

TIBET DIGEST

OCTOBER 2024

FOUNDATION FOR
**Non-violent
Alternatives**
To inform and shape policy on Tibet and the region



FOUNDATION FOR NON-VIOLENT ALTERNATIVES (FNVA)

Tibetdigest is a monthly publication curated by FNVA, offering comprehensive coverage of significant developments pertaining to Tibet, Chinese politics, and Sino-Indian relations as gleaned from various open-source media outlets.

www.fnvaworld.org
143, 4th Floor, Uday Park, New Delhi, 49
office@fnvaworld.org

Disclaimer: FNVA does not endorse "China's Tibet", "Tibet Autonomous Region of China", "Xizang" or any such phrase that denotes Tibet has been/is a part of China. Articles that contain such phraseology are news items from the Chinese state media and must not be confused as endorsement by FNVA

Table of Content

Summary- October Tibet Digest	12
CCP'S Tibet Policies	12
Buddhism	13
State of Ecology of the Tibetan Plateau	13
Tibet in Exile	14
Protests, Detention and Other News from the PRC	20
CHINA'S TIBET POLICY	22
China Tries to Blot out Tibetan Criticism of Mining Firm's Damage to the Environment	22
Artificial Chinese Cordyceps Threaten Tibet's Traditional Market, Livelihoods	23
China identifies over 4000 new tourism sites in Tibet's capital Lhasa	24
China reports more archaeological discoveries in Tibet	24
Chinese court rules in favor of Lhasa Public Security Bureau against Gonpo Kyi	25
Investigation of Tibetan officials in historical Dechen reveals rampant corruption in Chinese bureaucracy	26
Tibetan School Falls to China's Legal Pressure	28
BUDDHISM	30
China Escalates Crackdown on Tibetan Buddhism	30
China detained Tibetan youngsters for resisting transfer from monastic to colonial boarding schools	31
China's Sixth World Buddhist Forum to be held 15–17 October at Xuedou Temple, Ningbo	31
Authorities transfer 200 Tibetan monastic students to state schools	32
STATE OF ECOLOGY OF THE TIBETAN PLATEAU	34
Lead pollution in a remote Tibetan glacier reveals far-reaching human activities	34
Researchers Catch Humans Living on the Tibetan Plateau Evolving in Real Time	34
Small areas of Tibetan Plateau may have outsize impact on East Asia's spring rains	35
Warmer winters mean world's highest places may store less carbon	36
Geologist Tracks Lead Pollution In A Tibetan Glacier, Revealing Global Impact Of Human Activities	36
TIBET IN EXILE	38
Chinese Liaison Officer Sangay Kyab Participates in a Conference Discussing Democratisation of China in Berlin	38
India Tibet Coordination Office Holds Tibet Awareness Program in Mumbai to Strengthen Advocacy for Tibet	39
BTSM protests against China	40
Tibetan delegation in Europe raises awareness on repression by China in Tibet	40

Representative Dr Tsewang Gyalpo Arya Concludes his Maiden Tour to the Philippines	41
Tibetan rights group demands information on four missing detainees in Ngaba	42
Modi-Xi meeting at BRICS draws cautious optimism from Tibetan leader	42
Over 140 global Tibet groups condemn Musée Guimet’s cultural erasure of Tibet	43
For Tibetan political leader, ‘Middle Way’ to autonomy is still core focus	43
Tibetan Parliament Continues Europe Tibet Advocacy in Switzerland	44
15-Nation Joint Statement Demands China Address Human Rights Abuses in Tibet and East Turkistan	45
Sikyong Penpa Tsering Addresses Seminar Titled ‘Charting Tibet’s Future’ in Delhi	46
Bengaluru: Panelists urge global action for Tibetan rights amid growing pressures from China	47
UK Foreign Secretary raises Uyghur’s rights, ignores Tibet during China visit	47
Tibetan advocates highlight language suppression at UN Human Rights Council event	48
Tibet and Ukraine share struggle against colonial power: former CTA President in Kyiv	49
China should look for Mao’s reincarnation instead of Dalai Lama, says CTA President	49
Documentary Film ‘Never Forget Tibet’ Launches in Brazil	50
Surveillance in Tibet: ICT delivers remarks at 6th International Religious Freedom or Belief Alliance Ministerial Conference in Berlin	51
Tibetan students face crisis as arrivals in India decline	53
An open letter to Foreign Secretary David Lammy	53
Tibetan leadership congratulates Japanese atomic bomb survivors on winning Nobel Peace Prize	54
Tibetan Sikyong meets with Czech leaders, Tibet supporters	55
Sikyong Penpa Tsering Attends the 28th Forum 2000 Alongside Former Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-Wen	56
Tibetans in France continue protest, condemning museum’s refusal to rename exhibit as “Tibet”	56
In new film, Dalai Lama says inner peace is key to happiness	57
Sikyong Penpa Tsering Advocates for Tibetan Rights During Official Visit to the Netherlands	58
Tibetan nuns touring the U.S. spending six days in Lincoln County performing ceremonies, creating mandala	59
Tibet Museum Showcases Travelling Exhibition Alongside DIIR’s Tibet Awareness Talks	60
Deputy Speaker Dolma Tsering Teykhang Meets with the US Embassy Staff	60
Tibetans urge NYC to add Losar to ‘Alternate Side Parking suspension calendar	61
Exile administration issues guidelines for Tibet or China visits by Tibetans	62
DIIR Tibet Awareness Talk Reaches Thousands Across Indian Universities and Colleges	63
Open Letter to the co-founder of Rubin Museum of Art	64

12 Years After Dalai Lama’s Previous Visit, MPs from Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile Coming to Kashmir	65
Chamgon Kenting Tai Situpa Rinpoche Visits Tenzingang Tibetan Settlement, Confers Teachings to Tibetan and Local Residents	66
Dalai Lama to visit Ladakh next summer	66
Sikyong Delivers Kashag’s Message at the Celebration of 41st Sakya Trizin Kyabgon Gongma Dorje Chang Rinpoche’s 80th birthday	66
Tibetan Parliamentary Delegation Meets European Parliament Members in Belgium	67
Office of Tibet in Canberra and Alliance for Victims of the Chinese Communist Regime Organise Counter-event on PRC’s Founding Anniversary	68
Department of Religion and Culture Achieves Key Milestones in First Year of Tibetan Digital Library Initiative	68
Top Paris museum has replaced ‘Nepal-Tibet’ with incorrect ‘Himalayan World’ to avoid mentioning ‘Tibet’	68
Sikyong Visits Two Schools in Mussoorie, Advice Tibetan Students on Continuing Future Tibet Struggle	69
Dalai Lama praises Japan for promoting peace in world	70
Tibetan Student Unity Network Debuts on PRC’s 75th Anniversary, Aims to Empower Tibetan Students	70
Sikyong Penpa Tsering Extends His Congratulations to the New Prime Minister of Japan, Honourable Shigeru Ishiba	71
30 Tibetans detained	71
Embassy in New Delhi targeted as exile Tibetans, others protest on China’s 75 th National Day	71
Office of Tibet, Nepal Hosts Three-Day Exhibition Showcasing Jamyang Dorje’s Masterful Tibetan Calligraphy	72
His Holiness the Dalai Lama Confers Teaching on Tsongkhapa’s Three Principal Aspects of the Path	73
The World Needs a Champion like the Tibetan People and the Guidance of His Holiness the Dalai Lama More Than Ever: Congressman Jim McGovern at Gratitude Event in His Honor	75
CHINA POLITICS	77
Xi stresses advancing reform at study session for senior officials	77
Role reversed for China’s birth-control enforcers, now cajoling women to marry, have children	78
China faces stormy future as confidence in Xi crumbles	79
Village leaders facing spate of investigations	81
China takes down fake news about its military, closes social media accounts	82
Xi stresses enhancing inclusive public services for people	83
Former Chinese Justice Minister Tang Yijun Arrested on Corruption Charges	83
China accuses Australia of 'systemic racism', 'hate crimes' after human rights concerns raised	84

China's top political advisor stresses forging strong sense of community for Chinese nation	84
West blasts China on rights, China responds: What about Gaza?	84
China eyes 'top-tier industrial workforce' by 2035, vows hi-tech training, talent support	85
'Confident' China should relax grip on cultural, information exchange: academic	86
Xi Jinping again urges his troops to be ready for war	87
China's increasing passport controls evoke Mao era	87
China again ranks as the country with worst internet freedom, Myanmar giving it company this time	88
Gansu, Association of Disciples Member Deprogrammed—to Atheism	89
China cracks down on Communist party officials for reading banned books	89
China's Li Xiaopeng, son of former premier Li Peng, signals end to closely watched career	90
China's finance minister says there is room for more economic stimulus but offers no plan	91
China's political advisors urged to contribute to country's cultural advancement	91
Japan urged to investigate China's transnational repression operating in the country	92
Political disloyalty being emphasized in China's anti-corruption investigations	92
Japan: Chinese Authorities Harass Critics Abroad	93
China throws the book: more corruption suspects hit with claims of illicit reading	97
As economic challenges and security threats linger, China marks 75 years of Communist Party rule	98
PROTESTS, DETENTIONS AND OTHER NEWS FROM THE PRC	99
Authorities Arrest Four Tibetans in Ngaba County for Contacting Outsiders	99
Tibetan monks' phones seized after accusations of sharing news about school closures	99
China cracks down on 'uncivilised' online puns used to discuss sensitive topics	100
Condemned Uyghur official dies in prison in China's Xinjiang region	101
Overcrowding reported at China detention centers amid economic downturn	101
Falun Gong Practitioner Persecuted to Death 5 Days After Arrival in Notorious Prison	103
In rare appeal, Tibetan calls for company to stop digging up river	103
Yunnan, Update on Brother Chang Hao: Sentenced, Liberated, and Detained Again	105
China's ruling against Tibetan activist highlights Beijing's poor human rights record	105
Tibetan singer arrested for 'patriotic song' released early from prison	106
Former Tibetan political prisoner Thupten Yeshe passes away at 74 in Lhasa	107
MILITARY AND INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT	108
China's leader has a new military secretary, state TV video of rocket force visit suggests	108
Xi Jinping Inspects Rocket Force Unit, Emphasizes Combat Readiness and Party Leadership	109

Border town in Xizang sees rapid growth in cross-border trade, tourism under favorable national policies	109
China in the Region	111
China- Hong Kong	111
Hong Kong inmate denied early release under security law ‘treated unfairly’, court told	111
Beijing urges HSBC to keep backing mainland China and Hong Kong’s development push	112
China heightens surveillance in Hong Kong; critics and citizens on alert	113
Hong Kong and mainland China broaden trade agreement to support local firms’ expansion across border	113
Hong Kong plans to install thousands of surveillance cameras. Critics say it’s more proof the city is moving closer to China	114
Amnesty International recognizes three activists as prisoners of conscience	116
China- Nepal	117
Nepal opens Lomanthang to all citizens travelling to Chinese ruled Tibet	117
Nepal entrusts China to print Rs 100 notes with map laying claim over Indian territory	118
China-aided public welfare projects handed over to Nepal's community	118
CPC holds meeting of Nepali political parties, PM Oli reiterates ‘no anti-China activities’ stand	119
Chinese leaders meet top party leaders in Kathmandu	120
Chairman Prachanda stresses for implementation of agreements signed between Nepal, China	121
CPC invites 15 leaders each from Nepali parties in House for its briefing in Kathmandu	121
China expands territorial claims with new fence along Nepal-Tibet border	122
China fails to push BRI implementation plan in Nepal	123
China's economic and political ties with Nepal affecting lives of Tibetan refugee community	124
Nepal Urges China to Share Data Required for Flood Management	125
Chinese Communist Party’s direct aid to Nepali parties comes under fire	126
China’s withholding of vital information on glacial lakes in Tibet may have contributed to Nepal’s flood disaster	127
Chinese Communist Party launches relief initiative for Nepal flood victims	128
Red Cross Society of China donates \$100,000 to disaster victims of Nepal	128
China-Pakistan	128
Pakistan says China's remarks on safety of its citizens 'perplexing'	128
Chinese envoy miffed at CPEC security lapses	129
China warns security threats to its nationals impede BRI investments in Pakistan	131

Pakistan requests additional \$1.4 billion loan from China amid ongoing financial challenges	132
Pakistan requests China to increase currency swap agreement limit to 40 billion Yuan	132
Minister discusses cooperation initiatives with Chinese envoy	133
Pakistan Faces Brunt Of US Sanctions; A Total Of 26 Entities Blacklisted For Supporting Weapons Development In Iran, Pak, China	133
Pakistan gets 'promising response' from China over debt refiling: FinMin	135
Rise in violence against Chinese nationals in Pakistan threatens China's 'Silk Road' vision	135
Symposium held in Islamabad on China-Pakistan cooperation to drive modernization	137
Pakistan to increase security for Chinese projects as Beijing calls for urgent steps	138
China's Premier Li begins Pakistan visit amid rare strains in relations	138
China to work with Pakistan to protect Chinese personnel following attack	139
China's security agency vows to boost intelligence sharing after deadly attack in Pakistan	139
China calls on Pakistan to 'severely punish' attackers after 2 Chinese die in Karachi	140
China sends 27 military aircraft, six naval vessels towards Taiwan	141
'Terrorist attack' near Karachi airport kills two Chinese nationals, embassy says	141
Chinese modernization serves as model for Pakistan to promote economic development: Pakistani PM	142
Pakistan approves ₹45 billion for armed forces to protect Chinese interests	143
Chinese investment plays instrumental role in stabilizing Pakistan's economy: minister	143
China- Taiwan	143
CCP attempts to extend jurisdiction	143
Taiwan issues warnings to Chinese coast guard vessels around Kinmen	144
Taiwan reports Chinese 'combat patrol' after Beijing slams US arms deal	144
China vows to take 'countermeasures' over US and Taiwan \$2bn arms deal	145
Taiwan president 'won't yield an inch' in defense of island's territory	146
China Responds to Taiwan's Plea for Cross-Strait Peace with Military Pressure	146
Taiwan unveils plans to cope with potential Chinese military blockade	148
Taiwan says blockade would be act of war as China holds more drills	149
China holds live-fire drills on island closest to Taiwan	150
Preparing for a Chinese blockade, Taiwan maps out wartime food plans	150
China reiterate vow to use force over Taiwan as president Xi visits frontline island	151
China starts new round of war games around Taiwan	151
China threatens Taiwan with more trade measures after denouncing president's speech	152

Taiwan says four iPhone maker staff detained in China under 'strange' circumstances	153
US says Taiwan speech no justification for China military pressure	153
No one can stop China's reunification: mainland slams Lai's separatist remarks	154
Taiwan willing to cooperate with China, but not as subordinate to it as 'motherland'	154
Most Taiwanese believe China unlikely to invade in coming five years, poll shows	155
China criticizes Taiwan president for his 'motherland' comment	156
Communist China not the motherland, says Taiwan's president, because our republic is older	156
Taiwanese people ready to fight as China ramps up aggression, ambassador says	157
China wants Taiwan to make mistakes and is looking for excuses to trigger a blockade, Taiwan's navy commander says	157
Not subordinate to China, says Taiwan in response to Xi Jinping's "one-China principle"	158
Xi vows to 'reunify' Taiwan, warns of 'rough seas' ahead, on low-key 75th National Day	158
China-Xinjiang	159
China's idyllic Xinjiang grasslands hid a salty soiled secret that's been solved	159
China hosts World Media Summit in Xinjiang amid human rights concerns	160
Former political advisor of Xinjiang arrested for suspected bribe-taking	161
Rights groups blast Skechers over new store in Xinjiang	161
EU Parliament urges China to release Uyghur doctor Gulshan Abbas, economist Ilham Tohti	162
Chinese vice premier urges bolstering Xinjiang's development	163
For Companies in China, Pulling Out of Xinjiang Poses 'Messy Dilemma'	164
CHINA- US	166
Exclusive: China's Xi pressed Biden to alter language on Taiwan	166
Intel invests US\$300 million in China chip packaging and testing plant	167
Chinese Hackers Are Said to Have Targeted Phones Used by Trump and Vance	167
Oversight Committee Releases Report Exposing the CCP's Destructive Political Warfare and Influence Operations	168
China rivalry will continue 'into the next decade,' U.S. ambassador tells NBC News	169
Cold War legislative barrage: House passes 25 anti-China bills in one week	171
US to curb AI investment in China soon	171
DJI sues US department of defence over military company blacklist designation	172
Xi says China willing to be a partner, friend with the US	173
China slaps sanctions on 3 US firms, 10 senior execs over weapons sales to Taiwan	173
Chinese hackers access US telecom firms, worrying national security officials	173
Transnational repression endangers Americans: US diplomat	174
Joe Biden 'sent Xi Jinping congratulatory message' to mark China's 75th National Day	175

US bans Chinese steel and food-additives firms over Xinjiang human rights	175
China, US to hold talks on economic and trade issues, Xinhua reports	176
SINO-INDIAN RELATIONS	177
Indian And Chinese Troops Gift Sweets At Contested Border	177
Rajnath Singh to celebrate Diwali with soldiers at Bum La Pass in China border	178
India: Border issues far from fully resolved, normalizing China ties to take time	178
India and China disengaging at Ladakh border after reaching a patrolling deal	179
Two Nepalese nationals arrested in Lucknow for digital fraud linked to Chinese operative	180
China and India should manage their differences, Xi tells Modi in first formal talks in 5 years	180
Amid Modi-Xi meet, Indian Army opens museum to counter China's claims about Arunachal Pradesh	181
A Modi-Xi Meeting Could Signal a Thaw Between India and China	181
China's Xi and India's Modi meet after border accord between two countries	183
China confirms pact with India to 'resolve' conflict over disputed border	183
Arunachal's Siang valley dam project on fast track to counter China threat	184
India calls out China's non-transparent subsidies that stifle competition at WTO meet	185
China urges India to handle Taiwan issue cautiously after Mumbai office opening	185
Satellite pics show new Chinese settlement under construction near Pangong Lake	185
India expresses cautious optimism in Tibet-border talks with China	186
India launches major strategic infrastructure projects and plans, procurements as China threat simmers	187
India 'cautiously optimistic' about border talks with China: Rajnath Singh	188
EXPLAINED: Is China taking away people's passports?	188
"Ready to enhance communication with India, increase mutual trust": Chinese Foreign Ministry	190
New air force chief calls for India to 'catch up' with China on defence tech	190
Jaishankar refutes Chinese incursion claims in Arunachal Pradesh	191
China's restrictions drive Indians to undertake helicopter Mt Kailash pilgrimage from own country	191
India's renewed push for permanent UN Security Council seat faces persistent China roadblock	192
India: Tension with China to remain amid trust deficit, continuing border standoff	193
India cites 'trust deficit' to continue winter troop deployment on China-ruled Tibet-borders	193
COMMENTARIES	195
REVEALED: Inside the CIA's (largely) secret role in the Tibetan resistance	195
Has India made friends with China after the Modi-Xi agreement?	199
EXPLAINED: What's Hong Kong's role in China's hi-tech military plans?	201

Confronting the Growing Threat of the Chinese Communist Party	203
Data shows the Chinese government is less popular than state media makes it seem	203
Is Tibet forgotten?	204
A silent resistance is growing in Tibet	206
The changing dynamics of India-China relations amidst India-U.S. tensions	207
LAC patrolling agreement with China doesn't mean everything is resolved: Jaishankar	208
The Man Who Shaped China's Strongman Rule Has a New Job: Winning Taiwan	209
Explainer: India and China troops disengage at disputed Ladakh border, easing decades-long tensions	212
Opinion China-India border detente paves way for a more balanced world order	213
Brahmaputra's challenges: A call for strategic cooperation and sustainable solutions	214
What's next for China and India as Modi, Xi start over?	216
The curious case of China renaming locations in India's Arunachal Pradesh	217
Thaw in Sino-Indian relations: Trust, but keep verifying	219
Decoding Chinese Military Diplomacy in South Asia	220
We need to talk about China	225
From Orchards to Auctions: The Chinese Robbery of Uyghur Wealth. Part II	226
From Orchards to Auctions: The Chinese Robbery of Uyghur Wealth. Part I	228
China's Agents of Chaos	229
Guest Opinion: False narratives about Xinjiang won't halt its development	233
Value Vacuum: China's command versus India's concessions	234
Getting Hongkongers to retire in mainland China isn't the answer to poverty: experts	235
PRC at 75: In China under Xi Jinping, people run or 'lie flat'	236
China's economy is set to have its slowest year of growth in decades	238
Who really benefits from China's winter tourism promotion in Tibet?	239
Xi Jinping Has Further Boosted the Military-Industrial Group of China	239
China's Political Mobilization Challenge	242
Nicholas Roerich, Shambala, and Agarthā. 1. Tibet and Paris	244
Decision of The Court of the Citizens of World on the Proposed Indictment of Xi Jinping – The Opinion of Judge Bhavani Fonseka	246
South Asia In Transition: Geopolitical Impacts Of China's Expanding Role – OpEd	247
India's Arunachal Dam a defence against China's 'Mother of all Dams' plan in Tibet?	248
Book review: A document for the posterity	249
Opinion: What China's leaders grasp about another Trump term	252
China's government is about to spend big on stimulus – can it turn around the country's sluggish economy?	254
The Politics of China's Land Appropriation in Bhutan	255

China's 'Mother Of All Dams' Threatens More Tensions With India; Delhi Responds By Building Another Dam On Its Side	258
India has a China problem, not just a border problem	259
EXPLAINED: Xinjiang's largest cotton producer turned 70; not everyone is celebrating	260
The Great Han Chauvinism: Why China doesn't have any place for minorities	261
A Japanese boy was killed in China. Was cyber-nationalism to blame?	263
Don't play Big Brother, be nuanced with a long view Columnists	265
PRC Positive Messaging Frames Successful Colonization in Xinjiang	266
Human rights take a new hit in Xi Jinping's Tibet	271
Caught in India-China clashes, Ladakh's nomadic herders fear for future	272
China's 'New Great Wall' Casts a Shadow on Nepal	273
From G2 to Cold War 2.0: The Changing US Attitude Toward China	276
Dashain: Nepal turns to India for meat, China for toothpicks	277
CCP Insists on Falsifying the History of "Humanistic Buddhism"	278
From Deng to Xi, China's Foreign Policy Identity Has Been Consistent	278
Critical Translation Readings On Monyul In The History Of India's Tawang Monastery – Book Review	280
Opinion: The Erasure of Tibet- A Dangerous Change at the Guimet Museum	284
China still challenges India in the Himalayas as BRICS summit approaches	285
China's Dark Shadow Over Nepal's Tibetan Refugee Community	286
Book Review: The Phallus by Bhuchung D. Sonam	287
China's Sentinel State	289
China's Tryst With Religion	291
IAF downs Chinese spy balloon: What is China up to and what is India doing?	293
'Monks, Business and Rebellion: Nepal's Bhot-China Relationship and India' book review: Nepal's geographic location is both strength and a weakness	293
Why US-Taiwan aid package is a signal to China ahead of election	294
Why China is investigating US companies Calvin Klein and Tommy Hilfiger	296
Are China's lauded anti-poverty triumphs at risk of vanishing?	297
Jaishankar's Hard Sell In Colombo	299
Why do so many Chinese officials fall for fake promises of political charlatans?	300
How India-China border tensions affect Ladakh nomads	302
Sino-Indian relations coming full circle	303
PRC at 75: Deng Xiaoping never delivered on young people's desire for freedom	307
Why China's soft power fails to soften its image	309
After 19 years, a docent at the Rubin Museum says goodbye to his 'home away from home'	311
Geopolitics and the fate of Manipur	311
China is using an "anaconda strategy" to squeeze Taiwan	313

Did Jaishankar’s long story of China mean Mao’s 5 fingers...this secret of the dragon will force you to think	313
India’s geopolitical manoeuvring disrupts Mongolia’s religious harmony	315
Chinese are seeing India as going soft. Talk of ‘consensus’ over disengagement rings hollow	316
The Tibet International Communication Center and China's Latest Manipulation Exercise	317
Publications	319
The Sunday Funnies	319

Summary- October Tibet Digest

In October, China intensified control over Tibet, targeting religious, educational, and environmental spheres. Authorities forced Tibetan youths into state-run schools, arrested locals for contacting outsiders, and cracked down on activists exposing environmental harm from mining. Beijing also strengthened control over Tibetan Buddhism, asserting influence on religious leadership and reincarnation processes.



Environmental and tourism pressures grew as lead pollution was reported in glaciers, and thousands of new tourism sites were designated in Lhasa, raising concerns over cultural impacts. International solidarity efforts included a Berlin conference uniting voices against CCP repression, while India held Tibet awareness events to bolster advocacy.

CCP'S Tibet Policies

China Tries to blot out Tibetan Criticism of Mining Firm's Damage to the Environment: Tsowo Tsering, a Tibetan from Ngawa, highlighted severe environmental harm from sand mining by Anhui Xianhe Construction Engineering Company, claiming it leads to soil erosion and risks local homes. His video post was censored by Chinese authorities, raising concerns for his safety as he joins other activists speaking out against environmental exploitation in Tibet.

Artificial Chinese Cordyceps Threaten Tibet's Traditional Market, Livelihoods:

The influx of artificially cultivated cordyceps from Chinese companies is destabilizing the traditional Tibetan market, driving prices down and misleading consumers. Despite the establishment of a local association to address fraud, little action has been taken, leaving many Tibetan households struggling financially amid challenges from climate change and urbanization.

China Identifies Over 4000 New Tourism Sites in Tibet's Capital Lhasa: China has identified over 4,000 new tourism sites in Lhasa to attract more visitors, primarily from China. While this has led to increased tourism revenue, there are growing concerns about the social and environmental impacts on the local population, which is vastly outnumbered by tourists.

China reports more archaeological discoveries in Tibet: Chinese archaeologists have reported the discovery of 301 immovable cultural relics in Shigatse, including ancient sites, tombs, and inscriptions. These findings were made during the second phase of a national cultural relics census in Tibet Autonomous Region. However, concerns arise over China's tendency to Sinicize archaeological discoveries in Tibet, presenting them as evidence of historical Chinese ownership. The report did not specify details of the discoveries, focusing instead on the broader survey of cultural sites.

Chinese court rules in favor of Lhasa Public Security Bureau against Gonpo Kyi:

A Chinese court dismissed Gonpo Kyi's lawsuit against the Lhasa Public Security Bureau regarding her detention while advocating for her brother's release. Gonpo has campaigned for her brother Dorjee Tashi, sentenced to life imprisonment in 2010 after being falsely labeled a "secessionist." The court ruled the bureau acted lawfully in detaining her, emphasizing the challenges faced by individuals contesting state actions in Tibet, particularly when advocating for justice.

Investigation of Tibetan officials in historical Dechen reveals rampant corruption in Chinese bureaucracy:

Several Tibetan officials in Dechen Prefecture have come under investigation for corruption, highlighting endemic issues within Chinese governance. The officials, including former governors, face scrutiny for "serious violations of discipline and laws." Despite Xi Jinping's anti-corruption campaign, concerns persist that these efforts primarily serve to bolster the Communist Party's legitimacy rather than address systemic corruption.

Tibetan School Falls to China's Legal Pressure: Gangjong Sherig Norbu Lobling School, located in Golog prefecture, Qinghai, was forced to close despite its reputation for promoting Tibetan culture and language. Authorities claimed the school did not meet vague standards set by the Qinghai Provincial Party Committee.

Founded in 1994, the school educated youth from various regions in Tibetan studies, medicine, and other subjects, but recent legal challenges culminated in its closure amid broader efforts to suppress Tibetan education. Activists have noted a systematic decline in educational opportunities for Tibetan children, emphasizing the need for international attention to uphold their linguistic and cultural rights.

Buddhism

China Escalates Crackdown on Tibetan Buddhism: Beijing is intensifying control over Tibetan Buddhism through stricter restrictions, increased surveillance, and forced assimilation policies. Over one million Tibetan children have been placed in state-run schools promoting Mandarin and Chinese cultural values. The government is also asserting control over the appointment of Tibetan religious leaders, including the Dalai Lama's reincarnation, while launching the Tibet International Communication Center to reshape international narratives ahead of the 6th World Buddhist Forum.

China Detained Tibetan Youngsters for Resisting Transfer from Monastic to Colonial Boarding Schools: Four Tibetan youths were detained in Sichuan for resisting forced transfers from their monastic school to state-run, "colonial-style" schools aimed at Sinicization. After their detention, they underwent political re-education before being compelled to enroll in a local government school. These actions reflect ongoing efforts to assimilate Tibetan identity and limit family contact.

China's Sixth World Buddhist Forum to be Held 15–17 October at Xuedou Temple, Ningbo: The Sixth World Buddhist Forum will occur from October 15-17 at Xuedou Temple in Ningbo, Zhejiang, with participation from over 80 countries. The forum, themed "Hand in Hand for Coexistence," is a key element of China's Buddhist diplomacy, aiming to promote cultural narratives and Maitreya culture while strengthening international relations.

Authorities Transfer 200 Tibetan Monastic Students to State Schools: Chinese authorities have forcibly moved around 200 students from the Lhamo Kirti Monastery school in Sichuan to state-run boarding schools, completely shutting down the monastic institution. This action is part of a broader initiative to control Tibetan education and promote loyalty to the Chinese Communist Party, with parents coerced into compliance.

State of Ecology of the Tibetan Plateau

Lead Pollution in Remote Tibetan Glacier Reveals Human Activities: Researchers have detected lead pollution in the Guliya Ice Cap on the Tibetan Plateau, indicating significant human impact. The study shows lead levels began rising in 1974, peaking between 2000 and 2007, as measured in ice samples that serve as a historical record. Although the Tibetan Plateau is considered pristine, the findings highlight the extensive environmental effects of human activities, particularly since the Industrial Revolution.

Research Shows Evolution of Tibetan Women in Real Time: A study on Tibetan women reveals that those with successful childbirth possess unique cardiovascular traits that enhance oxygen utilization in the low-oxygen environment of the Tibetan Plateau. Researchers observed 417 women and found that higher rates of live births correlated with greater oxygen saturation in their blood without increased blood viscosity, suggesting ongoing natural selection for traits beneficial for high-altitude living.

Small Areas of Tibetan Plateau Impact East Asia's Spring Rains: Research indicates that small mountainous regions of the Tibetan Plateau significantly enhance spring rainfall in East Asia by up to 25%. Gravity waves generated by these areas influence atmospheric conditions, affecting moisture transport from the Indian Ocean. Advanced modeling suggests that without this influence, rainfall would decrease significantly, underscoring the importance of small-scale terrain in climate forecasting.

Warmer Winters May Reduce Carbon Storage in High Altitudes: Climate change is causing winter temperatures to rise more rapidly than summer temperatures in high-altitude regions, potentially decreasing soil carbon storage. An experimental study found that warmer winter temperatures significantly reduce microbial activity in

soils, leading to increased carbon loss as greenhouse gases. The findings suggest current climate models may underestimate soil carbon losses due to neglecting asymmetric warming patterns.

Geologist Tracks Lead Pollution in Tibetan Glacier

A study by Texas A&M's Dr. Franco Marcantonio has found lead pollution in the Guliya Ice Cap, revealing that human activities have impacted even remote areas. Lead contamination began in 1974, peaking between 2000 and 2007, primarily from leaded gasoline emissions in China. Analyzing ice samples dating back 36,000 years provided insights into environmental changes and pollution's widespread effects on ecosystems and human health.

Tibet in Exile

Chinese Liaison Officer Sangay Kyab Participates in a Conference Discussing Democratization of China in Berlin:

Sangay Kyab, the Chinese Liaison Officer from the Tibet Bureau in Geneva, participated in a conference in Berlin organized by Sino Euro Voice, focusing on the democratization of China. The conference brought together representatives from Taiwan, Hong Kong, Tibet, Uyghur, Mongolia, and Inner Mongolia to discuss the ongoing repression under the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Kyab highlighted the historical phases of repression in Tibet and emphasized the importance of solidarity among oppressed communities. Following the conference, participants held a protest outside the Chinese Embassy in Berlin.

India Tibet Coordination Office Holds Tibet Awareness Programme in Mumbai to Strengthen Advocacy for Tibet:

The India Tibet Coordination Office (ITCO) conducted a Tibet Awareness Program in Mumbai, involving educational, political, and media stakeholders to promote Tibetan advocacy. Events included a program at Shri Chhatrapati Shivaji High School, where students learned about the significance of Tibet to India. Meetings with Bollywood figures aimed to increase awareness in the creative industry, while discussions with political leaders focused on enhancing advocacy at state and national levels. The program concluded with strong support from participants, indicating a promising future for Tibetan advocacy initiatives.

BTSM Protests Against China: The Bharat-Tibet Sahyog Manch (BTSM) held a protest advocating for a boycott of Chinese products and calling for the liberation of Kailash Mansarovar and Tibet. Led by JKUT President Dr. Vivek Sharma, the protest aimed to rally community support against China and promote local products. Speakers emphasized that using Chinese goods contributes to China's economic strength, urging citizens to show patriotism through a commitment to Swadeshi products.

Tibetan Delegation in Europe Raises Awareness on Repression by China in Tibet: A parliamentary delegation from the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) met with Swiss officials to advocate for Tibetan rights and highlight the CCP's oppressive policies. They discussed strategies to raise awareness about the human rights situation in Tibet and presented a letter appealing for international support. The delegation's efforts included fostering unity within the Tibetan struggle and exploring collaboration with local Tibet support groups and NGOs.

Representative Dr. Tsewang Gyalpo Arya Concludes His Maiden Tour to the Philippines: Dr. Tsewang Gyalpo Arya, representing the Liaison Office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, concluded a week-long tour of the Philippines, where he discussed Tibet's historical and current situation with local officials and students. He emphasized the importance of international solidarity in the Tibetan cause and highlighted the Philippines' historical support for Tibet. Lectures and discussions addressed various issues, including China's oppressive policies, and the potential for future Tibetan studies programs at local universities was proposed.

Demand for Information on Missing Detainees in Ngaba: The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) has raised concerns about the disappearance of four Tibetans, including two monks from Kirti Monastery in Ngaba, Amdo, who were arbitrarily detained by Chinese authorities in early September. Their current status and charges remain unknown. TCHRD highlights increased repression in the region, citing frequent arbitrary detentions and intimidation aimed at silencing local Tibetans, as well as the government's broader campaign to assimilate Tibetan culture.

Cautious Optimism from Tibetan Leader Following Modi-Xi Meeting: Following a bilateral meeting at the BRICS summit, Tibetan President-in-exile Penpa Tsering expressed cautious optimism about the discussions between

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping. Tsering acknowledged the importance of improved relations but emphasized skepticism regarding China's trustworthiness, given its aggressive stance along the Indo-Tibetan border.

Global Tibet Groups Condemn Musée Guimet's Cultural Erasure: Over 140 Tibetan advocacy organizations have condemned Paris's Musée Guimet for replacing "Tibet" with "Himalayan World" in its exhibitions, arguing this obscures Tibet's unique cultural identity and supports China's occupation narrative. Critics assert that this change undermines historical accuracy and violates ethical standards for cultural representation. The coalition has urged the museum to restore the use of "Tibet" in its exhibits.

Tibetan Political Leader Advocates for the 'Middle Way': Sikyong Penpa Tsering articulated his hopes for change in China's governance during the Forum 2000 democracy conference. He emphasised the importance of the "Middle Way Approach," which seeks increased autonomy for Tibet within China, while also acknowledging the grim human rights situation in Tibet. Tsering plans to continue advocating for this approach, as well as addressing cultural repression faced by Tibetans under Chinese rule.

Tibetan Parliament Advocates for Human Rights in Switzerland: A Tibetan parliamentary delegation met with Swiss National Council member Nicolas Walder to discuss the human rights situation in Tibet, urging that discussions on these issues be a condition for continuing the Free Trade Agreement with China. The delegation also engaged with various UN missions to raise awareness of the ongoing repression of Tibetan culture, language, and religion and to seek continued accountability for China at the UN level.

15-Nation Joint Statement on Human Rights in Tibet and East Turkistan: Australia's Ambassador to the UN, James Martin Larsen, presented a joint statement from 15 countries expressing concern over human rights abuses in Tibet and East Turkistan during the UN General Assembly. The countries called for China to uphold its international obligations and address issues like arbitrary detention, forced labour, and repression of cultural rights. They urged the immediate release of detained individuals and allowed independent observers access to assess the human rights situation. The statement highlights the ongoing international pressure on China regarding these human rights violations.

Sikyong Penpa Tsering Addresses 'Charting Tibet's Future' Seminar: Sikyong Penpa Tsering delivered a keynote address at a seminar hosted by the Foundation for Non-violent Alternatives, discussing the Resolve Tibet Act and the future of the Tibetan community. He emphasised the significance of the Act in supporting Tibetan rights and outlined strategies to sustain the Tibetan freedom movement. He also reflected on Tibet's historical leadership and connections with India, addressing concerns about the mismanagement of Tibet's water resources by China. The session included a Q&A segment, promoting dialogue on the Tibetan cause.

Panelists Urge Global Action for Tibetan Rights in Bengaluru:

A panel discussion titled 'Why Tibet Matters' at the Dalai Lama Institute for Higher Education focused on Tibetan identity and rights amid pressures from China. Panelists highlighted the importance of international support for the Tibetan cause and the link between environmental sustainability and human rights. The event called for collective responsibility to advocate for Tibetan issues, emphasising the need for action against human rights violations in Tibet since its incorporation into China in 1950.

UK Foreign Secretary Addresses Uyghur Rights, Ignores Tibet: During a visit to China, UK Foreign Secretary David Lammy addressed human rights violations affecting the Uyghur population but failed to mention Tibet, despite calls from rights groups. The omission drew criticism, especially given the current human rights crisis in Tibet, including forced assimilation and cultural repression. Rights advocates urged Lammy to leverage the UK's economic ties with China to raise awareness and pressure Beijing on Tibetan rights, but he maintained a pragmatic approach to diplomatic relations.

Tibetan Advocates Highlight Language Suppression at UN Event: Tibetan advocates at a UN Human Rights Council side event drew attention to China's suppression of the Tibetan language and school closures. Panelists discussed the dangers faced by those advocating for language rights in Tibet. The event emphasized China's obligations under international law to provide education in Tibetan and addressed the negative impact of recent educational policies. Representatives from China attended the event but denied the validity of the testimonies,

reflecting Beijing's ongoing dismissal of Tibetan issues. The gathering underscored the continued call for recognition and protection of Tibetan language and culture.

Tibet and Ukraine Share Struggle Against Colonial Power: During a visit to Kyiv, former Tibetan President Dr. Lobsang Sangay drew parallels between the struggles of Tibet and Ukraine against colonial powers. He highlighted the systematic erosion of Tibetan culture under Chinese occupation and Ukraine's resistance to Russian aggression. Both nations face threats to their cultural identities and resources. Dr. Sangay criticized the indifference of Western governments toward China's actions and emphasised the economic exploitation in both regions, calling for solidarity between Tibetans and Ukrainians in their respective fights against imperialism.

China Should Look for Mao's Reincarnation Instead of Dalai Lama: President Penpa Tsering of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) addressed the future of the Dalai Lama's succession at the Forum 2000 in Prague. He challenged China's claims of authority over the reincarnation of the Dalai Lama, humorously suggesting they focus on finding Mao Zedong's reincarnation first. Tsering outlined the CTA's plan to ensure the Dalai Lama's reincarnation remains free from Chinese interference and hinted at an upcoming announcement from the Dalai Lama regarding his succession plans. He also discussed the ongoing cultural genocide in Tibet and criticized Western democracies for inadvertently empowering authoritarianism in China.

Documentary Film 'Never Forget Tibet' Launches in Brazil: On World Mental Health Day, the documentary *Never Forget Tibet* premiered in São Paulo, Brazil, telling the story of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's escape into exile. The film, produced by Compassionate Films, will be available in various formats starting 31 October and is set to release in 120 countries. The launch event featured a photo exhibition by Heinrich Harrer and performances by monks from the Drepung Loseling Monastery, promoting Tibetan culture and history. The initiative aims to inspire future generations and increase awareness about Tibetan issues, coinciding with the U.S. Resolve Tibet Act.

Surveillance in Tibet: ICT Delivers Remarks at International Conference: At the 6th International Religious Freedom or Belief Alliance Ministerial Conference in Berlin, ICT Executive Director Kai Mueller discussed the extensive surveillance of Tibetan Buddhists by the Chinese government, particularly in monasteries. He highlighted the oppressive measures used to control Tibetan Buddhism, including human intelligence and technological surveillance. Mueller called for international awareness and action against these violations of privacy and religious freedom, urging governments to recognize the threat posed by China's surveillance technologies.

Tibetan Students Face Crisis as Arrivals in India Decline: The arrival of new Tibetan students in India has drastically decreased, with no new entries reported at the Tibetan Children's Village this year. This decline is attributed to increasing Chinese oppression, with reports of forced assimilation of Tibetan children into 'colonial schools.' Tsultrim Dorjee, Director of TCV, emphasized the need for the Central Tibetan Administration to advocate for Tibetan migration for education, as past figures indicated a significant drop from hundreds of students annually to none this year.

Open Letter to Foreign Secretary David Lammy: As Foreign Secretary David Lammy prepares for his inaugural visit to China, UK-based Tibet groups urge him to prioritize human rights and the situation in Tibet. The letter highlights the deteriorating human rights conditions in Tibet, exacerbated by the Chinese government's increasing control and policies aimed at eradicating Tibetan culture. The groups stress the need for the UK to challenge China's human rights abuses and advocate for Tibetans' rights, including self-determination. They express concern about the UK government's planned "reset" of relations with China, warning that without a focus on human rights, this could repeat past failures. The letter outlines specific actions Lammy should take during his visit, including advocating for the abolition of coercive education policies targeting Tibetan children, pressing for the release of Tibetan political prisoners, and seeking information on the missing Panchen Lama.

Tibetan Leadership Congratulates Japanese Atomic Bomb Survivors on Nobel Peace Prize: The Tibetan leadership, including His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Penpa Tsering, congratulated Nihon Hidankyo, a group of Japanese atomic bomb survivors, for winning the 2024 Nobel Peace Prize. The award recognizes their efforts toward nuclear disarmament, reminding the world of the catastrophic impact of nuclear weapons. The leaders emphasized the significance of the survivors' advocacy and highlighted the ongoing threats posed by nuclear armaments.

Sikyong Meets Czech Leaders and Tibet Supporters: Sikyong Penpa Tsering held high-level meetings in the Czech Republic during the 28th Forum 2000, discussing Tibet's situation and ways to enhance support for the Tibetan cause. He met with officials from the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where they discussed plans for His Holiness the Dalai Lama's 90th birthday celebrations and the need for strategic support for Tibet. Tsering also met with members of the Czech Senate and Tibet support groups, reinforcing the emotional and strategic support for Tibetans and the importance of human rights advocacy.

Sikyong Penpa Tsering Attends the 28th Forum 2000: During the Forum 2000 in Prague, Sikyong Penpa Tsering engaged in discussions focusing on the importance of the Tibet-Czech Republic relationship and addressed concerns about Chinese transnational repression. The event gathered global leaders to discuss democracy and the threats it faces. Tsering urged participants to critically assess the narratives promoted by the Chinese government regarding Tibet and emphasized the need for solidarity with the Tibetan people.

Tibetans in France Continue Protests Against Museum Naming: Tibetans and supporters in Paris are protesting the Musée Guimet's decision to not rename its exhibition spaces to "Tibet" from "Himalayan World." While the Musée du Quai Branly apologized and plans to include "Tibet" alongside the Chinese term "Xizang," activists assert that the Guimet's naming diminishes Tibetan cultural identity. Protests include chants like "Tibet Exists. Name It," emphasizing the need for historical integrity against perceived Chinese influence. Experts criticized the museum's approach, arguing that it neglects the distinct culture and history of Tibet.

Dalai Lama's New Film Emphasizes Inner Peace: The documentary "Wisdom of Happiness," featuring the Dalai Lama, explores the connection between inner peace and happiness, set to release globally on December 5. Premiering at the Zurich Film Festival, it includes rare archival footage and insights into balancing Tibetan traditions with contemporary issues. Richard Gere, an executive producer, highlighted the film's potential impact. The Dalai Lama discusses the challenges of the 21st century and emphasizes the need for understanding emotions to foster compassion.

Sikyong Penpa Tsering Advocates for Tibetan Rights in the Netherlands: During his visit to the Netherlands, Sikyong Penpa Tsering engaged with Dutch officials and NGOs to discuss Tibetan rights and global issues concerning the Tibetan plateau's resources. He highlighted the connection between Tibet's struggles and broader human rights concerns, advocating for support against Chinese oppression.

Tibetan Nuns in the U.S. for Cultural Events: The Jangchub Choeling Tibetan nuns are touring the U.S., focusing on cultural events in Lincoln County, including the creation of a sacred Avalokiteshvara Sand Mandala. Their visit includes ceremonies, workshops, and discussions about Tibetan Buddhism and the experiences of nuns in exile. Funds raised will support the nunnery's medical needs.

Tibet Museum's Traveling Exhibition Highlights India-Tibet Relations: The Tibet Museum's exhibition, "India and Tibet: Ancient Ties and Current Bonds," successfully concluded in India, promoting awareness of the historical relationship between India and Tibet. The exhibition received positive feedback from students and faculty, fostering cultural exchange and understanding.

Deputy Speaker Dolma Tsering Teykhang Meets US Embassy Staff : Deputy Speaker Dolma Tsering Teykhang met with US Embassy staff, including First Secretary James Plasman, Political Officer Mike Cramer, and Political Specialist Ajay Dayal. They were given a guided tour of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile. Teykhang discussed the evolution of Tibetan democracy, highlighting milestones such as the establishment of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile in 1960 and the devolution of political authority from His Holiness the Dalai Lama in 2011. She expressed gratitude for the US government's support and stressed that the One China policy lacks justification regarding Tibet. Teykhang condemned China's policies targeting Tibetan identity and emphasized the significance of the Tibetan Plateau for global climate health.

Tibetans Urge NYC to Add Losar to Alternate Side Parking Suspension Calendar: Tibetan and Himalayan residents of New York City advocated for an official holiday recognizing Losar, the Tibetan Buddhist New Year, to suspend Alternate Side Parking (ASP) regulations. Council Member Julie Won introduced legislation, supported by 25 co-sponsors, aiming to add Losar to the city's holiday calendar. Activist Tenzin Dorjee highlighted the importance of Losar for nearly 100,000 people in NYC, arguing that it would allow community members to

celebrate without parking concerns. The proposed bill represents significant recognition of the Tibetan-American community and their contributions to the city's diversity.

Exile Administration Issues Guidelines for Tibet or China Visits by Tibetans: The Central Tibetan Administration announced guidelines for exiled Tibetans planning to visit Tibet or China, advising them to inform the Security Department in advance. The CTA expressed concerns about the Chinese government's attempts to infiltrate the Tibetan exile community and warned against visits that may lead to political entrapment. The announcement emphasized that while individual visits are not opposed, they should be communicated to relevant authorities to avoid deception and political repercussions upon return.

DIIR Tibet Awareness Talk Reaches Thousands Across Indian Universities and Colleges: The Department of Information and International Relations conducted a successful two-week Tibet Awareness Talk series, reaching over 1,348 participants across 13 universities in Varanasi and Gujarat. Speakers emphasized Tibet's human rights challenges and its significance to India. The talks received extensive media coverage, enhancing public awareness and engagement. Students expressed interest in Tibet's culture and current situation, demonstrating a strong commitment to educating themselves and others about Tibetan issues.

Open Letter to the Co-Founder of Rubin Museum of Art: Tenzing Rigdol expresses heartfelt gratitude to Shelly and Donald Rubin for their support throughout his artistic journey. Reflecting on their first meeting at the 2007 opening of "The Missing Peace: Artists Consider the 14th Dalai Lama," Rigdol recalls the exhibition's significance and the warmth he felt from the Rubin family. He shares fond memories, including a humorous encounter with Donald and moments during the "Tradition Transformed" exhibition, highlighting Donald's encouragement to focus on creating exceptional art despite criticism. Rigdol acknowledges the Rubin Museum's pivotal role in supporting Tibetan artists and congratulates them on their new direction, wishing for continued resonance of their spirit and love.

12 Years After Dalai Lama's Previous Visit, MPs from Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile Coming to Kashmir: A delegation from the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile, including Geshe Lharampa Gowo Lobang Phende and Phurpa Dorjee Gyaldhong, will visit Jammu and Kashmir from October 7 to 21, 2024. This visit recalls the Dalai Lama's significant 2012 trip to Srinagar, where he promoted interfaith harmony and met with local Tibetan communities. The MPs aim to engage with Tibetan residents across various regions in Ladakh to discuss welfare, education, and cultural identity amidst evolving geopolitical challenges. Their itinerary includes meetings in Srinagar, Leh, and several Tibetan settlements, focusing on sustaining cultural and religious harmony and addressing local issues.

Chamgon Kenting Tai Situpa Rinpoche Visits Tenzingang Tibetan Settlement: The 12th Chamgon Kenting Tai Situpa Rinpoche visited Gyuto Monastery in Tenzingang Tibetan Settlement, Arunachal Pradesh, from September 30 to October 2, 2024. The visit, facilitated by the Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister, included a grand reception from local residents. Rinpoche delivered a dharma talk on "Refugee Practice & Mind Generation" and conducted a long-life initiation for attendees. He also visited local institutions, emphasizing the importance of community engagement and spiritual guidance during his time in the region.

Dalai Lama to Visit Ladakh Next Summer: His Holiness the Dalai Lama has accepted an invitation to visit Ladakh next summer, following a meeting with local leaders. The visit is highly anticipated by the Ladakhi community, especially after concerns about his health following knee surgery. Initially scheduled for July 2024, the visit was postponed due to the surgery. His Holiness has resumed public audiences, allowing thousands to receive his blessings, marking a significant moment for the Tibetan community in the region.

Sikyong Delivers Kashag's Message at the Celebration of 41st Sakya Trizin Kyabgon Gongma Dorje Chang Rinpoche's 80th Birthday: On October 3, 2024, a ceremony celebrating the 80th birthday of the 41st Sakya Trizin was held at Sakya Monastery in Rajpur, attended by notable figures from the Tibetan community. Sikyong Penpa Tsering delivered a message praising Sakya Trizin's significant contributions to Buddhism and the Tibetan community in exile. The message reflected on the legacy of the Sakya tradition and its founders, commending Rinpoche for his support of the Dalai Lama and efforts in education and gender equality. Sikyong expressed gratitude for attending significant events honoring Rinpoche and wished him a long life.

Tibetan Parliamentary Delegation in Belgium: On October 1, 2024, a Tibetan parliamentary delegation, including Tashi Dhondup and Rigzin Lhundup, met with several Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) to discuss the situation in Tibet under the Chinese Communist Party. They emphasized the need for international support to address the Sino-Tibetan conflict and urged the MEPs to advocate for Tibet within the European Parliament and consider a resolution on the matter.

Counter-Event in Sydney Against Chinese Regime: Coinciding with China's founding anniversary, the Office of Tibet, along with the Alliance for Victims of the Chinese Communist Regime, organized a counter-event in Sydney on October 1, 2024. The event included a photo exhibition and rally that highlighted human rights abuses faced by various communities under Chinese rule. Speakers called for Australian government action, including sanctions against Chinese officials for their involvement in these abuses.

Milestones in Tibetan Digital Library Initiative: The Department of Religion and Culture announced progress in its Tibetan Digital Library Initiative, which aims to digitize Tibetan scriptures. Orientation workshops have been held in multiple Tibetan cultural institutions, resulting in the integration of QR codes for 2,000 bookshelves and 70,000 master texts.

Museums in Paris Face Criticism Over Tibet Naming: The Guimet Museum of Asian Arts in Paris has replaced "Nepal-Tibet" with "Himalayan World" in its exhibits, drawing criticism for yielding to Chinese pressure. In contrast, the Musee du quai Branly has committed to restoring the name "Tibet" in response to public outcry. Experts have condemned the museum's actions as an attempt to obscure Tibetan identity and culture.

Sikyong Penpa Tsering's School Visits: On October 2, 2024, Sikyong Penpa Tsering visited Tibetan Homes Foundation School and Sambhota Tibetan Day School in Mussoorie. He emphasized the importance of cultural pride and historical knowledge among Tibetan youth. Sikyong discussed efforts to gain international recognition of Tibet's historical status and addressed the sensitive topic of the Dalai Lama's reincarnation amidst anticipated Chinese interference.

Dalai Lama Praises Japan for Promoting Peace: The Dalai Lama congratulated Japan's new Prime Minister, Shigeru Ishida, in a letter expressing appreciation for Japan's efforts in promoting peace and compassion. He highlighted Japan's modernity and its tradition of valuing peace, urging Ishida to continue fostering dialogue and diplomacy during challenging global times.

Launch of Tibetan Student Unity Network: The Tibetan Student Unity Network (TSUN) was officially launched on October 1, 2024, coinciding with the 75th anniversary of the People's Republic of China. The network aims to unite exiled Tibetan students in India to promote cultural awareness and collective strength, currently involving ten student associations. It seeks to enhance students' knowledge of Tibetan history and governance through various initiatives, including online sessions and social media campaigns.

Sikyong Penpa Tsering Congratulates Japan's New Prime Minister: Sikyong Penpa Tsering sent a congratulatory letter to Prime Minister Ishida on behalf of the Central Tibetan Administration, praising Japan's support for Tibetan rights and human rights advocacy. He acknowledged Japan's history of hospitality towards the Dalai Lama and expressed hope for continued support under Ishida's leadership.

Tibetans Detained During Protest in New Delhi: Thirty Tibetans were detained by Delhi Police while protesting outside the Chinese embassy against human rights abuses in Tibet. This protest coincided with China's 75th anniversary of Communist Party rule and was part of a larger effort to raise awareness about the situation in Tibet, including a cycle rally from Dehradun to New Delhi.

International Protests Against Chinese Repression: Tibetan protesters in New Delhi, alongside international NGOs, condemned China's human rights violations during China's 75th National Day. Demonstrators called for accountability and solidarity against oppressive measures, voicing their demands through slogans and participating in awareness campaigns organized by groups like Students for a Free Tibet.

Office of Tibet, Nepal Hosts Exhibition of Jamyang Dorje's Tibetan Calligraphy: The Office of Tibet in Nepal organized a three-day exhibition from September 25 to 27, 2024, in collaboration with the Himalayan Buddhist Library and Cultural Center, showcasing the works of renowned Tibetan calligraphy artist Jamyang Dorjee. The

exhibition featured distinctive artworks primarily in the Umed (cursive) script, including a remarkable scroll of the “Padma Kathang Sheldrags” manuscript. The event took place at Choejor Community Hall, where Dorjee led educational sessions for monastic students and practitioners from the Shechen Monastery, as well as university students and schoolchildren from institutions like Namgyal University and Samten Memorial School. Approximately 200 participants, including monastics and members of the public, engaged in the sessions, which covered the history of Tibetan script and contemporary artistic techniques.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama Confers Teaching on Tsongkhapa’s Three Principal Aspects of the Path: On September 30, 2024, His Holiness the Dalai Lama addressed around 7,000 attendees, including 1,300 from Taiwan, at the Main Tibetan Temple in Dharamshala. During the teaching, he emphasized the significance of Jé Tsongkhapa’s “Three Principles of the Path”—renunciation, the awakening mind, and correct view. His Holiness discussed the importance of integrating these principles into one’s inner experience and outlined the path to enlightenment, stressing the need for a pure determination to be free, alongside the development of bodhichitta and wisdom. He encouraged attendees to cultivate these qualities to benefit all sentient beings and concluded with a Bodhisattva Vow, urging participants to embody the values of love, compassion, and understanding.

Congressman Jim McGovern Celebrates Tibetan Spirit at Gratitude Event: The Regional Tibetan Association of Massachusetts held a gratitude event titled “Thank You, Congressman Jim McGovern” to honor the congressman’s unwavering commitment to the Tibetan cause. In his address, McGovern highlighted the enduring spirit of the Tibetan community and the importance of human rights and resilience, stating that “the world needs a champion like the Tibetan people.” He reaffirmed his legislative efforts inspired by his interactions with Tibetans and called for unity among like-minded individuals to demand change. The event featured remarks from various dignitaries, including Sikyong Penpa Tsering, and culminated in the presentation of a silver sculpture replicating the historic Sino-Tibet Treaty, underscoring Tibet’s sovereignty. Cultural performances from local Tibetan schools added to the celebration, reinforcing the community’s resolve to fight for Tibetan rights and freedom.

Protests, Detention and Other News from the PRC

Authorities Arrest Four Tibetans in Ngaba County for Contacting Outsiders: Chinese authorities arrested four Tibetans in Ngaba County, Sichuan, accusing them of maintaining contact with individuals outside Tibet. This follows recent school closures at Kirti Monastery, where over 1,600 students were forced into state-administered boarding schools. The crackdown on communication reflects Beijing’s effort to limit outside influences and reinforce control over Tibetan identity.

Tibetan Monks’ Phones Seized After Accusations of Sharing News About School Closures: Chinese authorities confiscated phones from Tibetan monks in Sichuan, suspecting them of sharing information about recent monastery school closures. The closures affected nearly 600 students, forcing them into government-run schools that prioritize Mandarin instruction. Monks face intensified scrutiny and restrictions on communication, as authorities aim to prevent information from reaching the outside world.

China Cracks Down on ‘Uncivilised’ Online Puns Used to Discuss Sensitive Topics:

China has launched a campaign targeting online puns and wordplay used to circumvent censorship. The campaign aims to regulate language seen as “irregular” or “uncivilised,” as the government seeks to suppress discussions on sensitive issues, including political criticism. This crackdown highlights the ongoing battle between state control and citizens’ efforts to communicate discreetly online.

Condemned Uyghur Official Dies in Prison in China’s Xinjiang Region: Shirzat Bawudun, a former high-ranking Uyghur official sentenced to death for “separatism,” has died in prison. His death, reported without details, shocked relatives who had recently spoken with him. Bawudun’s case illustrates the harsh realities faced by even loyal Uyghurs amid a broader campaign against perceived dissent in Xinjiang.

Overcrowding Reported at China Detention Centers Amid Economic Downturn: Reports of overcrowding in Chinese detention centers have emerged, attributed to a crackdown on crime amid economic challenges. Detainees are crammed into small spaces as the number of arrests rises, with analysts suggesting that rising unemployment and financial stress contribute to increased crime rates. Authorities are responding with stricter laws and expanded definitions of illegal behavior, further straining detention facilities.

Falun Gong Practitioner Persecuted to Death 5 Days After Arrival in Notorious Prison: Ren Changbin, a 60-year-old Falun Gong practitioner, died from torture just five days after being incarcerated in Heilongjiang's Shuangyashan Prison. Arrested on September 14, 2023, he was sentenced to three years for his beliefs. His family discovered signs of severe torture on his body after his unexpected death was reported by prison authorities, raising concerns about ongoing abuses against Falun Gong practitioners in Chinese jails.

In Rare Appeal, Tibetan Calls for Company to Stop Digging Up River: Tsongon Tsering, a Tibetan from Sichuan, made a rare public appeal against illegal sand mining on the Tsaruma River, citing severe environmental damage. His WeChat account was shut down after he posted a video highlighting the issue, which reflects the broader fear among Tibetans of government reprisal for speaking out. Despite the company's acknowledgment of the extraction, no substantial action has been taken to remedy the environmental harm.

Yunnan, Update on Brother Chang Hao: Sentenced, Liberated, and Detained Again: Brother Chang Hao, a preacher known for distributing Bible verse masks, was detained again after a police raid during a baptism event. Previously sentenced to 13 months in prison, he was released but placed under surveillance. His recent detention adds to concerns about the ongoing persecution of independent religious activities in China, particularly against Christians.

China's Ruling Against Tibetan Activist Highlights Beijing's Poor Human Rights Record: Gonpo Kyi, a Tibetan activist, faced a court ruling that upheld her detention for peacefully protesting the imprisonment of her brother, Dorjee Tashi. His life sentence, stemming from accusations of secessionism, has prompted her persistent activism, which has led to further repression by Chinese authorities, including beatings and threats, highlighting the severe restrictions on Tibetan human rights.

Tibetan Singer Arrested for 'Patriotic Song' Released Early from Prison: Golok Palden, a Tibetan singer, was released early from a three-year sentence for performing a patriotic song. While his release was unexpected, he remains under strict surveillance and faces warnings against further performances. This case underscores the oppressive environment for cultural expression in Tibet, where artists frequently face detention for their work. Here are the summaries for the two news articles:

Former Tibetan Political Prisoner Thupten Yeshe Passes Away at 74 in Lhasa: Thupten Yeshe, a former political prisoner known for his leadership in the 1992 protest in Gyama Township, passed away at 74 in Lhasa, Tibet. He was arrested on July 6, 1992, along with four other farmers after a large protest against Chinese rule, where they displayed the Tibetan national flag and shouted pro-Tibet slogans. Following his arrest, Yeshe endured extensive torture and interrogation, leading to a 15-year prison sentence at Drapchi Prison. Despite his health deteriorating due to the brutal conditions, he was released in 2007. Yeshe's activism played a significant role in the Tibetan resistance movement.

CHINA'S TIBET POLICY

China Tries to Blot out Tibetan Criticism of Mining Firm's Damage to the Environment

28 October 2024, [The Diplomat](#), Duncan Barlett

Tsowo Tsering says sand mining is disrupting his community and endangers the international water supply. His supporters fear he risks jail for speaking out online.

Chinese censors are trying to prevent people from viewing posts that allege severe environmental damage in Tibet caused by sand mining.

A young Tibetan man named Tsowo Tsering initiated the online discussion with a video post, delivered in Mandarin. In it, he says he is speaking from Ngawa Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, in southwest China's Sichuan Province.

He shares video footage that he says proves the severe impact of activities by a Chinese mining company on his community. Tsowo Tsering claims that "large amounts of sand have been recklessly mined, leading to serious soil erosion in the surrounding areas. This endangers the foundations of residents' homes."

Tsering alleges that Anhui Xianhe Construction Engineering Company has been conducting large-scale sand extraction in the region since May 2023, under the pretense of road construction. Tsering states that the local Ecological Protection Bureau acknowledged the illegality of the mining operations but imposed only token penalties, allowing the destructive activities to continue.

The video has now been purged from Chinese platforms, but has been translated and transcribed on the website of Free Tibet.

The video focuses on the Tsaruma River, a tributary of the sources of Yangtze and Yellow Rivers. Tsowo Tsering says: "We have lived and flourished on this land for generations. The quality of the ecological environment concerns the health and life safety of our descendants."

He warns that over time, environmental damage will become increasingly severe. "The consequences will be beyond imagination. When environmental damage reaches a certain level, the collapse of the ecosystem will be an irreversible disaster," says Tsering.

Within days of its posting, Chinese authorities not only removed the video but also shut down Tsering's account and blocked all search terms related to his name on WeChat.

Free Tibet's Advocacy Officer Tenzin Kunga told The Diplomat that Tibetans, as stewards of their homeland, have a duty to raise urgent concerns over environmental destruction.

"Chinese construction companies, in collusion with local authorities, exploit Tibet's land without accountability," said Kunga

“Brave Tibetan environmentalists, like Tsowo Tsering, risk their safety in speaking out, as authorities often imprison them under the guise of ‘inciting separatism.’ I fear Tsering may face the same fate as Tibetan community leader A-Nya Sengdra, who is in prison for his activism.”

The Tibetan government-in-exile based in India is frequently critical of what it sees as China’s irresponsible attitude toward the environment.

There is particular concern over the process of the extraction of natural resources, which may cause water pollution. Tibet’s rivers and glaciers are internationally important. Water that originates on the Tibetan plateau supplies vast swathes of Asia, including many millions of people in China and India. Online protests by local people are extremely rare. They are also difficult to verify, as China strictly tries to control the narrative around its administration of Tibet.

Foreign reporters are rarely allowed into Tibet, least of all to cover sensitive environmental issues. The official Chinese media always present the development of Tibet as being a boon for local people, and associate it with a journey from feudalism to modernization, under the auspices of the Chinese Communist Party.

Artificial Chinese Cordyceps Threaten Tibet’s Traditional Market, Livelihoods

22 October 2024, [The Tibet Express](#)



A Chinese woman is trying to sell what she claims to be genuine Tibetan cordyceps from Nagchu, Tibet online.

A growing crisis has been unfolding on the Tibetan Plateau, with the flooding of artificial cordyceps fungi, locally known as Yartsa Gunbu (summer grass, winter worm), from China severely impacting the livelihoods of Tibetan communities. According to various local

media reports and commentaries online, this synthetic version of the precious medicinal fungus from China has been causing significant disruption to the traditional cordyceps market in Tibet and the lives of Tibetan households who depend on it.

While Chinese companies had been experimenting with cultivating artificial cordyceps in some places in Tibet for several years, it wasn’t until about three years ago that these products began aggressively entering the market. Initially, when only a few major Chinese enterprises were involved in production, they maintained prices comparable to natural cordyceps, minimising market disruption. However, the situation has changed dramatically.

Today, an estimated 200-300 Chinese companies selling artificial cordyceps in the market have driven prices to unprecedented lows. Whilst the natural harvest of the prized caterpillar fungus typically sells for 90,000 to 100,000 yuan per kilogram, the artificial version is being marketed for just 20,000 to 30,000 yuan. These companies aren’t just undercutting prices – they’re actively misleading consumers by marketing their products as authentic Tibetan cordyceps. Though produced by Chinese companies, some packages of the artificial fungus products carry fake labels claiming they have been sourced from premium cordyceps regions in Tibet like Nagchu, making it difficult for inexperienced buyers to distinguish the difference.

Despite the formation of a “Lhasa Tibetan Cordyceps Association,” local Tibetans report that the organisation has done little beyond making verbal promises. In April, authorities in Qinghai province issued warnings about the artificial cordyceps being an invasive species, threatening legal action against unauthorised cultivation. However, these warnings have had little practical effect.

The association even offered 2,000 yuan rewards for reporting fraudulent sales, but local Tibetans say that the provided contact numbers are fake, and no actual steps were taken.

Though the 27 September meeting in Xiling brought together deputy party secretaries from five provinces and cordyceps association executives, observers note that the meeting focused on general topics like cordyceps benefits and environmental protection whilst completely avoiding the critical issue of market fraud. Local Tibetans say that the discussions failed to address the urgent need for legal intervention to protect the authentic cordyceps market.

The artificial cordyceps producers claim they’re helping preserve natural cordyceps, which they say is nearing extinction. When some private Tibetan traders attempted legal action in China, highlighting how the price collapse was harming their communities, they were asked to provide individual proof of damages from all 70,000 affected people – an impossible ask that effectively blocked any legal remedy.

The crisis has left many Tibetans unable to sell their natural cordyceps at sustainable prices, forcing difficult choices between selling at a loss or facing severe financial hardship. Whilst the artificial product lacks the potency and flavour of natural cordyceps, it continues to evolve, making it all the more difficult to differentiate, easily deceiving inexperienced consumers.

The situation is particularly devastating because cordyceps harvesting has become a crucial source of income for many Tibetan households, especially following China's forced-urbanisation and resettlement policies that have displaced nomadic families from their traditional pastoralist lifestyles. These displaced communities often return to their native areas during cordyceps season but now face a market severely undermined by artificial alternatives. Combined with climate change's impacts on natural cordyceps growth, the flood of artificial products has created a perfect storm that threatens both the economic survival of Tibetan communities and the future of this traditional trade.

Yartsa Gunbu, *Ophiocordyceps sinensis* (scientific name), has been used in Chinese and Tibetan traditional medicine for centuries to treat various ailments including heart, liver, and lung problems, as well as asthma. It is also believed to boost libido, which has earned it the nickname 'Himalayan Viagra.' The highly valued medicinal fungus can be consumed directly, added to food or liquids, or ground up for use in traditional medicine production.

China identifies over 4000 new tourism sites in Tibet's capital Lhasa

14 October 2024, [Tibetan Review](#)

In its relentless push to attract more, and ever more Chinese to visit western Tibet (or Tibet Autonomous Region, TAR), China has identified over 4,000 new tourism development sites in its capital Lhasa. However, there is so far little or no known study of tourism's impact on the territory's people, environment, society, and culture.

This bears relevance as the number of tourists visiting the region, who are overwhelmingly from China, exceeded 15 times the local population of 3.66 million as of last year.

