality.

POINTS POLITICAL PARTIES COULD INCLUDE IN THEIR 2024 ELECTION MANIFESTO

UNDER NATIONAL SECURITY

- State that that your party recognises the strategic importance of Tibet and its impact on India's defense posture."
- State that your party encourages global cooperation and international support for India's stance on Tibet-related issues.
- State that your party aims to advocate for the reestablishment of India's diplomatic mission in Lhasa and makes further opening of Chinese diplomatic or other offices in India conditional on this".

UNDER POLICY FOR THE HIMALAYAN STATES

- State that your party considers Tibet and the Himalayan region very much India's core interest."

UNDER CLIMATE CHANGE

- State that your party acknowledges the paramount importance of transboundary rivers originating in Tibet, notably the Brahmaputra (Yarlung Tsangpo in Tibet) and the Indus (Singhi Khamban known in Tibet), as indispensable contributors to India's vital water resources, upon which the livelihoods of millions depend. Recognising potential risks arising from China's hydropower projects, particularly those affecting the Yarlung Tsangpo, the INC urges the People's Republic of China (PRC) to share comprehensive information regarding all hydropower initiatives on the Yarlung Tsangpo and Singhi Khamban. Given the profound implications for regions such as Arunachal Pradesh and Assam and the Union Territory of Ladakh, the INC advocates collaborative initiatives between India and China to address shared environmental concerns, thereby ensuring the sustainable management of water resources and insist that China does a proper and transparent environmental impact assessment before planning damming projects and to ensure China's dam-building programmes take neighbours into account."
- Demand institutionalisation of a water sharing agreement between China and the lower riparian states on the sharing of the Brahmaputra and other waters and push for the creation of a India-China Commission on Brahmaputra similar to the Indus Water Treaty between India and Pakistan.
- State "that if all this fails, your party will push for taking the Brahmaputra water issue in all international fora, including the UN."

UNDER CULTURAL HERITAGE, BUDDHISM AND SUCCESSION OF THE 14TH DALAI LAMA

- India being the land of origin of Buddhism, the INC has laid strong foundations in securing India as the rightful sphere of Buddhism by establishing organisations like the International Buddhist Confederation (IBC), and the Asian Buddhist Confederation of Peace (ABCP), among others, thus substantiating and putting India on the Buddhist Map once again. INC should therefore state and reiterate that "India is the land of the Buddha and therefore INC articulates its concerns regarding the policies enforced by the Chinese government which pose a substantial threat to the sacred realm of Buddhism and staunchly advocates for international solidarity in safeguarding Tibet's religious and cultural identity".
- State that "Given India's historical connections to the tradition of Buddhism and the enduring ties between India and Tibet, rooted in shared spiritual values and cultural exchanges, should be fortified. We pledge to foster collaborative efforts to protect and promote the teachings and traditions of Tibetan Buddhism."
- State that your party will promote interconnectivity and exchange along the Buddhist Himalayas that constitute India's first and solid cultural and emotional line of defence."
- State that " In the interest of national security especially of those in the Himalayan region, your party will strongly oppose outside interference and influence in matters related to the succession process of The 14th Dalai Lama which must be left to the current Dalai Lama and the Tibetan Buddhist community, which includes Indian citizens all along the Indo-Tibetan border, and should his successor the 15th Dalai Lama wish to be in India then he/she too shall be an honoured guest just like the 14th Dalai Lama, and that your party will ensure all support is offered to the 15th Dalai Lama."
- State that your party will work for the opening of pilgrimage tourist routes to Kailash-Mansarovar through Nathu-La and Demchok and propose the Dehra Dun-Mansarovar route on grounds of comfort and amenities for travellers. India should continue to suggest air travel for the sector Delhi-Leh-Gargunsa for pilgrims, as well as pan India, air and rail connections to Bodh Gaya, Varanasi, Kushinagar, and to other Buddhist pilgrimage sites." All in all working towards the establishment of a Buddhist Circuit.

SECURING TIBET IS SAFEGUARDING INDIA'S FUTURE, STANDING RESILIENT AGAINST EXTERNAL INFLUENCE, AND BRINGING A HARMONIOUS LEGACY IN THE HIMALAYAN EMBRACE.