Over 4,000 new tourism development sites have been identified in Lhasa since a survey began last October, reported China's official *Xinhua* news agency Oct 14, citing the city's culture and tourism bureau.

The report said most of these tourism resources are natural landscapes, which will attract more tourists and bring incomes to local residents.

The report noted that as an ancient city with a history of more than 1,300 years, Lhasa is among the cities in

the People's Republic of China that have the most cultural relics and documents. From January to July, the autonomous region received over 42 million domestic and international tourists, up 16.65% year-on-year, the report said.

In 2023, TAR saw a record 55.17 million visitors throughout the year, a massive 83.7% increase compared to the previous years, reported China's state media. The region was stated to have earned a total tourism revenue of CNY 65.1 billion (\$9.4 billion), reflecting a 60% increase from 2022. Only around 20,000 of the visitors were reported to be from countries other than China.

This year, by mid-2024, over 20 million tourists had visited TAR, with the vast majority being Chinese nationals, reported China's state media.

China reports more archaeological discoveries in Tibet

13 October 2024, [Tibetan Review](#)

Chinese archaeologists have discovered 301 immovable cultural relics, comprising sites of ancient culture, tombs, buildings, grotto temples, inscriptions and historical landmarks, in Shigatse city of Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), reported China's official *chinadaily.com.cn* Oct 11, citing the state *Xinhua* News Agency.

China is known to Sinicize even archaeological discoveries in Tibet and areas such as East Turkestan (Xinjiang) by falsely explaining them as belonging to their contemporary Chinese dynasties in post facto justifications of its current rule over these territories. Its false narratives seek to "prove" that Tibet and East Turkestan had been parts of China since ancient times. The report did not say what exact discoveries had been made, which may entail giving the false explanation. It only said the discovery work was carried out in 18 counties and districts in Shigatse over the past few months as part of the second phase of the fourth national cultural relics census in TAR.

The report cited the cultural and tourism bureau of Shigatse as saying that 1,088 cultural sites had been surveyed in the city thus far, and their related data has been collected.

Phuntsok Darje, deputy director of the cultural relics protection and archaeological research centre at the bureau, has "highlighted the profound significance of the city's cultural heritage and the diversity of those immovable cultural resources."

The report said the ongoing cultural relics census in TAR will include a comprehensive review of the 4,277 immovable cultural relics identified and registered during the third census.

The report added that simultaneous efforts were being made to investigate, identify and register

immovable cultural relics that weren't recorded in previous censuses, including those discovered since 2012.

Chinese court rules in favor of Lhasa Public Security Bureau against Gonpo Kyi

08 October 2024, [ITC](#)

For more than two years, a Tibetan woman named Gonpo Kyi has been seeking the release of her falsely accused brother, Dorjee Tashi. Last month a Chinese court ruled against her, putting justice for her younger brother even further out of reach.

On September 24, 2024, Lhasa City's Chengguan District Court dismissed all five counts of Gonpo Kyi's complaint against the district's public security bureau. Gonpo Kyi's lawsuit, filed in March 2024, primarily claimed that the ten-day detention she endured for peacefully advocating for her brother's release violated her rights.

Gonpo Kyi, also known as Gontey (Ch: Gongde), has been actively seeking justice since June 2022 for her younger brother Dorjee (Duoji Zhaxi), who received a life sentence in 2010 after being framed as a "secessionist" in the wake of the Chinese government's crackdown on mass Tibetan protests in spring 2008 and is imprisoned in the notorious Drapchi Prison. Before Gonpo Kyi began openly advocating for her brother's retrial in June 2022, she and other family members had exhausted all remedies to seek justice by appealing to authorities in Beijing for over a decade. With no success through appeals, Gonpo Kyi began to demand justice publicly through sit-ins in front of the Tibet Autonomous Region Higher People's Court in Lhasa.



Gonpo Kyi stood outside the Tibet Autonomous Region Higher People's Court in Lhasa on January 31, 2023, holding a sign that read, "Tibet's higher people's court perverts the law."

Gonpo's complaint

ICT obtained a copy of the Chengguan District Court's ruling, dated Sept. 24, 2024. It says a case was filed on March 25, 2024, after Gonpo filed a complaint alleging unlawful actions by Chengguan District Public Security Bureau (PSB) by detaining her and violating her right to express herself. Accordingly, the court held a public hearing on June 27, 2024.

In her complaint, Gonpo claimed that the district PSB had broken the law by detaining her, that the monetary penalty on her should be withdrawn, and that a compensation of 4,368 Yuan (436.80 per day for ten days) should be given to her. Gonpo also claimed that her A4 sign and white cloth banner advocacy materials should be returned to her, and all her court expenses should be reimbursed by the district PSB.

Gonpo stated that it is her right to ask for a retrial of her brother's case and that the A4 sign and white cloth banner—demanding Dorjee Tashi's lawyers have access to documents and a retrial of Dorjee's case—are her personal property and the PSB's confiscation of the materials was illegal.

Unfair verdict

The court, in its 16-page-long verdict, ruled that the PSB's detention of Gonpo Kyi was in accordance with Chinese law, the PSB's defense that Gonpo's activism (in the form of prostration, meditation, pasting flyers, lying down on the street) hindered the work of Tibet Autonomous Region Higher People's Court is valid, the PSB's ten-day detention of Gonpo Kyi is lawful, return of confiscated materials (A4 sign and white cloth banner) is not required, and Gonpo's claim for monetary compensation is dismissed. Overall, the Chengguan District Court dismissed all of plaintiff Gonpo's allegations and supported the defenses provided by the district public security bureau against her.

The comprehensive dismissal of all of Gonpo's claims underscores the difficulties individuals face when challenging actions of state security organs in the Chinese legal system, particularly in Tibet. The court's support for the public security bureau's actions reveals a low tolerance for public displays of dissent or advocacy, even when conducted peacefully and a wide latitude given to the authorities in suppressing activism.

Gonpo Kyi's advocacy

Since June 2022, Gonpo Kyi has been at the forefront of persistent efforts to seek justice for her brother. Her approach evolved from appeals to authorities in Beijing over a decade to more public forms of protest, including sit-ins in front of the Tibet Autonomous Region Higher People's Court in Lhasa. Gonpo and her family members' public advocacy for Dorjee Tashi reveals a growing frustration with the lack of progress through official channels and a willingness to risk personal consequences to draw attention to her brother's case.

During her public advocacy for the past several years, the PSB subjected her to beatings, detentions, forcible removal from protest site and blocking her protest from public view, and threatened multiple times with severe consequences. Gonpo's last activism was on May 28, 2024, during which she held an A4 sign demanding justice to Dorjee Tashi in front of the

Higher People’s Court of the Tibet Autonomous Region in Lhasa. In another video clip from the same day, she shows bruises on her arm presumably from beatings by the security officers on site.

Gonpo in her most recent video statement after the court’s ruling is defiant of the authorities and pledges to persist in seeking justice for her younger brother.

Translation of Gonpo’s statement

“I have petitioned the court in Lhasa for a retrial of Dorjee Tashi’s case in accordance with the law of the country, but they have refused to do it. The police detained, dragged, and beat me multiple times. I’m currently in ill health due to these beatings. My right to ask for a retrial of my brother is powerless. Until the Lhasa Court addresses my appeal, I will persist.”



Gonpo Kyi and her husband, Choekyong, were seen holding a sign that read “Dorjee Tashi is not guilty” in front of Dorjee Tashi’s Yak Hotel in Lhasa in early 2023.

Background on Dorjee Tashi

Dorjee Tashi, a prominent former Tibetan businessman, is currently serving a life sentence in Lhasa’s Drapchi Prison, a facility notorious for its harsh conditions and alleged human rights violations.

The International Campaign for Tibet previously documented the case of Dorjee Tashi and the Chinese authorities use of torture on him during pretrial detention. Dorjee was arrested in the aftermath of widespread protests across Tibet in spring 2008 challenging Chinese rule. He was subsequently arrested on suspicion of providing clandestine support to Tibetan protesters and alleged connections with the Tibetan exile community. The investigation into Dorjee’s perceived political loyalties was unusually led directly by China’s Ministry of Public Security, which in Dorjee’s testimony, and subjected him to torture in an attempt to extract confessions about supposed political affiliations and foreign connections.

Although the initial political accusations against Dorjee were eventually dropped, he was later charged with “loan fraud.” The Lhasa Intermediate People’s Court sentenced him to life imprisonment and permanent deprivation of political rights in May 2010. In related cases, Dorjee’s family members also faced legal consequences. His elder brother, Dorjee Tseten, received a six-year prison sentence, while relatives Dhugkar Tsering and Tsultrim were sentenced to five and two years in prison, respectively.

Investigation of Tibetan officials in historical Dechen reveals rampant corruption in Chinese bureaucracy

02 October 2024, [ITC](#)

Several senior officials in Dechen (Ch: Diqing) prefecture in present-day Yunnan Province have been investigated in recent months by China’s anti-graft agency, an indication of the high levels of corruption among Chinese officialdom – or, perhaps, of political instability.

The officials under investigation are ethnic Tibetans, one of whom had served as governor while at least three others had served at the level of deputy governor of Dechen Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, the only Tibetan prefecture in Yunnan province. Two of them even headed the United Front Work Department (UFWD) of Dechen and nearby Lijiang, a prefecture-level city. Chinese state media announced that they have undergone investigation “suspected of serious violations of discipline and laws,” the standard reasoning cited for all such investigations.

Corruption is endemic in Tibet under Chinese rule. Since the beginning of Xi Jinping’s rule, striking against corruption has been one of his signature campaigns. Instead of effectively tackling the endemic socio-political problem, in the absence of real checks and balances or any form of transparency Xi’s anti-graft campaign in fact serves the purpose of shoring up legitimacy for the Party and popular support for his indefinite rule.

Since April 2024, investigations have been started or actions taken against the following senior Tibetan officials from Dechen: Kalsang Namgyal (under investigation as of September 22, 2024), the head of the UFWD (as well as former deputy governor) of Dechen; Tashi Dhondup (under investigation as of August 30, 2024), member of the Standing Committee of Dechen and Secretary of the Political and Legal Committee; Feng Yuxiang (under investigation as of June 24, 2024), deputy secretary of the Lijiang City Party Committee and head of UFWD; Jangchup (Jiang Chu) (dismissed on May 19, 2024) executive vice governor of Dechen; and Qi Jianxin (dismissed on April 9, 2024), former governor of Dechen, who was dismissed from his then government position of Counselor in the prefecture after investigations were launched against him by the anti-corruption agency.

Namgyal spent all his professional career in Dechen, where he began working in 1991 in the finance bureau. Feng and Qi are both mentioned as being of Tibetan ethnicity despite using Chinese names; in the Kham and Amdo areas of eastern Tibet some Tibetans have been given Chinese names. Feng comes from Dechen and worked there before being transferred to Lijiang.



Tibetan officials from Dechen Prefecture under anti-graft scrutiny: (From left) Qi Jianxin, Jangchup, Tashi Dhondup, Kalsang Namgyal, and Feng Yuxiang

Historic Dechen

Dechen is in the southern part of Kham and covers an area of 9,189 square miles, making it larger than Israel and approximately the size of the American state of New Hampshire. It is currently divided into three administrative counties: Gyalthang (Xianggelila, formerly Zhongdian), Jol (Dechen), and Balung (Weixi). Until the formation of the prefecture in 1957, when it was renamed as Dechen, Gyalthang was the most well-known place in the region, and was part of the traditional trio of regions known in Tibetan as Baligyal (Bathang and Lithang, which are in current Sichuan, and Gyalthang). It was an important stop in the historical “Ancient Tea Horse Trading Route” for the lucrative tea trade to the Tibetan capital Lhasa and beyond.

At the end of 2022, Dechen’s total population was listed as 371,700 with Tibetans being the largest community with a population of 134,800, accounting for 36.26% of the total population, according to Yunnan Government statistics.

Among the present-day Tibetan areas, Dechen is less well known internationally. In an attempt to attract Chinese tourists, on December 17, 2001 the authorities in China renamed the prefecture capital Gyalthang as Shangri-La City (Xianggelila) after the fictional land of Shangri-La in the 1933 James Hilton novel *Lost Horizon*.

Even though Dechen is at a great distance from Lhasa, it had close political and spiritual connections to Tibet and Tibetan rulers of the past. The fifth Dalai Lama had established Gyalthang’s most famous monastery of Gaden Sumtsenling. The 65th Gaden Tripa (1801-1807), head of the Gelug lineage of Tibetan Buddhism, Gedun Tsultrim, was from Gyalthang. Like many other Tibetan Buddhists of Gyalthang, he began his spiritual education first in Gaden Sumtsenling and then went to Lhasa to study at Sera Monastery.

When the Chinese People’s Liberation Army started occupying eastern Tibet, including Gyalthang, the people “clearly identified and aligned themselves with the government in Lhasa under the Dalai Lama’s administration,” according to scholar Dawa Lokyitsang, whose grandfather is from Gyalthang.

In June 2003, envoys of the Dalai Lama, led by special envoy Lodi Gyari, visited Gyalthang as part of the rounds of talks between Tibetan and Chinese officials. In his statement, Gyari said, “We have been impressed by efforts to protect the beautiful environment of Gyalthang as well as the living conditions of some of the families that we visited. However, we emphasized to the officials the importance of maintaining Tibetan religious, cultural and linguistic identity along with the material development. Our visit was too short for us to assess in an adequate manner how effectively the Tibetan language, culture, religion and identity are being preserved, protected and promoted in this Tibetan area.”

Among contemporary prominent Tibetans from Dechen include the former head of the Central Tibetan Administration, Samdhong Rinpoche, who was born in Jol. He began his spiritual study in the Gaden Dechenling Monastery in Jol and did his further studies in Drepung Monastery in Lhasa. In fact, there were reports in the media in 2017 that the Dalai Lama had sent him on “a discreet visit to Kunming” which is the capital of Yunnan, in November of that year. Some other reports indicated that he had gone to Gyalthang, too. Within Tibet, Che Dalha (Qi Zhala), the former governor of the Tibet Autonomous Region, was born in Gyalthang and worked in the prefecture before being transferred to Lhasa in 2017.

Of particular interest is the fact that two of the officials being investigated were heading the UFWD. The UFWD is the key authority implementing policies aimed at controlling all aspects of Tibetan life under the People’s Republic of China. Therefore, leadership of the UFWD at all levels is chosen through the utmost scrutiny and only the most trust-worthy individuals find a place in the organization. The current governor of Dechen Prefecture, Zhang Weidong, who is said to be a Tibetan, was also head of the UFWD in 2015.

In 2018, significant structural reforms were announced in the role of the UFWD and in 2022, Xi Jinping gave major guidelines during the UFWD conference.

The Central Commission for Discipline Inspection (CCDI), that oversees all such investigations against officials, including those in Dechen, is secretive at all levels. Only after charges have been levelled and sentencing finalized will we come to know the reasons for the investigations and dismissals of the Tibetan officials from Dechen.

Tibetan School Falls to China's Legal Pressure

02 October 2024, [Khabarhub](#), Manoj Ghimire



The gate of closed school adorned with khatags tied by teachers and students/PHoto: tchrd

In July, 110 students graduated from Gangjong Sherig Norbu Lobling School on the Tibetan Plateau in Golog prefecture, Qinghai province. Despite the celebratory occasion, tears marked their faces.

For months, authorities had sought reasons to close the school, exploring various legal avenues. Until this summer, they had been unsuccessful.

Eventually, despite the school's legal victories, the regional administration ordered its closure. Gen Jigme Gyaltzen explained that the school was shut down for not meeting the Qinghai Provincial Party Committee's vague standards for vocational schools. No further details were provided.

Founded in 1994 in the Golog Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, the Tibetan school gained international acclaim for its rich curriculum in Tibetan cultural and linguistic studies. It attracted youth from Tibet, Mongolia, and Inner Mongolia.

The school emphasized preserving Tibetan language studies, medicine, and Buddhist philosophy, receiving support from Finland and the Netherlands. Its rigorous curriculum included computer science, engineering, medicine, filmmaking, and physical education.

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights has similar terms, though China hasn't ratified it. While children under 18 were not present at Gangjong Sherig Norbu Lobling, former students face limited options for higher learning in Tibetan. Opportunities to study in Tibetan are dwindling from kindergarten to university. At the Tibet Policy Institute's July roundtable, Shede Dawa of Tibet Watch highlighted the school's growth and its role in reconnecting students with their heritage, despite the region being referred to as an "open air prison."

The roundtable participants felt the impact of Dawa's upbringing in his sincere advocacy for peers facing academic repression.

Gazing at the scholars and locking eyes with the camera, he emphasized the school's founder's words: preserving the Tibetan language and script is vital for the Tibetan people's survival. Stories, cradled by linguistic exchange, ensure survival.

Dr. Lobsang Yangtso, from the International Tibet Network, admired the courage of alumni like Shede Dawa, who risk retaliation for speaking against the school's closure. "There are many others like him," she noted.

In recent years, human rights monitors have noted the gradual replacement of Tibetan textbooks with Chinese ones.

A 2010 cultural assimilation policy mandates that all schools in Tibet use Chinese as the primary language, starting from kindergarten. Dawa Tsering, director of the Tibet Policy Institute, explained the community's struggles:

"The Chinese government is closing monasteries and Tibetan schools as part of a broader strategy to eradicate Tibetan language and culture."

Tibetan activists argue that private schools are especially targeted in "patriotic education campaigns," making language instruction harder to monitor. Eight of the remaining 16 private Tibetan schools have been ordered to close, while the rest face allegations and administrative pressure.

The legal battle began with scrutiny of a logo used by the Pure Native Language Association, a student group at the school.

In 2018, Tibet Times reported that student leaders were sued for using images of a jewel and snow lion, symbols of refuge and unity. Allegations claimed the logo emulated the Tibetan national flag, banned in Tibet since the 1960s, providing grounds for an investigation.

For exiled Tibetans, the flag symbolizes freedom from oppression. To the Communist Party, it signifies separatism, leading to arrests and torture for possessing its image.

When initial suspicions yielded no results, the Communist Party adopted a new strategy to diminish the school's influence.

According to sources from the Central Tibetan Administration, Gangjong Sherig Norbu Lobling faced a series of legal challenges.

The Qinghai provincial government conducted a "search and interrogation" to find grounds for penalizing the school for hosting monks or nuns under 18, which is illegal under Chinese law.

If discovered, authorities reportedly forced these students to leave their monasteries and undergo "patriotic education."

Hundreds of Gangjong Sherig Norbu Lobling graduates have become researchers, government leaders, teachers, and entrepreneurs.

The school has been a source of Tibetan leadership since its inception. Founder Gen Jigme Gyaltzen, who left nomadic life to establish the school, was honored as a “Zhonghua Charity Worker” and received the “National People’s Education Award.”

Despite facing corruption allegations due to his roles in the Qinghai Tibetan Chamber of Commerce and Tibet Nomadic Management Office, he was cleared of all charges on June 28.

Editor-in-Chief of the Tibet Times, Pema Tso, noted that despite increasing challenges since the 2008 protests, the school community was “relieved” by a provincial court decision allowing its operation to continue.

However, the rule of law was ultimately subverted. On July 14, Gyaltzen announced the school’s closure due to non-compliance with Qinghai Provincial Party Committee’s vocational school standards, without specifying the violations.

The closure, revealed during the last graduation ceremony, created uncertainty for future scholars and professors. A former student’s sister was arrested for allegedly spreading “misinformation” about the shutdown, and her whereabouts remain unknown.

Under international law, China must allow young Tibetans to pursue education in their preferred language. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), ratified by China in 1992, states that minority children have the right to use their own language.

When questioned about how states can show support for Tibetan youth deprived of their linguistic heritage, Tempa Gyaltzen Zamlha, Deputy Director of the Tibet Policy Institute, made a straightforward appeal: “Bring attention to the matter.”

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights has similar terms, though China hasn’t ratified it. While children under 18 were not present at Gangjong Sherig Norbu Lobling, former students face limited options for higher learning in Tibetan. Opportunities to study in Tibetan are dwindling from kindergarten to university.

Tibet Watch reports that Dzoge County recently ordered 300 young monks at Taktsang Lhamo Kirti Monastery to disrobe and become lay students at government schools. An undisclosed source indicated that Dzoge County authorities plan to close the monastic school this month.

Ironically, while China shuts down Tibetan schools, it claims that the lack of education opportunities necessitates sending Tibetan children to distant boarding schools.

In June, Xi Jinping visited such a school in Qinghai’s provincial capital, which included 800 Tibetan students from the same area as Gangjong Sherig Norbu Lobling.

Lhadon Tethong, founder of Tibet Action Institute, criticized this hypocrisy: “Claiming Tibetan children must live in boarding schools due to remote geography, while closing an acclaimed school in a remote region, exposes China’s justification as a lie.” On July 29, 100 academics petitioned the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to pressure China to comply with international education standards.

When questioned about how states can show support for Tibetan youth deprived of their linguistic heritage, Tempa Gyaltzen Zamlha, Deputy Director of the Tibet Policy Institute, made a straightforward appeal: “Bring attention to the matter.”

BUDDHISM

China Escalates Crackdown on Tibetan Buddhism

11 October 2024, [RTV](#)

Beijing has intensified its campaign to assert control over Tibetan Buddhism, tightening religious and cultural restrictions. Recent high-profile visits by top Chinese officials signal a renewed crackdown, marked by harsher surveillance, school closures, and forced assimilation policies. Over one million Tibetan children have been separated from their families, while the Chinese Communist Party strengthens its grip on religious practices, including its controversial control over the Dalai Lama's reincarnation.

China's ongoing campaign to "sinicize" Tibetan Buddhism is deepening, with authorities pushing for greater control over religious and cultural practices in Tibetan regions. The United States Commission on International Religious Freedom's 2024 report highlights a growing suppression of religious freedom in Tibet. Tibetan Buddhist monasteries face tighter scrutiny, while security measures have been ramped up. Monks and nuns are subjected to indoctrination sessions and harsher penalties, as seen in the recent crackdown on the Tengdro Monastery.

A key part of Beijing's strategy is to assimilate Tibetan identity into the broader Chinese society. More than one million Tibetan children have been removed from their families and placed in state-run boarding schools, where they are taught in Mandarin and exposed to Chinese cultural ideals, further eroding Tibetan language and traditions. This move coincides with the closure of Tibetan-language schools, including the Jigme Gyaltsen Nationalities Vocational School, which had been operating for over 30 years.

Chinese authorities are also expanding their influence over the appointment of Tibetan religious leaders, requiring that all reincarnated Tibetan Lamas, including the Dalai Lama, be approved by the state. This interference has drawn sharp criticism from Tibetan communities and international human rights groups, who see it as a direct attack on the region's religious autonomy. The government's decision to close schools, suppress cultural practices, and tightly regulate religious affairs is part of a broader policy to secure its political dominance over Tibet.

Recent visits by senior Chinese officials to Tibet and other Tibetan-inhabited areas underscore the state's commitment to consolidating control. Top officials, including Chen Wenqing and Ying Yong, have emphasized the need to "crack down on separatist activities" and manage religious affairs in line with the law. These visits have coincided with the expansion of military infrastructure in the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), raising concerns over China's intentions in the strategically significant region.

In another bold step, China launched the Tibet International Communication Center in Lhasa in

September 2024, a propaganda hub aimed at shaping international views on Tibet. The center aligns with the government's push to dominate the narrative on Tibet ahead of the 6th World Buddhist Forum, scheduled for October 2024, where China plans to further promote its policies to international Buddhist communities.

China detained Tibetan youngsters for resisting transfer from monastic to colonial boarding schools

09 October 2024, [Tibetan Review](#)

Chinese authorities in a Tibetan area of Sichuan province have detained and subjected to political education four Tibetan youngsters for resisting transfer from their monastic school to a secular one run by the Chinese government meant to Sinicize them, reported the Tibetan service of *rfa.org* Oct 8, citing local Tibetan sources.

The students, aged 15-18, had been attending a school run by the Lhamo Kirti Monastery in Dzoge (Chinese: Ruò'ěrgài) county in the province's Ngaba (or Ngawa, Chinese: Aba) prefecture before the Chinese government forced its closure in early Jul 2024. Parents were ordered to enrol their children in government-run schools. These "colonial style" schools teach all subjects in Chinese language with primary focus on studying the "Xi Jinping Thought on socialism with Chinese characteristics for a new era". This is meant to make Chinese of the Tibetan children under the Chinese president's Sinicization drive.

A total of 300 novice monk-students were transferred to such Chinese schools last month, and the remaining 300 on Oct 2.

The four boys were detained on Oct 2 and subjected to several days of "political re-education". They were then forced to attend a local government-run school after their release on Oct 6, the report said, citing two local sources who could not be named for safety reasons.

"Those who refuse to go to the government-run school are being detained," the report quoted another local Tibetan source as saying. "Many children were also forced to attend political education sessions", during which they are told of having been "negatively influenced by their parents and the monastery."

Monasteries have for centuries been the main centres of learning for the Tibetan people who enrol in them at as young as 5-6 years of age. China put an end to this practice with a new vigour from 2018 in a renewed campaign to Sinicize Tibet.

Not only do children learn everything only in Mandarin Chinese in these boarding schools but they are also reportedly denied contact with their families for long periods. As a result, they are said to find it difficult to communicate with their parents later on.

China's Sixth World Buddhist Forum to be held 15–17 October at Xuedou Temple, Ningbo

04 October 2024, [BDG](#)

The Sixth World Buddhist Forum will be held in China from 15–17 October at Ningbo, Zhejiang, on the eastern coast of China. Delegates from over 80 countries will be participating, with the theme for the conference being titled, "Hand in Hand for Coexistence," which emphasizes the Chinese emphasis on multipolarity and non-interference.

The Sixth World Buddhist Forum is a cornerstone of Chinese Buddhist diplomacy. The conference is being organized by Wang Bangjin, party secretary of Ningbo, and Jin Liping, municipal party committee supervisor. The previous, fifth session of the World Buddhist Forum was held at the coastal city of Putian, in China's Fujian province. The Forum will hold a grand opening ceremony at Ningbo's Xuedou Temple, in the temple's Longhua Square.

Xuedou Temple is part of the Xuedou Maitreya Complex. It has seen over a millennium of prosperity and decline, and was destroyed and rebuilt five times. The most famous abbot of the temple in recent memory was Master Taixu (1890–1947), the great reform-minded monastic and forefather of Humanistic Buddhism. In 1933, proposed that Xuedou Mountain become one of China's five renowned Buddhist mountains. (China Daily)

Zhejiang as a heartland of Chinese Buddhism

Ningbo is in Zhejiang Province, with the capital being Hangzhou. The latter has long been touted as a core historical and contemporary hub of Chinese Buddhism. Ningbo also houses the famous Ayuwang Temple (阿育王寺), or the Temple of Ashoka the Great. According to the Princeton University Art Museum, the Ayuwang Monastery is the subject of several legends, including being established in 282 during the Western Jin Dynasty by the foreign monastic Huida (惠達). Its most important artifact is a parietal bone of the Buddha Shakyamuni, which is presently stored in a stupa shaped reliquary in the temple's Relic Hall (*sheli dian* 舍利殿). (Princeton University)

The broader province of Zhejiang is core to China's vision and strategy for Buddhist diplomacy. Former Chinese president Jiang Zemin (1926–2022) visited Ayuwang Monastery with Chinese leader Xi Jinping in 2002, while Xi was still the provincial governor of Zhejiang. Four years later in 2006, the First World Buddhist Forum was held in 2006, during Xi's tenure as governor and party secretary of Zhejiang.

Sharing "Maitreya Culture" with the world

Ningbo is also described as the hometown of Budai, who is known in Chinese Buddhism as an incarnation of Maitreya (known stereotypically in the West as the

fat laughing Buddha). The government of Ningbo Fenghua District has pushed Xuedou Mountain as the “distribution center” of “Maitreya culture”: a platform to explore the cultural essence of openness, tolerance, harmony and joy. The spirit of tolerance, kindness, wisdom, humor, and optimism contained in Maitreya culture shows a wealth of life wisdom that is closely connected with the traditional emphasis on harmony in Chinese culture and philosophy. “Maitreya culture is very helpful in solving people’s spiritual confusion and promoting social harmony,” said Wei Daoru, a researcher at the Institute of World Religions of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.



Xuedou Temple. Image from Niraj Kumar

The open-air Maitreya Buddha or Budai stature on Xuedou Mountain, Fenghua, is part of the Xuedou Maitreya Complex. It holds the record of highest sitting posture for a sculpture in the world. In December 2013, a smaller iteration of this stature was moved to Lumbini Chinese Temple at the site of Lumbini, Nepal. This smaller Buddha statue was escorted to the Chinese temple by the Fenghua Cultural Mission, and was an integral event during the 6th Nepal China Festival.

“This Buddha was carefully customized and built by Nepal in Lumbini, which highlights the importance both sides attach to cultural exchanges,” Jin Jianfan, vice chairman of the Chinese Culture Promotion Association, had said. Xuedou Temple has held 16 “Xuedou Mountain Maitreya Cultural Festival” in a row, providing believers with a wealth of Buddhist cultural activities.

The opening ceremony of one of the sessions of the China-South Korea-Japan Buddhist Friendly Interaction Conference was also held on Xuedou Mountain, in October 2016. The purpose of these trilateral exchanges is to reaffirm of the “golden bond” of Buddhism that contributes to a harmonious relationship the three countries, and to explore ways in which the three nations can contribute to regional stability and harmony in the Asia-Pacific region. The conference was first held in 1995, and by 2022 it had been held 22 times.

Authorities transfer 200 Tibetan monastic students to state schools

02 October 2024, [RFA](#)

Tibetans oppose the measure, calling the new facilities ‘colonial-style’ boarding schools.



Tibetan students from the Second Senior High School line up for exercises during a break in Shannan, also known as Lhoka, in western China’s Tibet Autonomous Region, June 18, 2023.

Chinese authorities on Wednesday transferred the remaining students at a shuttered Tibetan Buddhist monastery school in Sichuan province to state-administered residential schools, two Tibetans with knowledge of the situation said.

In early July, Radio Free Asia reported that authorities had closed down the Buddhist school of Lhamo Kirti Monastery in Dzoge county, known among locals as Taksang Lhamo Kirti Monastery, affecting nearly 600 students. They also required parents to enroll their children in state-administered residential schools.

Chinese officials transferred about 300 of the students to state-run boarding schools in September, said the sources, who declined to be named so they could speak about a sensitive issue.

And on Wednesday, the remaining 200-some students, aged 15 to 18, were forcibly admitted to similar state-run institutions, leaving the monastery school completely unoccupied, they said.

The measure is part of the Chinese government’s efforts to control Tibetan Buddhist education and assimilate Tibetan youth, activists say.

Tibetans opposed the transfer, saying the new facilities are “colonial-style” boarding schools where children are separated from their families and taught a Chinese-language curriculum that promotes loyalty to the Chinese Communist Party.

Authorities previously summoned the students’ parents for patriotic re-education sessions and had them sign agreements not to enroll their children in monastic schools before the legal age of 18, the sources said.

Established in 1986, the Lhamo Kirti Monastery school initially provided foundational education to young

monks before their advanced studies in Buddhist philosophy.

After being temporarily closed in 2003, the school reopened under the name Taktsang Lhamo Kirti Monastic School, focusing on educating novices.

Authorities also shut down another school at Kirti Monastery in Ngaba county, Sichuan province, affecting 1,000 students, RFA reported in July.

STATE OF ECOLOGY OF THE TIBETAN PLATEAU

Lead pollution in a remote Tibetan glacier reveals far-reaching human activities

24 October 2024, [U.S. National Science Foundation](#)

The Tibetan Plateau's glaciers are among the world's most remote and untouched places. Researchers say these ice fields provide water for millions of people and play a vital environmental role.

Now, geoscientists funded by the U.S. National Science Foundation have tracked pollution in the form of lead in the glaciers. The findings are reported in the journal *Nature Communications Earth and Environment*.

The Tibetan Plateau is often called the "Roof of the World." It's the highest and largest plateau on Earth. In a study of the Guliya Ice Cap there, Franco Marcantonio of Texas A&M University and his colleagues discovered that significant lead pollution of the ice cap began in 1974, with the highest levels between 2000 and 2007.

The team measured lead isotopes in samples dating to 36,000 years ago. The ice serves as a historical record, giving scientists a way of comparing levels of modern lead contamination to those of pre-industrial times.

"Even though Pb [lead] has been used by ancient civilizations for millennia, it was not until the Industrial Revolution and later, when leaded gasoline was introduced ... in the 1920s, that the emission of Pb from human activities skyrocketed," state the scientists in their paper. "By the 1980s, emissions surpassed their natural and pre-industrial contribution by about two orders of magnitude."

The Tibetan Plateau "is considered to be a pristine place due to the very low industrial activity in the region," write the researchers. Nonetheless, lead found its way there, and its history of human use was captured in the Guliya Ice Cap.

"This study advances our understanding of the breadth and timing of environmental impacts from human activities," says Margaret Fraiser, a program director in the NSF Division of Earth Sciences.

Researchers Catch Humans Living on the Tibetan Plateau Evolving in Real Time

23 October 2024, [Extreme Tech](#), Adrianna Nine

Tibetan women who have most successfully delivered children appear to have cardiovascular traits that help their bodies utilize the plateau's scarce oxygen.

Most discussions about evolution tend to focus on the past. But humans, like any other extant species, are engaged by default in a game of [natural selection](#), in which the traits that help us thrive also help us produce offspring with those traits. In studying communities living on the Tibetan Plateau,

researchers from the United States and Nepal have caught that process happening in real time.

Averaging 16,000 feet above sea level, Asia's 970,000-square-mile Tibetan Plateau is the definition of high elevation. Extreme altitudes like this can make it tough to breathe, thanks to the lower atmospheric pressure, thinner air, and weak oxygen levels. Every breath delivers less oxygen to the blood than one would find at sea level, making life on the Tibetan Plateau physiologically difficult.

But it appears that Tibetan communities are evolving to meet the challenge. In a paper for the journal *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, researchers note that native ethnic Tibetan women who have most successfully delivered children also possess unique cardiovascular traits that help their bodies take advantage of the plateau's scarce oxygen. The women's astonishing heart strength was accompanied by high saturations of oxygen in hemoglobin, or the red blood cell protein responsible for carrying oxygen from the lungs to other parts of the body.

The researchers spent time at the Tibetan Plateau—their "natural laboratory," as they call it—speaking with 417 women aged 46 to 86. All of these women lived at a minimum of 3,500 meters (11,483 feet) and consented to interviews and biological data-sharing related to their pregnancies, births, genetics, and personal health. Together, these 417 women reported 2,193 pregnancies, which resulted in 2,076 livebirths. Those who had higher rates of livebirths (compared with fewer or lost pregnancies) had higher concentrations of oxygen within the bloodstream, as well as higher rates of oxygen transport to and from bodily tissues.

Importantly, the women who'd experienced more successful births did not possess blood that was more viscous (thicker) than those with lower livebirth rates. As blood viscosity increases, so does strain on the heart, implying that the body is struggling to keep up with the region's low-oxygen conditions. Instead, the women's blood was of normal viscosity, supporting the notion that Tibetan populations are evolving to thrive in their high-altitude environment.

"This is a case of ongoing natural selection," Cynthia Beall, the study's corresponding author and a professor emerita at Case Western Reserve University, said. "Tibetan women have evolved in a way that balances the body's oxygen needs without overworking the heart."

Small areas of Tibetan Plateau may have outsized impact on East Asia's spring rains

16 October 2024, [SCMP](#), Zhang Tong

Up to a quarter of the heaviest rainfall may be the result of gravity waves created in small pockets of mountainous terrain

Small areas of the Tibetan Plateau may have an outsized influence on East Asia's climate by increasing spring rainfall by up to a quarter, researchers say.

The Tibetan Plateau, often referred to as the "Water Tower of Asia", is crucial to the hydrological cycle, feeding major Asian rivers such as the Yangtze, Yellow River, Indus, and Ganges.

Researchers have previously drawn a link between atmospheric conditions above the plateau and persistent springtime rainfall in East Asia, which occurs between March and May.

However, it is often hard to produce accurate forecasts and even advanced models systematically underestimate precipitation.

But a research team led by Professor Xu Xiangde, a member of the Chinese Academy of Engineering, has concluded that current climate models overlook the impact of small-scale mountain ranges covering an area ranging from a few to tens of kilometres.

These mountains are like wrinkles on the plateau but they play an important role in interacting with near-ground airflow and generating the gravity wave that is produced when airflow passes over mountainous terrain and creates ripples that trigger a chain reaction.

Thanks to advanced prediction tools, they are now known to have a number of effects on the climate around the plateau, but their influence on spring rains in East Asia is still poorly understood.

Beyond blocking and diversion, the southwesterly flow is influenced by a gravity wave generated by small areas of the plateau.

"Our research indicates that these gravity waves lead to an uplift in circulation on the southern side of the plateau," Xu said.

"This uplift reduces lower atmospheric pressure and intensifies the southwesterly monsoon, thereby increasing the moisture transport from the Indian Ocean and the Bay of Bengal to downstream East Asia. "The southwesterly monsoon acts like a high-speed highway, where an increase in vehicle speed (airflow) means more goods (moisture) are transported in the same amount of time."

Using the state-of-the-art Weather Research and Forecasting Model with data from 2000 to 2017, the team conducted simulations that found rainfall would drop by around a quarter without the influence of gravity waves.

This study was published in the peer-reviewed journal *Science China Earth Sciences* last October, marking the

first international revelation of this effect, which is vital for climate modelling and forecasting the spring rains that can cause heavy flooding.

According to the paper, gravity waves are most pronounced in winter and early spring, while in summer the transport of moisture is primarily influenced by the plateau's thermal properties.

Xu Xin said the research team is still improving their research on gravity waves. "As the Tibetan Plateau warms at more than twice the rate of other regions at the same latitude, this warming weakens wind speeds and hinders long-term climate observations of gravity waves," he said.

"Moreover, the difficulty of parameterising gravity waves in models persists as researchers continue to develop theories and explore advanced technologies for higher resolution characterisations of the plateau's small-scale terrain."

Warmer winters mean world's highest places may store less carbon

14 October 2024, [New Scientist](#), James Dinneen

At high altitudes, global warming is having its strongest effect on winter temperatures – and that might mean soils there store less carbon than we expected

Climate change is raising winter temperatures faster than those of summer, especially in high-altitude areas. This "asymmetric" warming could spell trouble for the vast amount of carbon stored in soils there by altering microbial activity more than expected.

The planet's soils store more carbon than any ecosystem other than the oceans, and could store much more if better managed. But soil carbon is threatened by climate change. Researchers expect warmer temperatures will boost the amount of soil carbon lost to the atmosphere as greenhouse gases, largely due to changes in the behaviour of soil microbes. However, the scale of this warming feedback remains uncertain.

Ning Ling at Lanzhou University in China and his colleagues heated soils in an experimental grassland on the Tibetan plateau to test how different patterns of warming might change microbial activity. Some of the soils were kept at ambient temperatures, while others were exposed to a "symmetric" warming of 2°C throughout the year. A third group was exposed to warming of 2.5 to 2.8°C during winter and 0.5 to 0.8°C during the rest of the year, a more realistic simulation of actual warming patterns.

After a decade of this treatment between 2011 and 2020, the researchers tested microbial activity of samples from the different soils. They focused on two measures in particular: growth rate and an indicator of how the organisms are using carbon, known as carbon

use efficiency. This has been shown to be a major determinant of the amount of organic carbon stored in soils.

"When a microbe eats carbon, it can do one of two things with it: it can break it down for energy and breathe that carbon as CO₂, or it can use it to make new body structures," says Daniel Rath at the Natural Resources Defense Council, an environmental non-profit organisation based in New York. A higher growth rate means microbes are using more carbon, and higher carbon use efficiency means more of that carbon is being made into body structures, rather than respired as CO₂, he says.

Ling and his colleagues found both warming patterns substantially reduced microbial activity. Soils under symmetric warming saw growth rate decline 31 per cent and carbon use efficiency decline 22 per cent relative to soil exposed to ambient temperatures. Under asymmetric warming, this effect was even stronger, with growth rate lowered by 58 per cent and carbon use efficiency lowered by 81 per cent relative to soils exposed to ambient temperatures. They ascribed the differences to factors including a change in the nutrients available to the microbes.

"Their findings suggest that soil carbon storage likely will decrease, reducing the capacity of terrestrial ecosystems to sequester carbon and degrading the soil's efficacy for nature-based solutions to climate change," says Yiqi Luo at Cornell University in New York.

Rath says the fact that current models don't take asymmetric warming into account means we are probably underestimating soil carbon losses due to climate change. However, he says the findings may only apply to soils from frigid ecosystems, and more research is needed to understand exactly what these changes in microbial activity mean for carbon. For instance, despite the significant change in microbial activity, the total amount of carbon stored in the soil didn't change over the course of the experiment.

Geologist Tracks Lead Pollution In A Tibetan Glacier, Revealing Global Impact Of Human Activities

10 October 2024, [Texas A&M Today](#), Grant Hawkins

Researchers concluded that human activities have introduced the pollutant in some of the most remote and pristine regions of the world.

A collaborative research team involving Texas A&M University geologist Dr. Franco Marcantonio has examined the source of lead contamination in a Tibetan glacier, concluding that human activities have introduced the pollutant metal in some of the most remote regions of the world.

The team's findings, detailed in the paper titled "Source of lead in a Tibetan glacier since the

Stone Age,” were recently published in *Nature Communications Earth and Environment*, a high-impact journal in the field of earth and environmental sciences.

The Tibetan Plateau, a vast highland region in Asia, is often described as the “Roof of the World” because it’s the highest and largest plateau on Earth, located mostly in southwestern China near the Himalayas and roughly four times the size of Texas. In their analysis of the Guliya Ice Cap within this region, Marcantonio and his colleagues — led by Dr. Roxana Sierra-Hernandez from The Ohio State University — discovered that significant lead pollution reached this area starting in 1974, with the highest levels of contamination occurring between 2000 and 2007.

By analyzing lead isotope ratios within Texas A&M’s Williams Radiogenic Isotope Facility, Marcantonio said they were able to trace the main source of this pollution to emissions from Chinese gasoline, which contained lead until its phasedown after 2007.

“Lead is a neurotoxin, and its presence in remote areas like the Tibetan Plateau shows the vast reach of human impact on the environment,” explained Marcantonio, a professor in the Department of Geology and Geophysics and holder of the Jane and Ken R. Williams ’45 Chair in Ocean Drilling Science, Technology and Education. “By studying lead contamination in glaciers, we not only learn about the pollution itself but also gain valuable insights into atmospheric circulation patterns and the timeline of environmental changes.”

To reach these conclusions, the team measured lead isotope ratios in ice samples from layers that dated back as far as 36,000 years. These ice layers acted as a historical record, allowing the scientists to compare modern lead contamination to levels from pre-industrial times while providing a clear picture of how human activities have affected the environment on a global scale.

The work, funded by the National Science Foundation, emphasizes the importance of understanding pollution in remote ecosystems, which could have serious health implications for both humans and wildlife. As Marcantonio continues his research, he plans to trace the movement of contaminant lead across different environments, including the oceans and even the human body.

“There’s still much we don’t know about how lead and other contaminants move through our environment,” Marcantonio said. “By following these pathways, we hope to better understand how pollution spreads and impacts different ecosystems, which can ultimately help us find solutions to reduce contamination and protect human health.”

Chinese Liaison Officer Sangay Kyab Participates in a Conference Discussing Democratisation of China in Berlin

28 October 2024, [CTA](#)



Chinese Liaison Officer Sangay Kyab Participates in a Conference Discussing Democratisation of China in Berlin

TIBET IN EXILE

The Chinese Liaison Officer from the Tibet Bureau in Geneva, Sangay Kyab, attended the “Joint conference of the people of Taiwan, Hong Kong, Tibet, Uyghur, Mongolia and Inner Mongolia against the atrocity in China” held by Sino Euro Voice in Berlin, Germany.

It was co-organised by the UK Headquarters of China Democracy Party, the Federation for a Democratic China, the Taiwan Foundation for Democracy, and the Democracy Party of China.

The conference’s inaugural featured Dr Jhy-Wey Shieh, the Taiwanese Representative to Germany, who delivered the opening remarks and emphasised the importance of unity and cooperation among the communities represented for fostering positive change in China. The Representative further expressed his gratitude to the Tibetan, Mongolian, and Uyghur communities for their solidarity and support for Taiwan in light of the increased aggression from the PRC in the Taiwan Strait.

In his address during the opening ceremony, Chinese Liaison Officer Sangay Kyab recounted His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama’s immense contributions and shrewd guidance in promoting collaborations among the victims of the CPC’s political repression while expressing his disappointment for the oversight in including a representative of White Paper Movement in this conference.

As the conference reflected on the Communist Party of China’s 75 years of rule, Sangay Kyab provided a detailed account of the 75 years of repression in Tibet, dividing the period into four distinct phases. He noted that the Chinese government initiated major political campaigns in Tibet from 1949 to 1965, following a violent incursion. This was succeeded by the infamous

Cultural Revolution, which lasted from 1966 to 1976. Kyab highlighted the CPC's promotion of mass immigration into Tibet from 1980 to 2012, alongside various sinicisation programs, marking the third phase of repression that led to numerous self-immolations, particularly after the 2008 pan-Tibet protests. He categorised the current period under Xi Jinping as the fourth phase, characterised by state policies aimed at erasing Tibetan identity, notably through the forced admission of over 1 million Tibetan children into colonial-style boarding schools.

In the virtual talk section of the conference, Representative Kelsang Gyaltzen of the Office of Tibet in Taiwan delivered a talk, stressing that international discussion and attention over the Tibet cause has not yet diminished as many misperceive. In light of that, he elaborated on the recent enactment of the Resolve Tibet Act in the US.

Representatives from Tibet, Southern Mongolia, East Turkistan, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Chinese pro-democracy activist groups participated in the conference.

A day later, at 10:30 in the morning on 25 October, participants of the conference held a protest in front of the Chinese Embassy in Berlin.

India Tibet Coordination Office Holds Tibet Awareness Program in Mumbai to Strengthen Advocacy for Tibet

28 October 2024, [CTA](#)



From left to right: Faculty Shri Arvind Nikose, Co-convenor of CGTC-I; Shri Santosh Rohidas Gharat, State Secretary (Political) of the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP), Maharashtra; Tashi Dekyi, Coordinator, ITCO; Principal Shri Kongere ji; Shri Bala Saheb Raste; and Teacher Suhas Shinde.

The India Tibet Coordination Office (ITCO) of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) organised a Tibet Awareness Program in Mumbai, engaging stakeholders across education, media, politics, and Tibet Support Groups to promote advocacy and solidarity with the Tibetan cause. The program aimed to strengthen advocacy and solidarity with the Tibetan cause, with events and meetings held across the city. As part of the awareness initiative, "A Day for Tibet Program" was held at Shri Chhatrapati Shivaji High

School in Navi Mumbai. Approximately 70 students, along with Principal Shri Kongere and faculty members, attended the program themed 'Why Tibet Matters to India'. The session was attended by chief guest Shri Santosh Gharat during which, ITCO Coordinator Tashi Dekyi shared insights on the historical, cultural, and geopolitical connections between India and Tibet in her address. The program highlighted the strategic relevance of Tibet, including environmental concerns and the importance of India's support for Tibet's cause. Students and teachers actively participated, making the session highly engaging and informative.

Likewise, another advocacy meeting was held at Mehboob Studio with Bollywood producer Shri Raj Satyam and his nephew, Anish Vajjala. Tashi Dekyi, Coordinator of the ITCO, and Shri Raj Satyam discussed about creative ways to reach out the Indian masses; by making the Hindi cinema fraternity more aware about Tibet, and building mass mobilisation through them.

Coordinator Tashi Dekyi also met with Shri Shashi Ranjan, an actor, filmmaker, and producer at Sony Entertainment Television, at his office in Lokandwala, Andheri West. The discussion centred on integrating Tibetan narratives into media and entertainment projects to generate public awareness.

On the political front, the program involved an advocacy meeting with Shri Santosh Rohidas Gharat, National General Secretary of the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP), Maharashtra. Shri Gharat expressed his support for the Tibetan cause and assured his involvement in political advocacy efforts to raise awareness at the state and national levels.

Coordinator Tashi Dekyi also made a courtesy call on Shri Varsha Eknath Gaikwad, a Congress Member of Parliament from Mumbai, at her office. The discussion focused on encouraging parliamentarians to engage with Tibet-related issues. Shri Gaikwad expressed her willingness to support initiatives promoting human rights and the preservation of Tibetan cultural heritage, signalling strong political backing for the Tibetan cause. The Coordinator also addressed the challenges faced by the Tibetan Refugee Market in Mumbai. She was joined by representatives from the Tibetan sweater-selling community in the city during this meeting. This dialogue underscored the need for continued support to sustain the livelihood and rights of Tibetan refugees in Mumbai.

In conclusion, the Tibet Awareness Program in Mumbai, spearheaded by Coordinator Tashi Dekyi marked a significant step in mobilising support across diverse sectors. The involvement of educational institutions, media professionals, political figures, and Tibet Support Groups demonstrated a collaborative effort to strengthen the Tibet advocacy movement.

The positive response from participants indicates the potential for future engagements and partnerships. Moving forward, follow-up meetings with key stakeholders, enhanced media outreach, and sustained political advocacy will be essential to maintain the program's momentum. The program also underscored the need for continued education and awareness efforts to inspire support among younger generations.

BTSM protests against China

28 October 2024, [Daily Excelsior](#)

The Bharat-Tibet Sahyog Manch (BTSM) held a protest on Sunday, raising slogans against China and seeking boycott of Chinese products. The demonstration, led by JKUT President Dr Vivek Sharma, demanded the complete liberation of Kailash Mansarovar and Tibet from Chinese control. Dr. Sharma stated: "As civilians, we may not be able to fight at the border, but we can respond effectively by boycotting all Chinese products and encouraging others to do the same." He urged all members of society to support the boycott of Chinese goods and choose local products instead. "Along with seeking the complete freedom of Tibet and Kailash Mansarovar, another objective of this protest is to encourage a boycott of Chinese goods in the market. While every citizen may not be able to go to war at the borders, it is our moral responsibility to embrace Swadeshi goods and demonstrate our patriotism," he said. Rajinder Sadotra, General Secretary BTSM, said that use of Chinese goods is equal to helping China become economically stronger. Others, who addressed the gathering, included Dr Vikrant Singh and Dr Rajesh Sharma, Vice President of BTSM; Vishal Sharma, Alok Mahajan, Mukesh Sharma and Dr Nitán.

Tibetan delegation in Europe raises awareness on repression by China in Tibet

27 October 2024, [ANI](#)

A parliamentary delegation from the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) has intensified its global advocacy efforts by engaging with key figures in Switzerland to discuss the urgent situation in Tibet, a statement from CTA said. The delegation, comprising parliamentarian MPs Geshe Atong Rinchen Gyaltzen, Lobsang Gyatso Sither, and Tenzin Choezin met with Mario Fehr, Minister of Security of Zurich Council and embarked to express gratitude for his support during Dalai Lama's recent visit and his ongoing commitment to the Tibetan cause, the statement added.

As per the statement, during the meeting, the MPs detailed the escalating repressive measures imposed by the Chinese Communist government, aimed at erasing Tibetan religion, culture, language, and identity. They presented a letter of appeal, signed by the Speaker of the Tibetan Parliament, along with a symbolic souvenir from the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile.

Minister Fehr acknowledged his long-standing connection with the Tibetan community since 1988, reinforcing the importance of international support against China's oppressive policies. In the afternoon, the delegation convened with members of the Tibetan Community of Switzerland and Liechtenstein, as well as representatives from Tibet support groups and NGOs, the statement said. They explored strategies to enhance collective advocacy efforts and discussed the delegation's objectives in challenging Chinese oppression. The MPs underscored the necessity of unity within the Tibetan struggle, responding to questions and fostering a collaborative spirit among attendees, as per the statement.

Tibet, a region with a rich cultural and spiritual heritage, came under Chinese control in the 1950s following a military invasion by the People's Republic of China (PRC). This event marked the beginning of a complex and often contentious relationship between Tibet and the Chinese government, which has led to significant international concern over various issues related to human rights, cultural preservation, and environmental degradation. The meeting also included Thinlay Chukki, a Representative of the Tibet Bureau in Geneva, and Phuntsok Topgyal, UN Advocacy Officer of the Tibet Bureau, further emphasizing the coordinated effort to shine a spotlight on China's violations of human rights in Tibet. Since the invasion, China has implemented policies that many observers characterize as politically repressive and culturally suppressive. These measures have included the restriction of religious practices, the imposition of Mandarin as the primary language of instruction in schools, and the repression of Tibetan cultural expressions. China's actions have often been framed as part of a broader agenda to assimilate Tibetan identity into a unified Chinese national identity, which has fueled ongoing tensions both within Tibet and between Tibetans and the Chinese government.

Representative Dr Tsewang Gyalpo Arya Concludes his Maiden Tour to the Philippines

27 October 2024, [CTA](#)

Representative Dr Tsewang Gyalpo Arya of the Liaison Office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama for Japan and East Asia concluded his one-week maiden official tour to the Philippines today after a series of interactions and lecture events on the Tibet issue in the regions surrounding Manila City.

The Philippines was one of the few countries that supported Tibet in the United Nations in the early 1960s to condemn Chinese occupation of Tibet and questioned the veracity of the 'liberation' of Tibet. The prestigious Ramon Magsaysay Award of the Philippines was awarded to H.H. the Dalai Lama in 1959 for his leadership in the preservation of Tibet's society, religion, and culture during a critical time.

Representative Dr Arya met with Hon. Congressman Adrian Amatong and discussed his schedule in the city. He updated the Congressman on the Tibet issue and the vision paper of the 16th Kashag of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA). While presenting a copy of the recent U.S. Resolve Tibet Act, he briefed the Congressman on the Act and requested the introduction of a similar bill in the Philippine parliament.

Congressman Adrian Amatong welcomed Dr. Arya and expressed pleasure meeting him and said that many people in the Philippines support the Tibet issue because Filipinos are freedom-loving people and Tibet represents a non-violent and justified struggle for freedom and justice. He advised continued efforts to negotiate with China for a peaceful resolution of the Tibet-China conflict.

Later, Representative Arya met with Hon. Wallace Chow, Representative of the Taipei Economic & Cultural Office in the Philippines, and discussed the situation in Tibet, Taiwan, and China. They agreed that freedom and democracy in China as important factors in resolving their issues with China and expressed solidarity to work for freedom and democracy around the world.

At the invitation of the University of the Philippines College of Mass Communication, Representative Arya visited the University, where he was received by Dean Fernando Paragas, Prof. Diosa Labiste, and the students. In his talk to the students, he briefly spoke of the early imperial power of Tibet, how Buddhism pacified the Tibetans, and how the Tibetans lived in peace under the leadership of successive Dalai Lamas until the Chinese communist invasion of Tibet in 1950. He talked about the historical distortion the CCP leadership is making to justify their claim on Tibet and warned the students of Chinese propaganda and disinformation.

Representative Dr. Arya visited the Philippine Palyul Tibetan Buddhist Dharma Center at Santa Mesa, where he met with the monks and explained the purpose of his visit to the Philippines and updated them on the workings of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), and shared with them the vision paper of the CTA.

Madam Susan Afan, President of the Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation (RMAF), and Joy Alampay, Director of Ramon Magsaysay Transformative Leadership Institute, met with Representative Dr. Arya and discussed the Tibet issue and the four missions of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. The President and the members of the RMAF visited Dharamsala and had an audience with His Holiness last September. The President emphasized the importance of sharing His Holiness the Dalai Lama's vision for world peace in the region and celebrating the 90th birth anniversary of His Holiness next year through seminars and other events.

Because of the typhoon emergency warning, the two lectures planned at the University of the Philippines Asian Center Forum and Del La Salle Saint Benilde's School of Diplomacy and Governance Forum were done online. Dr. Arya spoke on the theme "The Tibetan Struggle: Search for Freedom and Justice" and "The Philippines and Tibetan Relations: Helming vibrant partnership amidst diversity" at the two forums.

Representative Arya thanked the government and the people of the Philippines for their support in the early 1950s and for awarding the prestigious Ramon Magsaysay Award to His Holiness the Dalai Lama in 1959. He said he appreciated and wanted to revive the Filipinos' bold and freedom-loving spirit.

Representative Dr Arya, in his presentation at the two colleges, elaborated on how Tibet has been an independent nation since ancient times and how the CCP has been trying to distort this part of history to legitimize its occupation of Tibet. He explained how the CCP is a threat to China, Asia, and the world and how the freedom-loving nations around the world should work together to free China from the CCP's authoritative regime.

Faculty members and students asked many questions about the situation in Tibet, Chinese religious interference, historical distortion, China's transnational repression and surveillance, His Holiness the Dalai Lama's reincarnation issue, and the whereabouts of Panchen Lama. As the questions exceeded the time limit, it was decided to answer through email.

The deans, faculty members, and students thanked Representative Arya for his presentation on the history and current situation of Tibet and requested such talks in the future. The University presented a certificate of appreciation to Dr Arya. Prof. Maricel Fernandez-Carag,

in her closing remark, said that though Tibet and the Philippines are some 3662 km apart, we are united by the shared value of freedom and non-violence. “We need this international partnership to promote global citizenship education.” She said. Some suggested starting Tibetan studies at the University and requested reading materials on Tibet. Representative Arya welcomed the idea of Tibetan studies at the University and promised to send reading materials on Tibet.

Tibetan rights group demands information on four missing detainees in Ngaba

25 October 2024, [Phayul](#), Tsering Dhundup



The four detained Tibetans from Amdo Ngaba (Photo/TCHRD)

A Tibetan human rights organization has raised alarm over the disappearance of four Tibetans, including two prominent monks, who were detained by Chinese authorities in Ngaba, Amdo.

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) reported that two monks from Kirti Monastery in the Tibetan province of Amdo, Lobsang Samten and Lobsang Trinley, along with Tsering Tashi and Wangkyi, were arbitrarily detained in early September. Their current whereabouts and any charges against them remain unknown.

Lobsang Samten, 53, a monk holding the Karampa (Geshe) title for academic excellence, serves as the junior chant master at Kirti Monastery’s Prayer College. Originally from Khangsar township in Chikdril County, Samten has been associated with the monastery since childhood. This is not his first encounter with detention, as he was previously held in 2011 alongside 300 other monks.

The second detained monk, Lobsang Trinley, also known as Drenpo, is in his forties and hails from Rong khangsar town in Ngaba County. He has been instrumental in organizing ritual ceremonies at the monastery.

A source speaking to TCHRD revealed the intensifying situation in the region: “There have been reports of members of the Haritsang family being arrested for maintaining contacts in India, though specific details remain elusive. In recent months, repression in the

Ngaba region has intensified, with increased restrictions particularly aimed at Kirti Monastery and nearby villages.

“Arbitrary detentions and secret sentencing of Tibetans have become frequent. Local Tibetans are being silenced through intimidation, making it increasingly difficult for information to surface. Even those who are released from detention are prohibited from revealing the charges against them or where they were held, further obscuring the truth from the community.”

Ngaba is a region in the Tibetan province of Amdo that has been the epicentre of self-immolation protests against Chinese government repression due to which the region became unfortunately known as the “self-immolation capital of the world.”

This incident follows China’s closure of two major Buddhist monastery schools in July this year, forcing approximately 1,600 novice monks into government-run boarding schools, marking what observers see as part of a broader campaign to assimilate Tibetan cultural and religious identity into Han Chinese culture.

TCHRD has issued a call for Chinese authorities to end these arbitrary detentions immediately and provide information about the status and whereabouts of the four detained individuals

Modi-Xi meeting at BRICS draws cautious optimism from Tibetan leader

25 October 2024, [Phayul](#), Tsering Dhundup

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping held a bilateral meeting on the side lines of the BRICS summit in Kazan, Russia on Wednesday.

According to information released by India’s Ministry of External Affairs, the two leaders discussed improving India-China relations and agreed to work on restoring ties that had deteriorated due to border confrontations and other issues. During the meeting, Xi Jinping told Modi that India and China should take a different approach regarding their relationship and cooperation.

The first meeting in five years between Modi and Xi comes after recent talks between India and China regarding the Indo-Tibet border issues and military deployment arrangements reached some agreement. The breakthrough in the patrolling arrangement comes four years after the Galwan Valley clash and signals a move towards de-escalation in a region where both countries stationed tens of thousands of troops.

Tibetan President-in-exile Penpa Tsering welcomed the diplomatic engagement between the two Asian

powers in an interview with ANI where he lauded the development while maintaining a cautious perspective.

The democratically elected Tibetan leader said, "I think from the very beginning, when PM Modi came into the office, he tried his best to build relations with China. His Holiness, the Dalai, Lama and Tibetan people have always appreciated good relations between neighbours, between countries, and between people, and we believe in nonviolence and peaceful coexistence..."

He added, "So this (bilateral meeting between PM Modi and President Xi), I would say is a good development because any relationship that is improving, that is leading towards more peace is definitely appreciative..."

While acknowledging the benefits of improved India-China relations, Tsering expressed scepticism about China's reliability and said that "it is difficult to trust China."

China's repeated aggression and unprovoked belligerence against India, especially along the Indo-Tibetan border have strained relations between the two Asian giants, despite New Delhi's attempts to normalise ties and deescalate frictions over the years.

Over 140 global Tibet groups condemn Musée Guimet's cultural erasure of Tibet

25 October 2024, [Phayul](#), Tsering Dhundup

A coalition of more than 140 Tibet advocacy organizations has confronted Paris's Musée Guimet over its controversial decision to replace references to "Tibet" with "Himalayan World" in its exhibitions, accusing the museum of complicity in China's cultural erasure efforts.

In a letter delivered Thursday to Museum President Dr. Yannick Lintz, the coalition demanded the institution restore the use of "Tibet" in its exhibitions, arguing that the current terminology effectively censors Tibet's distinct cultural identity and tacitly endorses China's occupation of the region.

"This is not just a matter of semantics," stated Rashi Jauhri of the International Tibet Network. "By prioritising China's propaganda over historical accuracy, the museum is actively betraying every patron that walks through its door."

The controversy displays ongoing tensions surrounding Tibet's cultural representation in international institutions. Tibet, which was invaded by China in 1950, is currently ranked among the world's most repressed regions by Freedom House, with severe restrictions on civil liberties and political rights under the repressive occupation of the Chinese authority.

Critics argue that by adopting the term "Himalayan World," the museum is conflating distinct cultural traditions of Tibet, Bhutan, and Nepal, effectively obscuring Tibet's unique heritage. The museum's approach appears to contradict the International Council of Museums' Code of Ethics, which emphasizes accurate representation and appropriate consideration of represented groups.

Tenzin Namgyal of Students for a Free Tibet France expressed particular concern about the museum's lack of engagement with the Tibetan community, noting that "Ms. Yannick Lintz's refusal to enter into dialogue with the Tibetan people" is especially troubling given their direct connection to the artefacts in question.

The campaign has gained additional significance following a recent victory at Paris's Musée du quai Branly, which reversed its use of the term "Xizang" in favour of "Tibet" for its Tibetan artefacts after public protest.

For Tibetan political leader, 'Middle Way' to autonomy is still core focus

24 October 2024, [New Delhi Times](#)

In the lobby of an upscale hotel in Prague, Sikyong Penpa Tsering talked about death — specifically, the eventuality that China's Xi Jinping will one day die.

"Nothing is permanent. Even our life is not permanent. We are born, and we have to die. So even empires rise and fall. Governments rise and fall. Xi Jinping will also have to die. So, these are inevitable," said Tsering, leader of Tibet's exiled government, the Central Tibetan Administration.

He said it casually, matter-of-factly, as if he wasn't talking about the potential downfall of the world's second-most powerful government and the inevitable death of its powerful leader.

"China is going to change. It has to change. There is no other choice," Tsering told VOA last week on the sidelines of the Forum 2000 democracy conference in the Czech capital Prague.

Sitting on a leather chair and wearing a black Tibetan vest and a blue button-down shirt, Tsering spoke about how this fundamental Buddhist idea of impermanence gives him hope for his homeland.

Reports say abuse has increased

China annexed Tibet in 1950, and since then human rights abuses in the region have steadily grown, according to reports from the U.S. State Department and rights groups.

Beijing claims the region has been part of China since "ancient times." It views the Central Tibetan Administration, or CTA, as a separatist organization and says that no government should allow the Dalai Lama — the spiritual and one-time political leader of Tibet — to visit.

But for Tsering, under the Buddhist concept of impermanence, everything in life — even Beijing’s power and repression — is transient.

Although Tsering’s hope abounds, so does his pragmatism. The prospect of an improved human rights landscape and more autonomy remains far-off. It doesn’t help that the CTA and Beijing barely have an open communication channel, Tsering said.

“Even if we manage to re-establish contact, there’s no possibility of anything really coming out of it,” Tsering said. For now, the backchannel dialogue is for the long term, not the short term, the democratically elected leader added.

But in an ideal world, where Beijing was willing to engage with the CTA, among the top priorities would be human rights in Tibet, as well as the Middle Way Approach — the Tibet administration policy that would give the region increased autonomy while remaining part of China.

Those are among the issues Tsering sought to raise with political and civil society leaders at Forum 2000, an annual gathering on democracy human rights issues founded by former Czech President Vaclav Havel.

Advocating for ‘Middle Way’

Although based in India, Tsering frequently travels the world to make his case for the Tibetan people. But he feels a particular kinship with the Czech Republic and other countries in Europe that once suffered under communism.

“They have experienced what our people are going through now,” Tsering said. “That makes it easier for them to understand.”

Tsering has about one and a half years left in his five-year term. He said he hasn’t decided whether he’ll pursue a second term, but one of his priorities for the next 18 months is to advocate for the Middle Way Approach.

The Middle Way Approach accepts Tibet’s status as part of China but advocates for increased autonomy, like greater freedoms for religion, language and culture. It’s an attempt to balance Beijing’s concerns about Tibetan separatism and Tibetans’ concerns about cultural preservation.

Tsering said he doesn’t really understand why Beijing appears to be so opposed to the approach, since it doesn’t call for independence.

‘Dying a slow death culturally’

For years, reports from news outlets and rights groups have detailed Beijing’s grave rights abuses in Tibet.

Chinese authorities are particularly repressive of any signs of dissent among Tibetans in the region, with more than 5,600 political prisoners formerly or currently jailed in Tibet since 1990, according to the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy.

Expressions of Tibetan Buddhism and Tibetan cultural identity are also restricted.

“We are dying a slow death culturally, because China is squeezing us out of our breath like a python, squeezing it out, slowly but surely,” Tsering said.

Authorities have repressed the use of the Tibetan language, and the United Nations estimates that around 1 million children have been forcibly separated from families and sent to state-run boarding schools to assimilate into the dominant Han-Chinese culture.

“It’s very clear that the Chinese government seeks to essentially hollow out and erase Tibetans’ identities,” Sophie Richardson, a visiting scholar at Stanford and the former China director at Human Rights Watch, told VOA.

China’s Foreign Ministry did not reply to VOA’s email requesting comment for this story.

Other human rights issues include Beijing’s harassment of exiled Tibetan journalists and activists in a process known as transnational repression.

“It’s essentially to prevent anybody from hearing an alternative version of their story or critique of their version. The Chinese government wants everybody to believe its version of history,” Richardson said.

But when it comes to transnational repression, Tsering said he isn’t a target.

“They don’t threaten me because they know it doesn’t make sense. I won’t listen. If they threaten me, I’ll be much worse,” Tsering said. “If they ask me not to do something, I do it more because I know it hurts them.”

Tibetan Parliament Continues Europe Tibet Advocacy in Switzerland

24 October 2024, [CTA](#)

On the 21 October 2024, a delegation comprising Tibetan Parliament members Geshe Atong Rinchen Gyaltsen, Lobsang Gyatso Sither, and Tenzin Choezin held a meeting with member of Swiss National Council from Geneva, Nicolas Walder.

During the meeting, they briefed him about the critical situation inside Tibet and urged discussion of human rights in Tibet as a condition for continuing the Free Trade Agreement between Switzerland and China. They also raised concerns about difficulties faced by Tibetans in Switzerland. The delegation presented him with an appeal letter signed by the Speaker of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile.

On the same day, the parliamentary delegation held a closed-door meeting in the morning with UN Member States’ Missions from a number of countries. During the meeting, the delegation shared updates on the critical situation inside Tibet and the current policies and practices of the Chinese government aimed towards the eradication of Tibetan Language, Culture and Religion in both physical and online spaces.

The delegation also took this opportunity to thank the various missions for their recent mentions and

recommendation's at China's UPR and expressed our gratitude to them on behalf of the Tibetan Parliament in Exile and from Tibetans inside Tibet and all over the world.

At the same time, the delegation stressed on the importance to continue to hold China accountable and requested the members present at the meeting to continue to raise their voices for Tibet at the UN and at the same time, creating spaces for Tibet at UN side-events.

In the afternoon of the same day, the parliamentary delegation held a closed-door meeting with various Special Rapporteur Secretariats. The delegations shared updates on the situation inside Tibet based on the mandates represented during the meeting and also shared our overall concern about the critical situation inside Tibet.

The delegation also thanked the staff present for the number of reports that they have published on Tibet which puts China on the spot and highlights the critical situation inside Tibet to the world.

The delegation was accompanied by Thinlay Chukki, Representative of the Office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama in Geneva and UN Advocacy Officer Phuntsok Topgyal.

15-Nation Joint Statement Demands China Address Human Rights Abuses in Tibet and East Turkistan

24 October 2024, [CTA](#)



James Martin Larsen, Australia's Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations, delivers a joint statement on human rights abuses in Tibet and East Turkistan. Photo source: UN Web TV

James Martin Larsen, Australia's Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations, delivered a joint statement on behalf of a coalition of 15 countries, expressing serious concern over grave human rights violations in East Turkistan and Tibet, and calling for urgent action from China. The statement was presented during the general discussion on human rights at the 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly's Third Committee. Representing Australia, alongside 14 other countries including Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Japan, Lithuania, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, United Kingdom, United

States, Ambassador Larsen highlighted grave concerns based on evidence gathered by the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and other UN bodies. These findings point to large-scale arbitrary detention, family separations, enforced disappearances, forced labor, and systemic repression of Uyghurs and other predominantly Muslim minorities in East Turkistan. The assessment, released two years ago, described these violations as potentially amounting to crimes against humanity.

The statement also underscored growing concerns over human rights abuses in Tibet. United Nations human rights mechanisms have detailed arbitrary detentions for the peaceful expression of political views, restrictions on travel, forced labor, the forced separation of children from families in boarding schools, and the erosion of cultural, educational and religious rights and freedom in Tibet.

Ambassador Larsen noted that despite repeated international calls for transparency, China has dismissed these concerns and labeled the OHCHR's assessment as "illegal and void" during its Universal Periodic Review adoption in July 2024. China has yet to undertake a comprehensive human rights review of its policies in Xinjiang, with its problematic legal framework on national security and counterterrorism remaining unchanged, according to an OHCHR statement from August 2024.

The 15 nations called on China to uphold its international human rights obligations and fully implement the recommendations from the OHCHR and other UN mechanisms. These include the immediate release of individuals arbitrarily detained in both East Turkistan and Tibet and full transparency regarding the fate of missing persons. Additionally, the countries urged China to allow independent observers, including those from the UN, unfettered access to assess the human rights situation in these regions.

Concluding the joint statement, Ambassador Larsen emphasised that while no country has a perfect human rights record, all states must be held accountable to international standards. The coalition urged collective global responsibility in protecting and promoting human rights worldwide.

The joint statement reflects ongoing international pressure on China to address allegations of human rights violations in its territories, marking a significant moment in global diplomacy at the UN.

Sikyong Penpa Tsering Addresses Seminar Titled 'Charting Tibet's Future' in Delhi

22 October 2024, [CTA](#)



From left to right: Shri Ashok Kumar Mehta, who facilitated the session, Sikyong Penpa Tsering of the Central Tibetan Administration, Shri Om Prakash Tandon and Shri Sujeet Kumar gathered at the India International Centre Annexe.

On the evening of 21 October 2024, Sikyong Penpa Tsering of the Central Tibetan Administration delivered a keynote address during a talk session titled 'Charting Tibet's Future: The Resolve Tibet Act, Strategies in Exile, His Holiness the Dalai Lama's Legacy, and India's Role.'

The event was hosted by the Foundation for Non-violent Alternatives (FNVA) in Lecture Room 1 at the India International Centre Annexe.

Among the distinguished speakers were Sikyong Penpa Tsering, who provided insights into the current state of Tibetan affairs, and Om Prakash Tandon, the founding trustee of FNVA. Major General Ashok Kumar Mehta facilitated the session, ensuring a constructive exchange of ideas, while Shri Sujeet Kumar, a former Member of Lok Sabha and former convener of the All-Party Indian Parliamentary Forum for Tibet (APIPFT), also participated in the discussion. The discussion focused on the significance of the Resolve Tibet Act and its potential impact on the future of Tibet and the Tibetan exile community. Sikyong elaborated on the strategies being developed by the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) to sustain and strengthen the Tibetan freedom movement in exile.

Sikyong emphasised the importance of the Tibet Policy and Support Act, highlighting its role in advocating for the rights and autonomy of the Tibetan people. He explained how the act provides a structured approach to the U.S. policy toward Tibet, reinforcing international support for the Tibetan cause and holding the Chinese government accountable for human rights abuses in Tibet. He stated, "The act supports the central Tibetan leadership, encouraging dialogue and collaboration with global partners to further the Tibetan cause." He further articulated his vision, saying, "We aspire for a free and democratic

Tibet, and we remain committed to peaceful resistance and the pursuit of justice."

Additionally, Sikyong provided a concise overview of Tibet's leadership history, emphasising the continuous leadership of successive Dalai Lamas since the 15th century. He clarified misconceptions surrounding Tibet's sovereignty post-1913, explaining that Tibet maintained self-rule after expelling Chinese forces in 1912, following the fall of the Qing dynasty. He asserted, "No foreign country has ever directly ruled Tibet. While there have been instances of external influence, Tibet has never been under direct foreign control."

Sikyong further narrated the deep historical connections between India and Tibet, highlighting India's influence on Tibetan scripts and religion. He mentioned that, according to some historical accounts, the first king of Tibet was of Indian descent. Moreover, he expressed gratitude to the Indian government and people for their support of Tibetan refugees following the flight into exile led by His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

Sikyong also addressed the geopolitical and strategic significance of the Tibetan plateau, highlighting Tibet's role as the source of major rivers, including the Yarlung Tsangpo and the Mekong, and expressed concern over China's diversion of Tibet's water resources, which affects downstream countries like India and those in Southeast Asia. He condemned China for failing to share hydrological data, leading to environmental and livelihood challenges for riparian nations.

A key highlight of the talk was the enduring legacy of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama in shaping the global movement for Tibetan freedom and the preservation of Tibetan culture and identity. Since his exile in 1959, His Holiness has been a vital figure advocating for the rights of the Tibetan people, promoting a message of compassion and non-violence. Sikyong Penpa Tsering stated, "His Holiness' teachings have not only galvanised support within Tibet but have also inspired individuals and movements worldwide to stand up for justice and human rights." He added, "His commitment to dialogue and understanding continues to resonate with the Tibetan cause."

Sikyong underlined the significance of the Tibetan Plateau, often referred to as the 'Roof of the World', the 'Third Pole', or 'Asia's Water Tower.' He noted, "The rivers originating from Tibet, such as the Yarlung Tsangpo, Machu, and Dzachu, have become the lifeline for hundreds of millions of people in Asia." He pointed out that "two of the world's oldest civilisations—the Indus Valley Civilisation and Chinese Civilisation—also rely on Tibet's rivers."

However, Sikyong expressed concerns about the ongoing mismanagement of Tibetan rivers by the Chinese Communist government, stating, "This situation poses serious threats to the environment and

the livelihoods of millions downstream.” He warned of severe repercussions for the future, emphasising the urgent need for sustainable practices to protect these vital water resources.

The session concluded with a Q&A segment, allowing participants to engage directly and ask questions. The event offered insights into the current political situation, the challenges faced by the Tibetan community, and the CTA’s plans for safeguarding Tibet’s future.

Bengaluru: Panelists urge global action for Tibetan rights amid growing pressures from China

21 October 2024, [ANI](#)

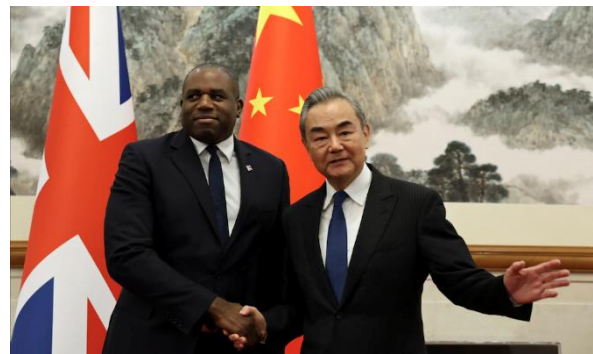
The Dalai Lama Institute for Higher Education (DLIHE) and the Department of Information and International Relations (DIIR), Central Tibetan Administration hosted a panel discussion titled 'Why Tibet Matters' at the institute's Aa-Ka-Ma auditorium. The panelists engaged in a robust dialogue on Tibetan identity and rights, exploring the multifaceted challenges faced by the Tibetan community in the current political climate. The event was moderated by Acharya Norbu, a lecturer in Tibetan History, and featured two panellists -- Dechen Palmo, an environmental researcher at the Tibet Policy Institute, and Dukthen Kyi, head of the Tibet Advocacy Section at DIIR. During the discussion, Dukthen Kyi highlighted the political and cultural importance of protecting Tibetan identity amid increasing pressures from the Chinese government. She outlined the Central Tibetan Administration's efforts to advocate for Tibetan rights and called for heightened international awareness and support for the Tibetan cause, linking environmental sustainability with human rights. The panel concluded with a call to action, urging participants to engage in advocacy for Tibet's critical issues. DLIHE's Principal, Tenzin Pasang, reinforced this message, emphasising the collective responsibility of attendees to support the Tibetan movement. The event, attended by nearly 200 students and faculty, fostered dialogue and community among those invested in the Tibetan cause.

The Tibetan issue involves political, cultural, and human rights concerns related to Tibet, a region known for its unique culture and spiritual traditions. After China invaded Tibet in 1950, it was incorporated into the People's Republic of China, changing its governance and society. Many Tibetans, including the Dalai Lama, seek greater autonomy or independence due to worries about cultural loss, religious repression, and human rights violations. The Chinese government insists that Tibet is part of China and promotes economic development in the

region. This has led to ongoing international discussions and activism for Tibet's cultural preservation and the rights of its people, making the issue a sensitive topic in international relations. In recent years, there have been several notable cases that highlight ongoing concerns. For instance, the Chinese government's intensified crackdown on Tibetan Buddhism, including the restriction of religious practices and the surveillance of monasteries, has drawn international attention. The situation surrounding the Panchen Lama, a key figure in Tibetan Buddhism, is particularly poignant. Kidnapped by Chinese authorities in 1995 at the age of six, he has not been seen publicly since, raising fears about religious freedom and the future of Tibetan spirituality. (ANI)

UK Foreign Secretary raises Uyghur’s rights, ignores Tibet during China visit

21 October 2024, [Phayul](#)



David Lammy and Wang Yi during the meeting on Friday in Beijing (Photo/EPA)

During his recent visit to China, UK Foreign Secretary David Lammy addressed human rights violations concerning the Uyghur population in East Turkestan (Xinjiang), but notably avoided any mention of Tibet, despite calls from rights groups to highlight the deteriorating human rights situation inside Tibet.

After Lammy’s meeting with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi on Friday, the UK Foreign Office issued a statement saying that the discussions included concerns over the mistreatment of Uyghurs in East Turkestan (Xinjiang) and the case of detained British citizen Jimmy Lai. The statement described the meeting as “constructive,” noting that a range of foreign policy and security issues were discussed.

Ahead of Lammy’s first official trip to Beijing, several Tibetan rights groups urged him to raise the deteriorating conditions in Tibet with his Chinese counterparts. In an open letter, the London-based *Free Tibet* organization stressed that Lammy’s visit coincided with a “historic low” for human rights in Tibet. The letter expressed deep concern over Beijing’s growing control over the region, citing the forced

assimilation of Tibetan children through state-imposed education systems and the closure of Tibetan schools. The group also pointed to increasing transnational repression of Tibetan communities in exile, particularly in the UK, by Chinese authorities. Rights groups also urged Lammy to use his first official visit to China as a foreign secretary to confront these human rights violations. They highlighted that Tibet remains largely closed to independent journalists, diplomats, and human rights monitors, limiting accountability. Citing the UK's economic and diplomatic influence as a key trading partner with China, the groups emphasised that Britain should leverage this position to pressure Beijing to release political prisoners and halt policies that endanger Tibetan culture, identity, and livelihood. However, no mention was made of Tibet.

During his visit to Beijing, Lammy also met with Ding Xuexiang, China's most senior vice-premier and a close ally of President Xi Jinping. He is also expected to travel to Shanghai for talks with British businesses to strengthen economic ties between the UK and China. Lammy emphasised that the UK government is seeking to bring "consistency" to its relationship with China, noting that there had not been "sufficient contact" between London and Beijing under his predecessors, particularly regarding human rights. He also stressed the importance of maintaining a "pragmatic" approach to relations with China. His visit marks the second by a British foreign secretary in two years, following James Cleverly's trip in August 2023.

Tibetan advocates highlight language suppression at UN Human Rights Council event

20 October 2024, [ANI](#)



Tibetan advocates highlight language suppression at UN Human Rights Council (Photo/@International Campaign for Tibet)

Tibetans and their supporters took the stage at a United Nations Human Rights Council side event in Geneva, bringing attention to China's suppression of the Tibetan language and recent school closures

in Tibet.

The event, hosted by the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights, was moderated by Kai Mueller from the International Campaign for Tibet (ICT). The panel featured prominent speakers including Palmo Tenzin, a senior researcher at ICT, Tenzin Choekyi from Tibet Watch, and Gloria Montgomery from the Tibet Justice Center. The discussion was well-attended by representatives from various UN missions, highlighting the growing concern over the situation in Tibet.

Tenzin Choekyi opened the event by outlining the history of Tibetan protests advocating for language rights and the severe consequences faced by those who speak out against the Chinese government. She noted that community leaders, intellectuals, and ordinary Tibetans risk detention, torture, or imprisonment for their advocacy. During the event, Palmo Tenzin emphasised the oppressive environment that stifles open dialogue about these issues within Tibet and discussed recent educational policies detrimental to the Tibetan language and culture.

She said, "Tibetan children lose their mother tongue, are unable to communicate with relatives, and cannot access their culture and history." Gloria Montgomery warned about the implications of China's closures of Tibetan schools, reminding attendees of the Chinese government's obligations under international law to provide education in the Tibetan language, as established by various international covenants ratified by the People's Republic of China.

In a significant move, China chose to attend the panel and respond to the testimonies rather than delegating the task to proxy organisations. However, their representatives denied the validity of the accounts presented, reflecting Beijing's longstanding dismissal of the situation in Tibet and a reluctance to engage with the testimonies provided by Tibetan advocates. Tencho Gyatso, President of the International Campaign for Tibet, praised the advocates for clearly illustrating the harsh realities of Chinese governance in Tibet. He stated, "Instead of lying to the world, China must acknowledge that Tibetans have every right to be educated in their mother tongue and stop trying to forcibly erase Tibet's rich heritage." The event's significance was underscored by a recent appeal from 100 Tibetan and Himalayan scholars to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Turk. In their petition, the scholars expressed deep concern over China's systematic closure of Tibetan monastic and public schools and called for an end to forced assimilation policies in Tibet. This gathering at the UN serves as a critical moment for Tibetan advocates, who continue to call for

recognition of their rights and the protection of their language and culture amid increasing repression.

Tibet and Ukraine share struggle against colonial power: former CTA President in Kyiv

19 October 2024, Phayul, [Tenzin Nyidon](#)



Former President of the Tibetan government in exile Dr. Lobsang Sangay during his visit to Kyiv, Ukraine's capital (Photo/Instagram)

The former President of the Tibetan government in exile, Dr. Lobsang Sangay, during his visit to Kyiv, Ukraine's capital, highlighted parallels between the struggles of Tibet and Ukraine against colonialist aggressors. In an interview with Kyiv Post, Dr. Sangay emphasised the shared challenges faced by both nations—Tibet under China's ongoing occupation and Ukraine resisting Russia's invasion. He stressed that in both cases, the aggressors are targeting not only land but also the cultural identity and resources of these countries.

The former political leader detailed how China has systematically sought to erode traditional Tibetan culture by imposing Han Chinese cultural norms. "Tibet was invaded, and 98% of our monasteries were destroyed, but today they are being rebuilt. Tibetans continue to resist forced assimilation. Even now, speaking Tibetan or wearing traditional Tibetan dress is an act of resistance, as is visiting monasteries, which is why Tibetans continue to do so 'constantly,'" he explained.

He also acknowledged that while Ukraine is an internationally recognised state, its challenges differ from those faced by Tibet. However, he pointed out the commonality in their experiences—both Tibetans and Ukrainians are dealing with imperialism and colonial forces, such as China and Russia, that exploit their lands for natural resources.

Dr. Sangay further highlighted how, in the case of Tibet, many Western governments turn a blind eye to China's actions. He drew a parallel to Ukraine, where European countries have softened sanctions on Russian steel and refused to penalise metal magnates who supply not only Europe but also the Russian military.

He noted the economic dimensions of Russia's and China's interests in these occupied regions. "Russia's

control of the Donbas led to the loss of 80% of Ukraine's coal reserves, which are essential for steel production, where Ukraine is a major producer. Similarly, China's exploitation of Tibet is economically motivated—80% of China's cotton comes from Xinjiang; 75% of its lithium is sourced from Tibet, along with 50% of its copper, gold, and uranium." Dr. Sangay emphasised that both Ukraine and Tibet have seen millions of lives disrupted and cultures threatened as imperialists seek to plunder their resources.

In closing, he conveyed a message of solidarity to the people of Ukraine, stating, "Your success would be our success. Ukraine is standing up for what is right—a battle between good and evil. It is time for the good side to win and the bad side to lose."

China should look for Mao's reincarnation instead of Dalai Lama, says CTA President

17 October 2024, [Phayul](#), Tenzin Nyidon

The democratically elected leader of the exile Tibetan government, known officially as the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), President Penpa Tsering emphasised the CTA's roadmap for ensuring the succession of the 14th Dalai Lama remains free from Chinese interference while speaking on the topic 'Future of Tibet?' at the 28th Forum 2000 held in Prague, Czech Republic.



President Penpa Tsering during a conversation with Carl Gershman, the Founding President of National Endowment Democracy (NED), at the 28th Forum 2000 in Prague, Czech Republic (Photo/Instagram)

In a bold statement, President Tsering suggested that instead of focusing on the reincarnation of the Dalai Lama, China should concern itself with finding the reincarnation of Mao Zedong. His comment was a sharp critique, made in response to question about Beijing's repeated claims of having the authority to decide the next Dalai Lama.

"The reincarnation in Tibetan Buddhism is unique, where we have reincarnated Lamas, which China refers to as 'living Buddhas.' They have been preparing for the death of the Dalai Lama for the last 20 years or

more. They are not concerned about the living 14th Dalai Lama but are more focused on the yet-to-come 15th Dalai Lama,” said Tsering.

He highlighted that His Holiness the Dalai Lama has often commented on China’s intentions, noting that if the Chinese government were genuinely serious about reincarnation, they should first study Tibetan Buddhism, which centers on the belief in life after death. “Maybe they should look for Mao Zedong’s reincarnation first, Deng Xiaoping’s reincarnation second, and now that Jiang Zemin is also no more, perhaps they should look into Jiang Zemin’s reincarnation as well,” Tsering added with pointed humour.

During the forum, the Tibetan leader also outlined the CTA’s strategy to safeguard the sanctity of the Dalai Lama’s reincarnation process. This roadmap involves the exile government collecting statements and resolutions from Buddhist communities worldwide as evidence of their collective stance on the issue. “The Tibetan Buddhist community will be most impacted by His Holiness’ reincarnation,” Tsering stated.

He further hinted at the possibility of an upcoming announcement from His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama regarding his succession plans. “Maybe next year, His Holiness will say something about his succession or reincarnation plans. He will definitely make a statement on how the process will take place. Whether it happens next year or a few years after that is for His Holiness to decide. There is only one document regarding His Holiness’s reincarnation, which is the September 2011 document,” Tsering said. In the same conversation, Penpa Tsering addressed several pressing issues, including the ongoing cultural genocide in Tibet and the colonial-style boarding schools designed to assimilate Tibetan children. He also touched upon the back-channel dialogues and the Dalai Lama’s unwavering commitment to democratic principles throughout his life.

The Tibetan statesman concluded the discussion with a thought-provoking question; “How are democracies empowering authoritarianism?” He criticised the way Western democracies have inadvertently fueled China’s rise to power. “China has all the political and military power because of its foreign exchange reserves, which they splurge on Belt and Road Initiatives (BRI), space technology, and military while initiating debt traps around the world,” he said.

“Politicians tell me that the dragon is biting at us, and I told them the dragon was once very weak. Who fed the dragon to become so strong it can bite? It is the U.S., Europe, and Japan.” He argued that to challenge China effectively, focusing on its economy is key. “If you want to bring China to its knees, then the economy is the answer,” he suggested, emphasising that reducing business with China could be a powerful means to challenge China’s overall threat.

Documentary Film ‘Never Forget Tibet’ Launches in Brazil

16 October 2024, [CTA](#)



Documentary Film ‘Never Forget Tibet’ Launches in Brazil

On World Mental Health Day (10 October 2024), a special event was held in São Paulo, Brazil, to launch *Never Forget Tibet*, an officially endorsed documentary by Latin America’s Office of Tibet, produced by Compassionate Films (U.K.). The film tells the incredible story of His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s escape into exile, assisted by Har Mander Singh.

The documentary will be available in Brazil starting 31 October on Apple TV+, YouTube Movies, and Google Play. Already accessible in over 60 English-speaking countries, the film will be released in 120 countries over the next 12 months and is being translated into multiple languages. It is set for release in India in 2025 to honour the 90th birthday and the remarkable achievements of His Holiness.

The launch event in Brazil was a huge success, with many attendees enjoying a special exhibition at Casa Seva Gallery, showcasing photographs by Austrian explorer Heinrich Harrer, whose work is featured in the film. Harrer’s photographs serve as a significant historical record of pre-invasion Tibet. The film’s director, Jean-Paul Martinez, highlighted the importance of these images at the event.

In addition to the film screening, the Mystical Arts of Tibet’s monks from the Drepung Loseling Monastery led a three-day Buddha of Compassion’s sand mandala program and chanting sessions, creating a joyous and deeply spiritual atmosphere for all participants.

The event drew strong support from civil society and cultural influencers from various fields, including news broadcaster Patricia Poeta, singer-songwriter Tierry de Araújo Paixão da Costa, and actor João Signorelli, known for his role as Gandhi in a Brazilian T.V. show.

The documentary not only recounts the remarkable escape of His Holiness but also highlights the rich art, culture, and spirituality of Tibet. The widespread attention it received is a promising sign for keeping Tibet’s globally relevant issues in the spotlight,

especially following the Resolve Tibet Act passed in the U.S. by President Biden.

A key takeaway from the event was the emphasis on inspiring the next generation with hope and awareness of Tibet. As part of this effort, a special delegation in Brazil will be taking a “Peace Tree” to five schools in São Paulo, offering an interactive exhibit to share His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s message of peace with young people.

The event marks an important milestone in promoting Tibetan culture and history in Latin America and beyond.

The Mystical Arts of Tibet in Colombia

At the request of Compassionate Films (U.K.) and Casa Seva (São Paulo, Brazil), the Mystical Arts of Tibet group returned to Latin America, holding a successful series of events in Bogotá, Colombia, from 4 to 17 September 2024. Accompanied by Representative Jigme Tsering, the group showcased Tibetan culture and Buddhist practices through the creation of two Sand Mandalas and three sessions of Sacred Music and Sacred Chants for Peace and Healing. These events, enriched by lectures on Tibetan Buddhist traditions, arts, and philosophy, took place at venues including Centro de Meditación Budista Yamantaka – FPMT Colombia, Biblioteca Pública Julio Mario Santo Domingo, Universidad Externado de Colombia, and Universidad El Bosque – Biblioteca.

The events were organised in collaboration with the Latin America Office of Tibet, Atlanta Loseling Center, and Centro Yamantaka, Bogotá, with coordination by Geshe Lobsang Kunchen, Isabela Caro, Claudia Bonito, Doris Julio, and volunteers. The diverse audiences were deeply engaged, appreciating the spiritual significance of the Mandalas and chants, as well as the teachings of compassion and peace at the heart of Tibetan Buddhism.

The tour fostered cultural exchange and greatly contributed to raising awareness of Tibetan traditions in Colombia, strengthening ties between the Colombian and Tibetan communities while helping to preserve and share Tibet’s rich cultural heritage.

Surveillance in Tibet: ICT delivers remarks at 6th International Religious Freedom or Belief Alliance Ministerial Conference in Berlin

15 October 2024, [ICT](#)

Kai Mueller, Executive Director of ICT Germany, addressed the 6th International Religious Freedom or Belief Alliance Ministerial Conference in Berlin last week, raising the dystopian proportions of surveillance in Tibet, particularly in Tibetan Buddhist monasteries. The high-profile conference was hosted by the German Federal Ministry on Development Cooperation and by the German Federal

Commissioner for global religious freedom or belief, Frank Schwabe, and by Ambassador at Large, Special Envoy for Holocaust Issues, Interfaith Dialogue and Freedom of Religion of the Czech Republic, Robert Rehak. German Federal Minister Schulze as well as US Ambassador at Large Rashad Hussain delivered remarks on this year’s conference topic which centered on artificial intelligence and freedom of religion and belief.

Remarks¹ delivered by Kai Mueller at the International Ministerial Conference on Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) on October 11, German Federal Ministry of Development Cooperation (BMZ)

On behalf of the International Campaign for Tibet, thank you for organizing this important conference and the opportunity to speak today on the Chinese government’s extensive use of surveillance targeting the Tibetan people.

Not surprisingly, China and thankfully the situation in Tibet and also the Uyghur region have been raised already several times today.

Rightfully so. Because China is a Leninist style one-party state that pursues a policy of so called Sinicization of religion towards Tibetan Buddhists, Uyghur Muslims and Chinese Christians, and others. And I urge for caution when using the term “Sinicization”, as we should not accept the rather crude ideology of the Chinese Communist Party as the equivalent to Chinese culture. Whatever the latter may be.

In this context, the Chinese government is deliberately targeting Tibetan Buddhism.

Why? Because the tenets of Tibetan Buddhism are central to Tibetan civilization.

A multitude of Chinese Communist Party (CCP) so-called regulations and laws assert official control of all aspects of Tibetan Buddhism. This includes recognition of lamas, religious venues, affiliations, personnel, schools, and religious activities.

President Xi Jinping declared that religious institutions and clergy should serve the state’s “highest interests” by prioritizing the political leadership, state socialism, and CCP priorities above the religious canon.

A particularly egregious violation of Tibetan Buddhists’ rights is the CCP’s interference in the reincarnation process of Tibetan spiritual leaders in and outside Tibet, most prominently its expected plan to disregard the 14th Dalai Lama’s authority to determine his own successor.

Returning to surveillance and AI. The CCP’s methods are of dystopian proportions aiming to eliminate the integrity and genuine practice of Tibetan Buddhism.

Both human and technological means are deployed.

It is important to understand that Tibetan Buddhist monasteries serve as both places of faith and community, and as schools and universities

transmitting Buddhist philosophy, literature, art, and Tibetan history over generations.

This is why as many as more than 6,000 government cadres operate in as many as 1,800 monasteries in the “Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR).”

This means at least three to four cadres in every monastery. The number may be higher, as these figures are from 2015.

One of the more pervasive oppressive measures are “reeducation campaigns” that force the monastic community and laypeople to profess devotion to the Chinese Communist Party.

The aim of such campaigns in Party speak is to instill the so-called “three consciousnesses” among monks and Buddhist laypeople. Specifically, “national consciousness”, “civic consciousness” and – most bizarrely for an autocratic state without separation of powers – “consciousness for the rule of law”.

Monks are forced to “expose and condemn” the Dalai Lama and to “preserve the unity of the motherland”. They have to “learn the Party’s policies, be grateful for the Party’s care, and play an active role in the religious community.”

I could go on with CCP language.

At the same time, a sophisticated network of both human and electronic surveillance is used to control the monastic community.

The methods deployed are of dystopian proportions. In a community predicated on trust and intimacy, of close bonds between teacher and student, sealed by vows, the suspicions caused by intrusive human intelligence gathering severely compromise the basis of meditative progress.

CCTV cameras are widely deployed for surveillance of the monasteries within and outside their vicinities.

These deliberately visible cameras are the most prominent tool used by law enforcement agencies to maintain surveillance of the monastic community, retain a cumulative record, and proactively crush any hint of dissent.

The presence of ever-watching cameras produces a suffocating environment for the monastic community. Less visible means are equally pervasive. The messaging App WeChat is popular among the monastic community. As the dominant social media app in Tibet and China, it is subject to state laws on content control.

Monks face arrest for messages as simple as sharing images of the Dalai Lama or talking about the state of Tibetan language.

Facial recognition and artificial intelligence technology for surveillance is also used to classify Tibetans as a “problematic group”. Monks and nuns are subject to the same surveillance as all other Tibetans.

Digital forensic analysis of an app Tibetans are being forced to install at police checkpoints revealed it is a

surveillance tool providing access to sensitive data and control over key device functionalities.

The CCP’s imposition of fear and suspicion via human and technological intelligence gathering erodes the core of the Tibetan Buddhist’s tradition of close community and trust and intimacy between teacher and student.

It constrains the way people communicate by creating a society-wide ‘chilling effect’ on the way they think, feel and relate to each other.

I would like to offer the following recommendations to governments.

-
- Raise electronic surveillance of Tibetan Buddhists as violations of both the right to privacy and freedom of religion.
 - Recognize the CCP’s concept of “Sinicization” as a systematic assault on religion, and prioritize combatting this human rights violation.
 - Understand AI as the “spider in the web” – integrating facial recognition technology, cameras, control of the internet, surveillance apps, DNA data collection, QR codes on residential buildings, and physical surveillance.
 - As China is exporting such technology abroad, states should not just view these products as a threat to their own public safety, but also as an ethical question. Do we want to see the same cameras on our public spaces that we see in Tibetan monasteries? I do not believe so.

Let me end on a positive note.

In 2022, Tibetan Buddhist monk Geshe Lobsang Monlam, and a team of more than 150 editors and staff in Dharamsala, India, published the 223 volume “Grand Monlam Tibetan Dictionary,” containing over 360,000 Tibetan-language definitions. This has given rise to 37 apps and a website.

In December 2023, Dr. Lobsang Monlam launched Monlam AI, a platform providing access to four machine learning models comprising machine translation, optical character recognition, speech-to-text, and text-to-speech functionalities.

Uniquely, the software is based on 30 million pages of Tibetan literature, from the fields of religion, philosophy, and psychology.

These examples demonstrate the innovations possible when Tibetans are empowered and free to practice, explore, and evolve their religious practice and language.

Thank you.

Tibetan students face crisis as arrivals in India decline

15 October 2024, Times of India

Due to reported Chinese oppression, the arrival of new Tibetan students in India has significantly decreased, with no new entries at the Tibetan Children's Village this year. This decline underscores the CTA's need to intensify efforts in pressuring China to allow Tibetan migration for education.

The number of Tibetan students arriving in India has significantly decreased, largely due to reported Chinese oppression, with no new arrivals at the Tibetan Children's Village (TCV) this year, making it imperative for the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) to exert international pressure on China to allow the movement of Tibetans into India.

"This year there is no arrival of any student from Tibet, last year around 6 students had arrived as against 700 to 800 students arriving every year before 2008," said Tsultrim Dorjee, Director of the Tibetan Children's Village (TCV).

"Reports received here indicate that China is forcibly taking young Tibetan children from cities and remote villages, bring them to 'colonial schools' established by the Chinese regime, in Tibet and convert them into Chinese," alleged Dorjee. He said a disturbing trend is emerging in which Tibetan students are being converted to Chinese by being taught the Chinese language, values, cultural practices, and traditions.

"This systematic approach aims to erase their Tibetan identity, leading them to forget their language, culture, values, and traditions. Moreover, it develops a sense of resentment towards Tibet, as the focus shifts entirely to a Chinese-centric education system" said Dorjee.

He claimed that China has established military camps to monitor the movement of Tibetans into India and has also set up posts along the Tibetan-Nepal border to prevent their entry into India.

Presently, there are just around 6000 Tibetan students in TCV and its branches undergoing kindergarten to Plus Two grade education as against the previous number of over 12000 students, added he. "Our mission is that all Tibetan children under our care receive a sound education, a firm cultural identity and become self-reliant and contributing members of the Tibetan community and the world at large" said the Director.

He also informed that they are celebrating the 64th Founding Anniversary of TCV with a theme that expresses solidarity with the children in Tibet, who are deprived of their language, culture, history, and values due to alleged Chinese political ideology. "We are continuously raising the issue of Tibetans through the CTA and civil population to build

international pressure on China, so it allow the movement of Tibetans into India. This will enable our youth to receive an education at TCV, Dharamshala, which is considered the mother of Tibetan schools in India and hosts the largest number of students," he said.

An open letter to Foreign Secretary David Lammy

15 October 2024, [Free Tibet](#)

As David Lammy prepares for his first trip to China as Foreign Secretary, Tibet groups in the UK urge him not to sacrifice human rights for trade

Dear Foreign Secretary,

We write on behalf of UK-based Tibet groups and the thousands of Tibetan community members based in the UK ahead of your first crucial visit to China with a clear message: you must ensure human rights and Tibet remain at the top of the agenda for the UK government.

Your meeting takes place at a historic low point for human rights in Tibet as the Chinese government increases its control in Tibet and intensifies policies designed to eradicate the distinct culture, way of life, and identity of the Tibetan people. Meanwhile, increasing instances of transnational repression are being inflicted on Tibetan communities around the world including the UK. It is critical that you use your first visit to China as Foreign Secretary to raise these crucial issues directly with Beijing.

A successful China policy is one in which the UK directly challenges the Chinese government's human rights abuses against the Tibetan people, working alongside other concerned governments to seek accountability for these abuses and challenging the Chinese government's attempts to undermine the international human rights system. It also means striving for a just and lasting settlement of the Tibet-China conflict that upholds Tibetans' rights, not least their legal and fundamental right to self-determination.

Although few details of your upcoming visit have been released by the government, reports about the meetings you will be holding in Beijing give us reason for concern. We are aware that the UK government plans to hold a "reset" with the Chinese government to establish friendlier ties and promote investment and job creation.

Recent history shows us that unless this reset contains an assertive call for an end to the Tibet-China conflict and immediate and verifiable human rights reform, it will achieve little of long-term value, and will ultimately lead the UK back to the failed policies of the so-called "Golden Era" of the 2010s when the human rights situation in Tibet sharply deteriorated. Decades of human rights diplomacy by foreign governments

have failed to deter Chinese authorities, particularly Xi Jinping, from deepening the repression in Tibet. Instead it has been taken as an invitation to assert further control.

With Tibet remaining closed off to independent journalists, diplomats and human rights monitors, one of the only forms of leverage that exists is for China's trading partners to press the Chinese government to release political prisoners and abandon policies that threaten the lives and livelihoods of Tibetans.

This does not mean halting negotiations on trade or global cooperation with China to address pressing global concerns, but it does mean using these meetings to speak up for Tibetans as they face multiple threats to their homeland and identity, and the UK government pairing its diplomacy with concerted pressure on Beijing to end its human rights abuses in Tibet, addressing transnational repression against Tibetans in the UK and calling for a just resolution of the Tibet-China conflict.

Given your previous work and well-known interest in decolonisation and the effects of imperialism, we are sure you will appreciate the importance that the UK's interactions with the Chinese government have for Tibetans, living under occupation or in exile, and that they, along with Tibet groups, and Tibet supporters will be paying close attention to the issues you raise, and those that you do not raise, during your visit.

With these considerations in mind, we urge you to use your visit to:

- Reiterate the UK's previous call for China to follow the recommendations of UN experts to immediately abolish China's colonial and coercive boarding school system imposed on Tibetan children in Tibet. Furthermore, call for an end to the closure of Tibetan schools and for the re-opening of those that have been shut down.
- Press for the immediate release of all Tibetan human rights defenders and end persecution of their families including the community leader and anti-corruption activist A-Nya Sengdra, Tibetan monk and religious philosopher Go Sherab Gyatso, and Jampa Choepel, who was detained after publishing a post about the teachings of the Dalai Lama;
- Seek information about Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, the 11th Panchen Lama of Tibet, who has been missing since his abduction in 1995. This must include tangible proof of his whereabouts, safety, and well-being.
- Urge a moratorium on the building of megadevelopment projects including mines and hydropower dams in Tibet until Tibetans have given full prior, free, and informed consent to all development projects.

Specifically raise the threat of the Kamtok Dam and other massive hydropower dam projects, which are forcing Tibetans from their homes and threatening monasteries with destruction from rising waters.

- And in addition to these human rights concerns, address Tibet's status by calling for a return to direct dialogue with the representatives of the Tibetan people, to end the Tibet-China conflict.

Upon conclusion of your visit, we also urge that you meet with Tibet groups and members of the Tibetan community.

The UK government's stated policy towards the Chinese government is to cooperate where it can, compete where it needs to, and challenge where it must. Your meetings this week offer their own challenge: should you return to the UK with promises of jobs and investment but without taking a stand for Tibet, you will have sold out Tibetans and their human rights including those who are UK citizens.

On the other hand, should you be bold, and seize the moment to speak out on Tibet and challenge China over its human rights abuses, it will show that this new Labour government can be a positive force for change and an example for other governments to follow.

Tibetan leadership congratulates Japanese atomic bomb survivors on winning Nobel Peace Prize

14 October 2024, [Phayul](#), Tenzin Nyidon

The exile Tibetan leadership, including His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the President of the Tibetan government in exile, Penpa Tsering have extended their heartfelt congratulations to Nihon Hidankyo, a Japanese group of atomic bomb survivors, for being awarded the 2024 Nobel Peace Prize. The prestigious award, presented to hibakusha, known as the survivors of the 1945 Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings has been recognised by the Norwegian Nobel Committee for efforts to eliminate nuclear weapons from the world.

Penpa Tsering, the political leader of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), congratulated the survivors, stating that their steadfast commitment to nuclear disarmament has inspired countless movements for peace around the globe. "My heartfelt congratulations to Nihon Hidankyo, this year's Nobel Peace Prize laureate. Their tireless advocacy for a nuclear-free world, shaped by the experiences of A-bomb survivors, is a profound reminder of the catastrophic threat nuclear weapons pose to humanity," he wrote. "In honouring Nihon Hidankyo with the Nobel Peace Prize, I hope this serves as a meaningful step towards a world free from nuclear weapons and united in peace."

Similarly, the foremost exile spiritual leader His Holiness the Dalai Lama sent a personal message of congratulations to the co-chairpersons of Nihon Hidankyo, Terumi Tanaka, Shigemitsu Tanaka, and Toshiyuki Mimaki, expressing his deep admiration for their resilience and courage. "During my visits to Japan, I have had the occasion to meet some of you. I deeply appreciate your work, His Holiness wrote on Saturday.

"Having visited both Hiroshima and Nagasaki myself, I have some sense of the immense suffering experienced by the victims, particularly the survivors of the nuclear bombings. I understand that because they experienced the horror of the nuclear explosions and survived, those who have founded this organisation powerfully represent the need to do away with these dangerous weapons," he further wrote.

Founded in 1956, Nihon Hidankyo has been actively sending survivors around the world to share their testimonies of the "atrocious damage" and suffering caused by nuclear weapons, according to the organisation's website. Their mission began nearly a decade after the devastating bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

On August 6, 1945, a U.S. bomber dropped a uranium bomb over the city of Hiroshima, killing around 140,000 people. Three days later, a second nuclear weapon was dropped on Nagasaki, leading to Japan's surrender, announced by Emperor Hirohito, which brought an end to World War II.

Speaking to reporters in Japan, a tearful Toshiyuki Mimaki, the co-head of the group, said, "Never did I dream this could happen," he said. Mimaki also criticised the idea that nuclear weapons bring peace, stating, "It has been said that because of nuclear weapons, the world maintains peace. But nuclear weapons can be used by terrorists."

Nihon Hidankyo has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize multiple times, including in 2005, when the group received special mention from the Norwegian Nobel Committee. The 2024 prize, which includes a diploma, a gold medal, and \$1 million, will be presented at a ceremony in Oslo this December, marking the anniversary of the death of prize creator Alfred Nobel.

Tibetan Sikyong meets with Czech leaders, Tibet supporters

16 October 2024, [Tibetan Review](#)

Sikyong (executive head), Mr Penpa Tsering, of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) held a series of high-level meetings at the Senate and Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic while visiting the country to attend the 28th Forum 2000 in capital

Prague, said the CTA on its *Tibet.net* website Oct 15. Among those attending the Forum was former President Dr Tsai Ing-wen of Taiwan.

The high-level meetings followed the Forum's plenary session on the second day on Oct 14 and began in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs where the Tibetan Sikyong held discussions with Veronica Mitkova, Director of the Human Rights and Transition Policy Department, and Patrick Rumlar, Deputy Director of the Asia Department.

Mitkova has provided insights on how the Czech government had raised the issue of Tibet in multilateral forums and on international platforms. She has also offered ideas on making the 90th birthday of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, which would be a significant event in Czechia. The CTA plans to observe the exile Tibetan spiritual leader's 90th birthday with a series of year-long events next year.

Rumlar was stated to have "candidly expressed the stance of Czech parliamentarians on the Tibetan cause".

The Tibetan Sikyong has next met with Mr Pavel Fischer, a Member of the Czech Senate, at his office. The two were stated to have discussed ways to transform the deep emotional and sympathetic sentiment that the people of Czechia had towards the Tibetan people into a more rational and strategic approach.

Sikyong Penpa Tsering has also met with Mr Jiří Oberfalzer, the Vice President of the Czech Senate, welcomed by Hayato Okamura, Member of the Chamber of Deputies, to both of their offices. Known for his active participation in Tibet events, Mr Okamura has said many in Czechia were deeply sensitive to human rights issues and would stand in solidarity with the Tibetan cause.

During the meeting with Mr Okamura, Katerina, Secretary of the Friends of Tibet Support Group in the Czech Republic, has presented to the Tibetan Sikyong a booklet showcasing the initiatives the group had undertaken in collaboration with the Tibetan community in support of the Tibetan cause.

Earlier, on his arrival in the Czech capital on Oct 13, the Tibetan Sikyong has met with representatives Zuzana from the Potala Himalayan Centre and Edita Kleckerová from the Lungta, both Tibet support groups in the country. Their discussions were stated to have centred on plans for celebrations marking the 90th birthday of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, with particular focus on project implementations.

Later in the evening. The Tibetan Sikyong has met with Mr Fernando Iglesias, Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Chamber of Deputies of Argentina, and Mr Claudio Javier Rozencwaig, Ambassador of Argentina to the Czech Republic, at the 28th Forum 2000 which was held from Oct 13 to 15.

The Prague visit was the final destination of the Tibetan Sikyong's tour of Europe this month which included Switzerland, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg in that order, beginning Oct 7.

The 28th Forum 2000 opened on Oct 13 evening in the Prague Congress Centre. Tsai Ing-Wen and the Tibetan Sikyong were prominently seated in the front row, the report noted. The keynote speakers at the opening ceremony included Mr Miloš Vystrčil, President of the Senate of the Czech Republic, and Mr Walter Russell Mead, the James Clarke Chace Professor of Foreign Affairs and Humanities at Bard College and who had taught American foreign policy at Yale University and served as the editor-at-large of *The American Interest* magazine.

The event provided a distinguished platform for dignitaries to engage in meaningful dialogue and exchange ideas on strengthening democratic values. Forum 2000 is a foundation and conference of the same name held in Prague, Czech Republic. The foundation was founded in 1996 as a joint initiative of the then Czech President Václav Havel, Japanese philanthropist Yohei Sasakawa, and Nobel Peace Prize laureate Elie Wiesel.

Sikyong Penpa Tsering Attends the 28th Forum 2000 Alongside Former Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-Wen

14 October 2024, [CTA](#)

Sikyong Penpa Tsering arrived in Prague in the early hours of the morning, marking the final destination of his European tour, to participate in the 28th Forum 2000 that is scheduled from 13 to 15 October. The first day of Sikyong's visit began with a meeting with representatives of the Tibet Support Groups: Zuzana from the Potala Himalayan Center and Edita Kleckerová from Lungta. Their discussions centred on plans for the upcoming 90th birthday celebration of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, with a particular focus on project implementation.

During the conversation, the representatives expressed concerns regarding the insufficient awareness in the Czech media regarding the current well-being of His Holiness, which led to inquiries about his health and the situation of Tibetans, particularly those in Tibet. Following this meeting, Sikyong gave an interview to Liam Scott and Jessica Jerreat of Voice of America, during which he addressed the issue of Chinese transnational repression and underscored the importance of the Tibet-Czech Republic relationship. In the evening, Sikyong Penpa Tsering engaged in a meeting with His Excellency Fernando Iglesias, Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Chamber of Deputies of Argentina, and His Excellency Claudio J. Rozencwaig, Ambassador of Argentina to the Czech Republic, at the 28th Forum 2000. His Excellency

Fernando Iglesias, drawing on his extensive experience and knowledge as a journalist, demonstrated a profound understanding of Chinese history, expressing his firm support for human rights and voicing concern for those suffering oppression. Sikyong Penpa Tsering encouraged both dignitaries to explore the "Tibet Brief 2020" and Professor Lau's book on Tibet, both of which provide compelling evidence that Tibet has never been a part of China. He urged them to critically assess these materials rather than accepting the narrative promoted by the Chinese government to the international community.

The day culminated in the opening and award ceremony of the 28th Forum 2000, held at the prestigious Prague Congress Center. The event gathered an assembly of dignitaries from across the globe, with the conference focusing on the theme of democracy. Her Excellency Tsai Ing-Wen, the former President of Taiwan, and Sikyong Penpa Tsering of the Central Tibetan Administration were prominently seated in the front row. The keynote speakers at the opening ceremony included His Excellency Miloš Vystrčil, President of the Senate of the Czech Republic, and Walter Russell Mead. Mead emphasised the gravity of the current global situation, stating, "Not since the 1940s has democracy been under this kind of threat, and not since the 1930s has the world been this close to a major power conflict." He highlighted the lack of responsibility and courage displayed by individuals in free countries, which has enabled the geopolitical expansionist ambitions of nations such as China and others. The speakers collectively stressed the urgent need to safeguard democracy amid escalating global challenges. The event provided a distinguished platform for dignitaries to engage in meaningful dialogue and exchange ideas on strengthening democratic values.

Tibetans in France continue protest, condemning museum's refusal to rename exhibit as "Tibet"

14 October 2024, [Phayul](#), Tenzin Nyidon



Tibetans in France protesting against the two museums in Paris on September 23, 2024 (Photo/SFT France)

Tibetans and Tibet supporters in the French capital are continuing their protests against the Musée Guimet, despite the museum's recent decision not to rename exhibitor spaces as "Tibet" rather than "Himalayan world. While the Musée du quai Branly apologised and promised, on September 25, to restore the name "Tibet" with the romanised version of a Chinese term, "Xizang" on its artefacts.

For weeks, members of the Tibetan diaspora, human rights activists, and Students for a Free Tibet (SFT), a chapter-based network of youth activists, have gathered outside the Musée Guimet, demanding the recognition of Tibet as a distinct cultural and historical entity. Protesters chanted slogans such as "Tibet Exists. Name It." and "Shame on Guimet," calling on the museum to honor Tibetan heritage by renaming the exhibition halls to reflect Tibet's true identity.

Despite the peaceful demonstrations, museum officials have rejected the appeal, stating that the name change was part of a broader global framework and that Tibet continues to be mentioned within the museum's exhibits.

"Many researchers and experts in the field have also expressed their disagreement with this renaming and the invisibilisation of Tibet that it entails," said Tenzin Yangchen, President of SFT France, speaking on behalf of the Tibetan community. "Their opposition underlines the importance of maintaining historical and cultural integrity in our academic and museum institutions. That is why we cannot remain silent."

Yangchen also emphasised that the issue at the Guimet Museum is just one example of the increasing Chinese influence in France. "For decades, the Tibetan people have suffered under the oppression of the Chinese government. We cannot remain silent in the face of this injustice that now extends to our own cultural institutions." She added that the protests would continue for as long as necessary until the Guimet Museum acknowledges Tibet as a nation with its own identity, culture, and artistic heritage. The activists are also stepping up efforts to engage with local politicians and government officials to press for change.

Nicolas Tournadre, a leading expert on Tibetan languages, has also criticised the museum's reasoning, stating, "The term 'Himalaya' is a denomination that provides a cheap way of sidestepping the once powerful Tibetan state. Indeed, the northern slopes of the Himalayan range only form the southern border of Tibet, which, additionally, also has several other ranges, which reach over 7,000 meters high, crossing it from east to west. On the other hand, certain populations south of the Himalayas have adopted many elements of Tibetan culture, such as the Ladakhi [in India], the Sherpa [in Nepal], or the Sikkimese [in India]: They are often referred to as 'Bhoti,' derived from the word 'Bod' – 'Tibet' [in Tibetan]."

Fernand Meyer, a Tibetologist and former chairholder of the Science and Civilisation of the Tibetan World at the Practical School of Advanced Studies (EPHE), echoed these concerns. "Since the Musée Guimet has no problem talking about Tibetan Buddhism, it would be strange to reduce it to Himalayan Buddhism alone!" Meyer remarked. "The 'Himalayan world' is not a culturally definable entity as such. Rather, it is a zone where the cultural areas of India and Tibet meet. To reduce the latter to its southern, geographically Himalayan fringe, therefore, does not do justice to the history and extension of a specifically Tibetan culture."

The controversy gained public attention when *Le Monde* raised concerns that the Musée du Quai Branly had replaced "Tibet" with "Xizang Autonomous Region," and the Musée Guimet had renamed its exhibition spaces focused on Tibet as the "Himalayan world." Scholars argue that these changes align with Chinese state propaganda, which aims to rewrite and distort Tibetan history and culture, ultimately legitimising China's illegal occupation of Tibet.

In new film, Dalai Lama says inner peace is key to happiness

12 October 2024, [RFA](#), Rabgang Tsering Phuntsok and Tenzin Dickyi

'Wisdom of Happiness' took 6 years to complete and includes never-before-seen archival footage.

"Eight billion human beings. Everybody, including our enemy, wants peace," says the Dalai Lama in a documentary that opens in Swiss cinemas on Dec. 5 and in other movie theaters around the world.

"Wisdom of Happiness" offers an intimate, meditative cinema experience where the Tibetan Buddhist spiritual leader speaks directly to the camera about what he says is the source of happiness — inner peace. Directed by Barbara Miller and Philip Delaquis and listing Richard Gere, the American actor and Tibet advocate, as an executive producer, the 90-minute film premiered on Oct. 7 to a sold-out audience at the Zurich Film Festival.

Gere, a long-time follower of the Dalai Lama, expressed excitement at the event about the potential impact the film could have on global audiences.

"There are around 750 people here tonight with different energy, but after this film, they have the possibility to carry it back to their families, communities and the world," Gere said at the film's screening. "This is how we change the world."

Taglined "A heart-to-heart with the Dalai Lama," the film provides a personal glimpse into the Dalai Lama's reflections on peace, happiness and the potential for a peaceful 21st century, while featuring never-before-

seen, newly restored archival footage of the Tibetan spiritual leader.

“We began working on this film in 2018, and it took six years to complete,” Miller told Radio Free Asia. “The result is an intimate and unique documentary that captures the Dalai Lama speaking directly to viewers, creating the feeling of a personal audience.”

“His Holiness advocates for greater compassion in humanity during the 21st century,” she said. “It’s a true blessing that we were able to create this documentary, which reflects everything His Holiness stands for.”

‘Not an easy century’

In the film, the 89-year-old Buddhist leader talks about balancing age-old Tibetan Buddhist traditions with contemporary values of a globalized society that is struggling with war, violence and environmental concerns.

“Our 21st century will not be an easy century,” the Dalai Lama says in the film. “Lot of difficulties come. Destructive actions come from destructive emotions. So, now our world needs knowledge about our mind, about our emotions, and how to tackle these emotions.”

Also present at the premiere in Zurich were Jetsun Pema, the Dalai Lama’s younger sister, Sikyong Penpa Tsering, president of the Central Tibetan Administration – the Tibetan government-in-exile – the film’s co-executive producer Oren Moverman and director of photography Manuel Bauer.

Speaking to RFA, Pema said, “It’s a truly wonderful film in which His Holiness shares practical wisdom for navigating the challenges of this century.”

“This is my second time watching it, yet every time I hear His Holiness speak, I feel both joy and sadness, and tears flow out without any control,” she said. “Everyone who has seen the film has loved it, and everyone is moved by it.”

Sikyong Penpa Tsering underscored the significance of the film and the relevance of the Dalai Lama’s teachings amid current war and conflict around the world.

“While this film centers on His Holiness’ wisdom regarding the universal pursuit of inner peace and compassion, the cause of Tibet is inherently tied to the Dalai Lama,” he said. “As a result, Tibet’s struggle naturally becomes part of the film, and that is why I am here at this premiere.”

Though there are visible conflicts in Gaza and Ukraine, it is important to remember that there are also about 55 other wars and acts of violence occurring in the world, many of which go unnoticed, Tsering said.

“In times like these, the teachings of His Holiness the Dalai Lama on love and compassion, as presented through this film, hold immense relevance and significance,” he said. “The premiere at this festival couldn’t be more timely.”

Archive footage

The documentary also delves into the story of the Dalai Lama’s early life, including rare archival material that chronicles his journey as Tenzin Gyatso, who was chosen as the spiritual leader of Tibet at the age of 4 in 1940.

At the screening, Gere emphasized the unique presence of the Tibetan spiritual leader, saying, “He has a childlike quality, is completely unpretentious, and you feel a bubble of joy around him.”

“At the same time, he is probably the greatest scholar of his generation,” he said. “It’s an incredible mix of purity, joy and profound wisdom.”

Pema also addressed the audience at the premiere, reflecting on the special connection between Tibet and Switzerland.

“Switzerland was the first country to open its doors to Tibetan refugees after China occupied our homeland,” she said. “Like Tibet, Switzerland is a mountainous country, and it’s always a pleasure to be here.”

Sikyong Penpa Tsering Advocates for Tibetan Rights During Official Visit to the Netherlands

11 October 2024, [CTA](#)

On the morning of 9 October 2024, Sikyong Penpa Tsering of the Central Tibetan Administration landed at the Schiphol Airport in Hague to kick off his official engagements in the Netherlands.

Sikyong commenced his day with a productive interaction with members of the Foreign Affairs Committee at the Dutch Parliament Building. The meeting was graced by the presence of His Excellency Jesse Klaver, the Chairman of the committee, along with other members.

Following this meeting, Sikyong called on His Excellency Wim Geerts, the Dutch Ambassador for Human Rights, who has previously expressed serious concerns regarding the violent arrest of Tibetans in Derge and advocated for their release.

Later that day, at the Hague Centre for Strategic Studies, Sikyong engaged in a thought-provoking discussion with the centre’s Political Director, Han ten Broek and Senior Project Manager, Berend Kwak. Ten young scholars of the centre also participated in the meeting, during which the gathering discoursed the global significance of the Tibetan plateau, particularly its vital water resources and their implications for riparian communities, as well as the prospects for Sino-India and India-Tibet relations.

Before heading towards Luxembourg for his scheduled programmes, Sikyong concluded the engagements in Hague with an informal meeting with coalitions of key NGOs, including representatives of Uyghur, Southern Mongolia, Hong Kong, International Campaign for Tibet, Student’s for Free Tibet, and the members of the

Tibetan community. This meeting underscored a shared commitment to Human Rights and humanitarian cooperation.

Throughout these formal interactions, Sikyong was accompanied by Representative Rigzin Choedon Genkhang of the Bureau du Tibet, Brussels.

Tibetan nuns touring the U.S. spending six days in Lincoln County performing ceremonies, creating mandala

09 October 2024, [Yachats News](#)



Jangchub Choeling Tibetan nuns will spend 4-5 days creating an Avalokiteshvara Sand mandala in the auditorium of the Lincoln City Cultural Center beginning next week.

The first United States tour by a group of Tibetan nuns is in Lincoln City for a week of Tibetan cultural events, workshops, talks and ceremonies from through Tuesday, Oct. 15.

The highlight of the visit by the Jangchub Choeling Tibetan nuns is the creation of the Avalokiteshvara Sand Mandala in the Lincoln City Cultural Center's auditorium. It will take four to five days to complete, and is a colorful and meticulously hand-created piece of sacred Tibetan art representing Avalokiteshvara, (Chenrezig in Tibetan) the Bodhisattva (or "Great Being") of Compassion.

The Dalai Lama himself is said to be the reincarnation of Chenrezig. The completed mandala will be a symbolic depiction of a celestial palace, filled with sacred symbols from Tibetan culture, including animals, trees, geometric designs and a portrait of Avalokiteshvara.

Unlike some other forms of "sand painting," the Tibetan sand mandalas are brocade-like designs that give the final design a three-dimensional quality. To draw the designs, the nuns use narrow metal funnels identical to the ancient tools used in Tibet for 1,000 years. The funnels are then vibrated by the nuns using a special metal rod, so that the fine lines of colored sand can be carefully "painted" into the mandala.

The week of events begins on the evening of Thursday, Oct. 10 with an opening "purification ceremony." Then, from Friday through Tuesday, the nuns will be

working throughout the day on the sand mandala. The public is invited to come and observe this meditative process of the mandala's creation throughout the visit. While the nuns are here, they will also be offering a number of other Tibetan cultural events, including a Tibetan Cultural Night on Saturday, Oct. 12, which features the sacred Dakini Dance, a ritual dance that until recently was only performed by Tibetan monks. Also on the cultural night program is the "Chod Ceremony" for removing of inner and outer obstacles featuring classic Tibetan Buddhist chanting and ceremony, followed by a question and answer and slideshow with the nuns about their history and life in Tibet, their perilous journey across the Himalayas to exile in India after the Chinese invasion in 1959, and the recent creation of an order of Tibetan nuns and "Geshemas," or senior teachers, alongside the large Tibetan monasteries of Tibetan monks.

Other events during the week include: the "White Tara Empowerment Ceremony" on Friday, Oct. 11, a meditation workshop on Saturday morning and, on Sunday, Oct. 13, a talk on "Who is Green Tara?," another important figure in Tibetan Buddhism.

On the final evening of their visit Tuesday, Oct. 15, the nuns will conduct the dissolution ceremony for the finished sand mandala, during which the completed mandala is ritually swept up and carried to the ocean. This ritual symbolizes the impermanence of all created things, a fundamental teaching of Tibetan Buddhism. All events are open and by suggested donation. Funds raised during the visit will be used for the medical care and medical facilities for the nuns at Jangchub Choeling Nunnery in the Tibetan Refugee Zone in Mundgod, India.

The U.S. tour is part of a year-long visit that has brought the nuns to Boston, Minneapolis, Chicago and New York City. The tour group includes four Tibetan nuns, one of whom is a Geshema, the highest degree awarded in the Tibetan monastic universities.

Thanks to the efforts of Tibetan women who aspired to become nuns and to the efforts of the Dalai Lama, the order of Tibetan nuns was re-established in the 1980s, with Geshema degrees awarded to nuns only in the past decade. However, there is still a lack of facilities, as well as qualified female teachers among the nuns, and thus the nunneries work in close cooperation and support from the various Tibetan monasteries and colleges in exile in India.

Tibet Museum Showcases Travelling Exhibition Alongside DIIR's Tibet Awareness Talks

08 October 2024, [CTA](#)



A group picture with dignitaries from Mahatma Gandhi Kashi Vidyapith University

The Tibet Museum of the Department of Information and International Relations (DIIR), Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), has successfully concluded its two-week travelling exhibition titled “India and Tibet: Ancient Ties and Current Bonds” at various universities and colleges in Varanasi and Gujarat. The exhibition aimed to raise awareness about India and Tibet’s historical and current relations through a visually engaging pictographic panel-based exhibition.

The first round of the museum’s travelling exhibition was showcased at the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies (CIHTS), Varanasi, from 23 to 25 September 2024. The exhibition was inaugurated and graced by the Vice Chancellor, Professor Wangchuk Dorje Negi, and the Registrar, Dr Sunita Chandra.

Thereafter, the exhibition was witnessed by faculty members, staff, students of the institute, and a group of Ladakh students from the Central Institute for Buddhist Studies who visited CIHTS for an education tour.

On 26 September 2024, an exhibition at Mahatma Gandhi Kashi Vidyapith (MGKVP), Varanasi, was inaugurated and led by Shri Santosh Sharma, Finance Officer and Shri Harishchand, Deputy Registrar. In a traditional gesture of goodwill, the Tibet Museum staff presented a Khatag (white scarf) to both dignitaries. Dr Sunil Vishwakarma, Head of the Department of Fine Arts, attended the opening ceremony, as well as faculty members and students from various departments of the university. The exhibition offered an opportunity for academic engagement with Tibet’s rich cultural heritage and its ties to India.

From 29 September to 1 October 2024, the Tibet Museum conducted a panel-based exhibition and workshop at The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Gujarat. The exhibition was attended by Tibetan students accompanied by key members of the Regional Tibetan Youth Congress (RTYC) and Tibetan Student’s Association (TSA), including Tsultrim Nyima,

President of RTYC, Nyima Tsering, Vice President, and Dechen Zangmo, General Secretary. The exhibition aimed to foster a deeper understanding of Tibet’s historical and cultural connections with India.

On 1 October, the exhibition was showcased at the main campus of Maharaja Sayajirao University (MSU) in Baroda. The event was attended by Kalpana, Dean of the university, Professor Sushmita Sen and students from various faculties. The exhibition provided a platform for students and faculty to explore the enduring ties between India and Tibet, creating an environment of cultural and academic exchange.

On 4 September 2024, Dr Geetika Patel, Vice President of Parul University; Dr Rajendra Parekh, Dean of the Faculty of Law; Dr Ketan Desai, Associate Professor in the Faculty of Law; and Dr Ruchi Tiwari inaugurated an exhibition at Parul University in Vadodara, Gujarat. The event attracted considerable interest, with participation from students and faculty members of the Departments of Law and Political Science. This exhibition facilitated valuable interactions between the Tibet Museum staff and the university community. The exhibition successfully captured the attention of students and faculty and received positive feedback from visitors. Museum staff had the opportunity to engage with a diverse audience, guiding them through the various pictorial panels and fostering a deeper understanding of the long-standing ties between India and Tibet.

-Report filed by The Tibet Museum, DIIR, CTA

Deputy Speaker Dolma Tsering Teykhang Meets with the US Embassy Staff

08 October 2024, [CTA](#)

Deputy Speaker Dolma Tsering Teykhang of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile met with staff from the US Embassy of Delhi, including James Plasman, First Secretary; Mike Cramer, Political Officer; and Ajay Dayal, Political Specialist on 8 October 2024. They were joined by Dhondup Gyalpo, Secretary of the Delhi-based Tibet Bureau, and Tenzin Paljor, protocol officer from the DIIR.

The US Embassy staff were welcomed with Khatag, traditional Tibetan ceremonial scarves, and taken on a guided tour of the parliament hall.

During the visit, the Deputy Speaker provided an overview of the evolution of Tibetan democracy, highlighting key milestones such as His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s vision for a democratic system for Tibet, the establishment of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile with 13 elected representatives in 1960, the inclusion of women’s representation in 1964, the adoption of the Charter of Tibetans in Exile in 1991, and the devolution of His Holiness’s political authority to elected leaders in 2011.

Additionally, the U.S. Embassy staff were briefed on the composition and undertaking of the Tibetan Parliament, including its key functions such as biannual sessions, visitation programs, and advocacy initiatives, among others.

The Deputy Speaker subsequently expressed her heartfelt gratitude to the U.S. government, Congress, and citizens for their unwavering support of the just cause of Tibet. She clarified that the One China policy has no justification regarding Tibet, as it lacks historical backing. She emphasised that the international community should not yield to China's dictates.

Speaking about the systematic targeting of Tibet's religion and language by the Chinese government through policies aimed at Sinicisation, the Deputy Speaker highlighted China's coercion of Tibetan children into colonial boarding schools and the promotion of marriages between Tibetans and Hans, among other measures that undermine Tibetan identity.

During the meeting, the Deputy Speaker emphasised the significance of the Tibetan Plateau and the rivers flowing from Tibet for the global climate, particularly focusing on China's claim to hegemony over Tibet's water resources and the serious impact this has on downstream South Asian countries.

-Report filed by Tibetan Parliamentary Secretariat



Tibetans urge NYC to add Losar to 'Alternate Side Parking suspension calendar

08 October 2024, [Phayul](#)

Tibetan and Himalayan residents of New York City on September 28 testified before the City Council, advocating for an Alternate Side Parking (ASP) holiday to recognise Losar, the Tibetan Buddhist New Year. Around 25 representatives from various organisations, including the Tibetan Community of New York and New Jersey, the United Sherpa Association, Lo Nyamship Association, and the Walung Community of North America, delivered testimonies during the public hearing.

The legislation, Intro 100, introduced by Council Member Julie Won (D-Queens) and supported by 25

co-sponsors, seeks to recognise Losar, the Tibetan Buddhist New Year, as an official holiday where 'Alternate Side Parking' (ASP) rules are suspended in New York City. The bill aims to add Losar to the city's list of holidays that already include exemptions for specific legal and religious observances important to various ethnic and religious communities.

ASP is a system that requires vehicles to be moved from designated streets to allow for routine street cleaning. While essential for maintaining city cleanliness, these parking restrictions can impose challenges for residents observing cultural or religious holidays. The City of New York currently suspends ASP rules on select holidays, such as Yom Kippur, Eid, and Diwali, to accommodate the religious practices of diverse communities.



Representatives from around 25 Tibetan and Himalayan organisations on the day of hearing (Photo/Nick Gulotta)

Tenzin Dorjee, a lecturer in political science at Columbia University and a well-known Tibet activist, delivered testimony supporting the proposed legislation to add Losar to New York City's ASP suspension calendar. Speaking before the City Council, Dorjee highlighted the significance of Losar for nearly 100,000 people in New York, including Tibetans, Mongolians, Nepalese, Ladakhis, Sherpas, Monpas, Kalmyks, and other Buddhist communities. He stressed that instead of focusing on prayers and festivities, community members are often forced to worry about moving their cars during the celebrations. "Many members of our community are essential workers who have kept the city going through its toughest times, including the pandemic, on so many levels," Dorjee said. "The least we can do is offer them the peace of mind to celebrate Losar without interrupting their prayers, without having to leave a family gathering just to move their cars, and without spending half an hour searching for parking."

Dorjee emphasised that the bill represents more than just a parking holiday—it is a gesture of respect and inclusion for a community that contributes to the city's rich cultural diversity. "By declaring Losar a street cleaning holiday we are acknowledging the

contribution of a diverse community that has given so much to the City,” he concluded.

If passed, Intro. 100, would be one of the most significant municipal laws recognising the Tibetan-American community and their civic participation in the United States.

Council Member Won, whose office includes a sizeable Tibetan and Himalayan population, including Bhutanese, Sherpas, Lowas, Sikkimese, Monpas, and more emphasised that the legislation will bring recognition to her Himalayan constituents. “Losar is the most important holiday for my Tibetan and Himalayan neighbours across the city. Intro. 100 will ensure that they can enjoy their celebrations without the disruption of moving their cars or worrying about being towed,” said Council Member Julie Won. “Suspending Alternate Side Parking on Losar is another way that we can honour our neighbours’ religious practices and time with their families.”

Exile administration issues guidelines for Tibet or China visits by Tibetans

08 October 2024, [Tibetan Review](#)

The Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) of the exile Tibetans has on Oct 7 announced guidelines requiring any exile Tibetan who wishes to visit Tibet or China to intimate its Security Department beforehand.

The general guidelines announced online notes that after Tibetans got separated between those remaining in Tibet and the others who escaped into exile, visits to each other and for other purposes became possible after 1979. However, the Chinese government has been using the opening up to infiltrate the Tibetan community in exile, which it has viewed as separatists and anti-China enemy forces, or their tools.

The announcement accuses China of having continued to carry out various kinds of devious plans with objectives to weaken the exile Tibetan setup and to create dissention and internal conflicts. In this milieu, there has been a sharp increase in recent times of the Chinese government enticing Tibetans living in India, Nepal and Bhutan as well as other foreign countries to visit Tibet for all sorts of purposes, including tourism, family visits, pilgrimage and so forth while at the same time engaging in transnational repression of Tibetans living abroad. These developments have seen a marked increase in numbers and prominence in recent times, which makes it necessary to urge everyone to take note of certain points for consideration and caution, the seven-point announcement said.

The announcement then begins by asking all senior leaders and officials at all levels of the CTA, whether current or former, not to undertake any visit to Tibet without taking into confidence its Department of Security.

The CTA has no objection to any private exile Tibetan undertaking visits to Tibet. However, they should intimate their travel plans to their concerned Settlement Representative or Welfare Officer, as the case may be, or, otherwise, the Department of Security itself.

The announcement notes that the Chinese government imposes all sorts of conditions on exile Tibetans while granting them permits; that under it, a few had set up Tibetan or Tibet-related organizations in a variety of names to organize visits to Tibet in the name of pilgrimage, tourism, scholarly visits and so forth. However, it says, these are devious programs designed to carry out political objectives, and it is important that visitors do not get snared in them, such as by becoming their members.

In the case of those who have visited Tibet and had been deceived into falling under the influence of the Chinese government, and have absolutely abandoned the fundamental Tibetan cause, anyone who publicize the Chinese propaganda and acts against the interest of the Tibetan people after their return should be considered as an opponent of the CTA. It is important that all Tibetans counter their propaganda efforts and expose them, whoever and wherever they may be, the announcement said.

The announcement also expresses concern that the Chinese government deceives Tibetans who visit Tibet by compelling them with use of monetary or material enticements, pressure tactics, threats, dire warnings, and so forth to enter into partnerships or co-operations, continuations of relationships, and so forth. It asks such people not to allow themselves to become victims of such machinations, but remain steadfast in their stand. Tibetans should make efforts to obtain guidance from concerned entities before their trip to Tibet. In order to pre-empt any chance of falling victim to such traps, Tibetans living abroad should obtain the telephone and other contact details of their host countries’ embassies in China, the announcement said.

Anyone who had mistakenly accepted Chinese government’s conditions due to the latter’s deception are asked to understand that once they return from their trip, they are free from the harassment and pressures of the Chinese government. They should therefore submit a timely report of the difficulties they had faced to the CTA’s Department of Security and thereby make efforts to free themselves from the Chinese government pressure. Any such people who ignore such situation or who continue their clandestine contacts can find themselves in any sort of legal trouble with their host countries, the announcement warned.

The announcement notes that these days, the government of China carries out transnational repression of exile Tibetans by trying to compel them

to refrain from engaging in activities for promoting the fundamental and political causes of Tibet and, instead, co-operate with it and facilitate its repressive activities. Calling such practices a violation of international law, the announcement says that in the best-case scenario, anyone who come under such pressure should publicize it before the media with proof thereof. Otherwise, such targeted persons should report the same with all the relevant details to their concerned host governments, or CTA Representative offices, or Settlement Heads, or the Department of Security, as the case may be.

DIIR Tibet Awareness Talk Reaches Thousands Across Indian Universities and Colleges

07 October 2024, [CTA](#)

The Department of Information and International Relations has successfully concluded a two-week Tibet Awareness Talk series and Tibet Museum Exhibition across universities and colleges in Varanasi and Gujarat. The campaign, aimed at educating students and faculty about Tibet's perennial relationship with India and the critical current situation inside Tibet under the repressive rule and policies of Chinese government, reached a total of 1,348 participants in 13 universities. During the talks, speakers Tenzin Kunkhen and Rinchen presented a detailed analysis of Tibet's current human rights challenges. They emphasised Tibet's global significance and urged Indian students to address these issues in their academic work. The speakers encouraged attendees to publish articles in journals to maintain awareness of Tibet's situation, highlighting the importance of ongoing dialogue and scholarly attention to the region's concerns.

Tibet Awareness Talk in Varanasi

The Tibet Talk kicked off with its first leg in Varanasi on 23 September and 24 September, making significant inroads at three key institutions. At the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, the talks engaged 250 students and faculty members, while at Malviya Shiksha Niketan Inter College, 100 participants attended the sessions. The campaign also reached out to 20 Tibetan students at the prestigious Banaras Hindu University, ensuring a diverse audience.

Gujarat Tour

In a notable collaboration, the Bharat Tibet Sangh (BTS) led by Shri Bhavesh Joshi, Gujarat BTS State President and the vibrant and affectionate BTS team, in Gujarat played a crucial role in facilitating the DIIR's Tibet Advocacy Section staff's outreach efforts throughout the state, particularly in the cities of Rajkot and Junagadh. Members of the Bharat Tibet Sangh not only assisted in arranging the talks but also provided transportation and accommodation facilities in the

state and accompanied the DIIR staff during their presentations at various universities, strengthening the impact of the awareness campaign. This partnership highlights the growing network of support for Tibetan issues in India and underscores the effectiveness of local organisations in promoting cross-cultural understanding and dialogue.

Vadodara:

- The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda (MSU) (30 September): 20 Tibetan students during the Middle Way Policy Outreach program.
- Parul University (1 October): 65 Indian students and faculty

Rajkot (3 October):

- SMT Kansagara College: 235 female students and 27 others
- VVP Engineering College: 250 professors, technical and academic staff, and non-academic staff
- Saurashtra University: 65 students and faculty

Junagadh (4 October):

- Commerce and Law College: 120 female students and 22 faculty members
- Bhakt Narsinh Mehta University: 158 students and 20 faculty members
- Junagadh Agriculture University: Meeting with the Vice Chancellor

Media Coverage and Wider Impact

The Tibet Awareness Talk series in Rajkot and Junagadh, Gujarat, garnered significant attention from prominent Gujarati newspapers, substantially amplifying the campaign's reach. Leading publications such as [Akila News](#) and [Gujarat Samachar](#) provided extensive coverage of the events, bringing the Tibet issue to the forefront of public discourse in the region. These newspapers, known for their wide readership and influence, played a crucial role in disseminating information about the talks to a vast audience across Gujarat. A local newspaper also covered and published the Tibet Awareness talk and the Tibet Museum Exhibition in Varanasi, not only to highlight the key messages of the campaign but also to spark interest in Tibet's cultural heritage and current challenges. Given the popularity and extensive circulation of these newspapers, it is estimated that the media coverage exponentially increased the number of people exposed to the Tibet awareness message, far beyond the direct participants in the university talks. This media amplification has been instrumental in fostering a more informed and engaged public discourse on Tibet-related issues.

Enthusiastic Response and Engagement

The Tibet Awareness Talk series across universities in Varanasi and Gujarat met with an overwhelmingly

positive response, underscoring the campaign's success in effectively conveying its message. Throughout the sessions, Indian students and faculty members displayed remarkable enthusiasm, engaging speakers with thought-provoking questions that reflected a deep interest in Tibet's culture, history, and the deteriorating current situation. The talks sparked lively discussions, with attendees expressing curiosity about various aspects of India-Tibet Relations and the gravity of the challenges faced by the Tibetan people inside Tibet. Many participants offered supportive messages and pledged to further educate themselves and others about Tibet-related issues. The enthusiastic reception, consistent across all visited institutions, from Central Institute for Higher Tibetan Studies to Gujarat's Saurashtra University, clearly demonstrates the talks' efficacy in raising awareness and fostering a sense of solidarity among Indian students and academics. The speakers noted that this widespread engagement and support significantly exceeded their expectations, reinforcing the importance and timeliness of the awareness campaign.

-Filed by the UN, EU and the Human Rights Desk, Tibet Advocacy Section, DIIR

Open Letter to the co-founder of Rubin Museum of Art

06 October 2024, [Phayul](#)

Dear Shelly,

When you graciously stopped by the MET Museum yesterday and congratulated me with a warm hug for my newest installation, I felt like I had made two very special people in my life proud and happy – you and Donald Rubin. Your visit brought immense warmth and joy, and I found myself reflecting on the long and wonderful journey we've shared over the years.

As we spoke at length, my mind began to wander like a wind-horse galloping through memory lanes. I recalled many cherished moments from my earliest involvement with Donald Rubin and the Rubin Museum family. Each memory, still vivid, brings surges of joy to my heart.

It feels like yesterday when I was first introduced to you and Donald by Tim McHenry at the 2007 opening of "The Missing Peace: Artists Consider the 14th Dalai Lama" at the Rubin Museum of Art. This groundbreaking group exhibition brought together 80 artists from around the world to celebrate the Dalai Lama as a symbol of peace. Notable participating artists included Lobsang Gyatso, Chuck Close, Bill Viola, Anish Kapoor, Laura Anderson, Marina Abramovic, Christo, and many others. If I am not mistaken, I was the youngest artist in the group. I felt humbled, cared and loved by all the senior artists that I met during the exhibition.

Despite initial backlash from the Chinese consulate, the exhibition received widespread acclaim from the public and critics. I was just 25 years old at the time and the warmth of your handshake and Donald's radiant smile left an indelible mark on my memory.

I also remember very fondly the time Fabio and I visited Donald at his office. As we were about to sit down, Donald stepped inside the room with both his arms raised and, in his signature lively voice, said, "I love art! I love art! Show me some good art!" Everyone in the room burst into laughter. That moment captured his infectious enthusiasm for life and art, which left a lasting impression on me. On another occasion, when I was about to leave after a meeting with a curator at the Rubin Museum to discuss an upcoming exhibition titled "Kora" at the Queens Museum of Art, Donald called me over saying, "Rigdol, I want to show a wonderful artwork by a young Tibetan artist." He led me to his office and pointed to a painting. I admired it and said, "This is a very good painting, it feels like the work of a master." I then added with a smile, "By the way, it's one of mine, from my pastel series." Donald was momentarily taken aback and then burst into laughter, saying, "Are you sure, you made this?" That day, I saw how genuinely he connected with art, letting it speak to his heart before anything else. The exhibition which opened at the Queen's museums and travelled to more than four other museums became one of the most significant and widely travelled exhibitions of contemporary Tibetan art representing artists from Tibet and the global diaspora.

One of my fondest memories dates back to 2010, during the "Tradition Transformed" exhibition. The Trace Foundation and Rubin Museum of Art co-organized a panel discussion, bringing together art critics, scholars, and participating artists. However, the discussions unexpectedly centred around a single review by New York Times art critic Ken Johnson. His critique was somewhat harsh, particularly towards two senior contemporary Tibetan artists. As the audience passionately defended the artists and exhibition, the atmosphere grew tense. Then, Donald, seated in the front row, raised his hand and calmly said, with a gentle smile, "Andy Warhol used to say he didn't read reviews; he measures it with a tape." The room erupted in laughter, and the tension dissipated instantly. Turning to us, the Tibetan artists, Donald continued, "All you need to do is create exceptional art. Focus on your work, and we'll always support you."

Through all this, I feel profound gratitude for the opportunities you, Donald, and the Rubin Museum of Art have provided me and numerous fellow artists, especially marginalized Tibetan artists.

The Rubin Museum has been and remains an integral part of my journey and that of countless artists. It is a nurturing home and platform for Tibetan, Nepalese,

Mongolian, and Bhutanese art, artists, historians, and scholars.

Finally, I would like to extend my warmest congratulations and heartfelt prayers for the bold new direction the Rubin Museum is embarking upon. May the spirit and love of Donald, you, and the Rubin Museum of Art resonate across all mountains and plains.

With
warm regards
Tenzing Rigdol

12 Years After Dalai Lama's Previous Visit, MPs from Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile Coming to Kashmir

05 October 2024, [Kashmir Life](#)

In a significant development for Tibetan communities across Jammu and Kashmir, the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile announced a delegation's forthcoming visit to Srinagar, Kargil, and various regions of Ladakh. The delegation, comprising parliamentarians Geshe Lharampa Gowo Lobang Phende and Phurpa Dorjee Gyaldhong, will embark on this extensive tour from October 7 to October 21, 2024, reports appearing in media suggest.

This visit holds profound historical and cultural importance, rekindling memories of the Dalai Lama's 2012 maiden visit to Srinagar, during which he met the Tibetan refugee community and local leaders, emphasising interfaith harmony and compassion.

The delegation's itinerary includes a series of meetings across Ladakh's key areas such as Leh, Zaskar, Nubra, Dhurduk, and the Tibetan settlements of Jangthang Nubma, Kakshung, Goeyul, Hanley, Makyu, Chumur, Sumdoe, and Samedh. They are expected to engage with the Tibetan communities to address issues of welfare, education, and preservation of Tibetan cultural identity amid evolving geopolitical scenarios in the region.

Their visit will begin in Srinagar, where they will spend two days meeting with local Tibetan refugees, a reminder of the deep historical ties between Kashmir and Tibet that stretch back centuries.

The two-day engagement in Srinagar revives memories of the Dalai Lama's visit in July 2012, when he met with both Tibetan and Kashmiri leaders. At the time, he was welcomed by the then-Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, who conveyed his government's support for the Tibetan refugees.

During his 2012 visit, the Dalai Lama's interactions with the Tibetan Muslim community in Srinagar stood as a powerful symbol of interfaith harmony. Tibetan Muslims, a small but historically significant community in Kashmir, have their roots dating back to the 8th century CE, when Muslim traders began settling in Tibet. By the time of the fifth Dalai Lama, Tibetan

Muslims had become an integral part of Tibetan society, granted special rights and recognition. The Dalai Lama's 2012 visit was the first to Kashmir after his retirement from active politics, focusing on meeting these Tibetan refugees who fled Tibet in 1959 following the Chinese occupation.

His Holiness had expressed deep admiration for the Tibetan Muslim community's resilience, recalling the rich cultural exchange between Tibet and Kashmir over the centuries. The community's history was shaped by centuries of trade and migration, with many Kashmiris settling in Tibet, intermarrying with Tibetan women, and becoming part of the Tibetan cultural fabric. These Tibetan Muslims were later repatriated to India after the Chinese occupation of Tibet, where they found refuge in Kashmir.

The current delegation's visit, echoing these shared histories, will undoubtedly focus on sustaining this cultural and religious harmony. After leaving Srinagar, the MPs will travel to Leh on October 11, where they will meet with Tibetan and Ladakhi Buddhist leaders. The Leh meetings are anticipated to include discussions on preserving Tibetan heritage and bolstering education initiatives within Tibetan settlements in Ladakh, especially those affected by the Sino-Indian tensions and recent border challenges.

Following their engagements in Leh, the delegation will travel across Ladakh, meeting Tibetan communities in remote areas like Zaskar and Nubra. On October 14, they are set to visit settlements in Jangthang Nubma, Kakshung, and Goeyul, with further visits scheduled to Hanley, Makyu, Chumur, and Sumdoe between October 16 and 18. These settlements are crucial to the Tibetan community's socio-economic stability, and the delegation is expected to discuss local education, healthcare, and cultural preservation measures.

Reflecting on the Dalai Lama's 2012 address to the Tibetan Public School in Srinagar, where he praised the school's efforts to promote interfaith harmony, the Tibetan parliamentarians are likely to emphasise the need for continued support for Tibetan educational institutions. The Dalai Lama, during his 2012 visit, had stressed the importance of education as the foundation of inner peace and happiness, calling for a balance between material development and moral values in the curriculum.

The delegation will conclude their tour on 21 October in Leh before returning to Dharamshala, where they will present a report to the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile on their observations and recommendations for the Tibetan communities in Jammu, Kashmir, and Ladakh.

Chamgon Kenting Tai Situpa Rinpoche Visits Tenzingang Tibetan Settlement, Confers Teachings to Tibetan and Local Residents

05 October 2024, [CTA](#)



Chamgon Kenting Tai Situpa Rinpoche Visits Tenzingang Tibetan Settlement, Confers Teachings to Tibetan and Local Residents

The 12th Chamgon Kenting Tai Situpa Rinpoche made a visit to Gyuto Monastery in Tenzingang Tibetan Settlement, Arunachal Pradesh, from 30 September to 2 October 2024. This visit was graciously facilitated by the Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh, Shri Pema Khandu, who invited Rinpoche to the Mon Tawang area.

The Gyuto Monastery and the Tenzingang Tibetan Settlement Office jointly extended an invitation to Tai Situ Rinpoche, who kindly accepted the request. On the evening of 30 September, the residents of Tenzingang, along with devotees from nearby villages—Domkho, Kamalangchen, Kalaktang, and Shergaon—extended a warm and grand welcome reception for Rinpoche.

On 1 October, Rinpoche delivered a dharma talk focusing on “Refugee Practice & Mind Generation,” as requested by the Tibetan Settlement Office. Rinpoche also conducted a long-life enthronement initiation for the attendees, including devotees, the public, and students at Tenzingang Gyuto Monastery, honouring the revered mother queen of the Siddha, Machi Drupi Gyalmo (Tsewang).

During the teaching, the Tibetan Settlement Officer delivered a welcome speech and presented brief introduction of the Tenzingang Tibetan Settlement, followed by a presentation of colourful cultural programme from the student of local Sambhota Tibetan School and settlers.

On 2 October, Tai Situ Rinpoche visited the Tibetan Settlement Office, Sambhota Tibetan School in Tenzingang, and K.S Memorial Clinic before departing for Guwahati, Assam.

The government of Arunachal Pradesh has declared Tai Situ Rinpoche as State guest during his visit to

Arunachal Pradesh and received all the protocol and accommodations from the State government.

-Report filed by Tibetan Settlement Office, Tenzingang

Dalai Lama to visit Ladakh next summer

04 October 2024, [Phayul](#)

His Holiness the Dalai Lama has agreed to visit Ladakh next summer, following a meeting with religious and community leaders from the region at his residence here on Friday .

The delegation included prominent figures such as Thiksey Rinpoche, Tsering Dorje, President of the Ladakh Buddhist Association (LBA), Tsering Angdus, President of the Ladakh Gonpa Association and Jigmet Rabtan, President of the Ladakh Youth Association. According to Thiksey Rinpoche, His Holiness agreed to the invitation to visit Ladakh and the Nubra region next summer.

The news comes as a welcome development for the Ladakhi people, who have been eagerly awaiting His Holiness’s visit since a few years. Speaking to the media, Tsering Dorje, President of LBA stated that the Ladakhi community had been concerned about the Dalai Lama’s health following his knee surgery.

This announcement follows an earlier request made in April by various Buddhist organizations from Ladakh. Initially, the Office of His Holiness had scheduled a visit for July 2024, but it had to be cancelled due to his knee surgery in the United States in June.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama has also resumed giving public audiences, scheduled on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday mornings at his residence here. These sessions began following the long-life prayer offered by the Monpa community of Arunachal Pradesh in the first week of September.

In recent years, public audiences for the general public have increased, with thousands of people taking the opportunity to receive the Tibetan spiritual leader Dalai Lama’s blessings in person. These public audiences were temporarily halted when His Holiness travelled to the U.S. for knee surgery in June.

Sikyong Delivers Kashag’s Message at the Celebration of 41st Sakya Trizin Kyabgon Gongma Dorje Chang Rinpoche’s 80th birthday

04 October 2024, [CTA](#)

On 3 October 2024, a long-life prayer ceremony was held along with the 80th birthday celebration of the 41st Sakya Trizin, Kyabgon Gongma Trichen Rinpoche, organised by the Sakya community at the Sakya Monastery in Rajpur, Dehradun.

The event was attended by the 42nd Sakya Trizin Ratna Vajra Rinpoche, the 43rd Sakya Trizin Gyana Vajra Rinpoche, Khondung Avikriti Vajra Rinpoche,

Khondung Asanga Vajra Rinpoche, Dungsey Abhaya Vajra Rinpoche, high lamas of the Sakya, Ngor, and Tsar traditions, Speaker of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile Khenpo Sonam Tenphel, Sikyong Penpa Tsering, Deputy Speaker Dolma Tsering Teykhang, Tibetan Justice Commissioner Tenzin Lungtok, former Speaker Pema Jungney, former Deputy Speaker Acharya Yeshi Phuntsok, former Kalons (Ministers), Public Service Commissioner Karma Yeshi, standing committee members of the 17th Tibetan Parliament, some former parliamentarians, Secretary Dhondul Dorjee of the Department of Religion and Culture, Secretary of the Gaden Phodrang Lobsang Jinpa, and other dignitaries from India and the Tibetan community.

In the afternoon, a birthday celebration was held for Sakya Trichen Rinpoche, presided over by the 43rd Sakya Trizin Gyana Vajra Rinpoche, the 42nd Sakya Trizin Ratna Vajra Rinpoche, and other members of the Khon lineage. The chief guest was Satpal Ji Maharaj, Minister for Public Works Department, Culture, and Tourism of Uttarakhand state. Special guests included Sikyong Penpa Tsering, Speaker of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile Khenpo Sonam Tenphel, and Tibetan Justice Commissioner Tenzin Lungtok, along with other reverent lamas, representatives of spiritual leaders, current and former officials of the Central Tibetan Administration, guests from various regions, and members of the monastic and lay communities.

At the event, Sikyong Penpa Tsering delivered the Kashag's message, offering heartfelt greetings and best wishes on the 80th birthday of Sakya Trichen, Ngawang Kunga Tegchen Palbar Trinley Samphel Wanggi Gyalpo. Warm regards were also extended to the 43rd Sakya Trizin, the 42nd Sakya Trizin, the Khön lineage descendants, and all the attendees. The message highlighted the significant religious, political, and cultural contributions of the Sakya tradition, led by great scholars who helped establish Buddhism in Tibet and has promoted its teachings over centuries. In his remarks, Sikyong highlighted the enduring legacy of the five Sakya founding masters and their successors, who have upheld and propagated the Buddha's teachings through explanation, debate, and practice. The message highlighted the significant religious, political, and cultural contributions of the Sakya tradition, led by these great scholars who helped establish Buddhism in Tibet and promoted its teachings.

It praised the efforts of figures like the great scholar Kunga Gyaltsen and his disciple, Drogon Chogyal Phagpa, who earned the favour of the Mongol emperors and their subjects through their profound Dharma teachings. By halting a major Chinese invasion, they offered fearless refuge to hundreds of thousands. They also unified Tibet's three provinces under one political authority, ending a period of division.

In the speech, Sikyong applauded Sakya Gongma Rinpoche for his steadfast support of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's leadership and the Tibetan administration throughout his time in exile. Sikyong also highlighted Rinpoche's global efforts to spread the teachings of Sutra and Tantra, while fostering non-sectarian disciples in Tibet, which have greatly benefited the preservation of Buddhism and the Sakya tradition. Reflecting on the hardships of exile, Sikyong praised Sakya Trizin's pivotal role in re-establishing Sakya monasteries, modernising their education systems, and promoting gender equality by empowering female teachers and abbots. Additionally, the Sikyong acknowledged his founding of Dharma centres worldwide and his transparent reforms to the Sakya throne-holder system, underscoring the far-reaching impact of his religious and secular contributions.

Sikyong expressed personal gratitude for the privilege of attending several significant events honouring Sakya Gongma Rinpoche, including the golden jubilee of his enthronement in 2009, the 50th anniversary of the Sakya Institute of Higher Buddhist Studies in 2022, and now the celebration of Rinpoche's 80th birthday. He conveyed his appreciation for being able to offer a brief long-life prayer on behalf of the Kashag of the Central Tibetan Administration.

Additionally, Sikyong emphasised that this celebration is an opportunity to reflect on Sakya Gongma Rinpoche's remarkable contributions and to put his teachings into practice.

In his concluding remarks, Sikyong extended heartfelt birthday greetings and wished Sakya Gongma Rinpoche a long life, hoping that all his noble aspirations will be fulfilled.

Tibetan Parliamentary Delegation Meets European Parliament Members in Belgium

03 October 2024, [CTA](#)

A Tibetan parliamentary delegation, including parliamentarians Tashi Dhondup and Rigzin Lhundup, continued their advocacy efforts in Belgium on 1 October 2024.

They held meetings with Bernard Guetta, Member of the European Parliament from France; Hannes Heide, Member of the European Parliament from Austria; Dainius Žalimas, Member of the European Parliament from Lithuania; Lóránt Vincze, Member of the European Parliament from Romania; and Michael Gahler, Member of the European Parliament from Germany.

During their meetings, the Tibetan lawmakers briefed Members of the European Parliament on the situation in Tibet, focusing on policies implemented by the Chinese Communist Party. They highlighted how

Tibetans in exile are working to protect and preserve their distinct language and religion, as well as the current status of the Tibetan struggle and the democratic framework of the Central Tibetan Administration.

The Tibetan MPs underscored the importance of support from the international community, particularly democratic nations, in resolving the Sino-Tibetan conflict. They urged European Parliament Members to raise the issue of Tibet within the Parliament and to adopt a resolution on the matter.

Office of Tibet in Canberra and Alliance for Victims of the Chinese Communist Regime Organise Counter-event on PRC's Founding Anniversary

03 October 2024, [CTA](#)

Coinciding with the founding day of the People's Republic of China, the Tibet Information Office (Office of Tibet), in collaboration with the New Zealand and Australia Alliance for Victims of the Chinese Communist Regime, organised a counter-event on 1 October 2024 at Sydney Town Hall.

Representative Karma Singey, accompanied by Chinese Liaison Officer of Tibet Information Office, attended the event and interacted with members of the participating groups.

The event featured a morning photo exhibition and an afternoon rally, bringing together Chinese democrats, Hongkongers, Tibetans, and Falun Dafa practitioners, aimed to raise public awareness about the pressing issues each community faces under Chinese Communist rule.

The President of the Alliance, Professor Feng, moderated the rally and underscored the illegality of the Chinese Communist Party by referring founding day of the PRC as "National Fall Day".

Chinese Liaison Officer of Tibet Information Office, Dawa Sangmo, emphasised in her speech the colonial nature of Chinese state-run Tibetan boarding schools and the forced closure of local Tibetan schools, a policy aimed at further eradicating the Tibetan language and culture.

Former Chinese diplomat, Chen Yonglin, who defected from the regime, spoke at the event, drawing attention to the countless lives lost since the Communist government came to power. He called on the Australian government to invoke the Magnitsky Act to sanction Chinese officials involved in human rights abuses.

Other speakers at the rally included John Deller, spokesperson for Falun Dafa, who spoke about the illegal organ harvesting from Falun Gong practitioners, and Jenni Chen from the Hong Kong community, who discussed the severe human rights abuses under China's National Security Law.

Likewise, V-TAG Australia actively participated in the event by displaying photos and reports and raised awareness among the Australian public on the Chinese state-run colonial boarding school. Tenzin Chokrab Kindeling, a member of V-TAG Australia, delivered a speech on behalf of the group.

The event concluded with a unified call for the Australian government to take immediate action, specifically urging the use of the Magnitsky Act to sanction Chinese officials involved in human rights abuses.

-Report filed by Office of Tibet, Canberra

Department of Religion and Culture Achieves Key Milestones in First Year of Tibetan Digital Library Initiative

03 October 2024, [CTA](#)

As part of the department's Strengthening Cultural Resilience of Tibetan Communities project funded by USAID, the Department of Religion and Culture has successfully completed orientation workshops on the Tibetan Digital Library Initiative at 20 different Tibetan cultural and religious institutions, marking the beginning of the research and digitisation of scriptures.

On 13 May this year, the first orientation session was held in Dharamshala, followed by other assigned regions, namely Bylakuppe, Hunsur, Kollegal, and Mundgod, where the mentioned institutions are located. Over the span of four and a half months, the Department of Religion and Culture, in collaboration with Wadhvani AI and the Monlam IT Research Centre, conducted a series of workshops at the aforementioned Tibetan settlements on the implementation of the Tibetan Library Management System application, as well as on researching and digitising ancient scriptures.

In addition, during these orientation workshops, the task force team from the Department of Religion and Culture also participated in the project. Thus far, the initiative has completed QR code integration for 2,000 bookshelves and 70,000 master texts.

-Report filed by Department of Religion and Culture, CTA

Top Paris museum has replaced 'Nepal-Tibet' with incorrect 'Himalayan World' to avoid mentioning 'Tibet'

03 October 2024, [Tibetan Review](#)

While the [Musée du quai Branly](#) apologized and promised, on Sep 25, to restore the name "Tibet" in place of the China-dictated "Xizang" on its displays and documentations, the Guimet Museum of Asian Arts, another top museum in Paris, refuses to come out of

its China-pressure despite criticisms from scholars and protests by Tibetans and supporters. The criticisms included an op-ed written by eminent French specialists on Tibet and China published in *Le Monde* on Aug 31.

While the Quai Branly museum has recognized its error and intends to correct it, the Guimet Museum rejects the accusations, pointing out that the change of name was made as part of a global reflection, and that Tibet remains mentioned within the museum, reported *actualnewsmagazine.com* Sep 29.

Whether in Hong Kong or Europe, museums that showcase exhibitions related to China sometimes succumb to Xi Jinping's warning for the arts to foster "correct" viewpoints of history and culture, noted the *chinadigitaltimes.net* Oct 1.

China decided last year to replace 'Tibet' with 'Xizang' in all its official documents to make the point that Tibet as the world has known thus far and as Tibetans identify themselves with no longer exists. 'Xizang', on the other hand, refers to the China-designated Tibetan region called 'Xizang Autonomous Region', which is roughly the western half of Tibet.

Earlier this year, the Guimet Museum renamed certain rooms of an exhibition from "Nepal-Tibet" to "Himalayan World," claiming that the decision was meant to highlight cultural, not geographical, similarities in that region. This was despite the fact that the museum appears to carry displays of artifacts from across Tibet, of which the Himalayas form only its southern belt.

The real reason for the museum's censoring of the name 'Tibet' appears to be pressure from China. According to anonymous sources from *Le Monde*, the museum was subjected to sustained pressure from Chinese authorities earlier this year.

In a Sep 27 *Le Monde* article by Bruno Philip, Tibet specialists criticized the museum's reasoning. It quoted linguist Nicolas Tournadre, a leading specialist in Tibetan languages, as saying: "The term 'Himalaya' is a denomination that provides a cheap way of sidestepping referring to the once powerful Tibetan state. Indeed, the northern slopes of the Himalayan range only form the southern border of Tibet, which, additionally, also has several other ranges, which reach over 7,000 meters high, crossing it from east to west. On the other hand, certain populations south of the Himalayas have adopted many elements of Tibetan culture, such as the Ladakhi [in India], the Sherpa [in Nepal] or the Sikkimese [in India]: They are often referred to as 'Bhoti,' derived from the word 'Bod' – 'Tibet' [in Tibetan]."

"Since the Musée Guimet has no problem talking about Tibetan Buddhism, it would be strange to reduce it to Himalayan Buddhism alone!" Tibet specialist Fernand Meyer, a former holder of the Science and Civilization of the Tibetan World chair at

the Practical School of Advanced Studies (EPHE), has said.

"the 'Himalayan world' is not a culturally definable entity as such. Rather, it is a zone where the cultural areas of India and Tibet meet. To reduce the latter to its southern, geographically Himalayan fringe, therefore, does not do justice to the history and extension of a specifically Tibetan culture," he has added.

Sikyong Visits Two Schools in Mussoorie, Advice Tibetan Students on Continuing Future Tibet Struggle

03 October 2024, [CTA](#)

On 2 October 2024, Sikyong Penpa Tsering visited Tibetan Homes Foundation School (THF) and Sambhota Tibetan Day School in Mussoorie (STS), where he addressed the students and staff of both schools.

On the morning, Sikyong Penpa Tsering traveled from Dehradun to Mussoorie. Upon arriving at Tibetan Homes School around 10 a.m, he was warmly welcomed by General Secretary of Mussoorie Tibetan Home School, Tenzin Choklang, and Sambhota School's Principal Sangpo Rigzin, along with students and staff from both schools performing traditional music.

Afterwards, in the Tsering Dolma Hall of Tibetan Homes School, students from grade 9 and above, along with staff from both schools, gathered for a meeting. The General Secretary of Tibetan Homes Foundation delivered a welcome speech and presented the school's report, followed by Principal Sangpo Rigzin presenting the report for Sambhota School. Then, the Sikyong addressed the gathering.

While lauding the teachers for their dedicated services, Sikyong began his address referring to the Tibetan saying "Hope for the best, prepare for the worst," he explained that while the hope is to resolve the Tibet issue, preparation requires hard work. He noted that since the elder generation of Tibetans who came into exile and worked for Tibet's freedom under His Holiness the Dalai Lama's leadership are gradually passing away, it is now crucial to mobilise younger generations to make them carry the baton of Tibetan freedom struggle.

Sikyong emphasised that Tibetan children should have pride in being Tibetan and maintain their cultural dignity. For this, Sikyong stressed the importance of understanding Tibet's history and current issues. He introduced the historical development of Tibet, the value and significance of Tibetan writing, and the history and evolution of Tibet-China conflicts. He further implored Tibetan youths to pay attention to and study their own history.

In relation to this, Sikyong explained that the Kashag (Cabinet) is working to gain recognition of Tibet's historical status as a sovereign nation to strengthen the support for policy of Middle Way Approach. Hence, Sikyong acknowledged that a hearing on Tibet was conducted in the U.S. for the said reason that eventually resulted in enactment of the "Resolve Tibet Act".

Additionally, regarding His Holiness the Dalai Lama's reincarnation, Sikyong disclosed that since the Chinese government will certainly interfere in the recognition process, Tibetans have passed resolutions affirming that the authority to recognise the reincarnation lies solely with His Holiness. Sikyong also suggested the importance of securing similar resolutions from Himalayan Buddhists communities, followers of Tibetan Buddhism, and the international community. He mentioned that the Department of Religion and Culture is compiling these resolutions to strategically counter China's interference in the reincarnation issue.

Furthermore, through a PowerPoint presentation, Sikyong explained Tibet's geographical location, its environmental and geopolitical importance to the world and Asia, and how Tibetan religion and culture benefit humanity. Afterwards, he answered questions from some students.

In the afternoon, Sikyong Penpa Tsering visited the Sambhota Tibetan Day School and gave a speech in English to the staff and students, primarily Indian students. First, Principal Sangpo Rigzin welcomed him and presented a brief school report. Then, the Sikyong gave his speech, expressing gratitude to the Indian government and people for assisting in the establishment of Tibetan schools in India. He explained that Tibetans consider India a holy land and that there are strong historical ties between Tibet and India, and noted that Tibetan Buddhism originated from India and His Holiness describes himself as an ambassador of ancient Indian wisdom.

Sikyong also addressed the declining number of Tibetan students in Tibetan schools and the increasing number of Indian students. He explained that the Tibetan administration's continued provision of education to Indian students is a way of showing gratitude to the Indian government and people. He mentioned that due to decreasing student numbers, some schools need to be consolidated. He then spoke primarily to the Indian students about the importance of the Tibetan plateau, the development of Tibetan history, and Indo-Tibetan relations, followed by answering students' questions.

After that, Sikyong inspected land that the Tibetan Homes School plans to sell, and then visited the local Tibetan market area to examine issues raised by the community regarding their difficulties.

Dalai Lama praises Japan for promoting peace in world

03 October 2024, [The Tribune](#)

The Dalai Lama has congratulated the new Prime Minister of Japan, Shigeru Ishida, on his election. In a letter to Ishida, the Dalai Lama wrote, "Over the years, I have had the opportunity to visit Japan quite regularly. I deeply appreciate the interest and enthusiasm that people from all walks of life have shown in my efforts to encourage the cultivation of fundamental human values such as compassion and my work to promote inter-religious harmony and create a peaceful world free from weapons, including nuclear weapons."

The Dalai Lama wrote, "I admire the way the Japanese people have worked to transform Japan into one of the most modern nations in the world. Japan has also frequently taken the lead in trying to establish peace in the world. Your country's spiritual traditions place great value on peace, and I hope you will be able to build on that during your tenure. In these times of uncertainty and upheaval in many parts of the world, it is vital that earnest and concerted efforts are made to resolve problems through dialogue and diplomacy." The Dalai Lama concluded his letter by wishing Ishida success in his efforts to fulfil the hopes and aspirations of the people of Japan and in creating a more peaceful and compassionate world.

Tibetan Student Unity Network Debuts on PRC's 75th Anniversary, Aims to Empower Tibetan Students

03 October 2024, [The Tibet Express](#)

Marking a significant milestone in the Tibetan diaspora community, the Tibetan Student Unity Network (TSUN)-India was officially launched on 1 October 2024, coinciding with the 75th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC).

This newly formed student network aims to unite exiled Tibetan students and youth across India, fostering unity, empowerment, and collective strength through a shared vision and apolitical stance.

The TSUN aims to educate students on Tibetan culture, history, and governance, fostering collective strength among dispersed student associations. Its initiatives include annual meetings, monthly online sessions, social media campaigns, and commemorating significant events.

Currently, 10 student associations have joined, with membership open to any student association in India. The network seeks to enhance Tibetan students' knowledge, influence, and collective strength.

In the RTYC Jalandhar President's absence due to health reasons, RTYC Jalandhar's Executive Member,

Karma Tashi, spoke with us, shedding light on the TSUN's vision and initiatives.

On the origin of the TSUN, Karma says it emerged from a youth gathering, where Tibetan student leaders converged, and was refined through subsequent meetings. This collaborative effort led to the network's official launch on 1 October 2024.

"The TSUN has three key goals," says Karma. It aims to establish a strong Tibetan student organisation, promote cultural and democratic awareness among youth, and unite dispersed, fragmented associations to amplify their collective influence.

"TSUN focuses on India for now with no international expansion plans," Karma said. Currently, its social media presence is only through its newly opened page on Instagram as [tsun_india](#). In order to join, any student association can contact the network through Instagram or reach out to RTYC Jalandhar's President or other TSUN leaders.

Karma added that so far, "TSUN marked Tibetan Democracy Day, which falls on 2 September." He added that the student members of the group participated in making short videos, dramas, and plays related to Tibetan Democracy Day, which he said drew approximately 30 participants.

The network has no single President; instead, the 10 member associations hold equal positions. These associations are RTYC Jalandhar, SFT Jalandhar, RTYC Sarah, Chakori, MTSA Mysore, TSAM Chennai, SFT Mangalore, RTYC Mangalore, and SFT Bangalore.

The network operates primarily online with no fixed location. It was formed informally in June/July through discussions among student leaders. The network's active members are the presidents and vice presidents of the 10-member student associations.

Sikyong Penpa Tsering Extends His Congratulations to the New Prime Minister of Japan, Honourable Shigeru Ishiba

03 October 2024, [CTA](#)

On 3 October 2024, Sikyong Penpa Tsering, on behalf of the Central Tibetan Administration and Tibetan people, wrote a congratulatory letter to extend greetings to Honourable Shigeru Ishiba and the Liberal Democratic Party of Japan on the election victory.

Sikyong wrote, "Japan has consistently shown gracious hospitality to His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan people since welcoming His Holiness in 1967, shortly after His arrival in India to exile. Over the years, Japan, a nation where the vast majority hold deep admiration and respect for His Holiness, has hosted His Holiness on multiple occasions".

Similarly, Sikyong shared the Tibetan people's admiration towards Japan's unwavering commitment to championing freedom, democracy, and the rule of

law, as well as its advocacy for human rights, particularly in the face of China's egregious violations and repression in Tibet, East Turkestan, Southern Mongolia and beyond. "Japan's bold stance against authoritarianism and infringement of freedom sets a true example of global leadership in defending rights and freedom," Sikyong added.

"It is also a profound source of hope for the Tibetan people in Tibet and in exile that Japan hosts one of the world's largest parliamentary support groups for Tibet, with over 100 members across party lines."

In conclusion, the Tibetan political leader expressed his optimism over continued support for Tibet and the Tibetan people under the leadership of Japan's new Prime Minister.

30 Tibetans detained

02 October 2024, [The Tribune](#)

New Delhi: The Delhi Police detained 30 Tibetans heading to protest outside the Chinese embassy on Tuesday against the human rights situation in their homeland, officials said. The protest was held after China marked its 75th year of communist party rule, a protester said. "We have detained 30 Tibetan protesters. They were released later after some time from Chanakyapuri police station," a police officer said.

Embassy in New Delhi targeted as exile Tibetans, others protest on China's 75th National Day

02 October 2024, [Tibetan Review](#)

As China marked the 75th anniversary of the founding of its Communist Party state on Oct 1 in a distinctly low-keyed manner, beset by a host of economic, social stability, and other challenges, Tibetans living in exile, supporters and other victims of its persecution rallied to register their protests.

In India's capital New Delhi, Tibetans held a demonstration and chanted slogans outside Chinese embassy in Chanakyapuri. Thirty protesters were subsequently detained by police, taken to Mandir Marg police station, and later released, reported the [timesofindia.com](#) Oct 1.

The protesters, numbering 50, had arrived in the national capital after completing a cycle rally from Dehradun, covering a distance of over 400 km, with the aim to draw attention to the ongoing human rights abuses and the suppression of Tibetan culture under China's Communist party. The multi-day rally sought to raise awareness about the situation in Tibet and called for international solidarity against China's oppressive measures, reported [indiatoday.in](#) Oct 1.

"We are here to peacefully protest the CCP's brutal occupation of Tibet. The world must acknowledge the

suffering of the Tibetan people and oppose this injustice,” the report quoted a Tibetan Youth Congress representative as saying before the detention.

The demonstrators vocalized their demands with slogans such as, “Make China accountable for committing atrocities in Tibet,” “Free Tibet,” and “Stop genocide in Tibet,” reported the *devdiscourse.com* Oct 1.

At the Vishwavidyalaya Metro Station in Delhi, Students for a Free Tibet (SFT) organized a photo action and awareness campaign.

SFT, a New York-headquartered group with grassroots chapters in various countries, was also a part of over 50 international human rights NGOs that came together to condemn transnational repression “in a powerful joint statement” on China’s 75th National Day.

Those that signed the Joint Statement Against Transnational Repression ranged from groups such as Human Rights Watch, Freedom House, and Amnesty International to local chapters of exile Tibetan groups. They came together “to show that the CCP’s transnational repression is in the spotlight, and we will fight back against it at every turn,” said the statement Oct 1.

“We stand together with dissidents against the long arm of authoritarian governments around the world. As organizations committed to protecting civil liberties, we, the undersigned, pledge to remain vigilant through education and advocacy to combat the growing threat of transnational repression,” the statement said.

The signatories vowed to “continue to collaborate with affected communities to raise public awareness of the tactics employed by governments that extend their reach abroad.”

The statement’s direct reference to China specifically said: “One disturbing example (of transnational repression) occurred on the streets of San Francisco in November 2023, when Hong Kong, Tibetan, Uyghur, and mainland Chinese protesters gathered to oppose the Chinese leader Xi Jinping during the APEC Summit. As documented by a recent report jointly published by the Hong Kong Democracy Council and Students for a Free Tibet — followed by a Washington Post investigation — harassment, intimidation, surveillance, and physical violence were orchestrated by groups affiliated with the Chinese Communist Party. Even consular personnel were seen on the ground. We urge the U.S. State Department to consider elevating this as a diplomatic incident and the Justice Department to consider bringing federal charges against those who were responsible. Congress should likewise consider passing relevant new legislation to deter future episodes.”

Elsewhere, 650 to 700 members of the exiled Uyghur community in Turkey staged a protest outside the

Chinese Consulate in the Seriyer district of Istanbul, reported the *ANI* news service Oct 1.

Led by Hidayet Oguzhan, President of the International Union of East Turkestan Organizations, the protest drew support from several NGOs advocating for Uyghur rights, the report said.

Office of Tibet, Nepal Hosts Three-Day Exhibition Showcasing Jamyang Dorje’s Masterful Tibetan Calligraphy

02 October 2024, [CTA](#)



Jamyang Dorjee showcased exceptional artwork, including various distinctive drawings using Tibetan scripts, particularly in the Umed (cursive) style

The Office of Tibet in Nepal, in collaboration with the Himalayan Buddhist Library and Cultural Center, hosted a distinguished three-day exhibition and workshop on Tibetan calligraphy from September 25 to 27, 2024.

Esteemed Tibetan calligraphy artist Jamyang Dorjee presented his remarkable artwork, featuring a variety of distinctive drawings utilizing Tibetan scripts, particularly in the Umed (འུམེད) style. A notable highlight of the exhibition was a unique scroll showcasing the complete “Padma Kathang Sheldrags” manuscript, accompanied by displays of various other calligraphic styles.

The opening ceremony was held at the Choejor Community Hall on the first day. Throughout the subsequent three days, Jamyang Dorjee conducted educational sessions tailored for diverse groups, including monastic students and practitioners—especially those from the Nyingma tradition’s Shechen Monastery and university students and schoolchildren.

Participants included students from Namgyal University, Songtsen Nepal School, Namgyal Middle School, and Samten Memorial School. During these sessions, Jamyang Dorjee provided comprehensive teachings on the history and origins of Tibetan script

alongside both traditional and contemporary artistic techniques.

The event witnessed the participation of approximately 200 individuals, comprising both male and female students, along with numerous interested public members. A significant presence of monastics from various monasteries, predominantly from Shechen Monastery, further enriched the program.

-Report filed by Office of Tibet, Nepal

His Holiness the Dalai Lama Confers Teaching on Tsongkhapa's Three Principal Aspects of the Path

01 October 2024, [CTA](#)

This morning His Holiness the Dalai Lama made a circuit of the Tsuglagkhang, the Main Tibetan Temple, on his way to address an estimated 7000 people, including 1300 from Taiwan, as well as many monks on vacation from the monasteries in South India. He smiled at those he saw as he passed, occasionally extending a hand to an elderly man or woman who caught his eye.

In the temple His Holiness warmly greeted the Ganden Throneholder and took his seat on the throne. The 'Heart Sutra' was chanted in Chinese, following which a mandala was offered to him.

"Today we're going to hold a spiritual discourse," His Holiness began. "When I was on my way here, listening to your chanting the 'Mig-tsé-ma' prayer to Jé Tsongkhapa reminded me that not only was I born close to his place of birth, but that I also share his philosophical views. However, the survival of the Buddhadharma is not linked to a particular location and those of us in exile have done our best to keep it alive. Jé Rinpoché's teaching has spread around the world and I've done my best to clarify it.

"When I was in Tibet, and also since leaving the Land of Snow, one of my most important practices has been to read the 18 volumes of Jé Rinpoché's Collected Works. I have a special regard for them and feel a close connection to them. Today, I'll read his 'Three Principles of the Path'.

"Tibetans' core identity is focussed on the Buddhadharma. We have kept it alive and we have kept it well through study and practice. Consequently, many who have an interest in the Dharma are paying attention to our tradition.

Tea and bread served to the congregation were blessed with the recitation of a verse that celebrates His Holiness's names:

I pray to you, O Supreme Noble Lotus Holder (Padmapani):

*You are the adamantine Gentle Glory who has Mastery of Speech,
Your vase of Sublime Insight is replete with the nectar of Exalted Wisdom,*

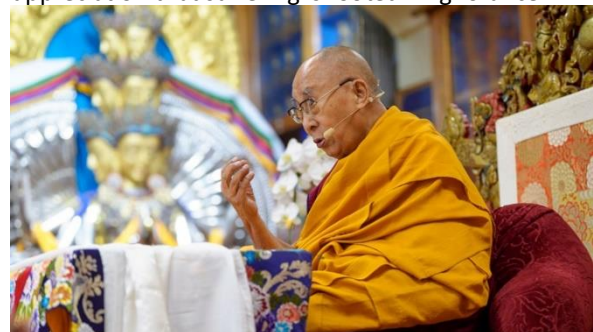
And you are embellishing jewellery of (Beautifully adorning) the Vast playful Ocean of Upholders of Dharma! "There was a prediction at the time of the Buddha," His Holiness continued, "that the Buddhadharma would spread from the north to the north. After his enlightenment the Buddha began his teaching by explaining the Four Noble Truths. In due course, what he had to say spread throughout Tibet, which is north of India, and on to Mongolia, which is north of Tibet. Tibetans in Tibet and in exile have kept the tradition alive through study and practice of the Three Higher Trainings—ethics, concentration and wisdom. Interest has grown around the world because these trainings are rooted in reason and logic.

"The three principles of the path are renunciation, or a determination to be free, the awakening mind and the correct view. The determination to be free does not lead to enlightenment directly, it needs to be augmented by the other two principles.

"Shantarakshita, among Indian masters invited by Tibetan kings to Tibet, established the Buddha's teachings there. We have studied and meditated on what was taught and put the Three Higher Trainings and the Three Principles of the Path into practice.

"When we develop a determination to be free, we'll no longer be drawn to the pleasures and attractions of this life or future lives in cyclic existence. We'll turn away from them. However, we will not reach the state of omniscience without the awakening mind of bodhichitta and a correct view of emptiness.

"From the very beginning of my day I cultivate the awakening mind and an understanding of emptiness. When I hear sad news, these principles help me develop a determination to be free. Understanding the workings of the mind and emotions, and seeing how things are dependently arisen, we can come to an appreciation that suffering is rooted in ignorance.



His Holiness the Dalai Lama addressing the congregation during his teaching at the Main Tibetan Temple in Dharamshala, HP, India on 30 September 2024. Photo by Tenzin Choejor

"The Three Principles of the Path need to be integrated within us. They need to become part of our inner experience."

His Holiness began to read briskly through the text noting that without a pure determination to be free there is no way to still attraction to the pleasures of

cyclic existence. We need to reverse attraction to this life as well as reversing attraction to future lives. When we do not for an instant wish for the pleasures of cyclic existence, and day and night remain intent on liberation, we will have produced a determination to be free.

However, a determination to be free without a pure awakening mind of bodhichitta does not bring forth enlightenment. Therefore, Bodhisattvas generate the excellent awakening mind. They reflect on how all beings, our mothers, are swept by the current of the four powerful rivers, tied by strong bonds of actions so hard to undo, caught in the iron net of self-centredness, completely enveloped by the darkness of ignorance, born and reborn in boundless cyclic existence, and are ceaselessly tormented by the three miseries. Thinking of them in this way they generate the awakening mind.

The text touches on how, despite these realizations, without wisdom, the realization of emptiness, we cannot cut the root of cyclic existence. Therefore, we must strive to understand dependent arising.

Jé Tsongkhapa states that appearances are infallible dependent arising, while emptiness is free of assertions. But as long as these two understandings are seen as separate, we will not have realized the intent of the Buddha. And yet, when these two realizations are simultaneous and concurrent, analysis of the profound view is complete. He goes on to reveal that appearances refute the extreme of existence, and emptiness refutes the extreme of nonexistence. When we understand the arising of cause and effect from the viewpoint of emptiness, we will not be captivated by either extreme view.



Members of the audience from Taiwan taking notes during His Holiness the Dalai Lama's teaching at the Main Tibetan Temple in Dharamshala, HP, India on 30 September 2024. Photo by Tenzin Choejor

Jé Rinpoché counsels his disciple Ngawang Drakpa, to whom he sent these verses to realize the Three Principles of the Path, to depend on solitude and strong effort, and quickly reach the final goal.

His Holiness announced that he would offer the Bodhisattva Vow. He remarked that he finds reading books about the awakening mind of bodhichitta and its qualities, such as Shantideva's 'Entering the Way of a Bodhisattva' to be both moving and inspiring. He said

such books encourage us to work for all sentient beings throughout space.

"When the Buddha first set out on the path to enlightenment," His Holiness advised, "he generated such an awakening mind. We should emulate him."

His Holiness read the verses for taking refuge in the Three Jewels and generating the awakening mind, encouraging members of the congregation to generate the awakening mind and take the Bodhisattva vow themselves. Next, he repeated verses from 'Entering into the Bodhisattva's Way' in celebration.

Today my birth is fruitful, my human life is justified. Today, I am born into the family of the Buddha, now I am a child of the Buddhas.

So that there may be no blemish upon this spotless family, I must now act as becomes my family.

"People around the world seem obsessed with weapons and the use of force," His Holiness observed. "As practitioners of the Buddhadharma we should avoid this. Nothing good comes from the use of force. Killing so many people only brings further suffering. Setting aside attachment, anger and hatred we should work instead to benefit all sentient beings. Much better that developing bodhichitta within ourselves should be our primary aim."



A view of crowd sitting in the courtyard attending His Holiness the Dalai Lama's teaching at the Main Tibetan Temple in Dharamshala, HP, India on 30 September 2024. Photo by Ven Zamling Norbu

Among several questions from the audience His Holiness was asked what is the main cause not to be separated from the spiritual master. He answered that heeding the teachings you've received and putting them into practice creates a strong link with your teacher.

Another questioner wanted to know whether steady cultivation of practices like the exchanging of self and others would lead to genuine experience. His Holiness replied that if you familiarize your mind with such practice, it will eventually give rise to experience. In terms of bodhichitta you'll feel ever closer to it. He repeated the verse concerning the four immeasurable wishes.

May all beings have happiness and the causes of happiness.

May all beings be free from suffering and the causes of suffering.

May all beings rejoice in the well-being of others. May all beings live in peace, free from greed and hatred.

“If we familiarize ourselves with bodhichitta, in time we will become imbued with it. I cultivate bodhichitta and the view of emptiness on a daily basis and I feel it has created a solid experience within me.”

Asked how a beginner should act to prevent their sense of bodhichitta from slackening His Holiness simply advised that if you persevere with a practice, it will not decline. Finally, he declared that main cause of higher rebirths in the future is to cultivate the awakening mind of bodhichitta and an understanding of emptiness.

The Taiwanese disciples expressed their pleasure at His Holiness’s advice with a burst of applause. He left the temple, walked steadily to the lift, smiling at well-wishers as he went, and in the courtyard boarded the golfcart that would carry him home.

The World Needs a Champion like the Tibetan People and the Guidance of His Holiness the Dalai Lama More Than Ever: Congressman Jim McGovern at Gratitude Event in His Honor

01 October 2024, [CTA](#)

The Regional Tibetan Association of Massachusetts (RTAM) on Saturday held a significant gratitude event titled “Thank You, Congressman Jim McGovern,” celebrating Congressman for his steadfast commitment to Tibet, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, and the Tibetan people.

In a stirring address, Congressman McGovern highlighted the enduring spirit and global impact of the Tibetan community. He spoke passionately about the vital themes of human rights, peace, and resilience. “The Tibetan Spirit Represents the Value that Can Change the World,” McGovern declared, reflecting on his experiences with the Tibetan community and His Holiness the Dalai Lama. His speech deeply resonated with the audience, which included community leaders, activists, and supporters of the Tibetan cause.

During his remarks, Congressman McGovern discussed the profound lessons of love, respect, and joy he has absorbed from Tibetan culture. He emphasised the importance of these values in offering a stark contrast to the turmoil seen worldwide today, underscoring the necessity of promoting these ideals to counteract the pervasive negativity and violence.

“The world needs a champion like the Tibetan people and the guidance of His Holiness the Dalai Lama more than ever,” stated McGovern, acknowledging the significant influence of Tibetan philosophy on fostering global unity and contentment.

Highlighting his legislative efforts, which were inspired by his interactions with the Tibetan community both within the U.S. and internationally, McGovern reaffirmed his commitment to supporting the Tibetan cause in Congress. “This legislation arose from meetings with Tibetans globally. These ideas came from you,” he noted, celebrating the cooperative efforts that have led to substantial policy advancements.

Congressman McGovern concluded with a compelling call to action: “Nothing improves in our community, our country, and the world unless good, like-minded people unite and demand change.”

Other special guests for the event focused on their collective appreciation for Congressman McGovern’s dedication to Tibetan freedom struggle and his broader impact on global human rights advocacy. Sikyong Penpa Tsering of the Central Tibetan Administration congratulated Congressman McGovern on receiving the well-deserved honour. In a video message, Sikyong expressed his heartfelt gratitude to Congressman McGovern for his unwavering commitment to the Tibetan cause, acknowledging the personal sacrifices he has made, including facing sanctions, as a consequence of his steadfast support for Tibet.

Thondup Tsering, Member of the Tibetan Parliament in Exile, reflected on Congressman McGovern’s long-standing commitment to human rights and his direct impact on the U.S. foreign policy, especially concerning Tibet, and referred to McGovern as “truly the conscience of the House.” Tsering further highlighted the congressman’s resilience against international pressures, and how despite facing sanctions, Congressman McGovern continues to stand with Tibet, wearing opposition as a badge of honour. “His commitment to justice is unwavering, and his actions inspire us to maintain our fight for freedom and dignity,” noted Tibetan Parliamentarian Thondup. Namgyal Choedup, Representative of His Holiness the Dalai Lama in Washington, D.C., commended Congressman McGovern for his compassionate and moral leadership that transcends political divisions, emphasising his pivotal role in advancing the Tibetan cause and supporting human rights on a global scale. Tenchoe Gyatso, President of the International Campaign for Tibet, praised Congressman McGovern for his leadership in passing crucial legislation like the Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act, which has bolstered international support for Tibet and set a precedent for future U.S. policies supporting Tibet.

Dhardon Sharling, former Member of Tibetan Parliament in Exile, spoke about the historical context of Congressman McGovern’s support, reflecting on a pivotal moment in 2012 when he co-authored a significant letter to the U.S. Secretary of State advocating for Tibetan rights. She underscored how

his support has not only persisted but intensified over the years, significantly contributing to the Tibetan cause and reinforcing their collective spirit and resilience.

Tsultrem Kunsang, President of the Regional Tibetan Association of Massachusetts, celebrated the impactful legislative achievements spearheaded by Congressman McGovern, particularly noting his crucial role in the passage of the Resolve Tibet Act. Kunsang highlighted this law as a significant milestone that not only affirms the U.S. commitment to the Tibetan cause but also serves as a bold declaration against misinformation about Tibet's historical sovereignty.

A highlight of the event was the special ceremonial presentation of a silver sculpture replicating the historic Sino-Tibet Treaty of A.D. 821/823. This pillar, still standing today in front of the Jokhang Temple in Lhasa, Tibet, symbolises the enduring peace and mutual recognition of sovereignty between Tibet and China.

The Resolve Tibet Act, sponsored by Congressman McGovern, not only recognises the right of the Tibetan people to self-determination under international law but also calls for a meaningful and direct dialogue without any preconditions with His Holiness the Dalai Lama or representatives of the Central Tibetan Administration. Significantly, section 5 of the Act's Findings challenges the long-standing false narrative propagated by China, stating, 'The United States Government has never taken the position that Tibet was a part of China since ancient times.' This is a historic acknowledgment by the U.S. Government, marking a clear departure from past narratives and affirming Tibet's status as a historically independent nation.

In keeping with the spirit of the Resolve Tibet Act, the pillar not only commemorates Tibet's historical independence but also underscores its rightful sovereignty, honouring Congressman McGovern's pivotal role in championing these truths.

The event featured cultural performances by the students and teachers of Thunme Lekshey School, The Tibetan Weekend School managed by RTAM. The gratitude event also served as a reaffirmation of the Tibetan community's resolve to fight for the rights of the Tibetan people and for the restoration of freedom in Tibet.

The entire event live streamed on Tibet TV can be [watched here](#).

CHINA POLITICS

Xi stresses advancing reform at study session for senior officials

30 October 2024, [Xinhua](#)

Chinese President Xi Jinping on Tuesday called for pooling strength to advance reform in a steady and sustained manner, as he addressed senior officials attending a central Party school study session.

Xi, also general secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, made the remarks at the opening of the study session at the Party School of the CPC Central Committee (National Academy of Governance) for principal officials at the provincial and ministerial level.

The session is themed on implementing the guiding principles of the third plenary session of the 20th CPC Central Committee, which rolled out a new package of comprehensive reforms for the country.

Xi pointed out that China's efforts to advance reforms on all fronts in the new era have yielded substantial results across practical, institutional and theoretical dimensions, representing one of the most monumental chapters in the nation's journey of reform and opening up.

He emphasized that the reforms are guided by clear principles. Core commitments include upholding the Party's overall leadership, adhering to Marxism, adhering to socialism with Chinese characteristics, and upholding the people's democratic dictatorship, focusing on fostering social equity and enhancing people's well-being in everything the authorities do.

Xi asserted that these principles must remain unwavering, regardless of circumstances.

He also highlighted the need to uphold the unity of reform and the rule of law, bolster the rule of law through reform, advance reform in the domain of law-based governance, and continuously improve the system of socialist rule of law with Chinese characteristics.

Xi underscored the need to uphold the unity of reform and opening up, steadily expand institutional opening up, take the initiative to align with high-standard international economic and trade rules, deepen reform in foreign trade, foreign investment and outbound investment management system, and foster a first-class business environment that is market-oriented, law-based and internationalized.

Xi stressed that leading officials, especially senior officials, should strive to open new horizons for reform and development rather than shying away from risks and challenges.

It is essential to build broad consensus and mobilize all positive factors to advance reforms, Xi said.

All regions and departments must implement the existing and incremental policies and strive to achieve

the annual economic and social development goals, he noted.

The opening session was presided over by Li Qiang, and attended by Zhao Leji, Wang Huning, Cai Qi, Ding Xuexiang and Li Xi, who are all members of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee. Vice President Han Zheng also attended the opening session.

Xi's speech is of great significance to solidifying confidence and pooling strength for advancing reforms, and will help ensure the effective implementation of various reform measures, said Li Qiang.

It is essential to grasp the core principles and practical implications of Xi's speech, and to implement reform measures with creativity, Li added.

Role reversed for China's birth-control enforcers, now cajoling women to marry, have children

29 October 2024, [Tibetan Review](#)

As China unveiled on Oct 28 new birth support policy measures to promote the building of a birth-friendly society, its grass roots government workers, who had spent decades imposing strict birth control policies, ruining careers and families, are now calling up women in their neighbourhoods to urge them to get pregnant amid the country's demographic crisis, reported China's official *Xinhua* news agency and the *scmp.com* Oct 28.

A directive from the General Office of China's State Council (the cabinet) details 13 targeted measures on enhancing childbirth support services, expanding child-care systems, strengthening support in education, housing and employment, and fostering a birth-friendly social atmosphere, said the *Xinhua* report.

The measures are designed for actively building a "new marriage and childbearing culture", noted *Reuters* Oct 28.

Tens of thousands of Chinese women of childbearing age are now being pursued through a vigorous campaign organised by vast district administrative networks. Grass-roots government workers have been mobilised to contact women in their neighbourhoods to urge them to get pregnant, said the *scmp.com* report.

The central government also hopes to learn why so many women are reluctant to have more children, and devise new policy options as a plummeting birth rate steers the country towards a demographic crisis, the report said.

A nationwide survey announced Oct 17 by China's Population and Development Research Centre sought to "obtain new data on views on marriage and fertility and key influencing factors".

A Sample Survey on Population and Family Development in China, approved by the National Bureau of Statistics on Oct 11 targeted women of child-bearing age – defined by the bureau as women aged between 15 and 49 – from about 30,000 families, covering 1,500 communities or villages across 150 counties.

Their responses showed strong grievance and anger against the country's past draconian one-child policy and antipathy towards marrying or having children in the post-Deng Xiaoping reform era of today.

Huang, a 35-year-old working mother of one son who lives in the southeast coastal province of Fujian, has said an overly enthusiastic social worker even asked about the timing of her most recent period and offered to give her a reminder call when it was "the right time" to conceive another baby.

She has cut short the government effort by telling the social worker that she had no immediate plans for a second child, that "I have no money, no time and no energy for a second baby."

Huang's sentiment was "very common", the *scmp.com* report cited district level officials from three coastal provinces as saying, speaking on condition of anonymity.

They have said many respondents had vented "strong grievances" about the country's recent past one-child policy as well as considerable worries about the economy and employment.

One official from Fujian, surnamed Lin, who was involved in the survey, has said many who had been fined by the government for breaching the previously strictly enforced birth control rule wanted the authorities to refund the penalties imposed on families.

China scrapped its decades-old draconian birth control policies in 2021, when Beijing raised the limit of children per family to three, and stopped imposing fines on families who exceed the quota.

Previously, couples who had more children than allowed were required by the local birth control department to pay "social maintenance fees", to have the child legally registered in the household.

In 2020, one couple in Guangzhou were fined nearly 320,000 yuan (US\$44,870) for having a third child, the report said, citing mainland media reports.

Women of child-bearing in China are now being targeted by joint efforts of the "civil affairs, education, police, health, statistics, medical insurance, social security departments," who seek to "understand how many women in our district are of child-bearing age, their intentions to have more children, their physical condition and the family's financial condition."

Some districts even offered women who intend to have more children in the near future free folic acid supplements, to help reduce the chance of birth

defects, a Guangdong district official surnamed Chen has said.

According to the China Population and Development Research Centre, in 2022, China's fertility rate dropped to 1.09, while the total fertility rate in Shanghai, one of China's wealthiest cities, dipped to 0.6 in 2023, according to the municipality, the report noted.

A replacement fertility rate of 2.1 children per woman is widely accepted as the necessary rate for a country's population to remain constant.

If China's fertility rate remains on its downward trajectory, for every child born in the future, six people will die – a trend that threatens to intensify the nation's demographic crisis, the report was stated to have warned.

China faces stormy future as confidence in Xi crumbles

29 October 2024, [ANI](#)



A File Photo of Xi Jinping at a Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference meeting in Beijing (File Photo/Reuters)

Recently circulating on social media was a photo of a Chinese soldier wedding his bride. Behind them, an enormous slogan was emblazoned: "Listen to Chairman Xi's command; Be responsible to Chairman Xi; Let Chairman Xi rest assured." These were the kinds of slogans prevalent during the Cultural Revolution of the 1960s, promoting a personality cult for Mao Zedong. There can be no questioning the centrality of Xi in China but as the country's economy increasingly struggles, many are questioning the direction Chairman Xi Jinping has taken China. One who is critical of Xi is Desmond Shum, a Hong Kong-raised businessman who was once married to billionaire businesswoman Duan Weihong. Witnessing the direction Xi was taking China, Shum departed China in 2015 and, six years later, wrote *Red Roulette*, a book that describes corruption within the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). In mid-October, he posted public criticism of Xi on

social media, saying, "Xi is systematically dismantling the most valuable asset of the CCP: public trust. Over the past few weeks, we've witnessed the wreckage of Xi's financial policies unfolding in real-time." Shum continued: "To me, the more pressing issue isn't merely the financial mishaps but how Xi is eroding the longstanding trust and confidence the Chinese people once had in CCP governance. While this is probably unintentional on his part, it is definitely systematic and far-reaching."

He said previous Chinese leaders like Deng Xiaoping, Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao were generally pragmatic. "This created a bond between the CCP and the public, rooted in the belief that the party was steering China towards continued prosperity. However, Xi has systematically undermined this trust through a combination of political centralization, economic clampdowns and a stifling of civil society. His leadership marks a sharp departure from the more collective and pragmatic governance approach seen in previous administrations."

Shum highlighted seven specific areas of failure. The first is political centralisation and authoritarianism, as Xi concentrated power to a degree not seen since Mao. Secondly, he has suppressed civil society and freedoms through censorship, crackdowns on non-governmental organisations and the treatment of Hong Kong.

Thirdly, Xi's anti-corruption campaign, initially popular, is now viewed as a political purge that has generated fear without rooting out corruption. Fourthly, Xi has eroded longstanding institutional norms, such as senior cadre appointments and bureaucratic procedures.

Fifthly, Shum said, Xi is to blame for economic tightening and state control, as his focus on expanding the role of state-owned enterprises came at the expense of the private sector. Sixthly, Xi grossly mishandled COVID-19, and this was perhaps the most damaging action he ever took. "After years of strict zero-COVID policies that ground daily life to a halt, the sudden reversal in late 2022 shocked the nation.

Particularly among younger generations, many view this as a defining moment of CCP mismanagement."

Finally, Shum identified nationalism and Beijing's aggressive stance on Taiwan, the South China Sea and the Indian border as a mistake.

Shum concluded: "When Wen Jiabao famously remarked that 'confidence is more important than gold' in 2008, it underscored the essential role trust plays in governance. Yet Xi has worked relentlessly--albeit unintentionally--to erode that very confidence. His COVID management has shaken people's trust in his societal governance, and the ongoing stock market debacle calls into question his ability to lead China's economy. As trust in Xi's leadership falters, the road

ahead looks increasingly bleak." A Chatham House seminar on 24 September, titled "Can China still Prosper under Xi?" featured several experts, including Dr. Winnie King, Senior Lecturer in Chinese International Political Economy, University of Bristol. Asked about Xi's performance, she noted, "I think in terms of the international system's expectations of China, we're quite disappointed, mainly because there was a lot of hope that he would bring in reform..." David Lubin, Michael Klein Research Fellow, Global Economy and Finance Programme, Chatham House, also participating in the seminar, said: "I think, if the question is, is he doing as much as he can do for the welfare of Chinese households, The answer is clearly no. But I don't think that's the question he's asking himself. The question he's asking himself is what can I do to promote the interests of the Chinese nation? And it's interesting that those two ideas that are so separate in the Chinese context [is] because of the way Xi Jinping feels himself to be encircled geopolitically. So economic policy is oriented around the need to protect China from geopolitical risk. From that point of view, he probably thinks he's doing quite well, but household welfare becomes a sort of sideshow." An economic macro trend is evident. China benefitted greatly from wider access to the global economy when it joined the World Trade Organisation in 2001, but China's ability to generate structural growth started fading rapidly in the 2010s. Beijing's solution was to leverage--to borrow funds to buy investments--and so it went on a huge credit binge even whilst the West was deleveraging to repair balance sheets. From 2012-16, the Chinese corporate sector took on much of the burden as companies attempted to level up their business models and expand operations in the West. Chinese household debt rose quickly at the same time. This was because China's business model was not about rewarding workers with greater wages, for that would hurt Chinese exports. Instead, the easiest way for households to join the wealth creation craze was via the real estate market. As more houses were purchased, prices rose, and at last, the average Chinese person felt they were getting richer. In fact, property currently accounts for 62 per cent of Chinese household net worth, compared to just 23 per cent in the US. However, Xi clamped down on the property sector as he signaled that paper wealth creation should be brought under control and as he promoted "common prosperity." The results were predictable, as the government could not deleverage a USD50-trillion real estate bubble in an orderly manner. As house prices fell, indebted households and developers sold off properties to fix their balance sheets. In a vicious cycle, fewer Chinese are seeking mortgages and less credit is

available, causing prices to further tumble. Interest rates are dropping in China, and pressure on the Chinese yuan is building. Incidentally, China will lift the retirement age from next year. Beijing listed factors for this, such as a rising life expectancy (78.6 in 2023 compared to 35 in 1949) and average years of education for new entrants in the workforce (14 years of education in 2023, versus eight years in 1982). However, the real reason forcing this change is an ageing population, a plummeting birthrate and a tighter pension budget. Shum said 2008 was a watershed moment for the CCP when it realised the Western model had failings. Indeed, as the rest of the world reeled, Beijing emerged as something of a hero as the West relied on China to stabilise things. "That's the moment when the Chinese leadership really decided, 'Hey, their system is not that great; our system may not be that bad, so we need to find our own way. That's the moment everything changed,'" Shum said, well before Xi assumed the reins of power. Concurrently, there was a diffusion of power throughout Chinese society, as private companies and wealthy individuals wielded more influence. Of course, this "was a problem for the party. The entire leadership sees that as a problem, but people are not sure what to do about it," Shum explained. It was at this point that Xi stepped in. Lubin described, under Xi's leadership, a change in balance of power between state-owned enterprises and the private sector to reduce the latter's influence. He related, "Starting in 2015-16, you got this sense that economic policy was emphasising the idea of bigger, better, stronger state-owned enterprises," and the balance started to tilt towards the state sector from that time on. The crushing of the private sector followed in 2021, which is when "the most important policy phrase or slogan in this context was the struggle against the unrestrained expansion of capital, the idea that the private sector was taking advantage of its position, taking things that were not in the national interest." There was even a Chinese proposal in December 2021 to create a traffic light system where the government would decide what investments in both the state and private sectors were good or not. This was a blatant attempt by the party to insert itself into the allocation of resources. Although the policy proposal died a natural death, it did reflect Xi's thinking about doing whatever it took to keep the CCP in power. Shum continued, "I think by now probably the whole world is seeing that China is taking a different trajectory since [Xi] came to power a decade ago ... It's amazing how badly he's played his hand and taken the country in a different trajectory." King described Xi as a combination of a Marxist and a nationalist. "...I think the nationalism side is very

under-discussed." She also highlighted the global financial crisis of 2008 as being pivotal in China's future direction. "The Chinese with their economy [were] facing something fundamentally different than they had envisioned, because they were working within a system that was seen to be quite stable. But the global financial crisis demonstrated to the Chinese that there was actually something that didn't fit for them."

Added to that were geopolitical changes--such as Obama's pivot to Asia, Trump's stronger line and American efforts to contain China--and this caused Xi to consider "the context of how the Chinese Communist Party was going to legitimise themselves and ensure their regime security." Rather than seeing him as a Marxist, Lubin believes Xi is more of a Leninist "in the sense that it seems fairly clear that Xi Jinping is an ideological leader. But the way one needs to understand ideology in this context is to understand it in a Leninist way. In other words, it's not a pure set of ideas--it's a set of ideas needed to keep the ruling party in power. That is quintessentially a Leninist approach, and I think that's his approach." Shum, taking part in the same Chatham House seminar, gave this assessment of Xi. "First and foremost, we really need to see him as a man of conviction and belief. He's a man of conviction and belief; seeing him as a power-hungry dictator is really missing the point. I think his vision for China is that it needs to be the primary geopolitical power, and rival, of the US. He believes the Chinese Communist Party should be the eternal ruler of China as a nation... You may not agree with his belief and conviction, and some of the worst tragedies of mankind in history happened [because of] people like Mao, like Hitler, like Stalin. Those were men of belief." Shum warned: "A man with belief of the wrong kind can do the most damage to humanity, and I tend to believe he's that sort." He noted that for Xi, "the party interest comes first," rather than the people. He said Xi set himself up for this declining state of affairs. By arresting hundreds of thousands, he was riding a tiger and cannot release his grip on power. As economic conditions worsen, Xi and his party core must increase their stranglehold over society because they are afraid of a backlash. However, Shum does not foresee a "collapse" of the CCP. He believes this is the wrong term; instead, he views it as a "long decline, because the CCP has such a complete hold on the country."

China has lost its luster for many foreign investors and for many Chinese. This year, China will experience its largest-ever outflow of high-net-worth individuals. In 2024, a record exodus of 15,200 wealthy individuals is expected, greater than the 13,800 who departed in 2023.

Illustrating how Xi's ideology means nothing to them, many pragmatic Chinese fear their wealth will be appropriated by the government. As Shum himself admitted, "As long as my money is in China, it's not really my money. The moment my money is out of China; that's my money!"

Village leaders facing spate of investigations

29 October 2024, [China Daily](#)

In the first nine months of this year, 77,000 current or former village heads and Party chiefs have been investigated in China, an increase of 31,000 compared to last year, as the central government's anti-corruption campaign delves deeper into the grassroots level.

Data from the country's top watchdog showed figures from January to September this year exceeded the total number of such officials investigated last year — 61,000 — with the supervision of grassroots officials being strengthened amid intensified rural vitalization efforts.

From January to September, disciplinary watchdogs handled 642,000 cases across the country, including investigations into officials at various levels, with 58 at the provincial and ministerial levels, according to a recent release from the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection.

Among the officials investigated, about 3,260 are at the department and bureau levels, 26,000 are at the county level and 89,000 are at the township level, data showed.

At the annual plenary session of the CCDI in January, the central leadership emphasized the need to extend the anti-corruption campaign to the grassroots level to better ensure justice for the people.

A targeted crackdown on corruption and misconduct in rural vitalization efforts was also stressed in the No 1 central document for 2024 released in February, which outlined the priorities for promoting rural vitalization this year.

As scrutiny on grassroots officials intensifies, cases of corruption involving village officials have been disclosed.

In September, Guizhou province revealed a case in which a village official was caught accepting kickbacks related to a toilet renovation project. And in another instance in August, a 32-year-old former village Party chief in Huizhou, Guangdong province, was found guilty of fraudulently obtaining compensation funds for crops.

Measures have been implemented to enhance the management and oversight of village cadres, especially those with significant responsibilities, as rural vitalization work progresses.

In November 2022, Guizhou issued regulations specifically targeting village heads to ensure they perform their duties with integrity. They encompass aspects such as standardizing village-level decision-making and implementing disciplinary supervision. The document detailing the regulations stipulates that matters concerning village-level asset management must be deliberated by the village Party organization, and reported to the township Party committee for the record.

It also emphasizes strict implementation of the annual inspection system for rural collective assets and a regular reporting system.

It explicitly requires that supervision should be strengthened in villages with large collective economies, numerous construction projects and high integrity risks. Furthermore, each village Party organization under the jurisdiction of a county Party committee should be inspected at least once per term of service.

China takes down fake news about its military, closes social media accounts

29 October 2024, [SCMP](#), Phoebe Zhang

Internet watchdog reports targets include false reports of 'cyberwarfare' in the South China Sea and other 'fantasy stories'

Chinese internet regulators are removing social media accounts that use fake information to hype the country's military strength, including false reports of "cyberwarfare" in the South China Sea.

A sample post from June on Douyin, China's version of TikTok, read: "Breaking news: China and the US engaged in 12 hours of cyber warfare, causing Luzon Island in the Philippines to lose all GPS, communication and phone signals!"

Another invented post in July featured a video delivering an in-depth explanation of how China had won in its rivalry with the United States, thanks to a technology breakthrough by telecoms giant Huawei which had upgraded China's radars.

In its latest report released on Monday, the Cyberspace Administration of China said the posts were promptly identified as rumours and removed. The accounts responsible invented "military fantasy stories" to give themselves a sense of satisfaction and fulfilment, it said.

According to the report, various military and local government authorities have recently removed a batch of accounts for "speculating and fabricating false information, misleading the public and distorting the image of military personnel".

Many of the accounts had been spreading military rumours and made-up history, the report said, naming

two WeChat accounts that falsely said China had sunk four foreign ships.

Shanghai-based online news outlet The Paper appeared to be referring to the fabricated posts in July, when its representative asked defence ministry spokesman Zhang Xiaogang at a press conference about cyberwarfare chatter on social media.

Zhang told the assembled journalists that he had not heard of any such cyberwar occurring in the South China Sea.

According to the internet regulator's report, some social media accounts were removed because they "engaged in historical nihilism", a term that usually refers to present-day narratives that contradict the official version of history.

The report said these included two accounts on Zhihu – China's version of the question-and-answer platform Quora – which said "Japanese soldiers killed by guerilla warfare on the Chinese battlefield were only a small portion of the entire army".

Other accounts were removed for distorting the image and policies of the People's Liberation Army. A Douyin account said a man joined the PLA despite his family's objections and a few years later "all his mother got to see was his ash box".

Some accounts called for 200,000 of the country's troops to be discharged, saying it was too expensive to keep an army and such an action would ease China's current financial troubles, the report said.

The cyberspace administration also said it was unacceptable for e-commerce traders to lure buyers for their online products in the name of the military.

Some accounts on Taobao and Xianyu – China's biggest e-commerce platforms owned by Alibaba, which also owns the South China Morning Post – have been using PLA logos or claiming that products are "special supply in the military", it said.

The accounts mentioned in the report could no longer be found on social media platforms, but some of the content continues to linger in the form of shared posts and screenshots.

"We will continue to crack down on illegal actions of social media accounts in military-related news, investigate and punish account owners who publish and hype false information, and expose typical cases," the regulator said, and invited the public to report any examples they see.

Chinese authorities have little tolerance for the spreading of unconfirmed or negative information about the military.

In April 2018, the Standing Committee passed legislation banning the slander of "heroes and martyrs", imposing administrative penalties on anyone who damaged memorials or insulted and defamed war heroes and other national figures.

In 2017, a woman was briefly detained for alleging that a sexual harassment scandal around a Beijing

kindergarten involved serving members of the PLA. Her accusations were later denied by the military.

Xi stresses enhancing inclusive public services for people

26 October 2024, [Xinhua](#)



Chinese Premier Li Qiang, also a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee, addresses a national civil affairs conference in Beijing, capital of China. The conference was held in Beijing from Oct. 25 to 26. [Photo/Xinhua]

Chinese President Xi Jinping has urged efforts to enhance inclusive public services for the people. In a recent instruction on civil affairs work, Xi, also general secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, emphasized the need to strengthen public services aimed at meeting the essential needs of the people and ensuring basic living standards for those facing difficulties.

Lauding the new progress achieved in all aspects of civil affairs in recent years, Xi urged Party committees and governments at all levels to follow a people-centered approach to resolve the most practical problems that are of the greatest and most direct concern to the people.

He called on civil affairs departments at all levels to promote the implementation of a proactive national strategy in response to population aging, and to improve work in social assistance, social welfare, social affairs and social governance.

Xi also emphasized the need for civil affairs departments to take the initiative in enhancing benefits for the people, meeting their needs and helping them overcome difficulties.

Xi's instruction was read out at a national civil affairs conference that was held in Beijing from Friday to Saturday. Premier Li Qiang, also a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee, addressed the conference.

The advancement of Chinese modernization requires the continuous enhancement of civil affairs work to safeguard and promote the immediate interests of

various groups, including people in difficulties and people with disabilities, Li said.

Li underscored the importance of doing the civil affairs work with profound feelings for the people and making solid progress to the satisfaction of the populace.

He also called for systematic efforts to plan and carry out reforms to break new ground in the civil affairs sector.

Speaking at the conference, State Councilor Shen Yiqin urged efforts to further improve the systems for social assistance and elderly care services. She also highlighted the importance of deepening reforms in funeral services and other fields, as well as boosting the development of charitable initiatives.

Model individuals and groups in the country's civil affairs sector were awarded at the conference.

Former Chinese Justice Minister Tang Yijun Arrested on Corruption Charges

24 October 2024, [ChinaScope](#)

Tang Yijun, China's former Minister of Justice, has been arrested on suspicion of accepting bribes, according to Xinhua News Agency. The Supreme People's Procuratorate has formally approved his arrest following an investigation by the National Supervision Commission.

The Central Commission for Discipline Inspection and National Supervisory Commission previously revealed several allegations against Tang, including using his authority to help relatives secure financial business deals, improperly interfering in market economic activities and judicial proceedings, failing to properly supervise his spouse, using public power for personal gain through large-scale trading of power for money, and illegally accepting massive amounts of bribes in exchange for favors in business operations, company listings, promotions, and case handling.

Notably, Caixin Media reported that during Tang's two-and-a-half-year tenure in Liaoning Province, he helped Evergrande Group acquire controlling stakes in Shengjing Bank, which led to substantial bad debts. Evergrande also made significant real estate investments in Liaoning, leaving behind unfinished buildings when its capital chain broke.

Tang's career included extensive work in Zhejiang Province before becoming the Chairman of Ningbo CPPCC in 2011. He later served as Liaoning Province Governor and Minister of Justice (2020-2023). His last position was Chairman of the Jiangxi Provincial CPPCC before his dismissal from both the Party and public office. Sources indicate that most of the alleged violations occurred during his time in Ningbo and Liaoning.

China accuses Australia of 'systemic racism', 'hate crimes' after human rights concerns raised

24 October 2024, Nine News, Yashee Sharma

China has accused Australia of being "plagued by systemic racism and hate crimes" in retaliation to concerns raised about human rights abuses in Xinjiang and Tibet.

Australia's Ambassador to the United Nations James Larsen shared a joint statement with 14 other countries this week to urge China to uphold its international human rights obligations following findings of serious human rights violations.

But Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lin Jian said those matters were China's "internal affairs" and pointed the finger back at Australia.

"Australia, long plagued by systemic racism and hate crimes, has severely violated the rights of refugees and immigrants, and left Indigenous people with vulnerable living conditions," he said yesterday.

"Australian soldiers have committed abhorrent crimes in Afghanistan and other countries during their military operations overseas."

Lin added that Australia, the US and other Western countries often turn a blind eye to the injustices at home.

China's top political advisor stresses forging strong sense of community for Chinese nation

24 October 2024, [Xinhua](#)

China's top political advisor Wang Huning has stressed forging a strong sense of community for the Chinese nation and advancing the development of a beautiful Xinjiang.

Wang, a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, made the remarks during a four-day research tour of the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region that ended on Thursday.

He called for solid efforts to promote ethnic unity in community-level governance, school education and people's daily life while visiting hospitals, primary schools and villages, and urged building a modern industrial system and enhancing higher education development when visiting enterprises and colleges. Maintaining social stability is a priority in Xinjiang-related work, Wang said, urging efforts to strengthen the sense of community for the Chinese nation among people of various ethnic groups by promoting fine culture in the region.

He also urged efforts to promote high-quality development in Xinjiang to consolidate the economic

foundation for social stability and long-term security in the region.

West blasts China on rights, China responds: What about Gaza?

23 October 2024, [Reuters](#), Michelle Nichols

Australia, the United States and 13 other countries criticized China at the United Nations on Tuesday over alleged human rights abuses in Xinjiang and Tibet, prompting China to denounce them for ignoring the "living hell" in the Gaza Strip.

Clashes over China's treatment of Uyghurs and other Muslims have become a common occurrence at both the United Nations in New York and the U.N. Human Rights Council in Geneva.

A U.N. report released two years ago said China's "arbitrary and discriminatory detention" of Uyghurs and other Muslims in its Xinjiang region may constitute crimes against humanity. It said that "serious human rights violations" had been committed.

"We urge China to uphold the international human-rights obligations that it has voluntarily assumed, and to implement all U.N. recommendations," Australia's U.N. Ambassador James Larsen told the U.N. General Assembly's human rights committee.

"This includes releasing all individuals arbitrarily detained in both Xinjiang and Tibet, and urgently clarifying the fate and whereabouts of missing family members," Larsen said.

He spoke on behalf of Australia, the United States, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Japan, Lithuania, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden and Britain.

Beijing has long denied all allegations of abuse of Uyghurs. China's U.N. Ambassador Fu Cong on Tuesday accused the group of Western states of resorting "to lies to provoke confrontations."

"The human-rights situation that should gather the most attention at the committee this year is undoubtedly that of Gaza," he said. "Australia and the U.S., among a few others, played down this living hell, while unleashing attacks and smears against the peaceful and tranquil Xinjiang."

'BIGGEST LIE'

Palestinian militants Hamas attacked Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, killing 1,200 people and abducting some 250 others.

U.S. ally Israel retaliated in Gaza, where Gaza authorities say more than 42,000 people have been killed and almost everyone in the enclave of 2.3 million displaced.

Fu said if the Gaza death toll was not enough to "awake the conscience of a few Western countries ...

then their so-called protection of human rights of Muslims is nothing but the biggest lie."

Independent U.N. human-rights experts criticized mostly Western states last month for supporting Israel despite its actions in Gaza.

Delivering the U.S. statement to the committee, deputy U.S. Ambassador Lisa Carty said Washington was calling for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, the immediate release of hostages held by Hamas and for Israel to allow more aid into the enclave.

"We continue to condemn (China's) ongoing atrocities in Xinjiang, repression of Tibetans, crackdown on Hong Kong's democratic institutions, and use of transnational repression to silence those abroad," said Carty.

Pakistan's U.N. Ambassador Munir Akram read a statement to the rights committee on behalf of 80 countries that said any issues related to Xinjiang, Hong Kong and Tibet were internal matters for China. The group also said it opposed politicization of human rights and double standards.

"No country has a perfect human-rights record. But no country is above fair scrutiny of its human-rights obligations," Australia's Larsen said. "It is incumbent on all of us not to undermine international human-rights commitments that benefit us all, and for which all states are accountable."

China eyes 'top-tier industrial workforce' by 2035, vows hi-tech training, talent support

22 October 2024, [SCMP](#), Vanessa Cai

Guidelines jointly issued by party Central Committee and the State Council come amid record youth joblessness and the continuing US tech war

China aims to boost training, support and "ideological guidance" for its industrial workforce, to create a highly skilled talent pool as the country doubles down on hi-tech development.

The goals were laid down in a set of guidelines issued jointly by the Communist Party Central Committee, the core leadership body of the ruling party, and the State Council – China's cabinet.

According to the guidelines, the country will focus on training to drive the development of "a top-tier industrial technical workforce" and provide talent and skill support for "Chinese-style modernisation".

The industrial workforce is "the backbone of creating social wealth, and a key force in implementing innovation-driven development strategies and accelerating the construction of a manufacturing powerhouse", the document released on Monday but dated October 12 said.

It also called for efforts to "unite and guide industrial workers to play a leading role in the construction of Chinese-style modernisation".

Main goals listed included "solidifying ideological and political guidance" for the workforce, and improving its overall quality "with an ever-expanding team of knowledgeable, skilled, and innovative industrial workers".

The country also aims to produce around 62,000 "master artisans" by 2035, including 2,000 defined as "national-level craftsmen", according to state news agency Xinhua's report on the guidelines.

The party's top leadership has repeatedly called for technological innovation as the country focuses on self-reliance and "new quality productive forces" amid a tech war with the United States, which has sought to curb China's hi-tech access.

According to Monday's guidelines, the training system should be improved so the workforce can meet emerging industry needs.

Modern vocational education will be improved to integrate practical training, along with the creation of quality courses and teaching teams. Skilled professionals will be encouraged to become educators, and teaching capabilities should be improved to set up vocational schools that meet international standards.

Improved worker welfare is also among the national goals for 2035, with the guidelines calling for a better support system for the career development, labour rights and well-being of industrial workers. This should be done through higher pay based on skills and innovation, and by ensuring job security with written contracts and labour dispute resolution mechanisms.

Another focus is protection of intellectual property rights related to innovation, and guiding skilled workers to take part in major technological projects and awards.

Meanwhile, working environments should be improved to "enhance the appeal of manufacturing jobs" for young people, the guidelines said, at a time when China is battling record joblessness among the 16-24 age group.

Migrant workers will be provided with skills training as well as support for their integration into cities. This will be done by relaxing rules related to *hukou* – or household registration – so they can better access social welfare where they live for work.

In emphasising the need to "strengthen ideological and political guidance", the guidelines said this aimed to ensure loyalty to the ruling party.

It called for efforts to promote the party's "innovative theories" among industrial workers and "to deepen education on socialist core values".

‘Confident’ China should relax grip on cultural, information exchange: academic

20 October 2024, [SCMP](#), Jane Cai

Too many Chinese scholars fail to properly engage with their overseas peers, leading to worsening decoupling, professor warns

China should cut red tape around international cultural exchanges and relax its internet controls to prevent the worsening of its information “decoupling” from the world, a leading academic said. Wang Wen, dean and professor of the Chongyang Institute for Financial Studies at Renmin University, noted that China had become a target for criticism by Western countries as Beijing pursued a bigger say in the global narrative.

“China has solved the problems of hunger and poverty. Now it’s time to address the problem of being scolded,” he wrote in last week’s issue of *Think Tank: Theory & Practice*, the bimonthly journal published by the Chinese Academy of Sciences and Nanjing University.

According to Wang, he has witnessed many awkward moments when Chinese scholars at overseas symposiums were asked “sensitive questions” on topics ranging from China’s leadership moves to human rights concerns in Xinjiang or Tibet.

Wang said he had attended events in more than 20 countries since China removed its pandemic curbs in 2022, and seen many scholars fail to properly address queries from overseas audiences.

Other subjects that Chinese academics find difficult to handle at these events include China’s battle against Covid-19, social governance, and cross-strait tensions with Taiwan, according to the article.

Wang suggested that these difficulties could arise because of insufficient language skills, limited knowledge of the matters raised, or that the speaker may “have some concerns”, which he did not specify. Many Chinese scholars chose to resort to the “official narrative” to explain what was happening in the country to foreign peers, instead of providing their own perspectives as public intellectuals, he wrote.

“If American scholars only repeated the White House’s policy advocacy or remarks of the US president, [it would be impossible for] the US to take the leading position in the world’s narrative system for such a long time.”

China has tightened speech controls as it prioritises national security amid the rivalry with the US and its allies, creating a tense environment for people to speak freely especially on controversial and politically sensitive issues.

Meanwhile, at the third plenum – a key Communist Party conclave which concluded in July – the party’s elites agreed to “establish a more effective international communication system”, as well as

expand cultural exchanges and cooperation to benefit China’s development.

In his article, Wang noted that Chinese academics went through lengthy scrutiny for approval from their employers to be interviewed by overseas media, go abroad for seminars, or receive visiting foreign peers. The process “seriously hampers exchanges of views and opinions”, he wrote. “China should thoroughly simplify the approval procedures, get rid of the formalism and stop overstretching the concept of national security to facilitate international communication.”

Wang also turned his attention to the Great Firewall – China’s sophisticated internet censorship system – which he said had “semi-decoupled” Chinese academia from the world and led to slow progress in efforts to catch up in technology and social sciences. China’s internet controls made it hard for researchers to use foreign search engines and access overseas websites. Instead, most had to rely on domestic search engines which were at least a decade behind more advanced systems, he wrote.

According to Wang, information decoupling threatens to be even more devastating for China in the age of artificial intelligence.

He argued that if Chinese content could not flow freely and merge into the databases used to feed AI models, Beijing’s narrative would be at a disadvantage in international communications.

Wang called for the gradual removal – region by region – of the Great Firewall, to stop the developing trend of “parallel worlds” from worsening as China gradually became more disconnected from the outside world.

He also suggested that China should expand its visa-free policy to visitors from more countries to improve people-to-people exchanges.

At present, foreign nationals from 54 countries – including the US, Canada, and Britain – are eligible for 72/144-hour visa-free entry if they have a valid onwards ticket to another country. There are also exemptions for cruise ship passengers.

China’s “strict disciplines, complicated procedures and prevalent formalism” were unnecessarily depressing international exchanges as well as other aspects of people’s lives, according to the article.

Wang said that during his visits to cities such as Paris, Berlin and Istanbul he had enjoyed the relaxed lifestyle, chatting with friends and reading newspapers over coffee. China should be similarly confident and loosen controls over cultural exchanges, he added.

In Wang’s own experience, he wrote that he usually enjoyed sharing information and taking part in the heated debates and brainstorming of overseas seminars. The talks were “straightforward”, he said. “No empty talks.”

Xi Jinping again urges his troops to be ready for war

20 October 2024, [Tibetan Review](#)

Amid unprecedented purges in the top military brass, a volatile situation in the South China Sea, warmongering over Taiwan, and a refusal to back down from a military standoff with India in the latter's eastern Ladakh border area, China's President Xi Jinping has again called on his troops to strengthen their preparedness for war. The latest call has come just days after Beijing staged large-scale military drills around Taiwan on Oct 14.

Xi made his comments while visiting a brigade of the People's Liberation Army Rocket Force on Oct 17, reported the *AFP* Oct 19, citing state-run broadcaster *CCTV*.

The military should "comprehensively strengthen training and preparation for war, (and) ensure troops have solid combat capabilities", *CCTV* was stated to have quoted Xi as saying.

Soldiers must "enhance their strategic deterrent and combat capability," Xi has said.

He has also said Chinese military must "strongly safeguard the country's strategic security and core interests."

The dispute between China and Taiwan dates back to a civil war in China in which the Kuomintang nationalist forces of Chiang Kai-shek were defeated by Mao Zedong's communist fighters and fled to the island in 1949.

China has vowed to take Taiwan ever since, while the latter claimed to be the legitimate government of China and he held the country's UN seat, with the veto power, until it lost that to the communist-ruled China in the 1970s.

The independence-leaning Democratic Progressive Party, which now holds Taiwan's presidency, has called the island a sovereign country, with President Lai Ching-te rejecting China's claim to be its motherland during his Oct 10 national day speech. It prompted China to react with its latest war drills around the island as a stern warning to the "separatist acts" of "Taiwan Independence" forces.

China said Oct 16 that it will never give up its commitment to use force against Taiwan, which it wants to accept its "One China Policy".

China's increasing passport controls evoke Mao era

18 October 2024, [VOA](#)

The Chinese government has been acting to restrict travel outside the country by ordering some teachers, civil servants and executives of state-owned enterprises to hand in their passports.

Analysts say that under President Xi Jinping, Beijing is reinstating some internal controls not seen since the era of communist China's founder, Mao Zedong.

Hong Jingfu, a professor in the political science department at Taiwan's National Cheng Kung University, told VOA Mandarin the Chinese Communist Party's confiscation of the passports aims to prevent foreign infiltration and secrets from being leaked.

Hong said the CCP is also worried that as people's confidence in the economy slows, they will become less loyal to Xi's regime and China's system, and that personnel and capital will flee the country.

Hong said Xi is taking China back to the Mao era path of "internal control and external defense," of closing the country to the outside world, because the CCP fears sharing the fate of its Soviet counterpart, which collapsed in 1991.

"Under the so-called overall national security concept, his demand for security is constantly rising, which, in fact, is ironically highlighting that China's so-called 'four self-confidences' Xi promotes is [just] more lying and boasting," Hong said.

Former Chinese President Hu Jintao in 2011 announced the so-called "Three Self-Confidences," promoting China's socialist path, theories and system. Xi in 2016 added a fourth one, socialist culture, as a way of cementing his authority and pushing for more communist and nationalist propaganda in education.

The *Financial Times* reported October 6 that since last year, an increasing number of schoolteachers and public sector employees in China have been required to hand in their passports, and those already abroad have been told to avoid contact with "foreign, hostile forces."

Chinese authorities have always regarded "instilling loyalty in students" as a top priority. The *FT* reports the passport controls aim to prevent teachers from being "ideologically polluted by foreign forces" and spreading ideas that are deemed ill-suited for the country.

It's not the first time in modern China that authorities have seized the passports of large categories of key workers. *Radio Free Asia* reports authorities ordered teachers to hand in their travel documents as early as 2018.

A university professor surnamed Li in China's southeastern, coastal Fujian province, who didn't want to give his full name due to the sensitivity of the issue, told VOA Mandarin that his university since 2019 has required teachers at the rank of associate professor and above to hand in their travel documents.

Even retirees are required to hand in their passports and entry and exit documents, he said, and department heads will only get them back five years after retirement.

Li said if a professor wants to travel abroad, they must report to their supervisor the country they are going to, the number of days they will be there, the purpose of the trip and the source of funds before they can get their passport back.

Li said the university also requires that passports be turned back in within five working days after returning from abroad.

The school did not give them a detailed explanation for the policy, said Li, telling its staff only that it's to ensure that the teaching, research and management work "maintains normal order" and is in line with the "spirit of the relevant documents of the superiors."

Legal authority for Chinese universities to require custody of passports and travel documents appears to be dubious. Article 16 of China's Detailed Rules for the Implementation of the Law on the Administration of the Exit and Entry of Chinese Citizens states that no organ, organization, enterprise, institution or individual other than the public security organ, the original document-issuing authority, the people's procuratorate, or the people's court may revoke or confiscate people's identification documents.

Observers told VOA Mandarin the practice increased significantly after Xi came to power in 2012. The Chinese government last year tightened restrictions on private overseas travel by civil servants and employees of state-owned enterprises, including banning overseas travel, vetting overseas relations, and strengthening approvals and confidentiality training.

Li believes his university's policy was prompted by government fears that teachers may leak sensitive research information or fail to return to China at all.

Hong, of National Cheng Kung University, says the control of passports also aims to keep middle-class people from leaving the country in order to restore consumer confidence and consumption levels.

China's economic downturn has led to a drop in consumer confidence and spending among the middle class that Beijing has tried to reignite with a series of stimulus measures.

But Hong said the CCP's passport controls are restricting economic activities and discouraging international exchanges that could help grow the economy.

"Actually, you are accelerating your so-called internal disintegration because there is no way to solve your internal contradictions," he said.

Despite the increasing number of passports reported seized, analysts say it's impossible for China to close off as much as it was under founding leader Mao, when everyone needed permission to travel abroad and being granted a passport was rare.

Wang Jian, a commentator living in the U.S. who used to work for the Hong Kong Economic Times, Ming Pao Daily News and Sing Tao Daily News, told VOA

Mandarin that since China's reform and opening up after Mao died in 1976, there is no way to close the country as it depends on exporting products and importing raw materials.

"China's current foreign trade model has determined that China's door cannot be closed," he said. "Second, the Chinese people [would] not accept it."

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Chinese authorities implemented strict controls on movement, including travel abroad, and stopped issuing new passports for nearly three years to try to control the spread of the virus.

The restrictions led to rare public protests against authorities known as the "White Paper Movement."

China again ranks as the country with worst internet freedom, Myanmar giving it company this time

17 October 2024, [Tibetan Review](#)

China has done it again, sharing the spot this time with Myanmar: the country with the world's worst environment for internet freedom, according to the annual ranking by the US-based Freedom House, which released its report Oct 16.

For the past decade, China has consistently ranked last in the world for internet freedom due to its all-pervading online surveillance and content control system dubbed the "Great Firewall," noted the *edition.cnn.com* Oct 17.

The organisation's 2024 Freedom on the Net (FOTN) report assessed internet freedom based on data collected from Jun 2023 to May 2024 in terms of obstacles people face accessing the internet, limits on content and violations of users' rights. China and Myanmar both scored 9 out of 100 in internet freedom, the lowest among all the countries assessed. The report says China intensified its efforts to seal off its domestic internet from the global network, blocked international access to certain official websites, and imposed hefty fines on individuals using virtual private networks (VPNs).

"Beijing has persisted in its effort to isolate China's domestic internet from the rest of the world, blocking international traffic to some government websites and imposing huge fines on people using VPNs. The Chinese government also continued to systematically repress dissent, for example by censoring online discussions about activist and journalist Sun Lin, who died in November 2023 after police beat him in apparent retaliation for his social media posts about protests against the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) leader Xi Jinping," the report says.

China's censors have reined in blogs, US search giants, and social media – even regulating "likes" of public posts, the report said.

The report from Freedom House, a US government-funded NGO, has found that global internet freedom has declined for the 14th consecutive year.

As expected, China has rejected the report's findings. Its Ministry of Foreign Affairs said Oct 16 that "Chinese citizens enjoy all rights and freedoms in accordance with the law."

"this so-called report is completely false and has ulterior motives," the *edition.cnn.com* reported quoted Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning as saying.

Gansu, Association of Disciples Member Deprogrammed—to Atheism

16 October 2024, [Bitter Winter](#), Fang Yongrui

After deprogramming, a former devotee acknowledges he is "his own God" and promises he "will only believe in science and the government."

There has been a new developments during and after COVID in the Chinese fight against the xie jiao—"movements spreading heterodox teachings" (sometimes less precisely translated as "evil cults")—which are mercilessly persecuted. To Falun Gong and The Church of Almighty God a third group has been added as a "direct threat to national security," the Association of Disciples.

The Association of Disciples (门徒会, Mentuhui) is a Christian new religious movement established by Ji Sanbao (季三保, 1940-1997), who was previously part of the True Jesus Church, in 1989. It faced a ban in 1990, was listed as one of the xie jiao, and experienced intense persecution.

From 2020, a national campaign of annihilation was launched against the Association of Disciples, which, like other forms of "illegal" religion, has experienced a new growth during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Movements like the Association of Disciples provided religious reasons for why God permits natural disasters. They suggested they can be used by believers for spiritual growth, drawing in those unhappy with state-controlled churches, which during COVID only repeated the government's slogans.

Members of the Association of Disciples assert that their movement imparts the "teachings of the Third Redemption" (三赎教), indicating it as the third symbol of salvation following Noah's ark and the cross of Jesus Christ.

Deprogramming, a practice banned as a crime in most democratic countries, consists in submitting believers to threats, pressures, and intense indoctrination in a confined setting, until they renounce their faith. In China, deprogramming is routinely used by the state to persuade xie jiao devotees to abandon their religious movements.

A "success story" from Gansu recently published by the China Anti-Xie-Jiao Association, which claims to be the largest anti-cult organization in the world and is directly controlled by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), sheds light on a feature of Chinese deprogramming. It does not limit itself to break the faith of xie jiao members. It wants to lead them to atheism.



Anti-cult poster: how the state will smash the Association of Disciples. From Weibo.

In the story, a member of the Association of Disciples, after having been arrested, is submitted to deprogramming. While the report tries to attract the attention of the readers to the usual tragic story of how the devotee did not provide medical care to his son, who died, relying on prayer only, the interesting part concerns the atheistic outcome of the deprogramming process. The devotee, we read, "woke up as if from a dream. When he first joined the cult, he was confused about 'what kind of 'God' is the 'true God.' Now he finally found the answer to this question: respect your parents, love your wife and children, work hard, be down-to-earth, advocate science, and love life, so that you can be your own 'God.'"

Confirming he had been successfully deprogrammed, in the end the former devotee proclaimed: "I will never believe in the 'Three Redemption Christ' thing again. I will only believe in science and the government."

These are the Chinese citizens the horrific system of deprogramming and torture aims to produce. Citizens who do not believe in God but are persuaded they are "their own God," and "only believe in science and the government."

China cracks down on Communist party officials for reading banned books

12 October 2024, [The Guardian](#), Helen Davidson and Chi-hui-Lin

Hillary Clinton and Hannah Arendt thought to be among authors of books procured by officials, as Xi Jinping tightens grip on Communist party
When Lam Wing-kee ran his bookshop in Hong Kong, filled with controversial and political titles banned in

mainland China, many of his customers were Chinese Communist party officials.

Back then, in the early years of Chinese leader Xi Jinping's reign, and before Lam was detained by Chinese authorities for his work, the officials would load up boxes of books on CCP politics, Chinese economics, and scandal, often taking them back over the border.

"CCP officials would look for books about what's going on in China, about changes in the top rank officials, who gets the most power, changes in the power and the struggle between them, etcetera," Lam tells the Guardian, suggesting officials were often buying the books to learn about what was going on inside their own party.

"Some of my customers were high-ranking members of the CCP," he said.

But today, such purchases are coming back to bite their buyers. Several recent corruption cases against CCP officials have included accusations of procuring or reading banned materials. The officials have so far received internal disciplinary actions, including being expelled from the party, but observers are watching to see if criminal charges follow.

In September a former municipal level official in Heilongjiang, Li Bin, accused of corruption, was also found to have "privately read an illegal publication containing contents that undermined the unity and solidarity of the Party", according to state media. He was expelled from the Party and his case given to prosecutors.

That same month, Cheng Zhiyi, former party secretary of Chongqing's Jiangjin district, was also expelled. Among the accusations were "losing ideals and beliefs" after he privately read books and magazines with "serious political problems" while "outside the country".

Henan official Yang Lei also was accused of "losing ideals and beliefs and abandoning the original mission" when he violated "political discipline and national laws", including bringing prohibited books into the country, according to CCTV in August.

A recent report by the South China Morning Post said at least a dozen cases this year had prominently included accusations of reading or procuring banned materials, up from seven last year. They emphasise illicit reading ahead of other crimes like bribery.

Wen-ti Sung, a nonresident fellow with the Atlantic Council's Global China Hub, attributes the rush of punishments to new performance targets for party discipline bureaucrats tasked with "punishing those who are deemed disparaging of the party's image, principles, or policies, as well as those who are in possession of material that could have such effect."

"The Chinese Communist party champions itself as always 'great, glorious, and correct'. This image of

infallibility must not be challenged, lest it threatens the governing legitimacy of the party," he said.

None of the corruption cases publicly reveal what reading materials the fallen cadres had accessed. But a list of banned titles published by China Digital Times offers some possibilities. The list includes writings on Chinese politics and history, including the Tiananmen Square massacre and the disastrous Mao-era policies that saw millions die from famine, violence, and political purges. There are books scrutinising the modern CCP's politics and power, or sharing the views of political enemies and critics like Hong Kong tycoon and activist Jimmy Lai, the exiled Tibetan Dalai Lama, and Bo Xilai, the fallen political foe of Xi Jinping. Hillary Clinton's memoir is on the list, as is Machiavelli's *The Prince*, and Hannah Arendt's *The Origins of Totalitarianism*.

Many of the banned books line the shelves of Lam's new shop in downtown Taipei, which he reopened in 2020 after fleeing to the Taiwanese capital in exile.

Xi's leadership has been particularly noteworthy for its purges of political rivals and crushing of factionalism. Discussion, criticism, even gossip, has become more and more dangerous for those trying to survive politically.

As Xi's grip tightens, it will be interesting to see if the illicit reading cases move beyond Party disciplinary proceedings and start to attract criminal charges, says law Prof Margaret Lewis, of Seton Hall University.

"It's not like in the past people would be like 'I'll just take an unauthorised biography of Bo Xilai down the coffee shop'. But it's a matter of turning up the temperature, not totally changing the climate" says Lewis.

"But it goes to show the power of information and books. They care enough to say this is punishable infraction."

China's Li Xiaopeng, son of former premier Li Peng, signals end to closely watched career

12 October 2024, [SCMP](#), Sylvie Zhuang

The former transport minister, a member of one of China's most powerful families, takes semi-retirement role on political advisory body

Li Xiaopeng, son of former Chinese premier Li Peng, has taken a semi-retirement role on the country's top political advisory body, drawing an end to the closely watched political career of a member of one of China's most powerful families.

Li was assigned the role of deputy director of the economic affairs committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), state news agency Xinhua reported on Friday.

The position is commonly seen as a semi-retirement role without actual decision-making power in Chinese

politics. The decision was announced at a two-day meeting of the advisory body's standing committee that concluded on Friday.

Li served as Communist Party chief of the Ministry of Transport from May 2023 until his title was removed at the end of September, three months after he turned 65 – the de facto retirement age for ministerial-level officials in China.

Li was born in June 1959 in Beijing. He earned a bachelor's degree from North China Electric Power University, where he studied electrical engineering.

He started his career as a technician at the system institute of the China Electric Power Research Institute in 1982 and rose through the ranks to become the head of the system institute in 1990.

He worked in the power industry until 2008, eventually becoming chairman of Huaneng Power, one of the country's biggest electricity producers.

This was followed by eight years of leadership experience in coal-rich Shanxi province, where he was governor and deputy party chief from 2013 to 2016.

Li became China's transport minister in 2016.

Li's career moves have attracted attention within China as he is the son of Li Peng, who served as China's premier from 1987 to 1998 and was one of the country's most influential – and controversial – political leaders.

Li Peng died in 2019 at age 90 in Beijing. As the only Chinese leader to serve as both premier and chairman of the national legislature, he wielded tremendous influence during his career.

As premier, he was openly at odds with party general secretary Zhao Ziyang during the student-led pro-democracy protests in the summer of 1989.

On May 20, 1989, Li appeared on national television and officially declared martial law in Beijing. This eventually led to the bloody Tiananmen Square crackdown on June 4 of that year, and his name was often associated with the incident.

In a rare move for a Chinese leader, Li Peng published a memoir in 2014 about his early political career, though he omitted the sensitive episodes of the later years.

While former paramount leader Deng Xiaoping picked Jiang Zemin to replace Zhao in 1989, Li remained premier until 1998, when he became chairman of the National People's Congress Standing Committee, cementing his position as the second most powerful man in China at the time. He retired from politics in 2003.

Li Peng's family has been powerful in China's energy sector for many years. His daughter, Li Xiaolin, has been called China's "power queen", holding top jobs in various state-owned energy giants until her retirement in 2018.

Li Xiaoping is the only child of Li Peng to have entered politics.

China's finance minister says there is room for more economic stimulus but offers no plan

12 October 2024, [AP](#), Ken Moritsugu

The Chinese government is looking at additional ways to boost the economy, Finance Minister Lan Fo'an said Saturday, but he stopped short of unveiling a major new stimulus plan that analysts and stock investors were hoping for.

Lan's remarks left the door open for such a plan in the future but he did not divulge what is under consideration.

"There are other policy tools that are being discussed that are still in the pipeline," he said at a news conference, adding that there is "ample room" in the government budget to raise debt and increase the deficit.

China's economy has remained sluggish despite the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions at the end of 2022. Companies have cut back on hiring and wages and a prolonged downturn in the property market has deflated consumer confidence, curbing spending.

The government has raised pensions and offered subsidies to people who trade in old cars or appliances for new ones, but such steps have failed to jolt economic growth.

Chinese stock markets rallied after the central bank and other government agencies announced steps at the end of September to revive the property sector and prop up financial markets.

But the rally has since cooled amid concern about whether the moves were enough to generate a sustainable economic recovery. Investors were hoping Lan would announce a stimulus package of up to 2 trillion yuan (\$280 billion).

The finance minister instead said the government would roll out a package of incremental measures to speed up implementation of its existing policies.

They include increasing scholarships for students, issuing bonds to help major banks replenish their capital, and providing more support to highly indebted local governments, some of which have had to curtail public services.

China's political advisors urged to contribute to country's cultural advancement

12 October 2024, [China Daily](#)

China's top political advisor Wang Huning on Friday called on the country's political advisors to continue conducting research and deliberating on matters revolving around deepening reform in the cultural sector.

Wang, a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and chairman of the Chinese

People's Political Consultative Conference National Committee, made the remarks at the closing meeting of a standing committee session of the CPPCC National Committee.

Political advisors were asked to pool wisdom for building up the country's cultural strength.

Wang also called on them to firmly uphold the CPPCC system, effectively run the CPPCC and fully leverage its political advantages.

Japan urged to investigate China's transnational repression operating in the country

11 October 2024, [Tibetan Review](#)

As the exile Tibetan administration advised overseas Tibetans not to submit or even remain silent but report and publicize when subjected to transnational repression by China, New York-based Human Rights Watch has issued a report Oct 9, saying people from Xinjiang, Tibet, Inner Mongolia and other places in the People's Republic of China (PRC) living in Japan had been subjected to such repression in recent times.

The report said that interviews with 25 people, including from Xinjiang, Tibet and Inner Mongolia, revealed that Chinese police or the Chinese Embassy in Japan had contacted them or their relatives in the PRC, pressuring them to end their activities in Japan. The interviewees were stated to have participated in nonviolent activities, such as organizing public events to draw attention to human rights abuses in Xinjiang, promoting Tibetan culture, and hosting book discussions featuring works by Inner Mongolian activists.

The group has urged the Japanese government to call on China to end its surveillance and threats against those living in Japan.

It has also urged Japan to establish a system to report such incidents and provide protection.

The group, which has posted its report on its *hrw.org* website, said a woman was arrested in 2023 upon returning to Hong Kong for posting pro-democratic comments online during her studies in Japan, while another individual who promoted Tibetan culture in Japan was told to return to Tibet to renew their passport.

Also, a man from Xinjiang has said that when he received a call from a relative asking him to return home, a police officer came on the line and told him he "could not guarantee what would happen to your family" unless he complied with the relative's request. He was later contacted on a messaging app by a police officer telling him to provide information about activists in Japan, Human Rights Watch said.

A person from Taiwan who had participated in activism related to Hong Kong while in a third country has reported having received multiple invitations from the

Chinese embassy to go and "retrieve important documents". The person was stated to have declined the offer, fearing detention or reprisal.

China has previously been reported to have set up illegal police stations, disguised as facilitation centres for overseas Chinese, in a number of countries to carry out its transnational repression. When exposed, China's Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning said at a press conference, "All our actions are carried out in accordance with laws and regulations."

Tepei Kasai, Asia program officer at Human Rights Watch, has said, "Japan should promptly establish a national system to investigate cases of transnational repression with appropriate safeguards for individuals' privacy."

On Oct 7, the exile Tibetan administration, known as the Central Tibetan Administration, based in Dharamshala, India, called the Chinese government's conduct a violation of international law. It urged anyone who come under such pressure to publicize it before the media with proof thereof. It also suggested that such targeted Tibetans should report the same with all the relevant details to their concerned host governments, or the CTA Representative offices, or Settlement Heads, or the Department of Security, as the case may be.

The call was part of a nine-point guideline for overseas Tibetans desiring to visit Tibet and China.

Political disloyalty being emphasized in China's anti-corruption investigations

09 October 2024, [Tibetan Review](#)

As President Xi Jinping tightens control, demanding absolute loyalty from more than 99 million members of the Communist Party of China (CPC), officials put under investigation for corruption are increasingly being accused primarily of having read forbidden publications, which is cited as proof of their disloyalty. While such reading bans in China are believed to date back decades, the recent uptick in naming and shaming appears to coincide with last year's amendment of the party disciplinary regulations, which greatly expanded the clause related to reading unapproved materials, noted the *scmp.com* Oct 7.

Those who privately read, browse or listen to publications and make irresponsible comments on the party Central Committee's major policies, vilify the image of the party and the country, or slander leaders will be issued warnings, the amended clause is stated to stipulate. If the circumstances are serious, such persons could be removed from party positions.

Deng Yuwen, former deputy editor of *Study Times*, the newspaper of the cadre-training Central Party School, has said reading and circulating some sensitive materials within the party was common. This had long

been impossible to ban, even in Mao Zedong's era, he has added.

"It is not a big deal if they are not under disciplinary investigation, but it can be major evidence of disloyalty when [the top watchdog] finds them."

Allegations of reading politically forbidden books have appeared in at least a dozen corruption case readouts so far this year – compared to around seven last year, the report said.

Similar accusations have been made by anti-corruption bodies in at least five other provinces this year.

One of the recent examples is Li Bin, a former vice-director of the municipal legislature of Mudanjiang in northeastern Heilongjiang province. He was expelled from the Communist Party on suspicions of corruption late last month.

At the top of the allegations made public was the accusation that he privately read an "illegal publication" with content that would "jeopardise the unity of the party", with the municipal corruption inspectors not leading the charges with claims of corrupt dealings.

This was in keeping with a norm in which political disloyalty is always the first charge listed, the report noted.

Similarly, Cheng Zhiyi, 61, former party secretary of Chongqing's Jiangjin district, was also accused of possessing and reading forbidden books. The southwestern city's corruption investigators issued an announcement on his wrongdoings, saying he was accused of "reading overseas books and periodicals with serious political problems".

Though the investigators did not name the books claimed to have been found in the allegedly corrupt officials' possession, the "forbidden books" are generally believed to include but not limited to those that examine a sensitive period for the party. These include insider stories about the struggle of the party and its leaders; the Chinese Civil War; the Anti-Rightist Movement of the 1950s; the Great Leap Forward (1958-62); the Three Years of Hardship famine (1959-61); the Cultural Revolution (1966-76); and the Tiananmen crackdown in 1989.

A 2021 customs document is stated to define articles that are prohibited and restricted from entering and leaving China. These include printed materials, films, photos, records, audio and video tapes, laser discs and computer storage media that are harmful to China's politics, economy, culture and morality.

A statement released by the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection (CCDI), China's top political disciplinary and anti-corruption body, was on Sep 12 stated to have accused Zhang Zulin, former vice-governor of southwestern Yunnan province, of possessing and reading forbidden books.

The 65-year-old retiree was stated to have been accused of "losing his political ideals and aspirations, forming political cliques ... and possessing and reading books, periodicals and audio-visual products with serious political problems" in private.

Three days earlier, the anti-corruption watchdog in Jiangxi province was stated to have accused Gan Chengjiu – a former general manager at the local government-owned Jiangxi Financial Holding Group Ltd – of bringing "reactionary books into the country" and reading them privately, along with other political disloyalty and corruption charges.

Japan: Chinese Authorities Harass Critics Abroad

09 October 2024, [HRW](#)

Beijing's Transnational Repression Hinges on Threats Against Families in China

Chinese authorities are seeking to intimidate people from China living in Japan who take part in activities critical of the Chinese government, Human Rights Watch said today.

The Chinese government's harassment of people from China, including those from Xinjiang, Tibet, and Inner Mongolia, and their family members back home, appears aimed at deterring members of the diaspora from protesting against the government or engaging in events deemed politically sensitive. The Chinese authorities have also sought out diaspora members to provide information on others in Japan.

"Chinese authorities appear to have few scruples about silencing people from China living in Japan who criticize Beijing's abuses," said Teppei Kasai, Asia program officer at Human Rights Watch. "The Japanese government should make clear to Beijing it won't tolerate the long arm of China's transnational repression in Japan."

Between June and August 2024, Human Rights Watch interviewed 25 people from Hong Kong and mainland China, including from Xinjiang, Tibet, and Inner Mongolia, who were living in Japan. All had been involved in peaceful activities that the Chinese Communist Party deems unfavorable or threatening to one-party rule; such as holding public events to raise awareness about crimes against humanity in Xinjiang, promoting Tibetan culture, or having a reading club discuss a book by an activist from Inner Mongolia.

Most of those interviewed said that the Chinese police have contacted them or their relatives back home, pressuring them to end their activities in Japan. Several provided logs of messages from the Chinese social media platform WeChat, recordings of video calls, and CCTV footage that corroborated their accounts.

One person said they stopped participating in any politically sensitive in-person and online activities

after receiving a call from Chinese authorities in 2024. Another who initially agreed to be interviewed later decided not to participate out of fear that Chinese authorities would retaliate.

Several ethnic Uyghurs from Xinjiang said that Chinese authorities contacted them through their relatives back home. The police then called them on WeChat and told them to either stop their anti-Chinese government activities in Japan or pressed them to share information about Japan's Uyghur community, including the members of the advocacy group Japan Uyghur Association.

Several people from Inner Mongolia involved in promoting language rights and peaceful self-determination for Inner Mongolians, an ethnic minority, said that Chinese authorities had contacted them, often through their relatives back home.

A person from Tibet who promotes Tibetan culture in Japan said that when they went to the Chinese embassy in Tokyo to renew their passport, embassy officials told them they needed to return to Tibet to do so. A person from Taiwan previously involved in Hong Kong's pro-democracy activism in a third country said the Chinese embassy sent them multiple invitations to "retrieve important documents." Both people said they rejected the embassy's recommendations, fearing they would be detained or face punishment.

Chinese authorities have violated the rights of Chinese nationals who return home. In 2023 Hong Kong police arbitrarily [arrested](#) a 23-year-old Hong Kong woman upon her return to the city for pro-democracy comments she posted online while studying in Japan. Several people said they did not seek help from the Japanese police as they did not believe Japanese authorities could provide any remedy, or feared reprisals or making the situation worse for themselves and their relatives back home.

Human Rights Watch shared its findings and wrote to the Chinese embassy in Japan for comment, but they have not responded. Japan's Foreign Ministry declined to comment, and the National Police Agency did not respond to a Human Rights Watch letter requesting information about their response to China's efforts at repression in Japan.

In recent years, the Japanese government has become increasingly vocal about the Chinese government's human rights violations, including raising the issue with Chinese officials, and with resolutions in parliament to monitor the cases.

The term "transnational repression" is increasingly used to refer to state actors reaching beyond their borders to suppress or stifle dissent. Nationals or former nationals living in another country, members of diaspora communities, and those living in exile are particularly vulnerable.

The Japanese government should recognize the threat posed by the Chinese government's repression of

Chinese nationals abroad, and help protect their basic rights by establishing a system for residents in Japan to report such incidents, Human Rights Watch said.

Such a system should have appropriate safeguards for individuals' privacy, facilitate criminal investigations in cases in which Japanese law has been violated, and protect people who have contacted the authorities to report credible cases from deportation and extradition. People who face such pressure should be advised of their right to seek asylum or other forms of protection.

The Japanese government should call on the Chinese government to end its surveillance and threats against those living in Japan. On June 26 Japan joined 54 countries from all regions at the UN Human Rights Council in condemning transnational repression and pledging to hold those responsible to account. Japan should also coordinate with other governments and UN bodies to protect those at risk.

"Japan should review its policies to establish support mechanisms to help those facing Chinese government harassment," Kasai said. "Japan should promptly establish a national system to investigate cases of transnational repression with appropriate safeguards for individuals' privacy."

For select accounts of Chinese government harassment of Chinese nationals living in Japan, please see below.

The names, dates, and personal information of those interviewed have been withheld for their protection.

Pressuring Relatives in China

A.B. is from Inner Mongolia, a region of northern China where ethnic minority Mongols who mainly speak Mongolian comprise 17 percent of the population. A.B. came to Japan for work in 2018 and said he joined peaceful protests in Japan against the Chinese government's policy of replacing Mongolian with Mandarin Chinese at schools. He said:

In response to the language issue, I felt that if I didn't say anything myself, we [eventually] wouldn't be able to do anything, so I started expressing my opinions against the Chinese government, against Beijing.... At first, I didn't disclose my name and face, I wore a mask. My [relatives] were worried about me. I wasn't sure about my future, I didn't have capacity to think about it.... I eventually found a job [in Japan], and that's when I went public with my face and name.

Since going public, A.B. said that officials of the local public security bureau – China's police – in Inner Mongolia have visited his relatives, who are not politically active. Two CCTV videos both timestamped on the same date in 2022, provided by A.B. and verified by Human Rights Watch to have been filmed in Inner Mongolia, show a car with sirens marked "public security bureau" driving up to his relative's home. Three men, one apparently wearing a local

public security bureau uniform, enter the home of A.B.'s relatives. A few minutes later, the three men are seen escorting A.B.'s relatives from their home:

The officials told my [relatives] they wanted to ask a few questions about some photographs, but that they couldn't show [the photographs] to them there, so they asked my [relatives] to come to the closest public security bureau office. They showed my [relatives] photographs posted online by an Inner Mongolian group [in Japan] and said I was in them. My [relative] just said these are probably fake.

Subsequently, A.B. said the local public security bureau told his relatives to sign documents declaring that A.B. would not participate in any protests in Japan, which they refused to do:

At the time, my [relatives] just told [the authorities] they couldn't read the Chinese characters.... [My relatives] told me at the time that these documents may be unfavorable to me because I'm participating in protests.... They knew what the document said to a certain extent.

A.B. said that while he does not believe he is doing anything wrong by participating in protests, at times he feels afraid. Worst of all, he said, is that he feels guilty that the local police are questioning and threatening his relatives in Inner Mongolia because of his activities in Japan:

In Japan, it's normal for people to interact with the police, including when they lose their belongings. But in Inner Mongolia, you don't interact with the police unless there's a serious incident. My [relatives] tell me they're afraid of the pressure they're feeling [from the police], and that has been tough on me.

F.G., who is also from Inner Mongolia, has lived in Japan for about two decades and has been participating in public protests since the early 2000s. He said that in 2019, as he prepared to protest Chinese President Xi Jinping's attendance at the G20 leaders' summit in Osaka, Japan, police officers visited his relatives back home:

They intimidated my relatives, asking them to tell me that I'm committing a crime against the [Chinese] state. They took down all of my relatives' contact information. My [relative] was afraid, telling me, "So many police officers came to our house because of you. Our [relatives] are getting older, could you please stop?" ... Since then, my [relative] cut off contact with me.

R.S. moved to Japan from Xinjiang in the early 2000s and began participating in protests in 2009. Since then, R.S. said that the Chinese police have contacted his relatives in Xinjiang a number of times, who then urged him to stop his activities in Japan.

R.S. said such harassment has taken a mental toll on his family. In early 2024, a police officer in Xinjiang again called his relative back home, asking for details about him and his family in Japan:

They called my [relative], asking for details such as where we live and what we're doing.... My [relative] was panicking, saying "We already told them once, isn't that good enough? What else do they want?" They called my [relative] again twice.... Apparently, they spoke to my [relative] in a terrible manner, and my [relative] couldn't take it so [the relative] threw the phone, breaking it into pieces.

S.T., who is also from Xinjiang and moved to Japan in the early 2000s, said he began privately supporting a local advocacy group in 2008 to raise awareness of human rights issues in Xinjiang. He said he was regularly in touch with his relatives back home, but the situation changed in 2017, when his relatives suddenly began asking him to come home. S.T. said:

One day, I was having another phone call with a [relative], rejecting his request for me to come home, and a police officer got on the phone. He told me, "Listen to your [relative], or I can't guarantee what happens to your family." That's when I realized they were being forced to tell me to come home.

S.T. said that was the last time he spoke to that relative. Subsequently, in 2018, S.T. said a police officer repeatedly messaged him on WeChat:

I asked him, "What do you want?" He said, "Don't have such a negative attitude and instead show loyalty to the central [Chinese] government.... If you provide information about activists in Japan, I can solve the issue involving your family very quickly." I told him, "I'm not going to cooperate with someone who won't let me contact my family, so don't call me," and I hung up.

After his interaction with the police officer, S.T. said he tried calling his relatives, but no one picked up. He believes his relatives were afraid of picking up a phone call from a foreign number

Restricting Freedom of Movement

A.B. said that Chinese authorities have restricted his relatives' freedom of movement, presumably because they are related to A.B.:

Last May, I invited my [relatives] to Japan, so I asked them to get passports. They went to the local public security bureau, and when they typed my name into their system, the word "national security personnel" came up in red.... They couldn't have their passports issued.

In 2024, A.B. said Chinese authorities again blocked his relatives from getting their passports:

When my [relative] found out their passport couldn't be issued, I think they were crying. So I told them, you don't need to come [to Japan]. I told them it's okay. That's when I had the realization that maybe I won't be able to see them again.... The last time I saw them was in 2018 before I came to Japan.

A.B. says he cannot visit Inner Mongolia to see his family as he believes Chinese authorities will detain him: "I'll be detained if I return so I don't have any

plans, this is something I'm mindful about.... My [relatives] told me, 'We'll kill ourselves if you're detained.'"

Targeting Commonplace Activities

Chinese authorities have been targeting and attempting to shut down commonplace activities in Japan, such as a reading club. J.K., from Inner Mongolia now living in Japan, said that a local police officer reached out to his relatives back home after he began organizing a reading club in 2024 that focused on a book written by an academic and activist from Inner Mongolia. He said:

The police told my relatives that I was part of a reading club that was discussing a book by a well-known academic and activist from Inner Mongolia, and that it's an "anti-China" gathering.... My relatives were very nervous, asking me why I'm not simply focusing on my research and why I'm participating in "anti-China" activities. They asked me if I'm a "Han traitor." I told them, "How could you call me that?" and I got very upset. We fought. I asked my relatives, "Which law am I breaking here?" And they told me, "Laws are meaningless, if the [Chinese] government says someone is bad, then that person is bad." They told me they just want to live safely and told me not to do anything dangerous.

Subsequently, the same police officer added J.K. on WeChat:

I spoke to him on WeChat. I asked him, "What do you want to talk about?" and he simply said "Talk." I asked him, "Please ask me a question," and he said, "Did you host this reading club?" I told him I did, and he said I should just pretend I didn't, so he asked me to clarify in writing that I did not host it. The police officer told me what to write.

Fearing for the safety of his relatives, J.K. sent a written statement to the police officer on WeChat. He also said that the police officer effectively asked him to spy on others, including by attending events, taking photographs of others, and sending information to him, which he refused.

J.K. said that he did not consult Japanese police about this incident because he fears the situation could get worse, and his relatives back home could face retribution.

Repressing Freedom of Expression and Assembly

X.Y., who is from mainland China, said that he moved to Japan in 2023 as he felt the Chinese government's increasing repression against those in the arts.

X.Y. said that after he moved to Japan, a Chinese police official reached out to his family in China in 2024, asking for the details of his WeChat account. Fearing for his family's safety, X.Y. told his family to have the officer reach out to him directly:

[The officer] initially called my family [in China]. My family asked me, "Do you know why the public security agency wants your phone number?" At the time, the

authorities didn't know I was in Japan, so they called my family thinking I was with them. I don't know if they were intending on intimidating my family, but it had an impact on them.

Subsequently, a public security official contacted X.Y. on WeChat and asked him to refrain from certain activities online, which Human Rights Watch is withholding for his security. X.Y. said the call changed his behavior in Japan, and that he still fears for the safety of his family in China:

I haven't received a call from them since, but I think this is because I stopped uploading material on sensitive topics and limited my activities.... I'm still affected by this. My family is in China, so there's a possibility they're being threatened as well.... Although I came to Japan, I don't think my freedom of expression is being protected.

X.Y. said that he did not ask Japanese authorities for help, as he believes that may put his family at greater risk of Chinese government retaliation:

Even if there were a hotline [to ask for help], I don't think I would use it. My family is still in China, and there's not much the police in Japan can do regarding what China's public security agency does. If I were to coordinate with the Japanese police, or not pick up a call from Chinese authorities, there's a possibility the situation may get even more complicated.... I don't know what will happen when I go back to China next time to see my family.

In late November 2022, thousands of people in China's cities took to the streets in what became known as the "White Paper" protests, to [demonstrate against](#) the government's "Zero Covid" measures and, for some, the Chinese Communist Party's authoritarian rule. People from China held similar protests in Japan. M.N., who was involved in organizing one of the protests in Tokyo, said that he received a call from an official at the Chinese embassy in Japan before one of the gatherings, asking him to cancel the protests. M.N. said:

When the "White Paper" protests were happening in China, we decided to also organize protests in Japan.... The Chinese embassy saw a poster about it, and they called me, asking me to stop.... Afterward, they called the Japanese language school I was attending and told them to stop my activism.... My teacher is from China, and he told me, "Please stop any political activities, or quit the school yourself"... I quit and now attend a vocational school to learn about the internet.

M.N., who was detained several times in China for participating in human rights activism, said that after he moved to Japan in 2022, a police officer visited his family in China. Police also called M.N. directly on WeChat in late 2022. M.N. provided a recording of the video call between him and two men, one of whom is wearing a police uniform with a visible six-digit identification number. The police officer asked M.N. if

he was still in Japan, about his studies, and about his social media activities. They told him he should “focus on himself” and “study well.” M.N. said: “After the call with the police, my family called me and told me to stop my activism, to study well, get into a Japanese university, and not participate in anything political.”

China throws the book: more corruption suspects hit with claims of illicit reading

07 October 2024, [SCMP](#), William Zheng

Growing number of disgraced officials being accused by anti-corruption agencies of reading forbidden books, cited as disloyalty to the party

Reading publications with “serious political problems” has become an increasingly common accusation levelled at disgraced officials by China’s anti-corruption agencies, who cite it as proof of disloyalty. Among them is Li Bin, a former vice-director of the municipal legislature of Mudanjiang in northeastern Heilongjiang province. He was expelled from the Communist Party on suspicions of corruption late last month.

However, municipal corruption inspectors did not lead with claims of corrupt dealings. Instead, at the top of allegations made public was the accusation that he privately read an “illegal publication” with content that would “jeopardise the unity of the party”.

It was in keeping with a norm in which political disloyalty is always the first charge listed.

A few days earlier, Cheng Zhiyi, 61, former party secretary of Chongqing’s Jiangjin district, was also accused of possessing and reading forbidden books. The southwestern city’s corruption investigators issued an announcement on his wrongdoings, saying he was accused of “reading overseas books and periodicals with serious political problems”.

Cheng and Li are among a growing group of disgraced Chinese officials who are being accused in public by corruption fighters at various levels of reading publications not endorsed by the authorities.

While the investigators did not name the books claimed to have been found in these officials’ possession, the accused are generally understood to have read political books that had been published outside mainland China and quietly carried across the border.

It is generally believed that “forbidden books” include but are not limited to those that examine a sensitive period for the party.

These include insider stories about the struggle of the party and its leaders; the Chinese Civil War; the Anti-Rightist Movement of the 1950s; the Great Leap Forward; the Three Years of Hardship famine; the Cultural Revolution; and the Tiananmen crackdown in 1989.

Publications on these subjects and others are forbidden by Chinese authorities and the act of carrying them across the border violates customs regulations.

A 2021 customs document defines articles prohibited and restricted from entering and leaving China. These include printed materials, films, photos, records, audio and video tapes, laser discs and computer storage media harmful to China’s politics, economy, culture and morality.

According to a tally by the South China Morning Post, allegations of reading politically forbidden books have appeared in at least a dozen corruption case readouts so far this year – from around seven last year.

Similar accusations have been made by anti-corruption bodies in at least five other provinces this year.

Deng Yuwen, former deputy editor of Study Times, the newspaper of the cadre-training Central Party School, said reading and circulating some sensitive materials within the party was common. This had long been impossible to ban, even in Mao Zedong’s era, he said. “It is not a big deal if they are not under disciplinary investigation, but it can be major evidence of disloyalty when [the top watchdog] finds them.”

Zhang Zulin, former vice-governor of southwestern Yunnan province, was accused on September 12 of possessing and reading forbidden books, according to a statement released by the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection (CCDI), China’s top political disciplinary and anti-corruption body.

Zhang, who is 65 and retired, is accused of “losing his political ideals and aspirations, forming political cliques ... and possessing and reading books, periodicals and audiovisual products with serious political problems” in private, according to the CCDI.

The CCDI statement also announced that Zhang would be stripped of party membership and handed over to the judiciary for trial.

Three days earlier, the anti-corruption watchdog in Jiangxi province accused Gan Chengjiu – a former general manager at Jiangxi Financial Holding Group Ltd – of bringing “reactionary books into the country” and reading them privately, along with other political disloyalty and corruption charges.

Jiangxi Financial Holding is wholly owned by the eastern provincial government.

While such reading bans in China are believed to date back decades, the recent uptick in naming and shaming appears to coincide with last year’s amendment of the party disciplinary regulations, which greatly expanded the clause related to reading unapproved materials.

Those who privately read, browse or listen to publications and make irresponsible comments on the party Central Committee’s major policies, vilify the image of the party and the country, or slander leaders

will be issued warnings, the amended clause stipulates. If the circumstances are serious, such persons could be removed from party positions.

As economic challenges and security threats linger, China marks 75 years of Communist Party rule

01 October 2024, [PBS](#), Adam Kemp

China is marking the 75th year of Communist Party rule as economic challenges and security threats linger over the massive state.

No festivities have been announced for the occasion Tuesday, save for a flag-raising ceremony at Tiananmen Square, with an honor guard marching from the entrance of the sprawling palace that in past centuries was the home of Chinese emperors. The entirely state-controlled media ran constant reports on China's economic progress and social stability, with no mention of challenges ranging from a declining birth rate to the disruption in supply chains that has harmed the largely export-driven economy.

Commemorations were also held in the former British colony of Hong Kong and Portugal's former territory of Macao, both of which returned to Chinese sovereignty in the late 1990s in a key indication of Beijing's determination to overcome what it has called a "Century of Humiliation."

In recent decades, China has mounted military parades and displays of the country's economic might only at the turn of decades, such as for the 60th and 70th anniversaries.

The world's second largest economy has struggled to regain momentum after the COVID-19 pandemic.

A prolonged property slump led to a spillover effect on other parts of the economy, from construction to sales of home appliances. Last week, China announced a slew of measures to boost the economy, including lower interest rates and smaller down payment requirements for mortgages.

Party leader and head of state Xi Jinping has largely avoided overseas travel since the pandemic, while continuing with his purges at home of top officials considered insufficiently loyal or being suspected of corruption or personal indiscretions.

"The road ahead will not be smooth, there will definitely be difficulties and obstacles, and we may encounter major tests such as high winds and rough seas, or even stormy waves" Xi warned during a banquet on the eve of the anniversary.

"We must be vigilant in times of peace, plan ahead, and rely closely on the entire Party, the entire army, and people of all ethnic groups across the country" he said, "no difficulties can stop the Chinese people from moving forward."

The anniversary also comes as China is facing growing frictions with neighbors including Japan, South Korea

and the Philippines over territorial claims and their close relationships with Beijing's chief rival, the United States.

The Communists under Mao Zedong seized power in 1949 amid a civil war with the Nationalists, also known as the KMT, led by Chiang Kai-shek, who shifted their political, economic and military power to the now self-governing island democracy of Taiwan.

Beijing continues to insist Taiwan must be annexed under Communist Party rule, by force if necessary, while the U.S. has provided arms to ensure its defense.

China, meanwhile, has involved itself in disputes over its claims to most of the South China Sea and uninhabited islands held by Japan, the Philippines, Vietnam and other neighboring nations.

China's military buildup and its recent launch of a nuclear capable ballistic missile into the Pacific Ocean have raised concerns about a possible conflict.

At home, Xi has made himself effectively leader for life by ending term limits and extending his power over key government and party bodies. China allows no competitive elections and the party retains near total control over the media that informs its 1.4 billion people.

PROTESTS, DETENTIONS AND OTHER NEWS FROM THE PRC

Authorities Arrest Four Tibetans in Ngaba County for Contacting Outsiders

30 October 2024, [CTA](#)

China's government restricts communication between Tibetans and those outside the region, saying it undermines national unity.

Chinese authorities have arrested four Tibetans from Ngaba county in Sichuan province, accusing one monk from Kirti Monastery of making dedication prayer offerings outside Tibet and two laypersons of maintaining contact with Tibetans outside the region, two sources told Radio Free Asia.

The arrests in early September come close on the heels of monastic school closures at Kirti Monastery in Ngaba county and Lhamo Kirti Monastery in Dzoge county, as well as the forced transfer of over 1,600 students, aged 6-17, from the Buddhist schools into state-administered "colonial style" boarding schools. More than 1,000 students were affected by the closure of the school at Kirti Monastery.

In the wake of the school closures, authorities have intensified surveillance and imposed tight restrictions on Tibetans in Ngaba county, including a crackdown on communication with the outside world.

"After the school closures in July, a high-ranking official from China's United Front Work Department was stationed in Ngaba county for several months, implementing even stricter control measures over both the monastery and the local community," the first source told RFA on the condition of anonymity for safety reasons.

Of the four arrested in September, two are Buddhist monks — Lobsang Samten, 53, and Lobsang Trinley, 40 — from Kirti Monastery. Samten was arrested for allegedly contacting someone outside Tibet for the purpose of dedicating prayers, while the reason for Trinley's arrest is still unclear, said the sources.

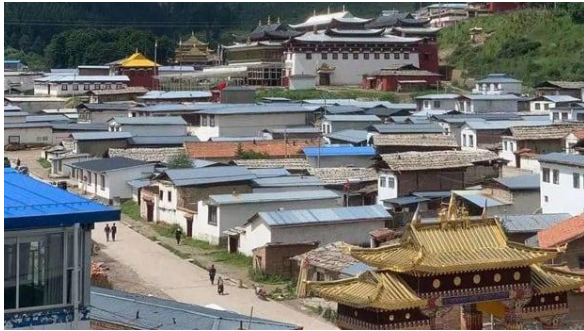
The Chinese government restricts communication between Tibetans and their family members and friends abroad, saying it undermines national unity.

Tibetans, in turn, have decried surveillance by Beijing, saying Chinese authorities are violating their human rights and trying to eradicate their religious, linguistic and cultural identity. [Click here](#) to read more.

Tibetan monks' phones seized after accusations of sharing news about school closures

24 October 2024, [RFA](#)

China has shut down 2 schools linked to monasteries in Sichuan province.



Taktsang Lhamo Kirti Monastery is seen in an undated photo. (Citizen photo)

Chinese authorities are confiscating the cell phones of Tibetan Buddhist monks in Sichuan province, accusing them of having shared news about the recent closure of schools linked to monasteries, two sources with knowledge of the situation said.

Under Chinese government rules, ethnic Tibetans are banned from contacting or sharing news with people outside the region.

Traditionally, many Tibetan children are sent to schools at monasteries to be educated in the Tibetan language in regular subjects as well as in Buddhism.

But Chinese authorities have closed schools at the Lhamo Kirti Monastery in Sichuan's Dzoge county and the Kirti Monastery in Ngaba county, claiming that the young monks were too young to receive monastic education.

The closure of the Lhamo Kirti Monastery school former affected nearly 600 students.

Instead, parents were required to enroll their children in state-administered residential schools, where the instruction is in Mandarin.

Suspicious that monks were sharing news about the closures with the wider world, authorities have been checking their phones since Oct. 1, said the sources who spoke on condition of anonymity for fear of reprisal. Those found to have done so had their phones confiscated.

Authorities also have held frequent meetings with monastery management to emphasize the need for monks to study regulatory rules for Buddhist monasteries, citing religious affairs regulations and the prohibition of "separatist activities" by monks, they said.

"Despite the closure of the monastic schools, strict controls have been imposed, and restrictions have intensified with authorities claiming the spread of information about the monastic school's closure to the outside world is a serious issue," the first source said.

"Officials are also conducting regular meetings with monastery staff, prohibiting 'separatist activities' and enforcing strict adherence to state regulations," he said.

According to Beijing's regulations on religious affairs, students at monastic schools must be 18 or older,

display patriotism and be compliant with national laws.

Tibetan advocates see these regulations as part of broader government efforts to suppress Tibetan culture and enforce "patriotic education."

Founded in 1986, the Lhamo Kirti Monastery school initially offered three classes held in the monastery's hall and monks' residences.

In 1993, a separate school called Taktsang Lhamo Tibetan Culture School was established, but it faced interference from the Chinese government when officials ramped up restrictions on the study of the Tibetan language and Buddhist philosophy, ultimately leading to its closure.

The monastery's primary school later reopened and served novice monks under the age of 18 and children from nearby nomadic areas.

In July 2024, authorities issued new orders requiring the closure of the school. Families were compelled to sign agreements ensuring that their children would be enrolled in government-run schools, where they would undergo state-approved "patriotic education."

China cracks down on 'uncivilised' online puns used to discuss sensitive topics

23 October 2024, [The Guardian](#), Helen Davidson

Campaign targets wordplay and memes that are often used by people to get around censorship controls
China's internet regulators have launched a campaign cracking down on puns and homophones, one of the last remaining ways for citizens to safely discuss sensitive subjects without recriminations or censorship.

The "clear and bright" campaign is targeting "irregular and uncivilised" language online, particularly jokes, memes, and wordplay, the Cyberspace Administration of China and the ministry of education announced this month.

"For some time, various internet jargons and memes have appeared frequently, leaving people more and more confused," said an editorial by the Communist party mouthpiece, the People's Daily.

"They also form a hidden erosion on the daily communication and ideological values of minors, which can easily lead to adverse consequences."

China's online spaces are strictly monitored and censored. Some sensitive topics and terms are strictly banned, such as references to the Tiananmen massacre, or criticism of President Xi Jinping. Insulting individuals or China generally is also frowned upon.

In response, users have adapted, using funny or obscure references and in-jokes to get around the censorship. Many rely on homophones, using phrases that sound very similar in Mandarin, but were written

with different Chinese characters, such as the word for “paratrooper” (sǎn bīng) instead of “idiot” (shǎ bī).

Authorities are in a near-constant race to catch new ways of describing Xi without mentioning him, which in the past have included a series of three arrows to represent the tones in his full name, or references to Winnie-the-Pooh because of suggestions Xi resembles the character.

Commenters will also often use the term “your country” to criticise Communist party (CCP) rule, instead of the CCP’s commonly used “my country”, as a protest that the CCP’s China is not their China. One Chinese academic told the Guardian that instead of openly discussing concerns about government policies, colleagues would instead share links to allegorical poems or historical references.

State media has also suggested the new campaign intends to target even benign-sounding puns, giving as an example the phrase “rainy girl without melons” (yǔ nǚ wú guā) which is often used in place of “it’s none of your business” (yǔ nǚ wú guān).

The People’s Daily noted the quick turnover for online memes, and urged authorities and social media platforms to not allow “obviously ambiguous” new words to spread quickly without “rectification”.

“A wave of bad jokes will have disappeared, and a new wave of bad jokes may be on the way,” it wrote.

Condemned Uyghur official dies in prison in China’s Xinjiang region

22 October 2024, [RFA](#)

Shirzat Bawudun, once a senior government official, was sentenced to death in 2021.



Former Uyghur official Shirzat Bawudun admits to acts of separatism and terrorism in a “confession” broadcast on April 9, 2021. (Image from CGTN video)

A Uyghur man who once served as a high-ranking government official in western China’s far-western Xinjiang region has died in prison four years after he was sentenced to death for “separatism” and “terrorism,” a prison official and a person with knowledge of the situation said.

Shirzat Bawudun is a former deputy secretary of the ruling Chinese Communist Party’s Political and Legal

Affairs Committee in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, or XUAR.

He was detained in November 2018 on suspicion of being “two-faced” and was officially arrested the following month after authorities determined he had committed a crime.

Bawudun and another high-ranking Uyghur official, Sattar Sawut, were given two-year suspended death sentences in 2021 in a stunning decision that critics said showed that even Uyghurs loyal to the Communist Party couldn’t escape persecution in Xinjiang.

It was unclear when Bawudun passed away. But a source familiar with the situation who wished to remain anonymous for security reasons told Radio Free Asia that when family members requested a video meeting with him in late July, authorities informed them that he had died in prison.

Relatives are shocked by the news of his death, which they described as mysterious, according to the source. During their last video call in March, family members didn’t observe any signs of illness or physical weakness, the source said.

Workers at the prison were notified of Bawudun’s death, but the cause wasn’t disclosed, a staff member at Turpan Dahiyan Prison in eastern Xinjiang told RFA last week.

The source familiar with the situation said authorities didn’t tell family members about how and when he died. They were only told that Bawudun died in prison and that they shouldn’t submit any more visitation requests, the source said.

Bawudun’s arrest came amid a campaign of extralegal incarceration that saw up to 1.8 million Uyghurs and other Muslim minorities held in a vast network of internment camps beginning in early 2017. Bawudun and Sawut were the first high-ranking government officials to be given death sentences.

Bawudun had also served as a director of the region’s High Court and was a member of the XUAR Political Consultative Conference.

According to the limited information shared by XUAR’s High Court in 2021, Bawudun was accused of “long-term planning to split the country,” “participating in the East Turkistan Islamic Movement” and “providing illegal intelligence to people outside” China.

Overcrowding reported at China detention centers amid economic downturn

21 October 2024, [VOA](#), Lin Nai-Chuan

Reports of overcrowded detention centers in China are spreading on the country’s social media platforms as Chinese law enforcement cracks down on both petty and serious crime.

Analysts say China's increasing economic challenges from the slowing economy to unemployment and a massive property crisis, are all contributing to higher crime rates and in turn an increase in detainees at detention centers.

In one video posted on October 9 on the Chinese social media platform Xiaohongshu, Beijing-based lawyer Zhao Haidong describes a recent visit to the city's Fengtai Detention Center.

"In some of the smaller rooms there are around 20 people, in bigger rooms around 30 or 40 people," he said, adding that the number of detainees was much more than in previous years.

In another video published in August, Wang Rui, a lawyer in Sichuan, says he found 20 people detained in a 12-person room. The detainees had to sleep sideways together on a 30-foot-long bed. Wang reports that China is looking to expand its detention center infrastructure.

One Chinese human rights lawyer who asked to speak anonymously with VOA citing security concerns said he had witnessed similar circumstances.

The lawyer said he recently visited an insurance agent who was detained in Hebei province on allegations of "corruption." Describing the conditions, the lawyer said, "There are 28 people living in a detention room of more than 10 square meters, and a dozen square meters can only accommodate about 7-9 people."

VOA reached out to all three detention centers for comment on the reports of overcrowding. The Fengtai Detention Center refused to comment and said reporters must visit the center in person and present their press credentials before its liaison office would speak with them.

The detention center in Hebei also refused to comment over the phone and the center in Sichuan did not respond to a request for information.

Detention centers are designed to hold individuals awaiting trials and those who are arrested for petty crimes serving three or fewer months of jail time. Their overcrowding has become a problem as China has increasingly arrested more people in violation of the law.

According to official statistics from the Supreme People's Procuratorate of China, 367,000 people were approved for arrest in the first half of 2024, an increase of 18.5% over the previous year. Reports also show that China has prosecuted over 761,000 people this year, an increase of almost 7%.

On China's social media platforms, lawyers cite two reasons for the increase: a tougher crackdown on crime and worsening economic hardships.

Shen Yanan, a lawyer in Shandong province, says actions that were previously tolerated are now being targeted for arrest.

These include illegal transactions, trade disputes, pornography, gambling, fishing and collecting

protected wild herbs, reported lawyer Sun Lianwei on her social media accounts.

Many online lawyers attribute the rise in arrests to increasing economic pressures and note that financial crimes have increased because of the pressure of mortgages, car loans and work.

Lin Zhanhui, assistant professor at Feng Chia University in Taichung, said that China's expansion of the definition of national security, heightening levels of social stability maintenance and changing standards for illegal behavior are the reasons for overcrowded detention centers.

"The CCP [Chinese Communist Party] is constantly expanding its criminal crackdown, through the so-called rule of law. [In addition to] maintaining stability for economic crimes, mass protests and political issues [must] be stabilized through national security laws," Lin told VOA.

Taiwanese democracy activist Lee Ming-che, who has firsthand experience in Chinese prisons, believes local government corruption could also be playing into the increase in arrests.

"With China's economic stagnation, and detention centers need to survive, local governments may be detaining more people [to] raise revenues and cracking down in these crimes that used to be overlooked," Lee said.

In China, inmates can pay to upgrade their meals and buy daily necessities. More inmates lead to more sales, increasing the revenue for the detention center and local government.

Lin Zhanhui has also observed local governments in China using "rule by law" as a means of bringing more money into local coffers. Such methods include short-term detentions and fines, he said.

Additionally, Lin agreed with the assessment of lawyers online in China that economic shifts, including rising youth unemployment, corporate layoffs, factory closures and general employment struggles were contributing to the rise in overall crime.

Given the rising costs of living in China, some people, he says, could even see arrest as a means to get free meals provided in detention centers.

Facing harder times and more stringent laws, online legal influencers say it is the responsibility of individual citizens to avoid arrest. That is a frequent reminder that lawyers give in videos posted on social media.

"And here, I want to remind everyone: before you do anything [illegal], be sure to think twice, think twice and then think twice again," lawyer Shi Chuang says.

Falun Gong Practitioner Persecuted to Death 5 Days After Arrival in Notorious Prison

21 October 2024, [Bitter Winter](#), Shen Xiang

The 60-year-old Ren Changbin had just arrived in Heilongjiang's Shuangyashan Prison when his sister was informed he had "accidentally" died.



Ren Changbin. From X.

In Heilongjiang Province, Falun Gong practitioner Ren Changbin was tortured to death on September 28, 2024, merely five days after his incarceration in the notorious Shuangyashan Prison, where torture is routinely practiced.

Ren Changbin was born in 1964 in Jiamusi City in Heilongjiang Province. He previously worked at the Jiamusi Gongnong Glass Factory before retiring and later joined the Jiamusi Jianxing Ready-Mixed Concrete Company.

On September 14 and 15, 2023, a special anti-xie jiao (the Chinese name for banned "organizations spreading heterodox teachings," sometimes less correctly translated as "evil cults") squad of the Jiamusi Public Security Bureau raided several private homes, arresting some thirty Falun Gong practitioners and their families.

Among them, Ren Changbin was arrested by the police at his home on the evening of September 14. He was accused of being active in a xie jiao, a crime punished by Article 300 of the Chinese Criminal Code. On July 25, 2024, he was sentenced to three years in prison by the Jiamusi Xiangyang District Court.



The notorious Shuangyashan Prison. From X.

Ren Changbin was transferred to Shuangyashan Prison on September 23, 2024. He was tortured to death just five days later, on the 28th, at the age of 60.

On September 28, 2024, at 8:00 a.m., Ren Changbin's sister was informed by the prison that he had died unexpectedly. When his family inquired about the cause of death, the prison authorities did not clarify, vaguely mentioning that he may have fallen while taking a shower. They were told that Ren Changbin's body had been sent to the funeral home.

Ren Changbin's sister quickly gathered family members and hurried to the funeral home. There, they observed a stitched wound on his head, bruised eyes, body injuries, and hurt feet, all unmistakable signs of torture. Ren Changbin joins a long list of Falun Gong practitioners tortured to death in Chinese jails.

In rare appeal, Tibetan calls for company to stop digging up river

20 October 2024, [RFA](#), Dolkar and Choegyri

Chinese authorities have since shut down Tsongon Tsering's WeChat account.



Tsongon Tsering, a Tibetan man from Tsaruma village in Kyungchu county in China's Sichuan province, calls for authorities to take action against illegal sand and gravel mining taking place since May 2023 on the Tsaruma River. (Image from citizen video via WeChat)

A Tibetan from Sichuan province has made a rare public appeal on Chinese social media, calling on authorities to take action against a company that he accuses of illegally extracting sand and gravel from a local riverbed, Tibetan sources with knowledge of the situation said.

In a 5-minute video posted on WeChat on Oct. 15, Tsongon Tsering from Tsaruma village in Kyungchu county said Anhui Xianhe Construction Engineering Co.'s digging has caused severe soil erosion and a drop in water levels in the Tsaruma River.

Such public appeals are rare due to fear of reprisals from the government for speaking out against authorities or state-approved projects.

Authorities have since shut down his account and blocked search terms related to his name on WeChat, a popular Chinese social media platform, said two sources from inside Tibet, who like others in this report, declined to be identified out of fear of retribution.

Tsering's case illustrates how authorities silence Tibetans who accuse Chinese companies of violating environmental regulations or harming the environment.

In the video, Tsering says Tibetan residents had made repeated appeals before local authorities for action against the company for causing environmental harm, but to no avail.

"The Anhui Xianhe Construction Engineering's business office has been illegally extracting sand and stones from the river in Tsaru Ma Village during their road construction work," he says in the video while holding up his ID card.

"The large-scale and indiscriminate extraction of sand from the river has led to serious soil erosion in the surrounding area and is posing a threat to the foundations of residents' homes," he continues.

Tsering's video, which gained significant attention online, was also widely shared by other users on the platform but even those were taken down and all related content censored by Thursday, Oct. 17, the two sources said.

Sources from the region said they fear Tsering, who hails from Ngaba Tibetan and Qiang Autonomous Prefecture, will face punishment for his public criticism of authorities.

Four other sources inside Tibet confirmed Tsering's statement that the sand extraction from the local river has caused environmental harm and that locals had reported the issue to various government departments at the village and county levels.

They also provided photos and videos as evidence of the damage, but no action had been taken, said the sources.

Tsering's video, which had around 10,000 views in a day's time, received more than 500 comments from netizens, the majority of whom expressed support for his appeal and called for environmental protection and for the Chinese state media and authorities to address the issue.

Tsering also tagged official Chinese media outlets in his post to draw their attention.

Affects the Yellow and Yangtze

In the video, Tsering explained that the Tsaruma River, where the extraction is taking place, is linked to the Yangtze and Yellow River systems, two of China's most important.

"The pollution of these river sources and the protection of local ecosystems and biodiversity are deeply interconnected issues," he said. "Moreover, this directly affects the water resources of Asia and the conditions of the high-altitude frozen soil."



A sand mining operation is seen along the Tsaruma River in Kyungchu county in Sichuan province, China, in this image posted Oct. 15, 2024, by Tibetan resident Tsongon Tsering. (Image from citizen video via WeChat)

On Oct. 17, a source told RFA that following Tsering's online appeal, the Kyungchu County Development and Reform Office had promised a thorough investigation into the matter.

An official from the Ngaba Prefecture Ecological Protection Office said his office was aware of the issue and investigating it in collaboration with the Sichuan Provincial Ecological Environment Monitoring Office, Chinese state media reported.

The agencies would release their findings soon, he said.

"Although environmental protection policies were introduced many years ago, implementation issues persist in our area," said Tsering in the video.

Brushing it under the rug

In it, he confirms that the county's Ecological Environment Bureau responded to his complaint in April 2024, confirming that the construction company had extracted sand and stones from the river and that it had been fined.

But Tsering said the response merely covers up for the relevant business enterprise and tried to brush the problem under the rug.

"They have addressed minor issues while avoiding the major ones, and have not taken any action to restore the ecological environment or manage the soil erosion situation," he said. "They have simply erected barriers around the endangered house foundations and considered the matter resolved."

Anhui Xianhe Construction Engineering, registered in China in June 2012, is involved in various construction projects including road construction, urban development, hydropower projects and environmental protection works.

RFA Tibetan could not reach the company for comment.

Yunnan, Update on Brother Chang Hao: Sentenced, Liberated, and Detained Again

18 October 2024, [Bitter Winter](#), Li Xiosi

The popular preacher was baptizing new Christians with famous Pastor John Cao when the police raided the gathering on October 15.



Brother Chang Hao (left) and Pastor John Cao (right). From X.

“Bitter Winter” has devoted several articles to Yunnan preacher Chang Hao, the “Christian anti-COVID mask man” who became popular by distributing masks inscribed with Bible verses, an initiative that mightily disturbed the authorities.

In April 2023, police raided Brother Chang Hao’s small rural church in Zhenxiong County, Zhaotong City, Yunnan Province. They confiscated Bibles, Christian books, and the famous anti-COVID masks with the Bible verses.

On November 7, 2023, the prosecutor brought the case against Brother Chang Hao to the Zhenxiong County People’s Court. According to Chinese law and procedure, a verdict was typically expected within two months, and no later than within three months. This period ended in February. Despite a document stating Chang Hao would be detained only until February 10 if no verdict was issued, he remained in jail without a verdict even after that date.

However, he was finally sent to trial and sentenced to one year and one month in jail for “picking quarrels and provoking trouble,” a catch-all charge against religionists who operate independently of the CCP-controlled religious bodies.

Counted from when he was first detained, the term of one year and one month expired on May 14, 2024, and Chang Hao was released on that date. However, he was kept under surveillance.

On October 15, 2024, Chang Hao gathered local believers in in Zhenxiong County to celebrate the baptism of fifteen new Christians, some of them coming from Hunan with Pastor John Cao (Cao Sanqiang), another well-known and persecuted figure in the house church movement.

The police raided the event. Pastor Cao and Brother Chang with dozens of Christians were taken to the

police station. All were eventually released except Brother Chang, who was notified he will remain in administrative detention for twelve days. What will happen next remains unclear.

China's ruling against Tibetan activist highlights Beijing's poor human rights record

11 October 2024, [ANI](#)

For over two years, a Tibetan woman named Gonpo Kyi has been fighting for the release of her falsely accused brother, Dorjee Tashi. Last month, a Chinese court ruled against her, putting justice for her younger brother even further out of reach. The court determined that the Public Security Bureau's (PSB) detention of Gonpo Kyi was lawful under Chinese law. The International Campaign for Tibet has expressed concern over the oppressional activities adopted by the Chinese administration against Gonpo Kyi. The PSB argued that Gonpo's activism expressed through prostration, meditation, posting flyers, and lying down in the street interfered with the work of the Tibet Autonomous Region Higher People's Court. As a result, the PSB's 10-day detention of Gonpo was deemed valid, the return of confiscated materials (an A4 sign and a white cloth banner) was denied, and her claim for monetary compensation was dismissed. Gonpo Kyi, also known as Gontey (Chinese: Gongde), has been actively seeking justice for her younger brother Dorjee (Duoji Zhaxi) since June 2022. Dorjee received a life sentence in 2010 after being framed as a "secessionist" in the aftermath of the Chinese government's crackdown on mass Tibetan protests in the spring of 2008, and he is currently imprisoned in the notorious Drapchi Prison. He was arrested following widespread protests across Tibet that challenged Chinese rule and was suspected of providing clandestine support to Tibetan demonstrators and of having alleged connections with the Tibetan exile community.

On September 24, 2024, the Chengguan District Court in Lhasa dismissed all five counts of Gonpo Kyi's complaint against the district's PSB. She had filed the lawsuit in March 2024, primarily claiming that her ten-day detention for peacefully advocating for her brother's release violated her rights. Since its illegal occupation in the 1950s, China has aimed for the complete sinicisation of Tibet, oppressing its people for over six decades. Since June 2022, Gonpo has been at the forefront of persistent efforts to seek justice for her brother. Her approach has evolved from appeals to authorities in Beijing over the past decade to more public forms of protest, including sit-ins in front of the Tibet Autonomous Region Higher People's Court in Lhasa.

Gonpo's public advocacy reveals growing frustration with the lack of progress through official channels and a willingness to risk personal consequences to draw attention to her brother's case. Tibetans in Tibet face severe restrictions on fundamental human rights, living under the constant surveillance of the Communist Party, which punishes or imprisons those who do not comply with its unfavourable policies and agendas, as reported by The Geneva Daily.

"I have petitioned the court in Lhasa for a retrial of Dorjee Tashi's case under the law of the country, but they have refused. The police have detained, dragged, and beaten me multiple times. I'm currently in poor health due to these beatings. My right to request a retrial for my brother feels powerless. Until the Lhasa Court addresses my appeal, I will persist," Gonpo stated.

Although the initial political charges against Dorjee were eventually dropped, he was later charged with "loan fraud."

In May 2010, the Lhasa Intermediate People's Court sentenced him to life imprisonment and permanent deprivation of political rights. Throughout her years of public advocacy, the PSB has subjected Gonpo to beatings, detentions, forcible removal from protest sites, and threats of severe consequences, all aimed at silencing her efforts.

Tibetan singer arrested for 'patriotic song' released early from prison

07 October 2024, [Phayul](#), Tsering Dhundup



Golok Palden in an undated photo (Photo/Tibet Times)

A Tibetan singer who was sentenced to three years in prison by Chinese authorities for performing a patriotic song has reportedly been released early, but remains under strict surveillance and restrictions.

Golok Palden, from Yostag village in Dhimda township of Golok Padma County, was released on September 25, several months before completing his original prison term. Sources indicate he has been explicitly warned against singing any more patriotic songs.

The singer was initially imprisoned in November of the previous year after performing the song "I Am the

Messenger of the Emperor" online. His arrest and sentencing were carried out secretly by Chinese authorities.

According to *Tibet Times*, which cited an anonymous Tibetan source from Tibet, Palden's release came without prior notice to his family. While the reasons for his early release remain unclear, reports suggest he is being closely monitored and followed by authorities. Concerns about Palden's health have emerged, as many prisoners released early by Chinese authorities often face medical issues and cases of death in detention are common in Chinese prisons. However, due to restrictions preventing him from meeting with villagers and the secretive nature of his release, his current health condition cannot be verified.

Prior to his arrest, Palden had established himself as a respected figure in Tibet's traditional music scene. In 2022, he achieved sixth place in a traditional singing competition organized by Minthang Sermo and gained popularity for his online release "Missing Mother." His social media following exceeded 98,000 at the time of his arrest.

Chinese authorities continue to implement severe restrictions on Tibetan cultural expression, with numerous artists, writers, and intellectuals facing arbitrary detention and harsh sentences. Singers Pema Trinley and Chakdor from Meuruma nomadic village were secretly sentenced by a Chinese court in Ngaba in February 2013, having been detained in July 2012 shortly after releasing their album "Agony of Unhealed Wounds," which addressed sensitive topics including self-immolation protests and contained songs praising Tibetan religious leaders.

The crackdown extends beyond musicians and include writers and cultural advocates. Tibetan writer and poet Gendun Lhundrup, known for his cultural preservation efforts and his poetry anthology "Khorwa," was arrested in the so called Qinghai province in 2020. Other notable cases include Tashi Wangchuk, sentenced to five years in 2018 for language advocacy, and singer Lhundrub Drakpa, who received a six-year sentence in June 2020 for his song "Black Hat" after spending over a year in pre-trial detention without legal representation. The pattern of suppression continues with the confirmed detention of prominent scholar Rongwo Gangkar in early 2021, following his disappearance for over a year.

Former Tibetan political prisoner Thupten Yeshi passes away at 74 in Lhasa

02 October 2024, [Phayul](#)



Former Tibetan political prisoner Thupten Yeshi in an undated photo (Photo/VOA)

Thupten Yeshi, a former political prisoner who spent an aggregate of 15 years in the infamous Drapchi prison for allegedly leading the 1992 protest in Gyama Township, Meldrogungkar County, has reportedly passed away at the age of 74 in Lhasa, Tibet's capital. The 1992 protest was the first in the County since 1987, marking a significant moment in Tibetan resistance.

Thupten Yeshi was arrested on July 6, 1992, alongside four other farmers—Kunchok Lodroe, Lhundup, Sonam Rinchen, and Sonam Dorjee—following a bold protest in Gyama Township, Meldrogungkar County. On June 30, 1992, a large meeting of around 1,200 people, including local leaders, convened in the township. The four farmers disrupted the gathering, unfurling a 2.5-meter-long Tibetan national flag and shouting slogans such as “Free Tibet,” “Chinese Leave Tibet,” and “Long Live His Holiness the Dalai Lama.”

They were swiftly arrested, and Thupten Yeshi was later apprehended as the alleged ringleader. He was initially detained for 13 days at Meldrogungkar County Detention Centre before being secretly transferred to Gutsa Detention Centre, east of Lhasa. There, he endured nearly three months of interrogation, torture, and inhumane treatment.

On October 20, 1992, following severe torture during interrogation at Gutsa, the Lhasa People's Intermediate Court convicted all five on charges of “counter-revolutionary plot” and “inciting reactionary propaganda.” Sonam Dorjee and Kunchok Lodroe were sentenced to 13 years in prison, while Thupten Yeshi, Lhundup, and Sonam Rinchen each received 15-year sentences.

Sonam Rinchen, in his twenties at the time, died in 1999 while still in prison, after suffering partial paralysis due to repeated torture. Kunchok Lodroe was released on medical parole in 1996.

On November 20, 1992, the group was transferred to Drapchi Prison. Thupten Yeshi was immediately placed in solitary confinement for reciting Mani prayers and refusing to “reform.” In February 1999, he developed severe renal problems and blisters all over his body, leading to a 17-day stay at Xizang Military Hospital near Drapchi. Despite not fully recovering, he was returned to prison in poor health. Thupten Yeshi was finally released in 2007 after completing his 15-year sentence.

MILITARY AND INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

China's leader has a new military secretary, state TV video of rocket force visit suggests

26 October 2024, [SCMP](#), Sylvie Zhuang

Signs are that Fang Yongxiang, 58, seen by Xi Jinping's side on at least two military visits, is the new CMC general office director

Xi Jinping appears to have a new military secretary, going by state footage of the Chinese president's recent inspection visits to People's Liberation Army units.

Lieutenant General Fang Yongxiang, 58, was part of the group accompanying Xi during his visit to an unspecified brigade of the elite PLA Rocket Force last week.

Footage released by state broadcaster CCTV on Saturday showed Fang standing at arm's length as Xi talked to several top commanders at the base in the southeastern province of Anhui.

A close-up shot showed Fang, along with General Zhang Youxia, China's most senior uniformed military official, to be the only two generals next to Xi not wearing the rocket force uniform.

Fang was also seen by Xi's side in CCTV footage of his visit in April to the Army Medical University in the southwestern city of Chongqing.

That clip showed Fang standing next to He Weidong, the second-ranked vice-chairman of the Central Military Commission (CMC), the body in charge of China's armed forces. Zhang is the first-ranked vice-chairman at the CMC, which is headed by Xi.

Fang is also an alternate member of the Communist Party's Central Committee, the country's top policymaking body.

Xi is generally accompanied on troop visits by his military secretary – the director of the CMC's general office, which oversees the commission's day-to-day operations.

Fang's inclusion in Xi's visit entourage suggests he is now CMC general office chief.

Personnel changes in the Chinese military are generally not officially announced and are only publicly confirmed much later than the actual appointments.

The role of military secretary was previously held by Zhong Shaojun, according to state media reports. CCTV footage of a military meeting in August showed Zhong seated with an armband bearing the logo of the National Defence University, the top PLA academy.

According to state news agency Xinhua, Fang was appointed a member of the PLA's election committee last month and will lead voting work for the entire military.

Fang is a native of Xiamen in Fujian, the southeastern province where Xi rose through the ranks in the 1980s and 90s.

Fang's military career started in 1989 after he graduated from the PLA's Army Infantry Academy. His career in Fujian overlapped Xi's time there by more than a decade.

Xi was appointed Xiamen's deputy mayor in 1985 and served as provincial governor from 1999 to 2002.

Fang started as a platoon leader and a company commander at the 31st Group Army, a division under the PLA's Eastern Theatre Command, which oversees the Taiwan Strait and the East China Sea.

He progressed through various leadership roles to become the 31st Group's political director and then a member of its core leadership standing committee in 2014.

He also led political and party work at the Eastern Theatre Command from 2015 to 2017, before being named Communist Party chief of the 81st Group Army Unit. The unit is a division under the PLA's Central Theatre Command headquartered in Beijing that protects the capital and supports the other four theatre commands.

In 2018, he was promoted to vice-minister at the newly set up Ministry for Veterans Affairs, a post he held until 2022.

In July that year Fang called on all veterans to oppose "the use of extreme moves to petition, and the staging of mass gatherings".

His comments at the ministry's first ever press conference came after several large-scale rallies by former servicemen and women seeking better retirement benefits. The ministry was established to better handle welfare for China's 57 million former armed forces personnel.

In 2022, Fang was made political commissar of the Southern Theatre Command, which covers key regions including the resource-rich and disputed South China Sea.

Xi Jinping Inspects Rocket Force Unit, Emphasizes Combat Readiness and Party Leadership

24 October 2024, [China Scope](#)

Xi Jinping, General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party, inspected a Rocket Force unit on the 17th, emphasizing the need to strengthen crisis awareness and combat readiness.

During his visit to a Rocket Force brigade in Hefei, Xi observed weapons equipment demonstrations and troop training exercises. In his remarks, Xi stressed maintaining absolute Party leadership over the military and ensuring troops follow orders from the Party Central Committee and Central Military Commission.

He also emphasized strengthening grass-roots Party organizations, investigating and dealing with corruption issues, enhancing combat preparedness

and operational capabilities, and adapting to modern warfare changes by focusing on new equipment, skills, and tactics.

The visit came shortly after China's "Joint Sword-2024B" military exercises near Taiwan on the 14th, and following Xi's inspection of Dongshan Island in Fujian province, a location with historical military significance in cross-strait relations. Vice Chairman of the Central Military Commission Zhang Youxia accompanied the inspection. The timing of these visits – to Dongshan Island and then the Rocket Force – appears significant given recent military activities in the region.

Border town in Xizang sees rapid growth in cross-border trade, tourism under favorable national policies

06 October 2024, [Bastille Post](#)

Benefiting from various favorable national policies, Gyirong, a charming Chinese town nestling in an area bordering Nepal, has witnessed rapid growth in cross-border trade and tourism, boosting local residents' income.

It is about 820 km west of Lhasa, capital of southwest China's Xizang Autonomous Region, and lies about 131 km from the Nepalese capital Kathmandu.

The Himalayas have cut open five north-south rift valleys in Xigaze under Xizang. The valley where Gyirong is located is the westernmost and longest of them all, stretching approximately 93 km.

The valley has served as a crucial transportation route between the hinterland of the Qinghai-Xizang Plateau and South Asia. Historically, it has functioned as a combination of an "official road" and a "commercial road."

In addition to its long history, the small town has undergone significant changes in the new era. Today, a land port has been built on the ancient commercial site.

In 1961, Gyirong port attained approval for opening. It was declared a second-class land port in 1972 and was upgraded to a national first-class land port in 1987. Thanks to the Belt and Road Initiative, the volume of border trade at the Gyirong port has steadily grown. In 2017, the port was designated as an international port, thereby allowing access to individuals from third countries besides China and Nepal.

During the week-long National Day holiday which started on Tuesday, the inbound and outbound passengers at the Gyirong port have significantly increased, with a noticeable rise in cross-border trade among border residents.

Dawa Phuntsog, who has been working at the Gyirong port for eight years, has noticed a significant surge in workload over the past two years.

"One aspect is that the volume of business has increased, and the other is that the personnel structure has become more diverse. Previously, it was only the border residents, and travelers from Nepal and other regions of China. After becoming an international port, there are more people from third countries besides China and Nepal. In terms of trade volume, there used to be mainly general merchandise. However, recently, with the export of new energy vehicles, highland drinking water, and some agricultural and sideline products, I think the variety has become more diverse," he said.

After graduating from her university, Nangsa chose to return to her hometown. She started by promoting her hometown through short videos on social platforms and then progressed to selling Nepalese products. As the pioneer of livestreaming e-commerce in Gyirong, she has transitioned the fervor of Sino-Nepalese border trade from offline to online. The source of income for villagers is becoming increasingly diversified.

Nangsa said that Xizang is a microcosm of China's achievements in construction and development, as well as a comprehensive window of Chinese modernization.

"Look at the development in Gyirong now, it's a microcosm of the country's opening up. I believe all of this signifies a more open, confident, and inclusive China," she said.

From January to August this year, the total import and export value in Xizang exceeded 7 billion yuan (about 1 billion U.S. dollars), with the Gyirong port surpassing 2.5 billion yuan (about 0.36 billion U.S. dollars).

China in the Region

China- Hong Kong

Hong Kong inmate denied early release under security law ‘treated unfairly’, court told

22 October 2024, [SCMP](#), Brian Wong

Adam Ma’s lawyers argue in court that Correctional Services Department failed to provide timely reasons in support of decision

A Hong Kong man convicted of inciting secession has complained of procedural unfairness over the prison service’s refusal to grant him early release under the domestic national security law.

Adam Ma Chun-man’s lawyers said on Tuesday that the Correctional Services Department had failed to provide timely reasons in support of a decision on March 23 this year to deny him a good behaviour reduction on his five-year sentence.

They told a High Court hearing their client was only given a day to consider whether he would make any “representation” over the decision made by the commissioner of correctional services under the Safeguarding National Security Ordinance.

It was only after Ma filed a written statement on March 25 that he received a prison committee’s “summary of consideration” in relation to the refusal, the court heard.

Ma, a former food delivery worker, has lodged an application for judicial review asking the court to order his immediate release from Tong Fuk Correctional Institution on Lantau Island.

The prison service has denied Ma early discharge on the grounds that a contrary decision would not be in the nation’s interests.

As a general rule, a prisoner’s sentence can be cut by a third for good conduct while in custody.

But the ordinance, mandated under Article 23 of the Basic Law, the city’s mini-constitution, stipulates that a prisoner convicted of national security offences “must not be granted remission” unless the commissioner is satisfied the move will not compromise national security.

A prison committee tasked with assessing inmates convicted of a national security offence concluded that “no information shows that if remission is granted to Mr Ma, he will not be detrimental to national security”.

It said it had considered Ma’s behaviour in jail, rehabilitation progress and psychological assessment. It noted that he “was not enthusiastic in participating in rehabilitation programmes” and “would not reveal his genuine feelings”.

The department’s Superintendent Lo Ho-kuen, who was called to testify in court over the circumstances of Ma’s complaint, said an English summary of the

committee's explanation was available as early as March 23, the day the ordinance took effect.

Lo acknowledged that he made no attempt to ask his supervisor for a copy for Ma's reference and opted to deliver the decision to the inmate verbally the same day.

"I did not ask [my supervisor] in that way, as it was not required of me," Lo said.

He said Ma appeared emotionally disturbed by being denied early release, and the department decided to send him to hospital fearing "something might happen that night".

But the superintendent maintained the prisoner was still capable of filing a complaint against the decision despite a lack of any reference material.

Steven Kwan Man-wai, for Ma, argued the decision was in breach of his client's legitimate expectations for early release, as he was told verbally as early as February he could leave jail on March 25.

Kwan also highlighted the department's "practice" of granting one-third remission to prisoners in general unless disciplinary offences were committed while behind bars.

That contention failed to convince Mr Justice Alex Lee Wan-tang, who is among the few jurists hand-picked by the city leader to adjudicate national security cases. Lee pointed to a lack of evidence suggesting the department routinely reduced prisoners' sentences without thorough consideration.

He noted the commissioner "simply had no power" to refer a national security offender's case to a statutory supervision board under the Security Bureau for consideration of early release if the required threshold was not met.

The judge also stressed he could not substitute himself for the commissioner in making decisions on national security threats.

The hearing continues on Wednesday.

Ma, known as the "second-generation Captain America" for dressing as the Marvel character in anti-government protests, was convicted and jailed for promoting Hong Kong independence through the chanting of slogans in public and in media interviews. The act is banned by the national security law imposed by Beijing in June 2020, which also criminalises subversion, terrorism and collusion with foreign forces.

Beijing urges HSBC to keep backing mainland China and Hong Kong's development push

19 October 2024, [SCMP](#), Jeffie Lam

Xia Baolong, Beijing's point man on Hong Kong affairs, issues call in meeting with HSBC group chairman Mark Tucker

Beijing's point man on Hong Kong affairs has called on HSBC to continue contributing to both the country's development and the financial hub's economy in a meeting with group chairman Mark Tucker in the nation's capital.

Xia Baolong, director of the Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office (HKMAO), praised the financial services giant for its optimism towards the development of the country in the Friday meeting. He also underscored Beijing's support for maintaining Hong Kong's "unique status and strengths".

Britain's foreign secretary, David Lammy, started his two-day visit to the country on the same day, calling for dialogue to fully resume between London and Beijing.

In the Friday discussion, which was also attended by HKMAO executive deputy director Zhou Ji, Xia called on HSBC to continue to play to its strengths, actively participate in the country's high-quality development and opening-up, and contribute to Hong Kong's prosperity.

"Xia emphasised it is China's long-standing national policy to ensure the comprehensive, accurate and unswerving implementation of the 'one country, two systems' governing principle," the office said.

"The central government will always fully support Hong Kong in maintaining its unique status and strengths, maintain a free, open and regularised business environment and create better conditions for enterprises from different countries and regions to develop in Hong Kong."

Peter Wong Tung-shun, non-executive chairman of the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation, and David Liao, co-chief executive of HSBC Asia-Pacific, were among those in the delegation led by Tucker.

Lau Siu-kai, a consultant at Beijing's semi-official think tank, the Chinese Association of Hong Kong and Macau Studies, said the meeting was part of the central government's bid to help attract and retain foreign companies that do business in the city amid heightened geopolitical tensions.

"The United States and some European countries have been calling on Western companies not to invest in Hong Kong," Lau said. "Beijing wants to send a strong message that Hong Kong remains a good place for business and that the political changes over the past few years should not be a deterrent."

He added that the timing reinforced Xia's message as the meeting coincided with the visit by Lammy, who said engagement with China was "pragmatic and necessary".

Last November, Xia also met British-owned conglomerate Swire Group in Shenzhen, praising it for its long-term presence in Hong Kong and its support for one country, two systems.

He similarly urged the company to contribute to the country's development.

Chief Executive John Lee Ka-chiu at the time lauded Xia's meeting with Swire, saying it would help improve understanding regarding policy directions and help to encourage investment.

China heightens surveillance in Hong Kong; critics and citizens on alert

10 October 2024, [ANI](#)

Hong Kong city's police have started a campaign under which the authorities would install thousands of cameras in the city to elevate their surveillance capabilities.

Despite consistently being ranked among the world's safest big cities, police in Hong Kong have cited crime as the reason for deeper penetration of CCTVs in the city which critics believe have the possibility of being equipped with powerful facial recognition and artificial intelligence tools, CNN reported. Hong Kong police had previously set a target of installing 2,000 new surveillance cameras this year, and eventually increasing the number over the years. CNN noted that the police in Hong Kong aim to eventually introduce facial recognition to these cameras, security chief Chris Tang told local media in July - adding that police could use AI in the future to track down suspects. In a statement to CNN, the Hong Kong Police Force said it was studying how police in other countries use surveillance cameras, including how they use AI. But it's not clear how many of the new cameras may have facial recognition capabilities, or whether there's a timeline for when the tech will be introduced.

Hong Kong held disruptive protests in 2019 to complain about the Chinese mainland government interfering with the freedoms of the city and tightening measures under the garb of national security. The new laws brought in place have been used to jail activists, journalists and political opponents, and target civil society groups and outspoken media outlets. Fears of mainland-style surveillance and policing caused notable angst during the 2019 protests, which broadened to encompass many Hong Kongers' fears that the central Chinese government would encroach on the city's limited autonomy. Justifying the attempt to increase surveillance in Hong Kong, the local newspapers said that Hong Kong saw 3 per cent increase in crime in the country. In their statement, police told CNN the new cameras would only monitor public places and delete footage after 31 days. They will follow existing personal data privacy laws, as well as "comprehensive and robust internal guidelines," police said, without elaborating on what those guidelines entailed. Chinese government is known for its surveillance

actions that have often been used to disrupt critics of the Chinese Communist Party. Despite the CCP routinely assuring that technology will not be misused, it has been time and again seen to be used in more repressive ways, with Xinjiang, a Muslim-majority Uyghur population area of China being routinely surveyed with invasive technologies. (ANI)

Hong Kong and mainland China broaden trade agreement to support local firms' expansion across border

10 October 2024, [HKPF](#), Hillary Leung

The expansion of a trade services deal under the Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement (CEPA) will benefit Hong Kong's role as an international finance and commercial centre, said the New People's Party.

Hong Kong has broadened a trade agreement with China, a move that will help local firms in sectors such as tourism and banking expand into the mainland market.

Financial Secretary Paul Chan and China's Ministry of Commerce representative Li Yongjie signed an agreement on Wednesday to expand a trade services deal under the Mainland and Hong Kong Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement (CEPA).

The expansion introduces "new liberalisation measures" such as relaxing qualification requirements for Hong Kong professionals, as well as easing restrictions on the export of services to the mainland Chinese market.

The measures cover around half a dozen sectors including financial services, telecommunications, television and tourism, and come as Hong Kong's economy continues to lag behind the pre-pandemic era.

"The further liberalisation measures under the CEPA Amendment Agreement will enable Hong Kong firms and professional sectors to go into the mainland market a lot easier," Chan told reporters after the signing ceremony.

Businesses are keen to expand into the mainland, Chan said, adding that the agreement would create a "very positive impact on Hong Kong."

Under the expanded arrangement, which will come into effect next March, television dramas produced in Hong Kong can be broadcast during prime time in mainland China upon approval. In the financial services sector, Hong Kong financial institutions will no longer have to meet the asset requirement of US\$2 billion before investing in shares of insurance companies across the border.

'Breakthroughs'

Signed in 2003, free trade deal CEPA aimed at promoting joint economic prosperity in Hong Kong and mainland China through strengthening trade cooperation across industries. An agreement on the trading of services was made in 2016.

Under CEPA, Hong Kong and mainland China do not apply tariffs to each other's exports of services. They also encourage mutual recognition of professional qualifications and promote the exchange of talent.

Before the latest amendment, the most recent modifications were made in 2019, when authorities on both sides agreed to liberalisation measures in sectors such as financial services, legal services and film.

Wednesday's announcement on the further expansion was welcomed by industry groups and political parties, who said it would give Hong Kong firms greater access to the mainland market.

"The amendment not only provides greater development opportunity for Hong Kong's strategic service industries but also further integrates the Greater Bay Area," the Federation of Hong Kong Industries' chairperson Steve Chuang said in a statement.

Regina Ip, the chairperson of the pro-Beijing New People's Party, said there were several "breakthroughs" in the amendment. She highlighted the scrapping of a rule requiring companies to have at least three years of experience to qualify for benefits under CEPA, as well as the lifting of restrictions for Hong Kong films.

The new amendment will significantly benefit Hong Kong's role as a financial, commercial and professional services centre, the party's statement read.

Hong Kong plans to install thousands of surveillance cameras. Critics say it's more proof the city is moving closer to China

05 October 2024, [CNN](#), Jessie Yeung

Glance up while strolling through parts of downtown Hong Kong and, chances are, you'll notice the glassy black lens of a surveillance camera trained on the city's crowded streets.

And that sight will become more common in the coming years, as the city's police pursue an ambitious campaign to install thousands of cameras to elevate their surveillance capabilities.

Though it consistently ranks among the world's safest big cities, police in the Asian financial hub say the new cameras are needed to fight crime – and have raised the possibility of equipping them with powerful facial recognition and artificial intelligence tools.

That's sparked alarm among some experts who see it as taking Hong Kong one step closer to the pervasive surveillance systems of mainland China, warning of the technology's repressive potential.

Hong Kong police had previously set a target of installing 2,000 new surveillance cameras this year, and potentially more than that each subsequent year. The force plans to eventually introduce facial recognition to these cameras, security chief Chris Tang told local media in July – adding that police could use AI in the future to track down suspects.

In a statement to CNN, the Hong Kong Police Force said it was studying how police in other countries use surveillance cameras, including how they use AI. But it's not clear how many of the new cameras may have facial recognition capabilities, or whether there's a timeline for when the tech will be introduced.

Tang and the Hong Kong police have repeatedly pointed to other jurisdictions, including Western democracies, that also make wide use of surveillance cameras for law enforcement. For instance, Singapore has 90,000 cameras and the United Kingdom has more than seven million, Tang told local newspaper Sing Tao Daily in June.

While some of those places, like the UK, have started using facial recognition cameras, experts say these early experiments have highlighted the need for careful regulation and privacy protections. Hong Kong police told CNN they would "comply with relevant laws" and follow strong internal guidelines – but haven't elaborated in depth on what that would look like.

And, some critics say, what sets Hong Kong apart from other places is its political environment – which has seen an ongoing crackdown on political dissent, as it draws closer to authoritarian mainland China.

Following unprecedented and often violent anti-government protests that rocked the city in 2019, local and central authorities imposed sweeping national security laws that have been used to jail activists, journalists and political opponents, and target civil society groups and outspoken media outlets.

Hong Kong's leaders have said the laws are needed to restore stability after the protests in the nominally semi-autonomous city, and argue their legislation is similar to other national security laws around the world.

"The difference is how the technology is being used," said Samantha Hoffman, a nonresident fellow at the National Bureau of Asian Research who has studied China's use of technology for security and propaganda. Places like the United States and the UK may have problems with how they implement that technology, too – but "this is fundamentally different... It has to do specifically with the system of government, as well as the way that the party state... uses the law to maintain its own power," said Hoffman.

What this means for Hong Kong

Hong Kong has more than 54,500 public CCTV cameras used by government bodies – about seven cameras

per 1,000 people, according to an estimate by Comparitech, a UK-based technology research firm.

That puts it about on par with New York City and still far behind London (13 per 1,000 people), but nowhere near mainland Chinese cities, which average about 440 cameras per 1,000 people.

Fears of mainland-style surveillance and policing caused notable angst during the 2019 protests, which broadened to encompass many Hong Kongers' fears that the central Chinese government would encroach on the city's limited autonomy.

Protesters on the streets covered their faces with masks and goggles to prevent identification, at times smashing or covering security cameras. At one point, they tore down a "smart" lamp post, even though Hong Kong authorities said it was only meant to collect data on traffic, weather and pollution.

At the time, activist and student leader Joshua Wong – who is now in prison on charges related to his activism and national security – said, "Can the Hong Kong government ensure that they will never install facial recognition tactics into the smart lamp post? ... They can't promise it and they won't because of the pressure from Beijing."

Across the border, the model of surveillance that protesters feared is ubiquitous – with China often celebrating the various achievements of its real-time facial recognition algorithms, and exporting surveillance technology to countries around the world.

According to an analysis by Comparitech, eight of the top 10 most surveilled cities in the world per capita are in China, where facial recognition is an inescapable part of daily life – from the facial scans required to register a new phone number, to facial recognition gates in some subway stations.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the government mandated a QR "health code" to track people's health status, which in some places required facial scans.

But the technology has also been used in more repressive ways.

In the far-western region of Xinjiang, Beijing has used cameras to monitor members of the Muslim-majority Uyghur population. And when unprecedented nationwide protests broke out in late 2022 against the government's strict Covid policies, police used facial recognition along with other sophisticated surveillance tools to track down protesters, The New York Times found.

"(China's) public security surveillance systems ... tend to track lists of particular people, maybe people with a history of mental illness or participation in protests, and make a note of people who are marked as being troublesome in some way," Hoffman said.

The systems then "track those specific people across the city and across its surveillance network."

"I think it's fair to anticipate that the use of CCTV and facial recognition technology in Hong Kong will begin to look a lot like those in mainland China over time," she said.

Hong Kong police have argued the cameras help fight crime, pointing to a pilot program earlier this year of 15 cameras installed in one district. Already, those cameras have provided evidence and clues for at least six crimes, Tang told Sing Tao Daily – and police will prioritize high-risk or high-crime areas for the remaining cameras.

The first five months of this year saw 3% more crimes than the same period last year, Sing Tao reported.

In their statement, police told CNN the new cameras would only monitor public places and delete footage after 31 days. They will follow existing personal data privacy laws, as well as "comprehensive and robust internal guidelines," police said, without elaborating on what those guidelines entailed.

When considering AI-equipped cameras, "the police will definitely comply with relevant laws," the force added.

But several experts interviewed by CNN cast doubt on whether those existing laws, written decades ago with broad exemptions for police, will be enough.

Steve Tsang, director of the SOAS China Institute at the University of London, warned that the new cameras could be "used for political repression" if they are employed under the "draconian" national security law. Unless authorities assure the public that the cameras won't be used for that purpose, "this is likely to be a further step in making Hong Kong law enforcement closer to how it is done on the Chinese mainland," he said.

How to regulate facial recognition

Other experts argued it's far too soon to say what the impact will be in Hong Kong, since authorities have not laid out in detail how they would use the technology.

"Hong Kong law doesn't, in all measures, mirror what happens in mainland China," said Normann Witzleb, an associate professor in data protection and privacy at the Chinese University of Hong Kong,

But that's why it's all the more important for authorities to address a raft of yet-unanswered questions, he said.

For instance, it remains unclear whether Hong Kong will deploy live facial recognition that constantly scans the environment, or whether the tech will only be applied to past footage when certain crimes occur or when legal authorization is granted.

Witzleb also raised the question of who would have the power to authorize the use of facial recognition, and what situations may warrant it. Would it be used to prosecute crime and locate suspects, for example – or for other public safety measures like identifying missing people?

And, Witzleb added, will police run the technology through their existing image databases, or use it more broadly with images held by other public authorities, or even publicly available imagery of anyone?

“It’s important to design guidelines for those systems that take proper recognition of the potential benefits that they have, but that also acknowledge they’re not foolproof, and that they have the potential to interfere with (people’s) rights in serious ways,” Witzleb said.

Regardless of how facial recognition might be used, both Hoffman and Witzleb said the presence of that technology and the increased number of security cameras may make Hong Kongers feel less free under the ever-watchful eye of the police.

“When you feel like you’re being monitored, that affects your behavior and your feelings of freedom as well,” Hoffman said. “I think that there’s an element of state coercion that doesn’t need to have to do with the effectiveness of the technology itself.”

Amnesty International recognizes three activists as prisoners of conscience

02 October 2024, [Amnesty International](#)

Amnesty International today designated three prominent human rights defenders from Hong Kong and mainland China as prisoners of conscience.

Human rights lawyers Chow Hang-tung and Ding Jiaxi, along with the free media advocate Jimmy Lai, are all currently imprisoned solely because of their peaceful human rights activism. Amnesty International has called for their immediate release.

“As the Chinese government touts progress on its **measures to promote human rights**, the stories of these three human rights defenders demonstrate a starkly different reality inside the country,” said Sarah Brooks, Amnesty International’s China Director.

“Meeting with diplomats; discussing politics; complaining about unfair treatment in police custody; talking with friends over dinner: these are all things that can get you jailed in today’s China.

“The ongoing detentions of Chow, Ding and Lai demonstrate the continuing failure of the authorities in China to uphold their international obligations, and their prosecution lays bare the cowardice of state officials who cannot accept criticism, whether from international experts or from their own citizens.”

Jimmy Lai and **Chow Hang-tung** have both been targeted amidst a broader dismantling of human rights and civic space in Hong Kong since the introduction of a Beijing-imposed National Security Law (NSL) in 2020. **Ding Jiaxi**, as with many human rights defenders in mainland China, is the direct victim of the authorities’ overly broad and vague ‘national security-related’ laws that justify convictions in secret trials and lengthy jail sentences.

Amnesty International considers a prisoner of conscience to be any person imprisoned solely because of their political, religious or other conscientiously held beliefs, their ethnic origin, sex, colour, language, national or social origin, socio-economic status, birth, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or other status, and who has not used violence or advocated violence or hatred in the circumstances leading to their detention.

Jimmy Lai

Nearly 200 police raided Lai’s Apple Daily newspaper shortly after the NSL was enacted. He was arrested along with several newspaper executives, and eventually charged with “colluding with foreign forces” under the NSL, and with sedition. Apple Daily closed in June 2021 following another police raid and the freezing of its assets, in what Amnesty International called a “flagrant attack on press freedom”.

Lai faces a maximum sentence of life imprisonment in his ongoing national security trial. Hong Kong courts have already convicted Lai on four separate cases involving “unauthorized assemblies”, for his engagement in peaceful protest – including attending a Tiananmen Square vigil. He has also been prosecuted for alleged “fraud”; as a result, Lai is already serving combined prison sentences which will see him spend nearly seven years unjustly behind bars.

Lai, who will turn 77 in December, has reportedly been held in solitary confinement, and there are serious concerns about his health, especially following the cancellation of his appearance in court in early June 2024. Those concerns are exacerbated by the lengthy delays in his NSL trial; begun in December 2023. After a long adjournment, it is currently expected to continue in November 2024.

Chow Hang-tung

Chow was charged in 2020 for participating in a peaceful vigil commemorating protesters killed in the 1989 Tiananmen crackdown, and charged again in 2021 after she asked people on social media to light candles in memory of the victims. She was jailed for 22 months for daring to commemorate their lives.

Chow also faces a potential 10-year prison sentence for “inciting subversion” under the NSL over her role as former leader of the Hong Kong Alliance in Support of Patriotic Democratic Movements of China, which organized the city’s annual Tiananmen candlelight vigil for 30 years.

By designating Chow, Lai and Ding as prisoners of conscience, we stand with all those unjustly detained for saying out loud what they believe to be true.

Sarah Brooks

Despite her imprisonment, Chow has continued to use her legal knowledge to defend rights, including in 2022 to secure the lifting of reporting restrictions on bail hearings. Most recently, Chow mounted a legal

challenge to rules that require women – but not men – to wear long trousers year-round in Hong Kong prisons, where temperatures regularly exceed 30 degrees Celsius in summer. In the past, Chow has suffered retaliation for such advocacy, including repeated periods of solitary confinement.

“Amnesty International and many others have highlighted the dangerous human rights flaws in the Hong Kong’s National Security Law. But rather than taking steps to repeal the law, the Hong Kong government has instead doubled down by ramming through an equally-repressive local national security legislation (referred to as ‘Article 23’) in March of this year – increasing jail times for peaceful activism, even if it happens outside Hong Kong or mainland China,” Sarah Brooks said.

Ding Jiayi

Ding was sentenced to 12 years in prison for “subverting state power” in April 2023. He is one of dozens of lawyers and activists targeted after attending an informal gathering held in the city of Xiamen in 2019, at which they discussed current affairs in China. Activist and legal scholar Xu Zhiyong, who had also attended the meeting, was sentenced to 14 years by the same court on the same charges.

Ding was held incommunicado, including in “residential surveillance at a designated location”, for more than a year after being taken away on 26 December 2019. He was subjected to torture and other ill-treatment during detention, including long hours of interrogation and being bound to an iron “tiger-chair” with his limbs contorted for more than 10 hours per day for many days. For nearly four years, from his initial detention until his transfer to prison following his sentencing, Ding was not allowed access to pen and paper.

He reportedly faces serious restrictions in prison, including the withdrawal of “yard time”. His right to communication is strictly limited to letters from direct family members, telephone calls are prohibited and he has limited access to reading materials.

“As part of its strategy to avoid scrutiny, the Chinese government routinely justifies ruthless repression – and rebuts efforts to hold authorities accountable for it – by describing it merely as ‘internal affairs’. This is why the stories of Jimmy Lai, Chow Hang-tung and Ding Jiayi are so important. Theirs are the ‘internal affairs’ the Chinese authorities tell us don’t deserve attention, dignity or justice,” Sarah Brooks said.

“By designating Chow, Lai and Ding as prisoners of conscience, we stand with all those unjustly detained for saying out loud what they believe to be true. All three – along with the many others imprisoned in Hong Kong and mainland China solely for their beliefs – must be immediately and unconditionally released.”

China- Nepal

Nepal opens Lomanthang to all citizens travelling to Chinese ruled Tibet

30 October 2024, [Tibetan Review](#)

Nepal has opened on Oct 30 a new immigration office at Lomanthang Rural Municipality-1, Nechung, of Mustang district in the Gandaki Province, to help streamline cross-border travel and operations at Korala Dry Port, reported the *kathmandupost.com* Oct 29 and 30.

Lomanthang, or Lo, the northern two-thirds of Mustang district, is culturally and linguistically Tibetan, while the southern third is called Thak, the homeland of Thakali people who speak a different language and have a synthesis of Tibetan and Nepalese culture. It is 20 kilometres (12 miles) by unpaved road from a border crossing into Drongpa (Chinese: Zhongba) County of Shigatse City, Tibet.

The Nepalese Department of Immigration requires foreign visitors to Lomanthang to obtain a special permit and liaison (guide) to protect local tradition from outside influence as well as to protect their environment.

Previously, only Mustang locals with permits issued by the District Administration Office could cross the Korala border for trade. The new office now allows easier access for all Nepali citizens intending to travel through this point, the report said.

Inaugurating the new immigration office at Korala, Nepal’s Home Minister Ramesh Lekhak has expressed optimism that the initiation will strengthen Nepal’s bilateral ties with China.

“The immigration facility will be instrumental in easing the movement of citizens and fostering bilateral trade, further cementing the bond between Nepal and China,” Lekhak has said.

The inauguration followed the installation of a prefabricated 10-room immigration and security post at the border, equipped with electricity, internet, and mobile phone connectivity. The government has extended the central transmission line to Korala and provided Nepal Telecom’s internet services, the report said.

The Chinese side has also constructed essential infrastructure, including customs facilities, quarantine areas, accommodations, a laboratory, and truck parking. These facilities aim to enhance efficiency at the Korala dry port, for which the Nepal Intermodal Transport Development Board has prepared a detailed project report for further development, the report said.

Located at an altitude of 4,650 metres, the Korala border was officially inaugurated on Nov 13 last year

in a joint ceremony between Mustang's Chief District Officer and an official from Shigatse City. Expansion of trade activities in this border has been deemed a landmark step towards economic prosperity by connecting with both northern and southern trade routes, the report said.

The report also said that following the commencement of the operation of the Korala border point, Nepal, India and China trade can now be operated through this route as well.

The Kaligandaki Corridor that reaches up to the Korala border point is connected with Siddhartha Highway in Syngja district and the road ends at the Sunauli border point with India in Rupandehi district. The route from Nepal-India border point at Sunauli to Nepal-Tibet border point at Korala through Siddhartha Highway and Kaligandaki corridor is taken as a possible alternative trilateral trade route between the three countries, the report said.

Nepal entrusts China to print Rs 100 notes with map laying claim over Indian territory

29 October 2024, [Tibetan Review](#)

Nepal under Prime Minister KPS Oli appears to be making common cause with China on its territorial dispute with India by awarding the contract for the printing of its controversial new Rs 100 note to a Chinese company. Oli is seen as the most pro-China Nepali leader and has in the past taken potshots at India as if to make that point.

Nepal has been laying claim over three Indian territories in the Indian state of Uttarakhand in the recent past – Limpiyadhura-Kalapani-Lipulekh. And its claim over the Limpiyadhura Pass area arises from its claim over Kalapani. The disputed area, a 370-square-kilometre stretch situated to the northwestern corner of Nepal, has been administered by India for hundreds of years.

The area is currently administration as part of Pithoragarh district in the Kumaon Division of the Uttarakhand state. However, Nepal has been claiming it since 1997, saying it lies within its Darchula district, Sudurpashchim Province.

Nepal added these regions to its map via a constitutional amendment in 2020, though they have been under Indian control for over 200 years, noted [zeenews.india.com](#) Oct 29. Nepal shares a border of over 1,800 km with five Indian states – Sikkim, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and West Bengal.

Oli's cabinet recently approved the inclusion of its new map with these three Indian territories on its new currency note of Nepali Rs 100. The printing of the notes will test Kathmandu's relations with India, the report noted.

The contract for printing the new currency notes has been awarded to China Banknote Printing and Minting Corporation. Nepal's central bank – Nepal Rashtira Bank – has issued its letter of intent to the Chinese firm on Oct 27, the report said.

Amid this development, Oli is planning to pay an official visit to China between mid-November and mid-December, though China is yet to extend an official invitation to him, the report said.

In Nepal's frequently changing alignment of parties in constant jostling for power, Oli assumed his fourth tenure as Prime Minister of Nepal in mid-July.

Oli held a meeting with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) in New York last month. During the meeting, he extended an invitation to Modi to visit Nepal, the report said.

Oli's Communist Party of Nepal (UML) is a coalition partner with Nepali Congress, which is seen as pro-India.

China lays claim to territories across much of India's northern borders with Tibet which the former annexed in 1951 through armed aggression.

Nepal's claim is based on the Sugauli Treaty signed with British East India Company in 1815. Under it, the India-western Nepal border is marked by the course of the Kali River, called the Mahakali downstream. But there was no map attached to it.

The Mahakali has two tributaries—one starting at Lipulekh and the other at Limpiyadhura further west. The treaty did not specify which of these two tributaries would be considered the Kali for the purpose of delineating the boundary. India says the Kali starts at Lipulekh, while Nepal says Limpiyadhura is the river's source, noted a [Kathmandupost.com](#) report Jun 4, 2020.

China-aided public welfare projects handed over to Nepal's community

25 October 2024, [Xinhua](#)

A solar-powered community bathroom and a rooftop photovoltaic power generation facility constructed in the Kathmandu Valley with Chinese aid were handed over to the local community on Friday.

The bathroom in Lalitpur, a city in the valley, has hot water generated by solar energy and three shower rooms for males and females, respectively, and can accommodate some 100 people per day.

The bathroom is described as a sustainable development project, as the waste water is filtered for storage to flush bathroom toilets, a shop serving customers generates income, and job opportunities are created.

The rooftop photovoltaic power generation facility nearby has 36 kilowatts in total installed capacity and

is expected to generate around 60,000 kWh of electricity per year, providing green power to the bathroom and the community.

Addressing the handover ceremony, Lalitpur Mayor Chiri Babu Maharjan expressed his gratitude for "this state-of-the-art" bathroom facility.

"Thank you very much for your good assistance and support," he said. "Hopefully, there will be a lot of avenues where we can work together."

Insufficient water supply and frequent power outage are challenges facing the Kathmandu Valley and other parts of Nepal.

The community bathroom is the first under the "Happy Community" program launched by the Chinese Embassy in Nepal, noted Ambassador Chen Song.

The two projects were constructed under the public welfare program implemented by the Yunnan Commercial Representative Office in Kathmandu, Nepal.

The Chinese side is confident that it can implement more of such small yet smart people-centered programs which are popular with the Nepali people, Chen said at the handover ceremony.

In addition, the Chinese side has launched poverty reduction projects in rural Nepal, including cultivating vegetables in greenhouses, making clean drinking water available at schools and installing solar streetlights, added the ambassador.

CPC holds meeting of Nepali political parties, PM Oli reiterates 'no anti-China activities' stand

21 October 2024, [Tibetan Review](#)

After a slowdown in activity for quite some time, the Communist Party of China (CPC) has resumed high-level visits to Nepal and received reassurance from Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli on Oct 20 that no 'anti-China activities' will be allowed in the country, reported the *kathmandupost.com* and the *PTI* news agency Oct 20.

Controversially, a CPC delegation has called a meeting of Nepali political parties having presence in the country's parliament without bothering to seek Kathmandu's permission.

The assurance was given as a reaffirmation of the Himalayan nation's commitment to China's 'One China' policy, said the *PTI* report.

The 'One China' policy usually refers to China's claim that there is only one China and Taiwan is part of it as a way to counter the latter's increasingly strident claim to be a separate sovereign entity. China claims that Taiwan is part of it and makes it mandatory for all the countries having diplomatic ties with it to follow the 'One China' policy.

However, in Nepal, the policy is more distinctively observed by cracking down on the Tibetan refugee community whenever it engages in any activity not approved by China. Besides, around 20,000 Tibetan refugees in the country have remained undocumented for decades as a result of pressure from China.

Oli, Chairman of the CPN (UML) and seen as the most pro-China leader of Nepal, has made the remarks in a meeting with a high-level Chinese delegation led by Chen Jining, a member of the Communist Party of China Central Committee. The meeting took place at his official residence in Baluwatar, Kathmandu.

Reaffirming Nepal's commitment to the 'One China' policy, Oli told the visiting delegation that no anti-China activities would be allowed to operate within Nepal's territory, the report said.

Oli has also expressed hopes for continued support from China for Nepal's economic development. He has underscored the role of the CPC and President Xi Jinping's leadership in "alleviating poverty and driving holistic development in China" and expressed Nepal's interest in benefiting from such advancements.

Chen, who is also the Secretary of the CPC Qinghai Provincial Committee, has reiterated China's support for Nepal's "happiness and prosperity", adding Beijing will always respect decisions made by Nepal's political parties.

Chen's delegation was stated to include Peng Xiubin, director-general of International Department of CPC (IDCPC); Wang Zhizhong, director-general of Foreign Affairs Office (FAO), CPC Qinghai Provincial Committee; Liu Chang, deputy director-general of FAO, CPC Qinghai Provincial Committee; Zheng Dengke, director of Policy Research Office, CPC Qinghai Provincial Committee; Du DU Xiaoli, director of FAO, CPC Qinghai Provincial Committee; Zheng Youya, deputy director and Nepali Translator at IDCPC; Wang Siqi, deputy director at IDCPC; and Chen Yongpei, first-level principal staff member of IDCPC.

* * *

Chen's delegation had arrived in Kathmandu on Oct 19. Until that day, Zhang Meizhi, member of the Standing Committee of the 14th National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China, and vice chairperson of the Standing Committee of Hebei Provincial People's Congress (Vice Minister Level), was in Kathmandu, said the *kathmandupost.com* report.

The former arrived in Kathmandu on the day the latter left the country, the report said.

The Chen's CPC delegation was stated to have invited at least 15 leaders each from all Nepali political parties that were represented in the country's House of Representatives on Oct 20 to brief them about the outcome of the recent CPC Central Committee meeting held in Beijing.

Fourteen political parties are represented in Nepal's 275-strong House of Representatives and the

delegations' visits were meant to strengthen party-to-party relationships between the two sides.

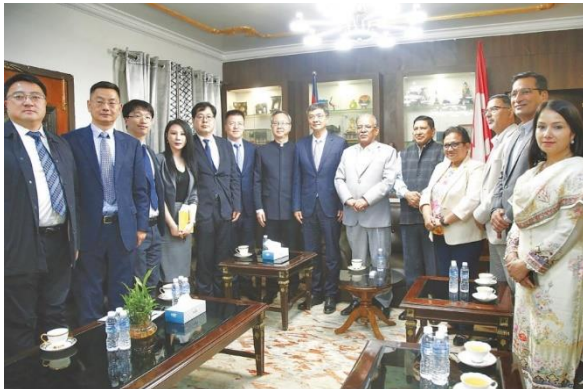
The Chinese side did not seek permission to hold the event, but informed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs about its plan to host the function, to be inaugurated by Narayan Dahal, chairman of the National Assembly, who was invited as the chief guest at the function, the report cited a ministry official as saying.

The 20th Central Committee of the CPC had convened its third plenary session in Beijing from Jul 15 to 18 earlier this year.

Chen had started meeting with top Nepali political leaders soon after his arrival, including Nepali Congress President Sher Bahadur Deuba and CPN (Maoist Centre) Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal, the report said.

Chinese leaders meet top party leaders in Kathmandu

20 October 2024, [The Kathmandu Post](#)



Maoist Centre Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal is flanked by party leaders and the Chinese delegation at his residence in Khumaltar on Saturday. Photo: Dahal's secretariat

The CPC delegation will brief Nepali party leaders on the 3rd Plenary Session of the 20th CPC Central Committee.

After a slowdown in activity for quite some time, the Communist Party of China has resumed high-level visits to Nepal.

A delegation led by members of the CPC Central Committee and Chen Gang, who is also the secretary of CPC Qinghai Provincial Committee, arrived in Kathmandu on Saturday.

Until Saturday, Zhang Meizhi, member of the Standing Committee of the 14th National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China, and vice chairperson of the Standing Committee of Hebei Provincial People's Congress (Vice Minister Level), was in Kathmandu.

The day Zhang left for China, Chen arrived in Kathmandu. Zhang met with Deputy Speaker Indira Rana Magar and went to Pokhara, according to security sources.

Rajendra Gautam, head of publicity department of the CPN-UML, and Chinese Ambassador to Nepal Chen Song, among others, received the Chinese delegation at Tribhuvan International Airport.

The CPC delegation led by Chen will brief the Nepali party leaders about the 3rd Plenary Session of the 20th CPC Central Committee on Sunday in Kathmandu, according to the itinerary. The IDCPC and CPC Qinghai Provincial Committee plan to co-host the briefing on the 3rd Plenary Session of the 20th CPC Central Committee at 14:30 pm on Sunday, at the Hotel Yak and Yeti in Kathmandu, said the invitation letter sent out to the various political parties that are represented at the Federal Parliament of Nepal.

Narayan Dahal, chairman of the National Assembly, is invited as chief guest at the function.

According to the security sources, apart from Chen, the delegation includes Penng Xiubin, director-general of International Department of CPC (IDCPC); Wang Zhizhong, director-general of Foreign Affairs Office (FAO), CPC Qinghai Provincial Committee; Liu Chang, deputy director-general of FAO, CPC Qinghai Provincial Committee; Zheng Dengke, director of Policy Research Office, CPC Qinghai Provincial Committee; Du DU Xiaoli, director of FAO, CPC Qinghai Provincial Committee; Zheng Youya, deputy director and Nepali Translator at IDCPC; Wang Siqi, deputy director at IDCPC; and Chen Yongpei, first-level principal staff member of IDCPC.

The CPC has invited at least 15 leaders each from all Nepali political parties that are represented in the House of Representatives in a rare party briefing on Sunday to brief about the outcome of the recent party meeting held in Beijing.

Fourteen political parties are represented in Nepal's 275-strong House of Representatives.

The Chinese side did not seek permission to hold the event but informed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs about its plan to host the function to be inaugurated by Dahal, according to a ministry official. The 20th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China convened its third plenary session in Beijing from July 15 to 18 earlier this year.

Soon after Chen arrived in Kathmandu on Saturday, he started meeting with top political leaders, including Nepali Congress President Sher Bahadur Deuba and CPN (Maoist Centre) Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal. Shankar Pokhrel, general secretary of the CPN-UML, organised a dinner in honour of the visiting Chinese leaders on Saturday evening.

On Sunday, Chen and the Chinese delegation will meet Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli at his residence in Baluwatar and will brief Nepali leaders on the outcome of the recently held CPC's plenary session.

Chairman Prachanda stresses for implementation of agreements signed between Nepal, China

19 October 2024, [The Rising Nepal](#)

CPN (Maoist Centre) Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' has said that Nepal was willing to learn several things from the development of modern China.

During a meeting with the leaders of the Communist Party of China (CPC) at his residence in Khumaltar on Saturday, the former Prime Minister said that China's development is a learning for Nepal.

Likewise, Chairman Prachanda thanked the Chinese government, CPC and CPC Secretary General Xi Jinping for China's support to Nepal's development priority.

On the occasion, he stressed the need to implement the agreements signed between Nepal and China during the high-level visit from China to Nepal in 2019.

Chairman Prachanda shared that Nepal was expecting effective operation of Nepal-China border points, advancement of railway construction, ensuring effective air connectivity and cooperation in the areas of health, education and others.

CPC Central Committee Member and CPC Secretary of Qinghai Province Committee Chen Gang, the leader of the Chinese delegation visiting Nepal, also shared his views on deepening Nepal-China relations.

Sharing that this was his first visit to Nepal, Gang said that the CPC has given importance to the relations of government and political parties based on their co-existence.

During the meeting, CPN (Maoist Centre) Senior Vice-Chairman Narayankaji Shrestha, Vice-Chairperson Pampha Bhusal, leaders Janardan Sharma, Shakti Bahadur Basnet and others were present.

Likewise, CPC Secretary of Qinghai Province Committee Chen Gang, Chinese Ambassador to Nepal Chen Song and others were present from the side of the Chinese delegation. (RSS)

CPC invites 15 leaders each from Nepali parties in House for its briefing in Kathmandu

19 October 2024, [The Kathmandu Post](#)

The Chinese side did not seek permission to hold the event but informed Foreign Ministry about its plan, according to an official. The Communist Party of China (CPC) has invited at least 15 leaders each from all Nepali political parties that are represented in the House of Representatives in a rare party briefing on Sunday. The International Department of the CPC sent the invitation to the Nepali political parties.

"The International Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (IDCPC)

and CPC Qinghai Provincial Committee presents its compliments to your party and has the honour to advise the following," reads the letter sent to one national party which was seen by the Post. "The IDCPC and CPC Qinghai Provincial Committee plans to co-host the briefing on the 3rd Plenary Session of the 20th CPC Central Committee at 14:30 p.m. on October 20th, at the Hotel Yak and Yeti in Kathmandu, Nepal." Fourteen political parties are represented in Nepal's 275-strong House of Representatives. And there are two independent lawmakers.

National Assembly Chairman Narayan Dahal has been invited as chief guest in the function. The Chinese Embassy in Kathmandu had informed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs about the function and the ministry allowed them to organise the programme without further consultation, said a joint secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

"We are hearing of such practice for the first time in Nepal," a CPN-UML leader said. "Since they invited us, we have to attend the event but it is up to the government to decide whether the political party from another country should invite us for internal party meetings. It is up to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to decide."

But a joint secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said that since China practices a different political system, the ministry did not reject holding such an event in Kathmandu.

In China, the CPC unilaterally runs the government, so the ministry did not urge them to stop the function, said the joint secretary. The Chinese side did not seek permission to hold the event but informed the ministry about its plan to host the function to be inaugurated by Dahal, according to the ministry official.

The 20th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China convened its third plenary session in Beijing from July 15 to 18 earlier this year. The session had endorsed several proposals related to development strategy of China, development and security, promotion of high-quality development, deepening reform in various sectors, advancing socialist democracy and rule of law, improving public communication and cultural work, safeguarding national security and social stability, promoting the development of national defense and the armed forces, advancing work related to Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan, pursuing major-country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics, and strengthening full and rigorous party self-governance, among others, according to the CPC document.

Arjun Thapa, head of the international department of Janata Samajbadi Party-Nepal, confirmed to the Post that his party has received an invitation to attend the briefing. But he said he is not participating. "Someone

from the party including some half a dozen party leaders will attend the briefing,” Thapa said.

“It’s a kind of propaganda meeting,” he added. But the letter sent by the Chinese side did not mention who from the International Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (IDCPC) and CPC Qinghai Provincial Committee will brief the Nepali leaders.

Earlier, in January end, Sun Haiyan, the vice minister of the International Liaison Department of the CPC, also did a similar kind of briefing to the second-rung leaders of the major Nepali political parties during a consultative conference in Kathmandu between Nepali political leaders and the CPC.

In the meeting, Sun had accused that certain countries were trying to destabilise the good relations between Nepal and China, while some elements were also defaming the Belt and Road Initiative by calling it a ‘debt trap’. But the theme of Sunday’s briefing is ‘Sharing the Opportunities Brought by Chinese Modernisation and Deepening the Trans-Himalaya Cooperation.’

“We cordially invite 15 representatives of your party/organisation to participate in this event,” reads the invitation letter.

Meanwhile, China also donated seven electric vehicle cars to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Friday. But both sides have not released any formal statement about it.

“These cars were stuck at the Nepal-China border for a long time,” said Amrit Bahadur Rai, spokesperson at the foreign ministry. “Finally, the Chinese side handed it over to us on Friday.”

The seven electric vehicles were stuck in customs due to Nepali side’s failure to pay the customs duty, another foreign ministry official said. “They were released after the finance ministry agreed to pay the tax amounting to over Rs10.5 million,” the official said.

China expands territorial claims with new fence along Nepal-Tibet border

19 October 2024, [MyIndMakers](#)

China has increased its territorial ambitions by building a fence along the Nepal-Tibet border. This new structure, reinforced with barbed wire and concrete barriers, clearly ignores the internationally recognised boundary between China and Nepal, extending deep into Nepalese territory. This action has raised concerns about China’s growing disregard for sovereign borders.

Recent satellite images have revealed a large inscription near the fence, which reads “Long Live the Chinese Communist Party.” This message stretches 600 feet across a hillside and is so enormous that it can be seen from space, serving as a clear act of

intimidation towards Nepal and its neighbouring countries. The New York Times has reported on these satellite images, bringing further global attention to this incursion.

This incident mirrors previous reports of Chinese territorial aggression. In 2021, Nepalese lawmaker Jeevan Bahadur Shahi published a report detailing Chinese military encroachments in the Humla district, which borders China. The report claimed that Chinese forces had destroyed eight border pillars and built infrastructure deep within Nepal’s territory. However, the Nepalese government suppressed these findings due to pressure from Beijing.

The details of this report later leaked to the BBC, sparking public outrage but resulting in no significant action from the government. Meanwhile, China has continued its expansionist policies, with reports indicating that over 11 regions along the Nepal-China border have been affected by similar land grabs. This latest fencing is consistent with China’s long-standing “salami-slicing” strategy, which involves making small, incremental territorial gains that ultimately lead to significant land grabs.

China has employed this method in other areas, including the South China Sea and along the contentious India-China border. Recently, tensions have escalated along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Ladakh, where a standoff with Indian forces has continued for over four years.

Adding to regional tensions, China has also renamed locations in Arunachal Pradesh, claiming them as Chinese territory, a claim firmly rejected by India. Additionally, Chinese authorities have increased pressure on ethnic Tibetan Nepalis living near the border, reportedly coercing villagers to avoid public displays of the Dalai Lama’s image under the threat of reprisals. This is part of a broader effort by China to suppress Tibetan culture and identity, extending its repressive measures into Nepalese territory.

Despite these clear violations of sovereignty, the Nepalese government has largely remained silent. The country’s leadership, increasingly dependent on China for economic and ideological support, has chosen to overlook these encroachments to maintain good relations with Beijing.

China’s ongoing border incursions in Nepal raise serious questions about the future of Nepal’s sovereignty. It remains to be seen whether Nepal’s leaders will find the courage to resist Chinese expansionism or continue to submit to pressure from Beijing. The global community should also pay attention; if China’s actions in Nepal go unchallenged, they may encourage similar aggression in other regions, particularly in India and the South China Sea.

China fails to push BRI implementation plan in Nepal

16 October 2024, [ORF](#), Arpan Gelal

The Chinese intention seems clear—until Nepal signs the BRI Implementation Plan, Chinese cooperation in mega projects will remain in limbo

The finalisation of the 'Implementation Plan' for the execution of projects under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has remained the central component of China's Nepal policy in the last few years. Recently, China has taken a more assertive stance to portray the success of BRI in Nepal as not a single project under BRI has been executed in its immediate neighbour. Although the negotiation on BRI projects stuck soon after signing the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on cooperation under the Belt and Road Initiative in 2017, the push for the BRI Implementation Plan has remained the major agenda of all high-level visits from China in recent years.

China has taken a more assertive stance to portray the success of BRI in Nepal as not a single project under BRI has been executed in its immediate neighbour.

China had taken the Implementation Plan forward in early 2020 but negotiations on the plan saw minimal progress. The COVID-19 pandemic and firm stance of the then Nepali Congress (NC)-led government that the projects under BRI be funded through grants and concessional loans, rather than China's proposal for commercial loans, stalled the progress. After the general election in November 2022, with the formation of a left coalition government in Kathmandu, China intensified its efforts to advance the Implementation Plan. The joint statement issued during then Prime Minister Prachanda's visit to China in September 2023 mentioned that the two sides will accelerate the discussion to finalise the BRI Implementation Plan at the earliest. Soon after assuming office as Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Narayan Kaji Shrestha, an influential high-ranking CPN (Maoist-Centre) leader with a close ties to China, made a nine-day long visit to China, reportedly with the objective of finalising the Implementation Plan. The plan could not be signed; however, Shrestha expressed his commitment to finalize it soon.

The BRI Implementation Plan gained traction from across the spectrum in Nepal when the outgoing government under Prachanda expedited the final preparations to sign the document during the 16th round of the Nepal-China diplomatic consultation meeting last June. The text of the agreement forwarded by China was finalised by the National Planning Commission with inputs from the relevant ministries. On the eve of the consultation meeting, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs forwarded the draft of the plan for final approval to the prime minister's office. The lawmakers of Nepali Congress (NC) and Rastriya

Swatantra Party (RSP) along with other parties strongly condemned the government's preparation to sign the plan without consultation with the opposition parties and wider consensus on the text of the plan. The government ultimately had to back off.

The joint statement issued during then Prime Minister Prachanda's visit to China in September 2023 mentioned that the two sides will accelerate the discussion to finalise the BRI Implementation Plan at the earliest.

This stalled China's tendency to leverage the left government in Nepal to promote its agenda. China often uses left parties with close ideological inclination to advance its interests. This is evident from the fact that most of the infrastructure projects in Nepal have been contracted to Chinese firms under the left-led administrations in Kathmandu.

The recent realignment in the ruling coalition under CPN-UML chair KP Sharma Oli, with Nepali Congress taking the role of key alliance partner and control of the Foreign Ministry, signals uncertainty about any deal on the Implementation Plan soon. Although Beijing will make attempts to move forward with the plan through Oli and his confidants, the strong reservation of the Nepali Congress on the funding modality and governance mechanisms of the projects under BRI will impede further developments.

At least, until the current coalition remains intact, BRI implementation in Nepal will remain on hold.

The fuss of Implementation Plan

After signing the MoU on cooperation under the BRI in 2017, Nepal proposed a list of 35 projects to implement under the initiative as early as 2018 under the KP Oli administration. The number of projects was eventually trimmed to nine after the insistence of the Chinese side to reduce the number to a single digit. The negotiations on the project selection and their funding and implementation modality could not move forward. Amid the deadlock, Nepal last year contracted a hydropower project proposed under BRI to an Indian contractor, and another is being awarded to an Indian state-owned enterprise.

Chinese rationale for seeking another agreement on BRI is puzzling. As per media reports, the recently finalised draft of the Implementation Plan includes a few priority sectors of cooperation under the BRI framework, lacking any details on the funding mechanisms and implementation modalities. Chinese officials contend that the Implementation Plan would open a pathway for advancing bilateral cooperation and serve as a catalyst for the implementation of projects under BRI in Nepal. However, it is unclear how yet another generic agreement without negotiations on project selection and funding mechanisms would facilitate the execution of projects.

Amid the deadlock, Nepal last year contracted a hydropower project proposed under BRI to an Indian

contractor, and another is being awarded to an Indian state-owned enterprise.

While the lack of transparency is a generic feature of Chinese engagements in Nepal's infrastructure landscape, the bilateral BRI dealings have been shrouded in secrecy since the beginning. The initial MoU on BRI is still kept confidential by both countries. Certain contentious provisions in the MoU came under scrutiny after a media house leaked the document in 2022. The recent outgoing government under Prachanda yet again took a similar step, concluding the draft of the Implementation Plan without deliberation, despite multiple calls from the lawmakers for parliamentary discussions. The left-led governments tend to override democratic norms, transparency, accountability, and processes while dealing with their Chinese counterpart, prioritising their ideological affinity with the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). BRI hasn't remained an excuse.

China's unilateral claims

After joining the initiative in 2017 with much fanfare, BRI was seen as a panacea to solve Nepal's infrastructure deficit. The majority of Nepalis perceived BRI as a project-led infrastructure initiative with little realisation of strategic and geopolitical motives attached to it. China's unilateral labelling of certain projects in Nepal under BRI increased the scepticism and has prompted a more cautionary approach.

Last month, the ambassador of China to Nepal took to social site X (formerly Twitter) to make a controversial claim to announce a 'new batch' of BRI projects in Nepal. The two countries signed the letters of exchange during the visit of the Vice Chairman of China International Development Cooperation Agency (CIDCA) for the initiation of four long-standing stalled projects, committed to be assisted by China. Earlier, the Chinese embassy had surprisingly announced Pokhara International Airport, built with a Chinese loan as a flagship project under the BRI. Nepali officials straightforwardly rejected the claim, given the loan negotiations for the airport began before the BRI was conceptualised in 2013.

China's unilateral labelling of certain projects in Nepal under BRI increased the scepticism and has prompted a more cautionary approach.

Amidst the stalemate in cooperation on large-scale infrastructure projects in recent years, China has expanded engagements through 'small yet smart' projects, allegedly under the BRI framework. In July 2023, the Communist Party of China (CPC) announced the 'Silk Roadster' platform coinciding with the tenth anniversary of BRI. Silk Roadster is stated to foster practical cooperation and people-to-people exchanges through training, skills development, scholarships and other short-term exchanges. Further, later the same year, the outcome document of the third BRI Forum

for International Cooperation mentioned two smaller projects related to education and sanitation implemented by Chinese NGOs as a part of China's flagship initiative.

While Nepal officially mentions that not a single project has taken off in Nepal under the BRI due to unfinalised funding and implementation modalities, China appears keen to categorise any bilateral engagements in Nepal as a part of the BRI initiative. China has publicly stated its intention to establish the neighbourhood as a demonstration zone for the success of the Belt and Road initiative along with other global initiatives, and as a strategically important neighbour, Nepal is a priority. For Beijing, ensuring the implementation of an agreement reached during President Xi Jinping's state visit to Nepal in 2019 has also been a matter of prestige. The agreement was aimed at accelerating the implementation of BRI within the broader framework of the Trans-Himalayan Multidimensional Connectivity Network. Further, China is eager to reaffirm its strategic influence to counter the US influence, particularly in light of its unsuccessful attempt to block the ratification of the Millennium Challenge Cooperation (MCC) compact in Nepal.

China has publicly stated its intention to establish the neighbourhood as a demonstration zone for the success of the Belt and Road initiative along with other global initiatives, and as a strategically important neighbour, Nepal is a priority.

Conclusion

China claims BRI has been implemented in Nepal, while Nepal has asserted that none of the projects under BRI has materialised. The Chinese intention seems clear—until Nepal signs the BRI Implementation Plan, Chinese cooperation in mega projects will remain in limbo, and engagements will continue to be limited to certain small-scale projects. However, finalising the financial and implementation modalities, and China's willingness to accommodate Nepal's interests, particularly its preference for grants and soft loans on par with other multilateral financial institutions, will remain critical for the implementation of BRI. Although the initial optimism regarding BRI has gradually waned, BRI may still move forward if China shows flexibility to address Nepal's concerns. However, in current circumstances, BRI is bound to remain in limbo.

China's economic and political ties with Nepal affecting lives of Tibetan refugee community

14 October 2024, [NorthEast Herald](#)

China's growing influence in Nepal is no longer just a geopolitical concern; it has evolved into a critical human rights issue, directly impacting the Tibetan

refugee community, according to an article published on online magazine Bitter Winter.

Writer of the article Tsering Passang, who is the founder and Chair of Global Alliance for Tibet and Persecuted Minorities, said he spent a month in Nepal over the past summer, visiting Tibetan refugee camps, where he witnessed the intensifying struggles these refugees face as China's presence in the country becomes stronger.

The situation goes beyond economic development—it's a story of increasing repression, echoing the very circumstances that forced Tibetans to flee their homeland more than 65 years ago, Passang shared his experience.

One of the most visible signs of China's involvement in Nepal is the rapid transformation of the country's infrastructure.

From the introduction of Chinese-funded electric buses to the construction of airports in Lumbini and Pokhara, China's projects are reshaping the landscape and shifting public perception of China.

However, these economic developments come at a cost: the erosion of Nepal's sovereignty.

For years, Nepal has walked a fine line between India and China, maintaining a delicate balance in its foreign relations.

Yet, with an increasing number of Chinese-backed projects, concerns are growing about Nepal's long-term independence.

Despite the creation of new airports, foreign airlines remain cautious about using them, largely due to India's concerns about China's expanding role in Nepal's internal affairs.

As Nepal becomes more dependent on Chinese investments, its foreign policy risks tilting in Beijing's favor, potentially undermining its autonomy.

This shift in Nepal's geopolitical stance has even graver consequences for the 10,000 Tibetan refugees still living in exile in the country.

Having fled persecution and cultural suppression in Tibet after China's occupation, many Tibetans are now confronting similar restrictions in Nepal, where they had hoped to find safety, according to the article.

Expressions of Tibetan identity—whether through wearing a "Free Tibet" t-shirt, raising the Tibetan flag, or practicing traditional customs—are increasingly met with resistance.

Passang said that during his visit, he learned that local authorities, possibly under Chinese pressure, have begun restricting Tibetan cultural practices.

Events like Gorshey, once a public celebration of Tibetan heritage, are now forced underground in the Kathmandu Valley, he said, adding that the suppression of these cultural activities is a painful reminder of the repression Tibetans believed they had escaped.

Even the symbolic tradition of Lhakar (White Wednesday) is now in jeopardy.

This weekly movement, which began after the 2008 protests in Tibet, allows Tibetans to express pride in their identity by speaking their language, wearing traditional clothing, and supporting Tibetan-owned businesses.

Yet even these peaceful acts of cultural resistance are being stifled.

As China's influence deepens in Nepal, Tibetans are finding it harder to gather and celebrate their traditions without fear of reprisal, the article read.

What is particularly distressing is that the very freedoms Tibetan refugees sought in exile—freedom of expression, freedom from fear, and the preservation of their identity—are being stripped away.

The parallels between the repression they fled in Tibet and the growing pressure they now face in Nepal are becoming alarmingly clear.

This mounting threat to the rights of Tibetan refugees must be addressed on the global stage.

"The international community cannot remain silent. China's expanding role in Nepal is not just about infrastructure—it's about human rights and cultural survival," Passang wrote in the article.

"Tibetan refugees deserve the right to express their cultural identity without fear of persecution or interference," he added.

"Now is the time for action. Media outlets, human rights organizations, and governments worldwide must bring attention to this urgent issue," Passang mentioned.

"As China continues to reshape Nepal's political and social landscape, the global community has a responsibility to ensure that Tibetans in exile can live free from oppression and preserve their cultural heritage," he added. "Their struggle is not just about one displaced community—it is a fight for universal values like freedom, dignity, and the right to exist as a people."

"The struggle for Tibetan freedom continues," Passang noted.

He also urged the international community to stand with the Tibetan refugees in Nepal and recognize the growing threat of China's influence.

"Defending their cultural identity and their right to live free from oppression is a fight for the fundamental human rights we all hold dear," Passang wrote in the article.

Nepal Urges China to Share Data Required for Flood Management

09 October 2024, [NewsWire](#)

More than 200 people have died in Nepal as a result of extreme weather conditions during this year's

monsoon season. Incessant rain lashed much of eastern and central Nepal, causing devastating floods. The Kathmandu Valley was badly hit. On October 2, Nepal's government said 224 people had so far been confirmed dead, while more than 150 others were injured and 24 people were missing.

In addition to the loss of life, many homes, power plants, and roads have been damaged by floods and landslides.

"I've never before seen flooding on this scale in Kathmandu," said Arun Bhakta Shrestha, the climate and environmental risks lead at the Hindu Kush Himalayan knowledge center, part of the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD).

The disaster serves as a reminder of Nepal's vulnerability to climate change, including the risks associated with melting glaciers.

In recent years, many glaciers in the Himalayan region have retreated, with melt water collection in glacial lakes. If these lakes burst, they have the potential to cause massive floods, endangering downstream communities.

And Nepal's Department of Hydrology and Meteorology claims that China has been withholding vital information on glacial lakes under its control in Tibet.

Department head Jagadishwor Karmacharya told the website Climate News that it is essential to obtain transparent information from the Chinese government in order to reduce the impact of floods. Karmacharya said that China, Nepal, and India must collaborate to prevent disasters, adding that Nepal has been asking China for many years to supply data about its glacial lakes but China has not met promises to do so.

Tibet – which the People's Republic of China manages as the Tibet Autonomous Region – has sometimes been described by geologists as Asia's water tower. Many major rivers start there, which supply water to nearly two billion people downstream.

China is sensitive to external criticism that its governance of Tibet is marked by an irresponsible approach toward the environment.

"Poor environmental tactics have displaced Tibetan communities, destroyed religious sites, and degraded local ecosystems," according to International Campaign for Tibet President, Tencho Gyatso. In his view, climate change – as well as an expansive hydropower dam network, extractive industries, and grassland degradation – threaten sustainable water management of Tibet's water resources.

"China's occupation and isolation of Tibet creates a global blind spot, which puts at risk the lives and livelihoods of 1.8 billion people downstream," said Gyatso.

Earlier this year, a team of scientists published an article in the scientific journal Nature Geoscience that warned of the widespread societal and economic impact of expansion of the glacial lakes on the Tibetan Plateau.

The researchers said that "in the absence of hazard mitigation measures, lake expansion is projected to submerge critical human infrastructure, including more than 1,000 km of roads, approximately 500 settlements and around 10,000 sq km of ecological components, such as grasslands, wetlands and croplands."

The scientists called for an international effort involving many countries, including China and Nepal, to address the problem.

Chinese Communist Party's direct aid to Nepali parties comes under fire

06 October 2024, [The Kathmandu Post](#)

Observers ask—what if diplomatic missions from other countries follow suit?



Members of Nepali political parties receive the cheque of the grant at a function in Kathmandu recently. **Photo Provided to the Post**

A relief initiative launched by the International Department of the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee on Friday for flood victims in Nepal, to be carried out through Nepali political parties, has drawn flak.

The Chinese Communist Party collaborated with the China Foundation for Rural Development Nepal Office to launch the initiative 'Join hands to face the difficulties and overcome the difficulties together,' aimed at providing humanitarian assistance to the flood-affected people in the Kathmandu Valley.

During the event, the relief materials were handed over to the representatives of various political parties of Nepal including the Nepali Congress, the CPN-UML and others.

Attendees included Wang Xin, counselor of the Chinese Embassy in Nepal, representatives from major political parties of Nepal, representatives from the China Foundation for Rural Development Nepal office

and its partners, as well as local residents and government officials, said a press statement.

“In response to the disaster, the Central Committee of the CPC International Department quickly took action and supported flood-affected communities through Nepali parties,” the statement reads. “They collaborated with the China Foundation for Rural Development Nepal Office to launch the initiative ‘Join hands to face the difficulties and overcome the difficulties together and the International Department of CPC Central Committee action to comfort affected people in the 2024 Nepal flood disaster.”

It is rare for a foreign political party to provide direct aid and support to political parties in Nepal.

A leader who attended Friday's event told the Post that such practice does not do well for the host country and that it was not an event that required inviting representatives from various political parties. “First, the amount was not significant,” said the leader requesting anonymity. “Second, extending direct support from foreign political parties to the political parties of another country is a very bad practice. But we were told by the party's senior leaders to attend the event, so we went there but none of us were comfortable while receiving the support.”

At a time when the government has decided not to receive the support bilaterally from any country for the floods and landslide victims, receiving such donation from a political party of a foreign country sets a very wrong precedent, said the leader of a ruling party who attended the event on Friday.

“Now, if the Bharatiya Janata Party or Indian National Congress or any other political parties of other countries extend a similar kind of support to us, then what should we do?” the leader said.

According to the Chinese Embassy in Kathmandu, the relief materials including rice, blankets, food packages and other daily necessities worth Rs19.70 million were distributed to the households affected by the recent floods and landslide through Nepali political parties.

Former vice-chair of the National Planning Commission, Govind Raj Pokharel, has said that the support provided at the time of a disaster should be welcomed but that it should be received only through an effective and transparent one-door policy.

“If the BJP of India will give us cash, then should we accept it or not?” Pokharel said. “We have to be cautious while accepting such support.”

He also pointed out the need for a timely discussion about the policy of political parties about accepting support provided by other countries directly to them. “Assistance at the time of disaster is welcome but such assistance should be accepted through one-door policy of the government,” Pokharel writes on X. “We need to think on time regarding political parties of other countries providing assistance to our political parties directly.”

After the launch of the emergency relief action, as many as 1,242 sets of carefully prepared relief supplies were swiftly distributed, including toothpaste, toothbrushes, towels, soap, sanitary pads, pressure cookers, plastic containers for packaging, blankets, mosquito nets, sleeping mats, water jar dispensers with mugs, rice, oil, lentil—essential items for the affected communities, said the Chinese Embassy.

Emergency family kits and food packages were distributed to 60 affected households during an event at Shree Mahendra Saraswati Sewa School in Teku, Kathmandu Metropolitan City-12.

Social media users have also criticised the manner in which the relief material was provided.

Vijay Kant Karna, a former ambassador, describes it as a very dangerous practice. Karna says that it gave opportunities for other countries' diplomatic missions to distribute anything to Nepali political parties. “I have never seen this practice before in Nepal,” Karna writes on X.

China's withholding of vital information on glacial lakes in Tibet may have contributed to Nepal's flood disaster

05 October 2024, [Tibetan Review](#)

Some 224 people had died, more than 150 others were injured and 24 missing as of Oct 2 due to disasters caused by incessant rain in much of eastern and central Nepal, including the capital Kathmandu, and China's withholding of vital information on glacial lakes under its control in Tibet could be partly responsible for it, according to *thediplomat.com* Oct 5. In addition to the loss of life, many homes, power plants, and roads have been damaged by floods and landslides, serving as a reminder of Nepal's vulnerability to climate change, the report said.

“I've never before seen flooding on this scale in Kathmandu,” Arun Bhakta Shrestha, the climate and environmental risks lead at the Hindu Kush Himalayan knowledge centre, part of the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), has said. Many glaciers in the Himalayan region have retreated in recent years, with melt water collecting in glacial lakes. These lakes could breach – and have breached – with the potential to cause massive floods, endangering downstream communities.

And Nepal's Department of Hydrology and Meteorology has expressed disappointment that China has been withholding vital information on glacial lakes under its control in Tibet, the report noted.

The report cited the department's head, Jagadishwor Karmacharya, as having told the website *Climate News* that it is essential to obtain transparent

information from the Chinese government in order to reduce the impact of floods.

Karmacharya has said that China, Nepal, and India must collaborate to prevent disasters. However, despite Nepal having asked it for many years to supply data about its glacial lakes, China has not met promises to do so.

Tibet has sometimes been described by geologists as Asia's water tower, with many major rivers starting there, supplying water to nearly two billion people downstream.

China's environmentally unsustainable development and related activities have partly been blamed for the worsening situation in Tibet, with devastating consequences both for the local Tibetan people and in downstream countries, including China itself.

"Poor environmental tactics have displaced Tibetan communities, destroyed religious sites, and degraded local ecosystems," Tencho Gyatso, President of Washington-based International Campaign for Tibet, has said.

"China's occupation and isolation of Tibet creates a global blind spot, which puts at risk the lives and livelihoods of 1.8 billion people downstream," she has said.

India too has been complaining about China's failure to provide hydrological data from Tibet that should enable it to take measures to avoid or minimize disasters.

Chinese Communist Party launches relief initiative for Nepal flood victims

04 October 2024, [The Kathmandu Post](#)

Relief kits distributed to 60 affected households at kick-off event in Kathmandu.

The International Department of the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee on Friday launched a relief initiative for flood victims.

It collaborated with the China Foundation for Rural Development Nepal Office to launch the initiative 'Join hands to face the difficulties and overcome the difficulties together,' providing humanitarian assistance to the flood-affected people in the Kathmandu Valley.

Emergency family kits and food packages were distributed to 60 affected households during an event at Shree Mahendra Saraswati Sewa School in Kathmandu Metropolitan City-12.

After the launch of the emergency relief action, 1,242 sets of relief supplies were swiftly deployed, including toothpaste, toothbrushes, towels, soap, sanitary pads, pressure cookers, plastic containers for packaging, blankets, mosquito nets, sleeping mats, water jar dispensers with mugs, rice, oil, lentils—essential items

for the affected communities, the department said in a statement.

Many compassionate enterprises and individuals have expressed their willingness to provide material and financial assistance for the rescue efforts in Nepal, working together to help the Nepali people overcome this difficult time, it said.

Red Cross Society of China donates \$100,000 to disaster victims of Nepal

02 October 2024, [Republica](#)

The Red Cross Society of China has donated \$100,000 to assist victims affected by the disaster in Nepal.

Chen Song, Chinese Ambassador to Nepal, handed over the amount to the Nepal Red Cross Society through the Ministry of Home Affairs on Wednesday.

According to the Ministry of Home Affairs, the funds have been transferred to the Nepal Red Cross Society through the home ministry for the assistance of victims affected by natural disasters such as floods, landslides and inundation.

Ambassador Song expressed the commitment that the Chinese government will provide additional support for the disaster victims. So far, the death toll from the recent floods and landslides has reached 228, with 25 people still missing in floods and landslides triggered by heavy rains.

China-Pakistan

Pakistan says China's remarks on safety of its citizens 'perplexing'

31 October 2024, [VOA](#), Ayaz Gul and Sarah Zaman

Pakistan pushed back Thursday against China's criticism of the safety of Chinese personnel in the country, calling the comments "perplexing" and contrary to established diplomatic traditions between the neighbors.

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mumtaz Baloch said at a weekly news conference in Islamabad that the government is dedicated to ensuring the security of Chinese nationals, projects, and institutions in Pakistan.

Baloch was responding to a rare public warning from the Chinese ambassador to the country, Jiang Zaidong, who urged Islamabad to take action against militants responsible for several deadly attacks on Chinese workers.

Jiang labeled the violence "unacceptable" and cautioned that it poses "a constraint" on Beijing's investments under its Belt and Road Initiative, or BRI.

"The statement of the Chinese ambassador is perplexing and is not reflective of the diplomatic traditions between Pakistan and China," Baloch said. "We will continue to engage with our Chinese brothers to reassure them of Pakistan's complete commitment to their security and well-being in Pakistan," she added.

Jiang, while addressing a seminar in Islamabad, referenced suicide car bombings in March and October of this year, which resulted in the deaths of seven Chinese personnel. It raised the number of Chinese workers killed in Pakistan to 21 since the countries launched a massive infrastructure project as part of the BRI about a decade ago.

"It is unacceptable for us to be attacked twice in only six months," the Chinese diplomat stated, speaking through his interpreter. He stressed the need for Islamabad to take "effective remedial measures to prevent the recurrence of such terror acts and ensure that perpetrators are identified, caught, and punished."

It is unprecedented for Pakistan to respond publicly to China's criticism, and it is extremely rare for the Chinese ambassador to admonish Islamabad for alleged security lapses against Chinese engineers and workers.

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, or CPEC, considered the flagship project of the BRI, has brought more than \$25 billion in Chinese investment to enhance Pakistan's infrastructure, facilitating improved bilateral trade and further integrating the broader South Asian region.

Jiang urged Pakistan to take action against "all anti-China terrorist groups," stating that "security is the biggest concern" for Beijing. He added that "without a safe and sound environment, nothing can be achieved."

Baloch said investigations into attacks on Chinese workers are ongoing and said the findings have been communicated to Beijing. She did not elaborate.

CPEC has resulted in roads, highways, primarily coal-fired power plants, and the strategic deepwater Gwadar port on the Arabian Sea in the country's southwestern Balochistan province.

Pakistani Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, while addressing Tuesday's seminar organized by the Islamabad-based independent Pakistan-China Institute, assured the Chinese ambassador that his country was taking action against terrorists and tightening the security of Chinese nationals.

Dar stated that Pakistan would share the progress with China in high-level talks next month.

"The Chinese are very clear; no matter how lucrative an investment is anywhere, if the security issue is there, they do not send Chinese personnel. Your country is the only exception," he told the audience,

quoting Chinese leaders as telling Pakistani counterparts in recent meetings.

Critics argue that Pakistan's financial difficulties and political instability have discouraged China from making new investments in the CPEC.

After the launch of CPEC projects, Pakistan's military formed a specially trained unit of over 13,000 troops to safeguard the initiatives nationwide. But the attacks on Chinese nationals have led to doubts about the effectiveness of the military unit.

Most of the recent attacks on Chinese workers and engineers have been claimed by the Baloch Liberation Army, or BLA, a prominent separatist group waging insurgent attacks in Balochistan.

The group, which is made up of militants from the Baloch ethnic minority, accuses China of helping Pakistan exploit the province's natural resources and has been calling for Beijing to withdraw its CPEC and other investments.

Both countries reject the allegations, saying Baloch insurgents are on a mission to subvert development in the impoverished province and undermine Pakistan's close ties with China.

Chinese envoy miffed at CPEC security lapses

October 30 2024, [The Express Tribune](#)



Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Jiang Zaidong says the strategic significance of China-Pakistan relations has become even more prominent. PHOTO: EXPRESS

In a rare public rebuff, the Chinese envoy to Pakistan on Tuesday said that two deadly terror attacks within only six months were unacceptable and the government should launch a crackdown against all anti-China terrorist groups.

Speaking at a seminar titled 'China at 75', Ambassador Jiang Zaidong further said that security was the biggest constraint to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and "without safe and sound environment nothing can be achieved".

The ambassador spoke twice during the seminar, organised by the Pakistan China Institute of stalwart politician Senator Mushahid Hussain. Jiang first spoke before the speech of Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar,

and then he used his right to reply after Dar's remarks on the security for the Chinese.

"It is very unacceptable for us to be attacked twice in only six months and these attacks have also caused casualties," Ambassador Jiang said. He added that Beijing hoped that the Pakistani side could further strengthen the security measures to protect Chinese personnel, institutions and projects.

"Pakistan should severely punish the perpetrators and crack down on all anti-China terrorist groups," said the ambassador during his second unusual intervention. "Security is the biggest concern for China and a constraint to CPEC in Pakistan."

Ambassador Jiang remarks came after Deputy Prime Minister Dar said in his speech that "Chinese are very clear no matter how lucrative an investment is anywhere if the security issue is there they do not send Chinese personnel. Your country is the only exception. This is what the Chinese leadership told the Prime Minister of Pakistan in my presence".

Ambassador Jiang clarified that "President Xi cares about Chinese people's security and puts people's lives first. He especially cares about the security of the Chinese people in Pakistan. Every time when he meets with Pakistani leaders he asks for taking measures to ensure the security of Chinese personnel, institutions and projects", said the ambassador.

The terrorists have twice targeted Chinese nationals in the past six months, first in March and then again in October just 10 days before the visit of the Chinese Premier to Pakistan.

It is highly uncommon when a foreign diplomat used his right to reply after the speech of the foreign minister, indicating divergent views on security between the two nations.

Dar said that Pakistan was taking action against the terrorists and the progress would be shared during the next week's meeting between President Asif Zardari and Chinese President Xi Jinping.

Ambassador Jiang said that during his exchanges with the leaders of the Pakistani side, Premier Li also emphasised the importance of security for economic development and cooperation. He emphasised that China would further deepen economic cooperation with Pakistan but "we hope that the Pakistani side could create a conducive and safe environment" for the Chinese people.

"President Xi always says that security is the guarantee of development and development is the guarantee of the security. With joint efforts, we could crack down on those terrorist groups," said Ambassador Jiang.

"There are an increasing number of attacks on the Chinese nationals because the Pak-China friendship has not been digested by certain powers of the world," Dar said. He added that despite these challenging times, in recent meetings, Pakistan and China had agreed to take CPEC to the next level by deepening

cooperation in the areas of trade, industrialisation, digital economy, agriculture and renewable energy.

Dar also criticised the United States for its tactics to stop Beijing becoming a global economic power.

"China will be the biggest economy in due course despite all the tools that have been used against it, including increasing tariffs on its products up to 200%, said Dar. "Increasing tariffs from 25% to 200% is nothing but politics to use unfair ways to stop China from becoming a global super economic power."

Dar also bitterly criticised the last Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government and former director general of the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) Faiz Hameed for the current deterioration in the security situation.

"We have to blame ourselves for the resurrection of terrorism" said Dar, while blaming the terror attacks on the PTI's policies of friendship with Afghanistan. "We have to blame ourselves for the cup of tea that we drank in Kabul," he added, referring to Lt-Gen (ret'd) Faiz Hameed's visit to Kabul immediately after the Taliban takeover.

"We have to blame ourselves for 102 hardened criminals, who were involved in various crimes but were freed after the cup of tea", said Dar. "We have to take blame for 35,000 to 40,000 terrorists who had left Pakistan but came back after the last government opened borders with Afghanistan."

On the issue of Dr Aafia Siddiqui, who is incarcerated in an American jail, the deputy prime minister highlighted the government's efforts to persuade the American leadership to pardon her, but said that those efforts could not bear fruit.

He said Prime Minister Shehbaz sent a letter to the US president, requesting to pardon Dr Aafia on humanitarian grounds as the US presidents usually grant certain pardons before relinquishing the office. He added that a three-member committee had been formed to meet the US parliamentarians to lobby in favour of her pardon, release, and sending her back to Pakistan.

Coming to unabated Israel's barbarism in Gaza, he said that Pakistan was one of the rare countries which spoke vocally in favour of the Palestinian people and called for an immediate end to genocide, and implementation of the UNSC resolutions and ICJ rulings.

He said 48,000 innocent Palestinian people had been killed with the majority of them being women and children and another 80,000 injured.

Expressing concerns over the attacks in Lebanon and Iran, he said Pakistan had sent 10 big consignments of relief goods to Gaza and had started hosting Palestinian medical students in Pakistan's public and private medical colleges to make them complete their education.

China warns security threats to its nationals impede BRI investments in Pakistan

30 October 2024, [VOA](#), Ayaz Gul

China has increased diplomatic pressure on close ally Pakistan to take action against the militants responsible for repeated attacks on Chinese workers, warning that the violence is “unacceptable” and poses “a constraint” on Beijing’s investments under its Belt and Road Initiative, or BRI.

The rare public warning accusing Islamabad of consistent security lapses concerning Chinese workers was issued by Beijing’s ambassador, Jiang Zaidong, while addressing a seminar in Islamabad this week. Analysts said the remarks reflect China’s increasing frustration with the security risks facing its workers in the South Asian nation.

Jiang referenced suicide car bombings in March and October of this year, which resulted in the deaths of seven Chinese personnel. It raised the number of Chinese workers killed in Pakistan to 21 since the countries launched a massive bilateral connectivity project as part of the BRI about a decade ago.

“It is unacceptable for us to be attacked twice in only six months,” the Chinese diplomat stated, speaking through his interpreter. He stressed the need for Islamabad to take “effective remedial measures to prevent the recurrence of such terror acts and ensure that perpetrators are identified, caught, and punished.”

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, or CPEC, considered the flagship project of the BRI, has brought more than \$25 billion in Chinese investment to enhance Pakistan’s infrastructure, facilitating improved bilateral trade and further integrating of the broader South Asian region.

Jiang urged Pakistan to take action against “all anti-China terrorist groups,” stating that “security is the biggest concern” for Beijing and “a constraint on CPEC” projects. He added that “without a safe and sound environment, nothing can be achieved.”

The CPEC has built roads, highways, primarily coal-fired power plants, and the strategic deepwater Gwadar port on the Arabian Sea in the country’s southwestern Balochistan province.

Pakistani Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, while addressing Tuesday’s seminar organized by the Islamabad-based independent Pakistan-China Institute, assured the Chinese ambassador that his country was taking action against terrorists and tightening the security of Chinese nationals.

Dar stated that Pakistan would share the progress with China in high-level talks next month.

“The Chinese are very clear; no matter how lucrative an investment is anywhere, if the security issue is there, they do not send Chinese personnel. Your country is the only exception,” he told the audience,

quoting Chinese leaders as telling Pakistani counterparts in recent meetings.

Critics argue that Pakistan’s financial difficulties and political instability have discouraged China from making new investments in the CPEC.

Michael Kugelman, an expert on South Asian affairs based in Washington, told VOA that Beijing’s security concerns have made it challenging for the mega project to regain momentum anytime soon.

“When the Chinese envoy publicly upbraids Pakistan for not providing proper security, you know there is a big problem,” said Kugelman, who directs the South Asia Institute at the Wilson Center.

“I imagine the objective moving forward will be carefully working to maintain and advance existing projects but being cautious about agreeing to new ones until China feels less concerned about security risks,” he added.

After the launch of CPEC projects, Pakistan’s military formed a specially trained unit of over 13,000 troops to safeguard these initiatives nationwide. But the attacks on Chinese nationals have led to concerns regarding the effectiveness of this military unit.

Hasnain Javed, a Beijing-based Pakistani foreign research associate, noted that China had never before publicly criticized Islamabad.

“This is a strong rebuttal and a serious dissatisfaction over the poor security around CPEC,” Javed told VOA in written comments. “Now, when the military is the main guarantor, particularly for security, the Chinese seem to be running on low patience.”

Most of the recent attacks on Chinese workers and engineers have been claimed by the Baloch Liberation Army, or BLA, a prominent separatist group waging insurgent attacks in Balochistan.

The group, which is made up of militants from the Baloch ethnic minority, accuses China of helping Pakistan to exploit the province’s natural resources and has been calling for Beijing to withdraw its CPEC and other investments.

Both countries reject the allegations, saying Baloch insurgents are on a mission to subvert development in the impoverished province and undermine Pakistan’s close ties with China.

The BLA, listed as a global terrorist organization by the United States, has lately intensified guerrilla attacks in Balochistan, killing hundreds of Pakistanis, primarily security force members, in recent months.

During his visit to Pakistan earlier in October, Chinese Premier Li Qiang also highlighted the significance of security for economic development and cooperation.

A post-visit joint statement quoted the Chinese side as stressing “the need and urgency to take targeted security measures in Pakistan to jointly create a safe environment for cooperation between the two countries.”

Pakistan requests additional \$1.4 billion loan from China amid ongoing financial challenges

27 October 2024, [Live Mint](#)

During a meeting with China's Vice Minister of Finance, Liao Min, Pakistan's Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb urged the Chinese side to elevate the limits under the Currency Swap Agreement to CNY 40 billion

In a bid to address its persistent external financing issues, Pakistan has formally requested a supplementary loan of 10 billion yuan (CNY) (approximately USD 1.4 billion) from China.

The announcement was made on Saturday, underscoring the fiscal pressures the nation continues to face, the Express Tribune reported.

During a meeting with China's Vice Minister of Finance, Liao Min, Pakistan's Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb urged the Chinese side to elevate the limits under the Currency Swap Agreement to CNY 40 billion. As stated by the Ministry of Finance, Pakistan has already fully utilised the existing CNY 30 billion (USD 4.3 billion) Chinese trade facility for debt repayment and is now seeking to raise this limit by an additional CNY 10 billion, which translates to USD 1.4 billion based on current exchange rates.

The finance minister's appeal occurred on the sidelines of the annual meetings of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. If approved by Beijing, the total facility would amount to approximately USD 5.7 billion.

This request is not unprecedented; Pakistan has previously sought increases in its debt limit, but Beijing has declined these appeals in the past. Notably, this request follows closely behind China's extension of the current USD 4.3 billion (CNY 30 billion) facility for an additional three years. This extension was formalised during the recent visit of Chinese Prime Minister Li Qiang, which also saw the debt repayment period for Pakistan extended to 2027.

Pakistan has fully consumed the existing trade finance facility of USD 4.3 billion under the China-Pakistan currency swap agreement. Although the Ministry of Finance did not specify the reasons behind the new request, reports suggest that uncertainties regarding some pipeline loans have prompted the need for additional financial support.

In a parallel move to fill the financing gap, Pakistan accepted terms for a costly USD 600 million commercial loan. However, this decision raised concerns, leading the IMF to clarify that the loan was not tied to the requirements of Pakistan's USD 7 billion bailout package. Aurangzeb later informed the National Assembly Standing Committee on Finance that the government secured USD 600 million in financing at an 11 per cent interest rate for IMF program purposes.

The finance ministry confirmed that both ministers reiterated the strength of the all-weather strategic cooperative partnership between Pakistan and China. Originally signed in December 2011, the bilateral currency swap agreement (CSA) aimed to promote bilateral trade, foreign direct investment, and provide short-term liquidity support.

In the fiscal year 2021, the initial limit of the CSA was extended from 20 billion CNY to 30 billion CNY (USD 4.5 billion) for a period of three years, with maturity periods ranging from three months to one year, according to the central bank.

This is not the first instance of Pakistan seeking an increase in its loan limit from China; in November 2022, then-Finance Minister Ishaq Dar also requested an additional 10 billion yuan (USD 1.5 billion) due to delays in loans from other bilateral and multilateral creditors.

Pakistan has primarily utilised the Chinese trade finance facility to repay foreign debts and stabilise its foreign currency reserves, preventing potential market turmoil. The current USD 4.3 billion facility is part of the State Bank of Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves, which are approximately USD 11 billion. Additionally, China has extended USD 4 billion in SAFE deposits, which are included in these reserves, along with another USD 4 billion in commercial loans. Despite these supports, Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves remain insufficient to meet its debt obligations to China.

The finance ministry stated that Aurangzeb expressed gratitude to the Chinese government for its unwavering support in Pakistan's socio-economic development and assistance in securing the IMF's Extended Fund Facility (EFF).

Furthermore, the finance minister highlighted Pakistan's eagerness to learn from China's experience in economic reform and mentioned plans to issue an inaugural Panda bond in the Chinese market to diversify its financing options.

Aurangzeb also assured China of comprehensive security measures for Chinese workers in Pakistan. Both parties emphasised the importance of enhancing online payment settlements and integrating the two nations' payment systems, marking a collaborative step forward in their economic partnership.

Pakistan requests China to increase currency swap agreement limit to 40 billion Yuan

27 October 2024, [ANI](#)

Pakistan Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb has requested the Chinese government to raise the limits of the currency swap agreement to 40 billion Chinese Yuan, [ARY News](#) reported. During a meeting with China's Vice Minister of

Finance, Liao Min, in Washington, DC, Aurangzeb reaffirmed Islamabad's commitment to enhance the strategic partnership between Pakistan and China, as stated in a press release. He expressed gratitude to the Chinese government for its steadfast support in Pakistan's socio-economic development and its assistance in securing the IMF's Extended Fund Facility (EFF), ARY News reported. Aurangzeb indicated that Pakistan is keen to learn from China's economic reform experiences and welcomed Chinese automobile manufacturer BYD's decision to introduce electric vehicles in Pakistan. He also informed the Chinese representatives about Pakistan's plans to launch its inaugural Panda bond in the Chinese market to diversify its financing options.

The finance minister assured that Pakistani authorities would provide robust security for Chinese workers and noted that many Chinese companies are interested in expanding their investments and creating more jobs in Pakistan, as per ARY News. "Both sides emphasised the need for online payment settlements and integration of the two countries' payment systems," the statement read. Meanwhile, the finance minister also met Andrew Torre, the Regional President for VISA, and commended the company's efforts in modernising Pakistan's payments ecosystem, including support for local payment platforms like 1Link.

Aurangzeb praised Visa's launch of the Financial Inclusion Card in partnership with Meezan Bank, emphasising the need for more routing options for clients and ensuring fair competition for domestic transaction processing, as per ARY News. Additionally, Muhammad Aurangzeb met with Mohammad Kallala, the Global Head of Corporate and Investment Banking at Natixis. Kallala provided insights into Natixis' operations in sectors like infrastructure, renewables, transportation, aviation, telecom, and technology. The two discussed potential partnerships with Gulf investors, especially from Saudi Arabia, to support financing and advisory services for investments in Pakistan. Kallala mentioned that the bank intends to collaborate with selected leading Pakistani companies to facilitate these investments. Both parties agreed on the importance of ongoing engagement moving forward. (ANI)

Minister discusses cooperation initiatives with Chinese envoy

25 October 2024, [The News](#)

Following the successful visit of Chinese Premier Li Qiang to Pakistan, a productive meeting was held

between Jiang Zaidong, Ambassador of China to Pakistan, and Fahd Haroon, Minister of State/Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Digital Media, along with their respective teams. The meeting focused on the role of media and digital outreach in supporting key China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) initiatives.



Minister of State and Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Digital Media, Fahd Haroon (left) and Ambassador of China to Pakistan Jiang Zaidong pictured during a meeting — Supplied

Discussions highlighted opportunities to enhance trade, investment, and regional peace and security, as well as various areas of mutual interest that could further strengthen bilateral ties. Haroon expressed appreciation for the ambassador's kind invitation to China and reiterated the commitment to the enduring friendship between Pakistan and China.

Pakistan Faces Brunt Of US Sanctions; A Total Of 26 Entities Blacklisted For Supporting Weapons Development In Iran, Pak, China

23 October 2024, [The Eurasian Times](#), Ashish Dangwal

The United States has added more than two dozen entities to its export blacklist, accusing them of supporting weapons and drone development programs in Iran and Pakistan, as well as aiding in the modernization of China's military.

The move, announced by the Commerce Department, targets 26 entities, primarily located in Pakistan (16), China (6), the United Arab Emirates (3), and Egypt (1). These entities are said to have violated US export controls, been involved in "weapons programs of concern," or circumvented sanctions imposed on Russia and Iran. Their inclusion in the "Entity List" restricts their ability to obtain US-made items and technology without government approval.

"We are vigilant in defending US national security from bad actors," said Alan Estevez, Undersecretary of Commerce for Industry and Security, in a statement. He stressed that the US will hold accountable any entity that violates its export controls.

"Six entities under the destination of the PRC were added for acquiring US-origin items in support of the

PRC's military modernization, dilatory and evasive conduct during end-use checks, and procurement of US-origin items for Iran's weapons of mass destruction and unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) programs," the statement reads.

Among the companies blacklisted is Beijing Moreget Creative Technology, accused of acquiring US-origin items related to aviation simulation technology in support of China's military modernization.

This move reflects Washington's growing concerns over China's rapid military advancements, which the US sees as a threat to its global standing.

Additionally, Hong Kong-based Small Leopard Electronics and its associated company, Shenzhen Dragonfly Supply Chain, were added to the list for allegedly obstructing Commerce Department investigations.

Small Leopard was involved in a transaction supplying goods to an Iranian procurement network and had previously been on the Unverified List for failing to comply with on-site visits required to receive US-origin technology.

Three other companies, Detail Technology (HK), L-Tong Electronic Technology, and Shenzhen Jiachuang Weiye Technology, were also blacklisted for their involvement in procuring US technology for Iran's weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and drone development programs.

The US export blacklist is a powerful tool used to restrict the flow of American technology to foreign companies deemed threats to U.S. national security or foreign policy. Companies on this list are required to obtain a special license to access U.S. technology, a request that is typically denied.

Beijing, in response, has urged Washington to cease its "discriminatory and unfair measures" targeting Chinese companies. The U.S., however, remains firm in its stance, signaling that violations of export controls will not go unpunished.

US Blacklists Pakistani Entities

The latest additions to the US export blacklist include nine entities linked to Pakistan, which were flagged for operating as front companies and procurement agents for the Advanced Engineering Research Organization, a Pakistani firm that has been on the Entity List since 2014.

Additionally, seven more Pakistani companies were blacklisted for their role in supporting the country's ballistic missile development program.

"We will continue to cut off entities that seek to evade our controls and act contrary to US national security," said Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Export Administration Thea D. Rozman Kendler. "Programs such as Iran's WMD program, their unmanned aerial vehicle program, and Pakistan's ballistic missile program pose significant threats to the national

security of the United States and will not be aided by US technologies."

Assistant Secretary for Export Enforcement Matthew S. Axelrod further clarified the U.S. approach to enforcement, stating that action would be taken against entities that engage in the transshipment of US items to support WMD and UAV programs in countries like Iran and Pakistan or to aid Russia's military efforts.

Axelrod added that any foreign entities obstructing US end-use checks would face serious repercussions. Earlier this year, the US imposed sanctions on three Chinese firms and one Belarus-based company for their involvement in Pakistan's missile development.

In a continued effort to curb Pakistan's ballistic missile capabilities, the US imposed additional sanctions in September on a Chinese firm linked to Islamabad's missile program as part of a broader non-proliferation initiative, as reported by the EurAsian Times.

At the time, US State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller revealed that Pakistan's National Development Complex (NDC) had collaborated with Beijing's Research Institute of Automation for Machine Building (RIAMB) to obtain equipment for testing rocket motors for the Shaheen-3 and Ababeel missile systems.

Pakistan's Shaheen-III, a two-stage medium-range ballistic missile with a range of 2,750 kilometers, can carry both conventional and nuclear warheads. The Ababeel, with a range of 2,200 kilometers, is also designed for nuclear delivery. Both missiles form a key part of Pakistan's strategic arsenal.

The sanctions were imposed because these entities and individuals transferred equipment and technology governed by the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), aiding Category I missile programs in a non-MTCR country.

Despite opposing the sanctions, Pakistan has refused to join the MTCR, a pact India signed in 2016, which seeks to limit the proliferation of missile technology.

While the MTCR is not a formal treaty, its goal is to prevent the spread of WMDs by regulating the export of missiles and related technologies. The regime focuses on unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) capable of delivering significant payloads, as well as the hardware and technology associated with these systems.

Pakistan and China have consistently condemned these sanctions. Pakistan's Foreign Office spokesperson Baloch previously criticized the selective enforcement of non-proliferation principles, accusing certain nations of making exceptions to support their geopolitical allies.

In addition to Chinese and Pakistani companies, three entities based in the UAE and one in Egypt were blacklisted for procuring or attempting to procure US-origin parts in violation of US sanctions and export controls implemented after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.

Pakistan gets 'promising response' from China over debt refiling: FinMin

23 October 2024, [The Tribune Express](#)

Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb meets Saudi, Turkish counterparts on sidelines of World Bank-IMF summit

Pakistan is advancing economic ties with China, Saudi Arabia, and Turkiye, as Federal Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb held high-level discussions on the sidelines of the World Bank-IMF Annual Meetings in Washington DC.

The meetings focused on debt reprofiling, trade cooperation, and joint ventures to strengthen Pakistan's economic prospects.

Aurangzeb revealed a "promising response" from China over Pakistan's request to reprofile its power sector debt, a move aimed at providing the country with breathing room to lower electricity prices.

"We have just started that discussion, and the response is encouraging," the minister told *Bloomberg*, while stressing the importance of continuing structural reforms.

He noted that Pakistan seeks to extend the maturity of debt for nine power plants built by Chinese companies under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

China has already rolled over \$16 billion in debt from a total of \$26 billion in the current fiscal year.

Aurangzeb meets Saudi, Turkish FM's to boost trade and investment

In addition to these negotiations, Aurangzeb met with Saudi Finance Minister Mohammed Aljadaan to discuss enhancing bilateral trade and investment in key sectors.

Both ministers emphasised the historical bonds between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, agreeing to further cooperation in energy and other areas of mutual interest.

Aljadaan also shared insights into Saudi Arabia's energy reforms, offering valuable lessons for Pakistan as it seeks to overhaul its energy sector.

Aurangzeb also held discussions with Turkiye's Treasury and Finance Minister Mehmet Simsek, where he invited Turkish firms to explore mutually beneficial joint ventures (JVs) with Pakistani counterparts.

Highlighting the strong potential to increase bilateral trade, the minister praised Turkiye's experience in power sector reforms and expressed Pakistan's interest in learning from their success.

These discussions underscore Pakistan's strategic efforts to secure debt relief and deepen economic ties with key global partners, aiming to strengthen its economy and create new opportunities for trade and investment.

Aurangzeb also held discussions with Turkiye's Treasury and Finance Minister Mehmet Simsek, where

he invited Turkish firms to explore mutually beneficial joint ventures (JVs) with Pakistani counterparts.

Highlighting the strong potential to increase bilateral trade, the minister praised Turkiye's experience in power sector reforms and expressed Pakistan's interest in learning from their success.

These discussions underscore Pakistan's strategic efforts to secure debt relief and deepen economic ties with key global partners, aiming to strengthen its economy and create new opportunities for trade and investment.

Rise in violence against Chinese nationals in Pakistan threatens China's 'Silk Road' vision

21 October 2024, [ABC](#), Libby Hogan

When China's Premier Li Qiang visited Pakistan last week — the first such visit in over a decade — the talks focused on boosting security for Chinese projects.

China is spending billions of dollars on the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor infrastructure project, which spans 3,000 kilometres and includes the strategic Gwadar Port in Balochistan, in the country's south-west.

It's hoped the project will create a new "Silk Road" shortening the trading route between China and the Middle East.

However, Chinese nationals working in Pakistan continue to be targeted by attacks from separatist groups, with nearly 100 killed in recent years.

Earlier this month, two Chinese engineers were killed by a suicide car bomb during an attack by the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) on a Chinese convoy in Karachi.

Who is behind the recent attacks?

The BLA, made up of militants from the Baloch ethnic minority, is the main group responsible for attacks on Chinese interests in Pakistan.

The terror group first came to prominence in the early 2000s after they claimed responsibility for a series of bombing attacks on the Pakistani authorities.

However, its roots are believed to go back to the 1970s, with militants fighting the Pakistan government over the exploitation of local resources.

They say their goal is an independent state for the Baloch people in the Balochistan region.

In recent years, they have begun to target Chinese interests along with the Pakistan government.

Analysts note that these attacks have focused on people tied to China's projects, not random Chinese nationals.

A rise in violence targeting Chinese nationals

Imtiaz Gul, from the Islamabad-based Centre for Research and Security Studies, said that such attacks were part of a longstanding pattern.

"The targets have been directed at Chinese engineers, accountants, professionals [and] business executives over the last few years," he told the ABC.

However, he pointed out that it wasn't just the BLA.

He said groups like Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan and Islamic State Khorasan had also carried out attacks on Chinese interests in the region.

In March, five Chinese engineers were killed in a bombing linked to the Pakistani Taliban, though the group denied involvement.

He also noted there had been violent incidents unrelated to Chinese nationals, such as the gunning down of 21 coal miners, including four Afghans, in Balochistan this month.

"Regardless of who is behind these attacks, they are all instruments of terror, to destabilise the region," Mr Gul said.

Why is there opposition to Chinese investment projects?

Resentment against the Chinese presence in Balochistan comes from two main issues.

First, locals feel excluded from the economic benefits of projects like Gwadar Port.

Despite promises of fresh water and jobs, many say these have not materialised.

"We don't even have drinking water," said Mir Sadaat Baloch, a local teacher.

"I've sat in three meetings, and there is a lot of talk and not any action," he added.

Local fishermen are also frustrated with the restricted access to the sea and port expansion into their traditional fishing grounds, impacting their livelihoods. Secondly, many believe their resources are being exploited without benefiting the province.

Balochistan, the largest province of Pakistan covering almost 44 per cent of the country's land mass, is resource rich yet it is also one of the poorest.

Analyst Sher Baz Khetran, a researcher at the Institute of Strategic Studies in Islamabad, said local communities felt they were not properly consulted before work began on the projects.

"Many Baloch people see it in black and white. They don't want the Chinese to invest anymore while their resources are exploited," Mr Khetran said.

Seema Khan, a professor at Deakin University, argues that the violence stems from broader political instability and lack of representation of Balochistan people, particularly in the lower house of Pakistan's parliament.

Raji Pillai Rajagopalan, a senior research fellow at the Australian Strategic Policy Institute, said Pakistan was grappling with multiple challenges.

"The situation is highly uncertain, with a disturbing domestic political climate, issues with the Taliban and Afghanistan, a deteriorating law and order situation, and an economy in serious trouble," she said.

The Gwadar Port Authority did not immediately respond to questions about the lack of consultation or development around the port.

Accusations Pakistan used for proxy terrorism

Pakistan, meanwhile, blames foreign powers for stoking unrest.

"Pakistani authorities suspect the Balochistan Liberation Army, which has safe havens along Iran's border with Balochistan, is being used as a proxy by India," Syed Fazl-e-Haider, author of Economic Development of Balochistan, told the ABC.

India denies the claims.

Previously, India has directly accused Pakistan's powerful military intelligence agency of involvement in 2008's Mumbai attacks and high commission officials of espionage in Delhi.

According to Ms Rajagopalan, tit-for-tat accusations between the two countries are common.

"I haven't seen any convincing evidence that India is involved in any material sense in the Baluchi struggle," she told the ABC.

"Of course, Indian leaders have publicly supported Baluchis rhetorically, but I am not sure if they have followed up with actual assistance."

Ms Khan pointed to the economic rivalry between India and China and suggested regional actors may want to sabotage the China-Pakistan friendship.

"It's in a lot of foreign powers' interests to keep Pakistan unstable and to target economic partnerships," said Ms Khan.

India opposes China's Belt and Road infrastructure projects and is building its own alternate route via Afghanistan to Iran.

The head of media for Pakistan's armed forces has previously accused India of sponsoring banned UN-designated terrorist groups including Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan, Jamaat-ul-Ahrar, and the Baloch Liberation Army.

In 2016, Pakistani authorities arrested Kulbhushan Jadhav, an alleged Indian spy and naval officer who confessed to funding Baloch insurgents to carry out attacks in Pakistan.



Pakistan has accused the BLA of being an instrument of proxy terrorism. (Reuters: Saumya Khandelwal)

Mr Jadhav, operating under the alias Hussein Mubarik Patel, had been running a small business in the Iranian port city of Chabahar.

India's foreign ministry denied the allegations at the time, dismissing them as "fabricated" and "figments of imagination".

"This desperate attempt will find few takers as the international community is aware of Pakistan's tactics," India's foreign ministry spokesperson Anurag Srivastava said.

Local analysts were also sceptical that the recent Karachi attack was carried out without the help of specialised external expertise.

"To know the exact map coordinates, timing of vehicles and movements takes a lot of intelligence," said journalist Essa Naqvi.

"This organised militant activity is beyond the capacity of local indigenous people who are struggling to get electricity and a glass of clean drinking water."

Promises to bolster security

Following the meetings between the Pakistani and Chinese representatives — held on the sidelines of Eurasian security conference — Pakistan agreed to increase security for Chinese workers.

Pakistan would make "comprehensive efforts to ensure the safety and security of Chinese personnel, projects and institutions", a joint statement said.

However, Mr Naqvi criticised the focus on Chinese citizens, saying local needs were being ignored.

"I don't see any effort from the government to look at the safety, right to education, shelter and basic rights of citizens in Balochistan," he said.

"It is more about safety of Chinese citizens."

He added that corruption prevented investment benefits from reaching ordinary people.

How important is Pakistan for China's Belt and Road Initiative?

Despite the security threats, China's investment in Pakistan is crucial for the success of the Belt and Road Initiative.

Experts agree that the project is too important for China to abandon.

Gwadar Port, in particular, is central to China's regional ambitions, competing with major hubs like Iran and Dubai.

It was envisioned as the crown jewel of President Xi Jinping's infrastructure plan, linking China's Xinjiang region to the Arabian Sea, and shortening vital trade routes.

Ms Khan argues that Gwadar's strategic importance lies in its ability to bypass the Malacca Strait, to avoid any possible blockages.

"Once fully operational, it will firmly secure China's interests," she said.

"This port is vital for China's broader strategic aims, shaping relationships between superpowers in the region."

Symposium held in Islamabad on China-Pakistan cooperation to drive modernization

20 October 2024, [Xinhua](#)

The Hong Ting Forum themed "Understanding China-Pakistan All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership and Chinese-style Modernization Development Path" has been held in Pakistan's federal capital city of Islamabad.

The symposium held on Friday drew about 100 participants, including diplomats, scholars, and media representatives. It was co-convened by Xinhua News Agency and the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), an Islamabad-based think tank.

Speaking at the event, Shi Yuanqiang, minister of Chinese Embassy in Pakistan, said that China is ready to share development opportunities with the rest of the world.

"China and Pakistan are good neighbors and all-weather strategic cooperative partners, and mutually beneficial cooperation benefits both countries," he added.

Masood Khalid, former Pakistani ambassador to China, said the third plenary session of the 20th Communist Party of China Central Committee has adopted a grand strategic blueprint for Chinese-style modernization.

"Pakistan greatly value our time-tested relationship with China, and both countries are tied in a relationship which is unbreakable," Khalid said, adding that Pakistan should learn from the development model of Chinese-style modernization to embark on the path of self-reliance and better benefit both nations and regional development.

Mudassar Iqbal, deputy director of Associated Press of Pakistan, said that China's approach to modernization is not only benefiting its own people but also contributing to global development.

"The ironclad friendship between Pakistan and China will enable the two countries to stand and move forward side by side and forge a future of shared prosperity and unshakable friendship," he added.

Hassan Daud Butt, senior advisor at the China Study Center of the Sustainable Development Policy Institute, an Islamabad-based think tank, said that Pakistan should fully utilize the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) to expand cooperation with China in various fields such as industry, agriculture, science and technology, digital economy, green energy and technological innovation.

On the occasion, Khalid Mahmood, chairman of the ISSI Board of Governors, said efforts should be stepped up by the media and think tanks of Pakistan and China to contribute to deepening the all-weather strategic cooperative partnership between the two countries

Pakistan to increase security for Chinese projects as Beijing calls for urgent steps

16 October 2024, Reuters

Pakistan has agreed to increase security for Chinese citizens and projects in the South Asian nation, a joint statement said on Tuesday, as Beijing called for urgent security measures following an escalation in militant threats in the country.

China has pumped billions of dollars into Pakistan over the years building infrastructure under the Belt and Road Initiative, while also running a strategic port and a major mine in the country.

But its citizens and projects have been attacked continuously by separatist militants fighting against what they call exploitation of the mineral-rich southwestern Balochistan province.

"The Chinese side underscored the need and urgency to take targeted security measures in Pakistan, to jointly create a safe environment for cooperation," said a joint statement on the visit of Chinese Premier Li Qiang.

Li arrived in Islamabad on Monday for a four-day visit—the first visit by a Chinese premier to Pakistan in 11 years — days after a suicide bombing in Karachi killed two Chinese engineers. It was the second attack on Chinese engineers in the country this year.

The visit coincides with a meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, a Eurasian security and political group.

The Pakistani side emphasised its firm commitment to enhancing security input and coordination as well as strengthening security measures, the statement, released by Pakistan's foreign office, added.

Pakistan will make "comprehensive efforts to ensure the safety and security of Chinese personnel, projects and institutions," the 30-point statement added.

Islamabad is under tight security for the duration of the Chinese premier's visit, which concludes on Thursday.

The joint statement also pressed on regional, economic and diplomatic cooperation between the two countries.

Both parties reaffirmed their commitment to an upgraded version of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor, a \$65 billion investment in the South Asian country under Chinese President Xi Jinping's Belt and Road Initiative.

China's Premier Li begins Pakistan visit amid rare strains in relations

14 October 2024, [VOA](#), Ayaz Gul

Chinese Premier Li Qiang began a four-day visit to Pakistan on Monday under tight security for bilateral talks and to attend the heads of government meeting

of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) hosted in Islamabad this week.

Pakistan is on high alert after a recent increase in deadly insurgent attacks nationwide, including a suicide car bomb attack in Karachi last week that targeted a Chinese convoy and resulted in the deaths of two Chinese engineers.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif received Li at a military air base outside the Pakistani capital before the two led their respective teams' delegations to review bilateral trade and progress on the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. Popularly known as CPEC, the Chinese-funded multibillion-dollar bilateral project is a key extension of Chinese President Xi Jinping's global Belt and Road Initiative.

The Pakistani government has declared a three-day public holiday in Islamabad and the adjoining garrison city of Rawalpindi. Schools and businesses are closed, and troops and paramilitary forces have been deployed to ensure "foolproof security arrangements" for Li's visit and the two-day SCO summit starting Tuesday.

After holding delegation-level talks, Li and Sharif virtually inaugurated the CPEC-built international airport in Gwadar, a coastal city housing a Chinese-controlled deep-water port on the Arabian Sea.

"Under the strategic guidance of President Xi Jinping and the Pakistani leadership, our all-weather strategic cooperative partnership is constantly deepening. What we have is a unique and unbreakable iron-clad friendship that has stood the test of a changing international landscape," Li stated while addressing the ceremony broadcast live.

In his brief speech, Sharif thanked the Chinese premier for building the airport as a gift to Pakistan. "I want to assure you that I will work with you very closely ... to promote peace and security for the people of China in Pakistan," he added.

Neither side has commented on the reason for the virtual inauguration, but diplomatic sources cited heightened security concerns, particularly following the Karachi attack.

Li is the first Chinese premier to visit Islamabad in 11 years. The Sharif administration said the visit will help advance the development of CPEC and facilitate Chinese business expansion in the South Asian nation. China has invested nearly \$25 billion over the past decade under CPEC, building large-scale infrastructure development projects in Pakistan such as roads, highways, power plants, the Gwadar seaport and the airport.

However, critics are skeptical about whether China would be keen to expand its business investments under CPEC, citing growing security threats to Chinese workers in Pakistan, among other challenges.

Militant attacks have killed at least 21 Chinese nationals since 2017. Last week's Karachi suicide

bombing of Chinese engineers associated with a CPEC power plant prompted Beijing to ask its citizens not to visit Balochistan and the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. Both sit on Pakistan's border with Afghanistan and witness almost daily insurgent attacks.

On Monday, at least four police officers were killed when Islamist insurgents stormed a district police headquarters in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Authorities said that all five assailants were also killed in the ensuing exchange of fire.

Turning point

Mushahid Hussain, a former senator and head of the Islamabad-based Pakistan-China Institute, cautioned that the latest deadly attack on Chinese nationals was a severe blow and could be a "turning point" for the "strategic partnership" between the two countries. "China has huge investments in strife-torn Nigeria and Congo, but never have we witnessed ... murders of Chinese engineers and technicians ... as we see these recurring in Pakistan," Hussain noted. Hussain described the Karachi attack as a "blatant breach of security" and echoed Chinese calls for Pakistani authorities to bring the perpetrators to justice urgently.

"China, our best friend, has been badly let down with their confidence shaken" despite Islamabad promising "foolproof security" for its Chinese guests, he stated. Separatist militant group the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) claimed responsibility for the October 6 attack in Karachi, the capital of the southern Sindh province. The group has been waging deadly attacks in Balochistan, accusing China of helping Pakistan to exploit the region's natural resources, charges both countries reject as unfounded.

Information Minister Attaullah Tarar told reporters Monday that their government was doing all it could to ensure the security of the Chinese nationals in Pakistan. He stated that recent attacks on Chinese workers, including the Karachi bombing, "are being probed, and the prime minister is personally looking into it." In their post-attack meetings with Pakistani counterparts, Chinese officials appeared "furious" and pressed the host nation to "severely punish" the perpetrators and urgently enhance the security of Chinese nationals and projects, according to diplomatic sources privy to the discussions. Husnain Javed, a Beijing-based Pakistani researcher, told VOA that CPEC-related debt and capacity payments for Chinese-built coal-fired power plants are the main hurdles in moving the project forward. "Pakistan is looking to defer these payments for a period of 3 years with interest and penalty amount [growing]. ... We are far from CPEC phase 2," he stated in written comments.

Javed noted that growing security concerns for thousands of Chinese workers in Pakistan have added to the bilateral project challenges.

"The recent attack, I think, is the final nail in the CPEC coffin, as it heavily damaged the trust between the two countries. ... It's important to consider that these were no ordinary engineers," the researcher noted. The Chinese Foreign Ministry said last week that a high-level team was sent to Islamabad after the attack. It "asked the Pakistani side to properly handle ensuing matters ... conduct thorough investigations, bring all the perpetrators to justice, and step up security measures to ensure the safety and security of Chinese personnel, institutions and projects."

China to work with Pakistan to protect Chinese personnel following attack

10 October 2024, [Reuters](#)

China said on Thursday it would work with Pakistan to protect the safety and security of Chinese personnel, projects and institutions in Pakistan, following the killing of two Chinese engineers claimed by a separatist militant group on Sunday.

Mao Ning, a Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson, said she was not aware of reports that Pakistani authorities are seeking to curb movements of Chinese citizens during the Shanghai Cooperation Organization meeting next week because of a security risk from militant groups targeting them.

China's security agency vows to boost intelligence sharing after deadly attack in Pakistan

09 October 2024, [SCMP](#), Xinlu Liang

Ministry of State Security says Chinese bodies will 'guard against the infiltration of extremist violent ideologies'

China's top anti-espionage agency, the Ministry of State Security (MSS), has pledged to step up early warning and anti-terrorism intelligence cooperation following a deadly attack against Chinese nationals in Pakistan at the weekend.

In an editorial published on Wednesday, the ministry emphasised that combating terrorism was a "shared responsibility of the international community and a pressing priority".

Pakistan has been plagued by terrorism and has faced frequent attacks that threaten public safety and regional stability, according to the article.

It said the MSS firmly opposed all forms of terrorism and was committed to supporting Pakistan's counterterrorism efforts while working to thwart attempts to undermine relations between the two countries.

China's national security agencies would "adopt stricter measures and means to legally combat violent and terrorist activities, prevent foreign terrorist activities from extending into domestic territory and guard against the infiltration of extremist violent ideologies into the country," the MSS said.

"In regions concentrated with overseas interests, efforts will be made to enhance early warning systems for terrorist attack risks, strengthen emergency response to sudden incidents, and effectively protect the safety of overseas citizens, organisations and projects."

It said China would adopt a "multifaceted" approach to counterterrorism, and deepen international cooperation against terrorism, improve mechanisms for anti-terrorism intelligence sharing, financial regulation, law enforcement cooperation and judicial assistance.

The statement came three days after a deadly attack was launched against Chinese nationals in Karachi by the separatist group, Baloch Liberation Army (BLA).

The attack, involving a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device, claimed the lives of two Chinese nationals and injured several others near Jinnah International Airport on Sunday night.

The Chinese government expressed "shock" and condemned the attack, urging Pakistan to enhance security measures and investigate thoroughly to ensure accountability.

Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said there would be a thorough investigation to apprehend those responsible, reaffirming Pakistan's commitment to protect Chinese nationals and infrastructure projects. In a meeting on Tuesday with Liu Jinsong, head of the Asian affairs department at the Chinese foreign ministry, Khalil Hashmi, Pakistani ambassador to China, said his side would make every effort to improve security measures, enhance anti-terrorism cooperation with the Chinese side and strengthen the protection of Chinese personnel, projects and institutions in Pakistan.

The incident has reignited concerns about the safety of the US\$65 billion China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a flagship initiative under China's Belt and Road Initiative aimed at enhancing connectivity between China and the Arabian Sea.

However, Pakistan is grappling with an increasingly unstable security environment, particularly in its Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces.

In a statement on Monday, the Chinese embassy in Pakistan advised Chinese citizens to avoid travelling to Balochistan – a resource-rich region and crucial site for CPEC infrastructure developments – and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, which have seen a surge in attacks targeting Chinese personnel and projects.

The BLA has in recent years intensified its assaults on projects associated with China, including launching a

lethal attack on the Chinese consulate in Karachi in 2018 and multiple suicide bombings. The militant group claims Beijing is taking advantage of local resources in partnership with the Pakistani government.

The latest attack came just days before the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation summit is to be held in Islamabad.

Recent meetings among members of the security bloc have focused on strengthening regional security mechanisms to address mutual concerns.

In May, China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi highlighted the necessity of joint operations and intelligence exchanges to combat the rising tide of "three forces of evil" – terrorism, separatism and religious extremism.

China calls on Pakistan to 'severely punish' attackers after 2 Chinese die in Karachi

07 October 2024, [SCMP](#), Meredith Chen

Baloch Liberation Army finds targeting Chinese interests 'a useful tool' in its separatist campaign, says academic

The Chinese embassy in Pakistan has called on Islamabad to punish those responsible for a deadly attack on Chinese nationals near Jinnah International Airport in the southern city of Karachi on Sunday night. At least two Chinese were killed and one Chinese and several Pakistanis were wounded on Monday morning. China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said on Monday night that Beijing was "shocked" by the event.

"The Chinese side strongly condemns the attack and offers deep condolences for the victims," it said.

"China calls on the Pakistan side to plug security loopholes and take specific action to protect the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor and Chinese nationals ... in Pakistan."

It added that China was willing to work with Pakistan to quash any attempt to undermine relations between the two countries.

The Chinese embassy said that around 11pm on Sunday a "terrorist attack" was launched on vehicles of a China-funded electric power company.

The regional government of southern Sindh province said on X that a tanker had exploded on the airport motorway. Pakistani broadcaster Geo News said at least 10 people were hurt in the blast.

The company employing the attacked workers is involved in the Pakistan Port Qasim Power Project, around 37km (20 miles) southeast of Karachi.

The project is part of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, a flagship project under Beijing's multibillion-dollar Belt and Road Initiative.

Separatist militant group Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) said it carried out the attack using a vehicle-borne

improvised explosive device targeting “a high-level convoy of Chinese engineers and investors”.

The Chinese embassy demanded Islamabad “conduct a thorough investigation of the attack, and severely punish the perpetrators”.

“The Chinese embassy and consulates general in Pakistan strongly condemn this act of terrorism, express deep condolences for the victims from both countries, and extend sincere sympathies to the injured and their families,” it said, adding that the Chinese side had been working with Pakistani authorities in the aftermath.

In a post on X on Monday, Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said he was “deeply shocked and saddened by last night’s tragic incident” and “strongly [condemns] this heinous act”.

“The perpetrators of this dastardly incident cannot be Pakistanis but are sworn enemies of Pakistan,” he said, adding that an investigation was under way to “identify them and bring them to justice”.

Other parts of the CPEC have also been attacked this year, targeting Chinese nationals and China-affiliated projects in the South Asian country.

In March, a suicide bomber rammed a vehicle into a convoy of Chinese engineers working on a dam in northwest Pakistan’s Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, killing five Chinese. Pakistan’s military claimed the assault was planned in neighbouring Afghanistan.

Before that, a naval airbase and a strategic port in the southwestern province of Balochistan, where China has invested billions in infrastructure projects, were attacked.

The BLA seeks independence for Balochistan, the province bordering Afghanistan and Iran. In August, it launched coordinated attacks there, killing more than 70 people.

The group specifically targets Chinese interests, particularly in the strategic port of Gwadar on the Arabian Sea, accusing Beijing of aiding Islamabad in exploiting the province. It has previously killed Chinese citizens working in the region and attacked Beijing’s consulate in Karachi.

According to Lin Minwang, deputy director of Fudan University’s Centre for South Asian Studies, the violence against Chinese interests is not likely to be resolved if China maintains a strict non-intervention policy, because Pakistan does not have the capacity to eradicate the terrorist groups.

“China has been caught in the conflict between Islamabad and the separatist militants, and targeting Chinese interests has become a useful tool for the BLA,” he said.

Lin said the issue had persisted for around two decades, with the number of attacks surging after the economic corridor was established and the China factor “grew increasingly important in Pakistan’s internal politics”.

The withdrawal of US troops from neighbouring Afghanistan, where they had conducted counterterrorism measures, also contributed to the increase in attacks, he said.

Lin said any intervention by China would test its military abilities abroad and depend on Islamabad’s willingness, which appeared to be lacking.

“With no party prepared, this situation is likely to persist” even though economic ties between the two countries appeared likely to stay strong.

China sends 27 military aircraft, six naval vessels towards Taiwan

07 October 2024, [India Narrative](#)

Taiwan’s Ministry of National Defence (MND) said that 27 Chinese military aircraft and six naval vessels were detected operating around Taiwan from 6 am (local time) on Sunday to 6 am (local time) on Monday.

According to Taiwan’s MND, 19 of the People’s Liberation Army’s (PLA) aircraft crossed the Taiwan Strait median line in the country’s northern, central, southwestern, and eastern Air Defence Identification Zone (ADIZ).

In a post on X, Taiwan MND stated, “27 PLA aircraft and 6 PLAN vessels operating around Taiwan were detected up until 6 a.m. (UTC+8) today. 19 of the aircraft crossed the median line and entered Taiwan’s northern, central, and southwestern ADIZ. We have monitored the situation and responded accordingly.”

This latest Chinese military activity adds to a series of similar provocations by Beijing in recent months.

On Sunday, the Taiwanese MND said that four Chinese military aircraft and six naval vessels were detected operating around Taiwan from 6 am (local time) on Saturday to 6 am (local time) on Sunday.

Two of the People’s Liberation Army’s (PLA) aircraft crossed the Taiwan Strait median line in the country’s northern, central, southwestern, and eastern Air Defence Identification Zone (ADIZ), the statement added.

In a post on X, Taiwan MND stated, “4 PLA aircraft and 6 PLAN vessels operating around Taiwan were detected up until 6 a.m. (UTC+8) today. 2 of the aircraft crossed the median line of the Taiwan Strait. We have monitored the situation and responded accordingly.”

'Terrorist attack' near Karachi airport kills two Chinese nationals, embassy says

07 October 2024, [Reuters](#)

Two Chinese nationals were killed in an explosion near the international airport of the southern Pakistani city of Karachi on Sunday night, the Chinese embassy in Pakistan said, in what it described as a “terrorist attack”.

In a statement emailed to journalists, separatist militant group Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) claimed the explosion was an attack carried out by them using a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device targeting Chinese nationals, including engineers.

The Chinese embassy said a convoy from the Port Qasim Electric Power Company was attacked near the airport.

"The Chinese Embassy and Consulates General in Pakistan strongly condemn this terrorist attack, express deep condolences to the innocent victims of both countries and sincere sympathies to the injured and (their) families," the statement said, adding the Chinese side has been working with Pakistani authorities in the aftermath.

Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said a Chinese national was also injured and that an investigation was underway.

"Pakistan stands committed to safeguarding our Chinese friends," he said in a statement on social media platform X. "We will leave no stone unturned to ensure their security and well-being."

Pakistan is preparing to host the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation summit in the capital Islamabad, which was roiled by protests and clashes this weekend between police and supporters of jailed former Prime Minister Imran Khan.

High-level Chinese representation and the first visit by an Indian foreign minister in a decade are expected at the summit next week, which authorities have vowed to secure.

Pakistan broadcaster Geo News reported at least 10 people were injured in Sunday's blast in addition to the fatalities. Karachi police did not immediately respond to request for comment.

The BLA seeks independence for the province of Balochistan, located in Pakistan's southwest and bordering on Afghanistan and Iran. In August, it launched coordinated attacks in the province, in which more than 70 people were killed.

BLA specifically targets Chinese interests - in particular the strategic port of Gwadar on the Arabian Sea, accusing Beijing of helping Islamabad exploit the province. It has previously killed Chinese citizens working in the region and attacked Beijing's consulate in Karachi.

Security issues have affected China's billions of planned investments, including under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor which is part of President Xi Jinping's Belt and Road.

In March, a suicide bomber killed five Chinese engineers working on a hydropower project in northern Pakistan. Authorities arrested militants they said were associated with the Pakistani Taliban, though that group denied being behind the attack.

Chinese modernization serves as model for Pakistan to promote economic development: Pakistani PM

05 October 2024, [Global Times](#)

The unique Chinese modernization serves as a model for Pakistan to promote economic development, Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has said, extending congratulations on the 75th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China. China has made remarkable achievements, and Pakistan desired to revamp its economy by emulating China's path of progress, which offers new opportunities for countries around the world, including Pakistan, Sharif said in an interview with Chinese media.

China believed in inclusiveness and multilateralism, a recipe for enhanced peaceful global interaction, bringing more understanding between various nations with enhanced economic cooperation, trade, investment and people-to-people exchanges, the prime minister said.

He said that 14 Palestinian factions have lately held a reconciliation dialogue in Beijing under the mediation of China, a testimony to China's positive role in promoting regional and world peace and development.

Speaking highly of Pakistan-China time-tested friendship, Sharif said that the friendship, based on mutual trust and respect, is exemplary in the world. The two countries have always supported each other and have worked closely on the international stage to jointly strengthen the forces that promote regional and world peace as well as stability, he said. Talking about the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a flagship project of the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative, the prime minister said that the project promotes socio-economic development of Pakistan.

Launched in 2013, the CPEC is a corridor linking the Gwadar Port in southwest Pakistan's Balochistan province with Kashgar in northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, which highlights energy, transport, and industrial cooperation in the first phase. Issues of road connectivity and electricity that greatly hindered Pakistan's economy in the past were resolved in the first phase, Sharif said, noting the CPEC has successfully entered a new phase of high-quality development, which focuses more on strengthening cooperation with China in such fields as agriculture, information technology and mining.

The prime minister underscored that Pakistan and China would continue to work together to further enhance economic cooperation and lift their unshakable and unique friendship to new heights.

Pakistan approves ₹45 billion for armed forces to protect Chinese interests

04 October 2024, [CNBC](#)

The Pakistan government decided to provide an additional ₹45 billion budget for the armed forces mainly to strengthen their capacity to protect Chinese commercial interests in the cash-strapped country and manage the fencing along international borders.

The decision was taken in the meeting of the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the cabinet on Thursday, which was chaired by Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb, reported The Express Tribune.

The paper said that out of the ₹45 billion, an amount of ₹35.4 billion will be given to the military and ₹9.5 billion to the navy for various purposes. The ECC considered and approved a proposal submitted by the Defence Division for a technical supplementary grant of ₹45 billion for the already approved projects of defence services during the current fiscal year. It is the second major supplementary grant approved for the armed forces after the approval of the budget in June. Earlier, the ECC gave ₹60 billion for Operation Azm-e-Istehkam. These supplementary grants are over and above the ₹2.127 trillion defence budget.

Due to the increasing number of terror attacks, China has demanded the signing of an agreement on anti-terrorism cooperation to address its security concerns. China has also proposed the establishment of a joint company to ensure the security of its citizens already working in Pakistan or will be engaged during the CPEC phase II.

Under phase I, both sides have completed 38 projects worth \$25.2 billion. Of these, 17 projects valued at \$18 billion were completed in the energy sector, according to the paper.

About 26 projects worth \$26.8 billion are in the pipeline and many of those have been included in CPEC phase II. However, the security concerns have slowed down work on these projects. China has also proposed that a vehicle-mounted mobile securing equipment project should be included in phase II besides undertaking a project on ballistic protective vehicles, the paper reported. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a major infrastructure project in Pakistan, launched in 2015 as part of China's Belt and Road Initiative. It aims to enhance economic connectivity between China and Pakistan by developing a network of roads, railways, pipelines and energy projects.

Chinese investment plays instrumental role in stabilizing Pakistan's economy: minister

03 October 2024, [People's Daily Online](#)

Pakistan's Minister for Planning Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal said on Wednesday that Chinese investment and financial assistance have played an instrumental role in stabilizing Pakistan's economy during challenging times, the ministry said in a statement.

Chairing a meeting here with senior government officials on enhancing cross-sectoral cooperation and formulating a comprehensive action plan to boost economic ties with China, Iqbal reiterated Pakistan's commitment to strengthening collaboration across various sectors.

Chinese projects under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) are a shining example of a shared vision for growth and modernization between the two countries, the statement quoted Iqbal as saying.

Launched in 2013, CPEC, a flagship project of the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative, is a corridor linking the Gwadar Port in southwest Pakistan's Balochistan province with Kashgar in northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, which highlights energy, transport, and industrial cooperation in the first phase, while in the new phase expands to fields of agriculture and livelihood, among others.

The minister also highlighted the essential role of all ministries in the successful implementation of CPEC, emphasizing that collaboration across government sectors is crucial to unlocking the full potential of the initiative.

Iqbal stressed the importance of interaction with the Chinese private sector to showcase Pakistan's potential as a prime destination for advanced business-to-business investments, the statement said. The minister also underscored the urgency of achieving substantive advancements in priority sectors such as infrastructure development, road connectivity, information technology, agriculture, industrial cooperation, education, healthcare, water resources, energy, and artificial intelligence.

China- Taiwan

CCP attempts to extend jurisdiction

31 October 2024, [Taipei Times](#)

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) last month sentenced Taiwanese activist and Taiwanese National Party cofounder Yang Chih-yuan (楊智淵) to nine years in prison. Yang's case shows that China wishes to suppress political activists and organizers inside Taiwan. Yang once organized a political group to

promote the concept of “one country on each side [of the Taiwan Strait],” mainly advocating for Taiwan’s sovereignty and independence. This position is in direct opposition to Beijing’s “one China principle.”

Yang was arrested in China in August 2022, and in April last year was charged with “separatism,” according to the CCP’s “Anti-Secession” Law. His case has brought a sharp response from Taiwan, criticizing Chinese authorities’ use of vague legal language to carry out its unjust ruling against Yang, and using the ruling to strike fear into Taiwanese.

The CCP in 2005 rubber stamped its “Anti-Secession” Law into existence, aimed at trying to forestall a Taiwanese declaration of formal, de jure independence or the implementation of any “separatist” activities.

The content of the law is vague, and the standards for defining a supposed crime are by no means clear, which has led to its abuse by the CCP. Party authorities are using this type of vague legal caprice to suppress and whisk away dissidents, even to the extent of prosecuting them for activities conducted overseas.

Yang’s political activities were mostly carried out within Taiwan, and he never actually crossed into China to carry out any obviously “separatist” activities. Clearly, the CCP’s legal interpretations have already stretched far beyond the bounds of its jurisdiction.

If China were to take over Taiwan, the CCP would use similarly opaque legalese to carry out political suppression of far more Taiwanese than just those with a background like Yang’s. Taiwan is a diverse and free society. If the CCP handed down rulings on the illegality of opinion using the standards of its “Anti-Secession” Law, an integration of Taiwan into China’s legal system would see anyone who advocates for Taiwan’s sovereignty or carries out Taiwan independence-related activities facing the extreme likelihood of being defined as “Taiwan separatists.” This would not only stifle Taiwan’s political diversity, it would render Taiwanese unable to freely express their thoughts and opinions.

Taiwanese should realize the basic differences between the legal systems. In China, the rule of law is subject to political or party interference, and the CCP can use the legal system as a tool to suppress differences of opinion. Taiwanese who travel to China need to be especially mindful of their own words and actions, even within Taiwan, to keep themselves from unwittingly infringing on sensitive political topics, particularly those related to discussions of Taiwan’s sovereignty or independence.

The government should remind the public to carefully evaluate the necessity of travel to China, and remain aware of possible risks if they decide to go through with travel plans. Yang’s plight is a wake-up call for Taiwanese that the tension between our government and China’s is not just a matter of those who are part

of the political echelons — this strain has extended into everyone’s daily life.

Yang’s case casts into sharp relief China’s severe suppression of Taiwanese political workers, using vague legal language to attempt to extend China’s jurisdiction to Taiwan. The CCP is abusing its own “Anti-Secession” Law to force people into a post-unification scenario, where similar laws could be used to mute Taiwan’s diverse political voices, and even arbitrarily charge Taiwanese with the so-called crime of supporting “Taiwanese independence.” Taiwanese must be clear on the differences in the legal systems, ask themselves about the risks of traveling to China, and pay attention to what they have said and done to keep themselves from running into unjust treatment by China due to their political stances.

Taiwan issues warnings to Chinese coast guard vessels around Kinmen

29 October 2024, [Taipei Times](#)

Taiwan yesterday issued warnings to four Chinese coast guard vessels that intruded into restricted waters around the Taiwan-controlled Kinmen Islands, according to the Coast Guard Administration (CGA).

The four China Coast Guard ships were detected approaching restricted waters south of Kinmen at around 2 pm yesterday, the CGA’s Kinmen-Matsu Branch said in a statement.

The CGA said it immediately deployed four patrol boats to closely monitor the situation.

When the Chinese ships with the hull numbers "14512," "14609," "14603" and "14602" separately entered the restricted waters off Fuhsing islet (復興嶼), Zhaishan (翟山), Sinhu (新湖) and Liaoluo (料羅) at 3 pm, the Taiwanese patrol boats broadcast warnings until they left the areas at 5 pm, it said.

The actions by the China Coast Guard only exacerbate the estrangement between people on two sides of the Taiwan Strait and impede cross-strait exchanges, the CGA said, adding it will continue to safeguard national sovereignty and uphold Taiwan’s rights on the sea.

Taiwan reports Chinese 'combat patrol' after Beijing slams US arms deal

27 October 2024, [Reuters](#), Ben Blanchard and Ryan Woo

Taiwan's defence ministry said on Sunday that Chinese warplanes and warships had carried out another "combat patrol" near the island, after Beijing threatened to take countermeasures in response to a \$2 billion arms sale package by the United States.

The United States is bound by law to provide Chinese-claimed Taiwan with the means to defend itself

despite the lack of formal diplomatic ties, to the constant anger of Beijing.

The Pentagon said on Friday the United States had approved a potential \$2 billion arms sale package to Taiwan, including the delivery for the first time to the island of an advanced air defence missile system battle-tested in Ukraine.

Taiwan's defence ministry said it had detected 19 Chinese military aircraft, including Su-30 fighter jets, carrying out a "joint combat readiness patrol" around Taiwan in conjunction with Chinese warships starting on Sunday morning.

It said the Chinese aircraft flew in airspace to the north, centre, southwest and east of Taiwan, and that Taiwanese forces were dispatched to keep watch.

China's defence ministry did not answer calls seeking comment outside normal office hours.

China stages such patrols around Taiwan several times a month, but this was the first since Beijing held a new round of full-blown war games near the island this month.

In a statement late on Saturday, China's foreign ministry said it strongly condemned and firmly opposed the latest U.S. weapons sales and had lodged "solemn representations" with Washington.

China urges the United States to immediately stop arming Taiwan and stop its dangerous moves that undermine peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait, it added.

"China will take resolute countermeasures and take all measures necessary to firmly defend national sovereignty, security and territorial integrity," the ministry said, without elaborating.

China has over the past five years stepped up its military activities around democratically governed Taiwan, whose government rejects Beijing's sovereignty claims.

Taiwan's government has welcomed the new arms sale, the 17th to the island under U.S. President Joe Biden's administration.

"In the face of China's threats, Taiwan is duty-bound to protect its homeland, and will continue to demonstrate its determination to defend itself," Taiwan's foreign ministry said on Saturday, responding to the arms sale.

China vows to take 'countermeasures' over US and Taiwan \$2bn arms deal

27 October 2024, [The Guardian](#)

Package includes Nasams air defence system that Taiwan says will help it in the face of China's frequent military manoeuvres

China will take "countermeasures" to defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity, the government

said, lambasting a \$2bn arms sale package by the United States to Taiwan.

The Pentagon on Friday said the United States had approved a potential \$2bn arms sale package to Taiwan, including the delivery for the first time to the island of an advanced air defence missile system battle-tested in Ukraine, including advanced surface-to-air missile systems and radar. The deal awaits approval by Congress.

In a statement late on Saturday, China's foreign ministry said it strongly condemned and firmly opposed the sales and had lodged "solemn representations" with the US.

China urges the US to immediately stop arming Taiwan and stop its dangerous moves that undermine peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait, it added.

"China will take resolute countermeasures and take all measures necessary to firmly defend national sovereignty, security and territorial integrity," the ministry said, without elaborating.

The US is bound by law to provide Chinese-claimed Taiwan with the means to defend itself despite the lack of formal diplomatic ties, to the anger of Beijing.

The Pentagon's Defense Security Cooperation Agency said the new sale consisted of \$1.16bn in missile systems, and radar systems worth an estimated \$828m.

The missile system sale is for three National Advanced Surface-to-Air Missile System (Nasams) medium-range air defence solutions that includes the advanced AMRAAM Extended Range surface to air missiles, it added.

"This proposed sale serves US national, economic, and security interests by supporting the recipient's continuing efforts to modernise its armed forces and to maintain a credible defensive capability," it said in a statement. "The proposed sale will help improve the security of the recipient and assist in maintaining political stability, military balance, and economic progress in the region."

Demand for Nasams has increased since the system was employed in Ukraine. Taiwan's defence ministry welcomed the announcement, noting the "proven" use of Nasams in Ukraine and saying it would help Taiwan's air defence capabilities in the face of China's frequent military manoeuvres.

China has over the past five years stepped up its military activities around democratically governed Taiwan, whose government rejects Beijing's sovereignty claims, including staging a new round of war games earlier this month.

Taiwan's government welcomed the new arms sale, the 17th of the Biden administration to the island.

"In the face of China's threats, Taiwan is duty-bound to protect its homeland, and will continue to demonstrate its determination to defend itself,"

Taiwan's foreign ministry said, responding to the arms sale.

Beijing's foreign ministry hit back in its statement late on Saturday, saying the latest arms package "seriously damages China-US relations, and endangers peace and stability" in the strait.

China has refused to rule out using force to bring Taiwan under its control.

In September, Beijing sanctioned US defence companies in retaliation for Washington's approval of the sale of military equipment to Taiwan.

Taiwan president 'won't yield an inch' in defense of island's territory

25 October 2024, [VOA](#)

Taiwanese President Lai Ching-te said Friday the island will not cede an inch of its territory, as China maintains military pressure on Taipei to accept its claim of sovereignty.

Lai made the remarks during a visit to the Kinmen islands off China for the 75th anniversary of a victory over communist forces in the Battle of Gunningtou.

It followed a fortnight of intense military activity in the Taiwan Strait -- the sensitive waterway that separates China and Taiwan -- with troops from both sides holding drills.

"(We) will not yield an inch of ground in Taiwan, Penghu, Kinmen and Matsu to firmly defend our homeland," Lai said in a speech, referring to the islands controlled by Taipei.

"The Battle of Gunningtou lets us understand that democracy and freedom should not be taken for granted, but require the joint efforts of generations to defend them," Lai said.

Without naming China, Lai insisted that "any external forces" would not be allowed to change the future of the islands.

China's Communist Party has never ruled democratic Taiwan, but Beijing claims the island as part of its territory and has said it will never renounce the use of force to bring it under its control.

Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Lin Jian brushed aside Lai's comments, insisting that China and Taiwan "will and must be unified in the end".

The dispute between Beijing and Taipei dates back to a civil war between Mao Zedong's communist fighters and Chiang Kai-shek's nationalist forces, which fled to Taiwan in 1949 following their defeat.

The nationalists scored a key victory over the communists in the Battle of Gunningtou on the Kinmen islands.

Lai, who took power in May and has been more outspoken than his predecessor in defending Taiwan's sovereignty, earlier attended a somber ceremony for the battle and shook hands with veterans.

In his speech, Lai said Taiwan's "determination to defend our national sovereignty" and efforts "to maintain peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait" were unchanged.

He repeated his hope that China and Taiwan will "conduct dialogue and exchanges with parity, dignity and in a healthy and orderly manner".

Beijing severed high-level communications with Taipei in 2016 and has since ramped up military and political pressure on the self-ruled island.

China's large-scale war games around Taiwan on October 14 were followed by live-fire drills near the island on Tuesday, and the transiting of a Chinese aircraft carrier group through the Taiwan Strait a day later.

Taiwanese troops conducted live-fire drills on Penghu island in the waterway on Thursday, days after a US and a Canadian warship sailed through the narrow passage.

China Responds to Taiwan's Plea for Cross-Strait Peace with Military Pressure

24 October 2024, [United States Institute of Peace](#)

In his first National Day speech as Taiwan's president, William Lai Ching-te called for regional peace while reaffirming that China and Taiwan "are not subordinate to each other." Though Lai's October 10 address was more restrained than past remarks, it was attacked by China's state media as "highly provocative." Days later, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) encircled Taiwan with record numbers of military aircraft and warships during a series of military "drills." This follows a pattern from Beijing since Lai took office. In late June, China released a set of judicial guidelines to prosecute advocates of Taiwan independence, saying they could face the death penalty in extreme cases. By September, more than 2,000 PLA aircraft had been recorded entering Taiwan's Air Defense Identification Zone in 2024, the highest annual number of incursions to date. Taiwan's Digital Affairs Ministry reported over 90,000 cyberattack attempts targeting government infrastructure in August alone. From February to September, China's Coast Guard vessels entered restricted waters near Taiwan's outlying Kinmen Islands at least 40 times.

As China continues its pressure campaign against Taiwan and channels of cross-Strait communication continue to wither, the risk of miscalculation or unwanted escalation will likely grow in the months ahead. Going forward, the United States should encourage both sides to practice restraint.

USIP's Naiyu Kuo, Dan Spinelli and Jennifer Staats discuss Lai's approach to cross-Strait relations, how Beijing has challenged the new Taiwanese president

since he took office and if the two sides are in a dangerous cycle of escalation.

What does Lai's speech reveal about his approach to cross-Strait relations?

Lai's speech repeated many of the key themes from his inaugural address this May. He signaled a strong commitment to Taiwan's autonomy by stressing that the Republic of China (ROC, or Taiwan) and the People's Republic of China (PRC, or China) are not subordinate to each other and promising that he would "uphold the commitment to resist annexation or encroachment upon our sovereignty." Lai also emphasized that China "has no right to represent Taiwan," a stance frequently reiterated by Taiwan's foreign ministry to counter Beijing's efforts to exclude Taiwan from international fora. Yet Lai also suggested a potential framework for cross-Strait engagement. He appealed directly to China to cooperate with Taiwan on climate change, pandemic prevention and regional security, and called on Beijing to work with the international community to advance peace, security and prosperity.

Indeed, Lai may have been attempting to lower the temperature after a series of earlier provocative remarks that stoked Beijing's ire. Speaking to a domestic audience days before National Day, for example, Lai posited that the PRC could not be Taiwan's "motherland" because the ROC dates its founding to 1911, 38 years before the PRC's establishment in 1949. In September, he suggested that if Beijing were intent on reclaiming lost territory, it should pursue territorial claims in Russia that were ceded by the Qing empire. Both statements drew sharp criticism from Beijing's Taiwan Affairs Office (TAO), and some domestic political opponents warned Lai was "provoking a war."

How did Beijing respond?

Although Taiwan's foreign ministry urged China to recognize the goodwill Lai expressed, Chinese state media rejected the notion that Lai's speech evinced "moderation" or "restraint," and instead claimed it was a continuation of what it labels Lai's "new two-state theory" and "separatist fallacies."

Two days after the speech, China's Ministry of Commerce issued a statement saying it is studying further trade measures against Taiwan, which could result in new tariffs or other forms of economic pressure. Early in the week that followed, the TAO announced sanctions against Puma Shen, Robert Tsao and Kuma Academy for allegedly engaging in "separatist activities." (Co-founded by Shen and funded by Tsao, Kuma Academy is a Taiwanese civil defense organization that trains civilians to respond to emergencies.)

On October 14, the PLA's Eastern Theater announced "Joint Sword-2024 B" drills and deployed fighter jets, drones and warships to encircle Taiwan and simulate a

potential blockade. As part of the one-day exercise, China flew a record number of 153 Chinese military aircraft around Taiwan in a 13-hour period. When the PLA announced the start of the exercises, it neither provided advance notice nor indicated the duration of the exercises, which aims to intimidate Taiwan psychologically and complicate Taiwan's defense preparedness.

The military exercises encircled Taiwan and included joint air and naval combat readiness patrols, a blockade of key ports north, south and east of Taiwan, and an assault on maritime and land targets. Law enforcement vessels also featured prominently, as China's Coast Guard (CCG) deployed 17 ships to patrol the waters surrounding Taiwan, the first time they have circumnavigated the island. In addition, four CCG vessels entered the restricted waters around the Matsu Islands for the first time.

Leaders in Beijing appear to see military action as the most effective tool for sending signals to Taipei, Washington and others in the region.

The pre-planned drills were shorter in timeframe but closer in proximity to Taiwan than the exercises conducted after House Speaker Pelosi visited the island in August 2022. The U.S. Department of Defense called the recent exercise "irresponsible, disproportionate, and destabilizing," and a State Department spokesperson said China's "response with military provocations to a routine annual speech is unwarranted and risks escalation."

The TAO justified the drills as punishment for Lai's alleged pursuit of "Taiwan independence." On October 15, TAO claimed that Lai's May inaugural speech, National Day address and remarks about the "motherland" were all responsible for escalating tensions, and warned that each provocation made by "separatists" in the name of "Taiwan independence" will be met with more intense countermeasures "until China's complete reunification is realized."

The intensified pressure aims to weaken Taiwan's ruling Democratic Progressive Party, intimidate the Taiwanese public and challenge the Taiwan government's autonomy to assert actual control over the island.

How can we avoid an escalation spiral?

Both Beijing and Taipei continue to blame the other for changing the status quo, and view their own statements and actions as necessary responses to provocation from the other.

Leaders in Beijing appear to see military action as the most effective tool for sending signals to Taipei, Washington and others in the region. Until it faces meaningful consequences for this coercion, China's political, economic, military and gray-zone pressures on Taiwan are likely to persist and possibly intensify as Beijing pushes its unification agenda and seeks to avoid appearing weak. Its incremental military actions,

like the recent exercises, aim to pressure Taiwan without crossing red lines that would trigger significant international response.

Lai himself is also walking a tightrope. He must respond to critics, at home and abroad, who argue that he is not doing enough to defend Taiwan, while also being mindful of concerns on the island that his provocative comments risk drawing Taiwan into unwanted war. At the same time, China's bellicose response to his more moderate remarks may lead Lai to believe there is nothing he can do to lower the temperature.

Without clear channels of communication, the two sides are often left guessing about the other's intentions or concerns without the ability to frankly address or resolve key issues that could lead to unwanted escalation or conflict. Given the increasingly tense situation, it is incumbent on U.S. political leaders to consistently oppose unilateral changes to the status quo from either side, reaffirm that Washington does not support Taiwan independence and call on all parties to resolve their differences peacefully, so as to not exacerbate the potential for crisis.

Taiwan unveils plans to cope with potential Chinese military blockade

23 October 2024, [VOA](#), William Zheng

Taiwan is stepping up efforts to strengthen its capabilities to respond to a potential military blockade by China, as Beijing increases military pressure on the democratically ruled island.

In a report outlining Taiwan's wartime food plan, which was submitted to parliament on Tuesday, the Ministry of Agriculture said it had maintained a three-month rice stockpile and ensured food and critical supplies were stored evenly across the island.

According to the ministry, the current rice stockpile can sustain Taiwan for seven months, and its fish feed inventory is enough to support fishing in ponds for over three months if sea fishing is not possible. The government said it is also drafting plans to prepare for rice rationing during wartime.

In the event of a Chinese military blockade, Taiwanese authorities said they would dedicate more farmland to grow rice and use additional ponds to grow aquaculture. The crops that Taiwan would prioritize growing in the event of war include sweet potatoes, soybeans and fresh vegetables. The ministry also plans to set up a task force to conduct a monthly inventory of the island's food resources.

Officials from Taiwan's Ministry of Economic Affairs also laid out plans to boost Taiwan's energy reserves and energy supply.

Hu Wen-chong, director of the department of state-owned enterprise management at Taiwan's Ministry of Economic Affairs, told lawmakers Wednesday that the government plans to set up three natural gas receiving stations to enhance the natural gas safety stock to more than 14 days. Taiwan currently has enough stock to maintain natural gas supplies for eight days.

In the event of a natural gas shortage during wartime, Hu told lawmakers that the government could activate some decommissioned coal-fired power plants to support the island's energy supply needs.

Maintaining Taiwan's oil supply is another concern. Taiwan imports close to 70% of its oil from the Middle East, which some legislators worry could be affected if China pressures regional countries to halt exports to the island during a blockade. Hu said the island has diversified its oil procurement from other countries, such as the United States and Indonesia.

Analysts welcomed the preparations for a potential blockade but said Taiwan's wartime food and energy reserve plans were designed to cope with food natural disasters, such as typhoons and earthquakes.

"Wartime is different from natural disasters because there won't be threats posed by the Chinese military during an earthquake," Lin Ying-yu, a military expert at Tamkang University in Taiwan, told VOA by phone.

"For these plans to work in wartime scenarios, there is still a lot of room for improvement."

Su Tzu-yun, a military expert at the Taipei-based Institute for National Defense and Security Research, noted that Taiwan has been taking monthly inventories of critical supplies and storing these resources across the island for a long time.

"There are close to 1,000 grain silos of various sizes across Taiwan, and it has been conducting critical resource distribution drills during the annual Wan An air-defense exercise in July," Su said.

Natural gas accounts for around half of Taiwan's electricity, a crucial resource that Taiwan will not be able to import during a Chinese blockade. Su said figuring out ways to use the island's oil and coal stocks to supply electricity is important.

In a phone interview with VOA, Su cited a report from Taiwan's Energy Administration Act that said the island has about five months' worth of oil and coal reserve, with around 190 million tons of underground coal. Those resources could be used to supply electricity if Taiwan experiences a natural gas shortage during a Chinese blockade, Su said.

Chinese blockade "an act of war"

Over the past week, China has increased its military pressure on Taiwan, staging a one-day blockade-style military exercise around the island just days after Taiwan President Lai Ching-te's National Day speech on October 10.

In the speech, Lai said the People's Republic of China — China's official name — has no right to represent

Taiwan, formally known as the Republic of China. Beijing views Taiwan as part of its territory. China also began holding live-fire air and sea drills near Niushan island off the southeastern Chinese province of Fujian on Tuesday.

On Wednesday, Taiwan's defense minister Wellington Koo said a Chinese aircraft carrier group sailed through the Taiwan Strait. The group was led by the Liaoning, China's oldest aircraft carrier. Taiwan's defense ministry said it was closely monitoring the Liaoning's movement.

Koo also said Beijing's "Joint Sword-2024B" exercise, which took place on October 13, fell short of the definition of an actual blockade since the Chinese military didn't impose no-flight and no-sail zones.

"If you really want to carry out a so-called blockade, which according to international law is to prohibit all aircraft and ships entering the area, then according to United Nations resolutions it is regarded as a form of war," he told journalists at Taiwan's parliament on Wednesday.

Koo added that since around one-fifth of global freight passes through the Taiwan Strait, a blockade imposed by China would have global consequences.

"The international community could not sit by and just watch," Koo told lawmakers during a legislative session on Wednesday.

Since August 2022, China has held at least four blockade-style military exercises around Taiwan and each exercise has served as a response to high-level political exchanges between Taiwan and the U.S. or important speeches delivered by Taiwan's president.

Lin at Tamkang University said while China is using these blockade-style military exercises to test its capabilities and improve coordination between different forces, they are also Beijing's way of responding to major political remarks in Taiwan.

"China is trying to signal that whenever the Taiwanese government makes important political remarks, Beijing will respond militarily," he told VOA.

Lin said Taipei should closely monitor Chinese military exercises and adjust or improve the military's defense and offense capabilities accordingly.

Taiwan says blockade would be act of war as China holds more drills

23 October 2024, Aljazeera

Taiwanese defence chief says a blockade would have far-reaching consequences for international trade.

Taiwan's defence chief has warned that a Chinese blockade would be an act of war and have far-reaching consequences for international trade after Beijing held military exercises to encircle the self-governed island. Taiwanese Defence Minister Wellington Koo made his comments on Wednesday as the Chinese People's

Liberation Army (PLA) continued exercises near the democratically-ruled island after last week carrying out war games that included a simulated blockade.

"If you really want to carry out a so-called blockade, which according to international law is to prohibit all aircraft and ships entering the area, then according to United Nations resolutions it is regarded as a form of war," Koo said in remarks to reporters at parliament.

"I want to stress that drills and exercises are totally different from a blockade, as would be the impact on the international community," Koo added.

China claims Taiwan as its territory and has said it reserves the right to use force to bring it under its control, with the PLA regularly holding drills – including simulating blockading key ports and assaulting maritime and ground targets – around the island.

Taiwan, also known by its official name the Republic of China, has never been ruled by the People's Republic of China and rejects Beijing's sovereignty claims.

Beijing also asserts jurisdiction over the entirety of the Taiwan Strait, a 180km-wide (110-mile) waterway separating mainland China from Taiwan.

Taiwan and other members of the international community reject Beijing's claim, with the United States, Japan and several European countries asserting its status as an international waterway.

The US navy, in particular, regularly sails through the strait to maintain freedom of navigation rights.

Koo, who noted that one-fifth of global freight passes through the strait, said that the international community "could not sit by and just watch" if China were to impose a blockade.

Taiwan's defence ministry announced earlier on Wednesday that Chinese aircraft carriers, led by the Liaoning carrier, travelled north through the waterway after passing through waters near the Taiwan-controlled Pratas islands.

During the previous 24 hours, Taiwan's military detected 15 Chinese military aircraft and six navy vessels in the skies and waters around the island, the defence ministry said.

"The Liaoning is passing through the Taiwan Strait now, sailing north along the west of the median line and we are closely monitoring it," Koo said.

Taiwan has reported almost daily Chinese military drills around the island for the past five years, but activity has intensified since April's election of outspoken President William Lai Ching-te, whom Beijing has labelled a "dangerous separatist".

On October 14, Beijing launched large-scale military drills – code-named "Joint Sword-2024B" and involving the army, navy, air force and rocket force – in the Taiwan Strait and areas to the north, south and east of Taiwan.

Beijing said the drills, which came soon after Lai delivered his National Day speech on October 10, were

issued as a “stern warning to the separatist acts of ‘Taiwan Independence’ forces”.

China holds live-fire drills on island closest to Taiwan

22 October 2024, [BBC](#), Kelly Ng

China held a live-firing exercise from its territory closest to Taiwan one week after it launched a large-scale drill encircling the island.

Chinese military drills off the Taiwanese coast have intensified in recent years as its claims over the self-governed island have grown.

Beijing announced late on Monday that an area around Niushan - an island 105km (66 miles) from Taiwan - will be closed for drills for four hours from 09:00 local time (01:00 GMT) on Tuesday.

Taiwan's premier Cho Jung-tai said on Tuesday that China should not be conducting such exercises given their threat to regional stability.

"No matter how large the scale of the drill is, they should not be frequent and close to Taiwan," he told reporters. "This will only cause unnecessary tension." Although Taipei has called the drills routine, analysts believe China is likely sending a message given their proximity to Taiwan.

The exercises are also part of a wider campaign, which has seen Chinese ships and planes regularly cross into Taiwanese territory and airspace - a grey zone warfare tactic intended to normalise the incursions and weaken Taiwan over a prolonged period.

As the Chinese drills have intensified, so have manoeuvres by Taiwan's allies, mainly the United States.

For decades, the US Pacific fleet was the only foreign navy that regularly transited the Taiwan Strait that separates the two sides to assert its freedom of navigation.

But recently, other US allies, including Canada, Germany, Australia and Japan have been joining these patrols as part of what are called “high-visibility” operations.

The most recent was over the weekend, when the US and Canada sailed their warships through the waters.

Analysts say this represents increased signalling from China and the US. While Beijing is emphasising its claims over Taiwan, Washington is making clear its support for the island.

A US official, however, told the BBC that Washington is keen on lowering tensions with Beijing given the US's current focus on conflicts in the Middle East and Europe.

But the longer-term threat for the US still comes from China, the official said.

Last Monday, Beijing deployed a record number of 153 military aircraft, as well as warships and coast guard

vessels to encircle Taiwan in an exercise designed to simulate an attack by land, sea and air.

This followed Taiwanese President William Lai's National Day speech on 10 October, where he pledged to "resist annexation or encroachment upon [Taiwan's] sovereignty".

China and Taiwan are "not subordinate to each other", he said, adding that China "has no right to represent Taiwan".

China has repeatedly vowed to take Taiwan by force if necessary. It has long seen Lai as a "troublemaker" advocating for Taiwan's independence.

Preparing for a Chinese blockade, Taiwan maps out wartime food plans

22 October 2024, [Reuters](#)

Taiwan's government offered rare details on Tuesday of its wartime food plan, saying it is taking monthly inventories of crucial supplies like rice and making sure they are properly stored across the island in case of a Chinese blockade.

China, which views democratically governed Taiwan as its own territory, has over the past five years staged almost daily military activities around the island, including war games that have practised blockades and attacks on ports. Taiwan's government rejects Beijing's sovereignty claims.

China's latest war games around the island, carried out last week, included blockading key ports and areas, and assaulting maritime and ground targets, Beijing said.

In a report to parliament about preparations in case of a Chinese blockade, a copy of which was reviewed by Reuters, Taiwan's agriculture ministry said it has ensured that rice stock piles were above a three-month level as required by law and that food supplies were stored across the island in a bid to "lower attack risks".

The ministry said Taiwan's current rice stocks were enough to support the island for at least seven months and plans on rice rationing through supply stations across the island were being made in case of a food crisis.

During a blockade, more farmland will be used to grow rice, the ministry said, adding it will also prioritise growing sweet potatoes, soy beans and fresh vegetables as well as using more ponds for aquaculture.

In a scenario in which sea fishing is not allowed, the ministry said the island's fish feed inventory will be enough to support fishing in ponds for more than three months.

The ministry said it was planning to set up a task force to ensure food supply safety by taking a monthly inventory of the island's food resources.

Taiwan, a farming powerhouse during Japanese colonial rule from 1895 to 1945, depends on imports for the majority of its food needs as farm land was taken over for factories during rapid industrialisation starting in the 1960s.

Taiwan's food self-sufficiency rate in 2023 dropped to 30.3%, the lowest level in 18 years, according a previous report from the ministry.

In a separate report to parliament on preparations for the same scenario, the National Security Bureau said China's cyber forces were honing their skills to infiltrate key online infrastructure like telecoms in a bid to destabilise Taiwan with misinformation during a conflict with China.

China reiterate vow to use force over Taiwan as president Xi visits frontline island

17 October 2024, [Tibetan Review](#)

China has on Oct 16 vowed never to commit to renounce the use of force to “reunify” Taiwan, a day after president Xi Jining visited Dongshan island in Fujian province which lies across the economically prosperous and democratically self-ruled island. Both the events came after China subjected Taiwan on Oct 14 to massive war exercises as a “stern warning” to Taiwan “independence forces”. All this followed Taiwanese President Lai Ching-te’s vow to defend the island from any Chinese armed aggression during his national day address on Oct 10.

“We are willing to strive for the prospect of peaceful reunification with the utmost sincerity and endeavour,” *Reuters* Oct 16 quoted Chen Binhua, spokesperson for China’s Taiwan Affairs Office, as saying at a regular press briefing in Beijing. “But we will never commit ourselves to renouncing the use of force.”

“No matter how many troops Taiwan has and how many weapons it acquires, and no matter whether external forces intervene or not, if it (Taiwan) dares to take risks, it will lead to its own destruction,” he has added. “Our actions to defend national sovereignty and territorial integrity will not cease for a moment.”

Chen’s remarks came a day after Chinese state media reported Oct 15 President Xi’s arrival the previous day on Dongshan island where in 1953 China beat off an invasion attempt by Taiwan-based military of the Republic of China (ROC), the official name of Taiwan and which had ruled China from 1911 until its civil war loss to the communists in 1949. No armistice or peace treaty has ever been signed between the two sides.

Xi was stated to have urged officials in Fujian to promote cross-strait cultural exchanges and “enhance the ethnic, cultural and national identity of Taiwan compatriots.”

Taiwan’s ROC government, which for long claimed to be the legitimate government of China and even held its UN seat, with the veto power, until the 1970s, now rejects China’s sovereignty claims, saying only the island’s people can decide their future.

In his Oct 10 speech, Lai said China had no right to represent Taiwan, that the island was willing to work with the government in Beijing to combat challenges like climate change, striking both a firm and a conciliatory tone which Taiwan officials said was a show of goodwill.

But Chen, the Chinese spokesperson, said Lai had stuck to his “stubborn separatist position”, adding “There was no goodwill to speak of.”

Lai has repeatedly offered talks with China, only to be rebuffed by the latter.

China has over the past five years sent warships and warplanes in the waters and skies around Taiwan on an almost daily basis. It has also carried out large-scale war drills to cut off the island in shows of force to intimidate the island against making any move towards declaring independence.

China starts new round of war games around Taiwan

14 October 2024, [Aljazeera](#)

Beijing begins manoeuvres in ‘stern warning’ days after President Lai’s first National Day speech.

China’s military has started a new round of war games with ships and aircraft near Taiwan, just days after the self-ruled democratic island marked its National Day.

The exercises, dubbed Joint Sword-2024B, began early on Monday and were a “stern warning to the separatist acts of ‘Taiwan Independence’ forces”, said Beijing, which claims the island as its own.

Captain Li Xi, the spokesman for the Chinese military’s Eastern Theatre Command, said the drills were focussed on “sea-air combat-readiness patrol, blockade on key ports and areas” and would also involve an “assault on maritime and ground targets”.

The drills, he added, were a “legitimate and necessary operation for safeguarding state sovereignty and national unity”, and gave no date for their conclusion.

Taiwan’s Ministry of Defence expressed its strong condemnation of China’s “irrational and provocative actions” and said it had “dispatched appropriate forces to respond accordingly to protect freedom and democracy, and defend the sovereignty” of Taiwan.

As of 8am (00:00 GMT), it said some 25 PLA aircraft and a total of 11 ships, including seven from the navy, were found operating around Taiwan.

President William Lai Ching-te promised to protect the island from external threats.

“I would like to reassure my compatriots that the government will continue to defend the democratic and free constitutional system, protect democratic

Taiwan, and safeguard national security," he wrote on Facebook.

In recent years, China has stepped up its military activity around Taiwan, which it claims as its own. The latest drills come just days after Lai gave his first National Day address on October 10, promising he would resist any "annexation or encroachment" and that Beijing had no right to represent the island's 23 million people.

"It was widely anticipated that the PLA [People's Liberation Army] would conduct military exercises following Lai's National Day speech," Bonnie Glaser, the managing director of the German Marshall Fund's Indo-Pacific programme, told Al Jazeera. "The drills have the effect of demonstrating to the domestic audience that the CCP [Chinese Communist Party] has the resolve to defend Chinese territory. They are also intended to warn Taipei and Washington not to cross Beijing's red lines."

'It will pass'

Beijing has not ruled out the use of force to bring Taiwan under its control and said the drills were a warning to the "separatist acts of Taiwan independence forces".

It has condemned Lai, who was elected in January and took office in May, as a "separatist" and previously staged military exercises, Joint Sword-2024A, three days after his inauguration.

Lev Nachman, a professor of political science at the National Taiwan University in Taipei, said China's latest actions were no surprise.

"While military threats are no small matter, we all knew the PRC [People's Republic of China] would respond to Lai's Double Ten Day speech with military threats of some sort," Nachman wrote on X. "There is no need to panic or overreact. We all saw this coming. It will pass quickly."

In his October 10 speech, Lai had also appeared to reach out to Beijing, expressing hope for "healthy and orderly dialogue and exchanges", and urging Beijing to use its influence to help resolve conflicts in the Middle East and Ukraine.

But China's state-run Global Times, in an analysis of the speech published on Sunday, quoted analysts describing Lai's speech as a "poison pill wrapped in cellophane".

Other state media also accused Lai of promoting a "two-state" theory to describe Taiwan and China after he noted last week the different ages of the two governments. The People's Republic of China, which celebrated its National Day on October 1, is 75 years old, while the Republic of China, which celebrated on October 10 and is headquartered in Taipei, turned 113. Kuang-shun Yang, the co-founder of the Taipei-based think tank US-Taiwan Watch, said the drills could be China testing the waters internationally at a time of global upheaval, citing the Russia-Ukraine war,

the conflicts in the Middle East and threats from North Korea.

"We can see that the world has a lot of regional flashpoints that are ongoing and maybe Beijing sees this as ... an opportunity to test their will and see if the world's support for Taiwan is strong enough," he told Al Jazeera.

Beijing has sought to erase Taiwan from the international stage, blocking it from global forums and poaching its few remaining formal diplomatic allies.

The United States remains Taiwan's main international supporter and supplier of weapons.

It said it was "seriously concerned" at the latest military drills.

"The PRC response with military provocations to a routine annual speech is unwarranted and risks escalation," State Department Spokesman Matthew Miller said in a statement.

"We call on the PRC to act with restraint and to avoid any further actions that may undermine peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait and in the broader region, which is essential to regional peace and prosperity and a matter of international concern."

China threatens Taiwan with more trade measures after denouncing president's speech

12 October 2024, [Reuters](#)

China is studying further trade measures against Taiwan, China's Ministry of Commerce said on Saturday, two days after Beijing denounced a speech by Taiwan President Lai Ching-te.

The Chinese ministry said in a statement on its website that the Democratic Progressive Party, Taiwan's ruling party, had not taken any practical measures to lift "trade restrictions" on China.

"At present, relevant (Chinese government) departments are studying further measures based on the conclusions of the investigation into trade barriers from Taiwan" against China, it added.

Taiwan's China policy making Mainland Affairs Council said it regretted and "strongly protested" the move.

"Blatant economic coercion will only arouse the resentment of the Taiwanese people and cause the distance between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait to grow wider and wider," it said in a statement.

China, which views democratically governed Taiwan as its own territory, detests Lai as a "separatist". Lai and his government reject Beijing's sovereignty claims, saying only Taiwan's people can decide their future.

On Thursday at his keynote national day speech, Lai said the People's Republic of China had no right to represent Taiwan, but that the island was willing to work with Beijing to combat challenges like climate change, striking both a firm and conciliatory tone, drawing anger from China.

The Saturday announcement from China's commerce ministry could portend tariffs or other forms of economic pressure against the island in the near future.

China's Taiwan Affairs Office, which on Thursday said that Lai's speech promoted "separatist ideas" and incited confrontation, responded to the announcement by saying the fundamental reason behind the trade dispute was the "DPP authorities' stubborn adherence to the stance of 'Taiwan independence'".

"The political basis makes it difficult for cross-strait trade disputes to be resolved through negotiation," it added.

In May, China reinstated tariffs on 134 items it imports from Taiwan, after Beijing's finance ministry said it would suspend concessions on the items under a trade deal because Taiwan had not reciprocated.

The Cross-Strait Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA) between China and Taiwan was initially signed in 2010 and Taiwanese officials had previously told Reuters that China was likely to pressure Lai by ending some of the preferential trading terms within it.

Taiwan says four iPhone maker staff detained in China under 'strange' circumstances

11 October 2024, [NBC News](#)

Four had been detained in China's Zhengzhou, home to a major Foxconn plant assembling Apple's iPhones, on suspicion of the equivalent of "breach of trust," Taiwan's Mainland Affairs Council said.

Four employees of Taiwan's Foxconn, the world's largest iPhone assembler, have been detained in China under "quite strange" circumstances, Taiwan's government said.

Taiwan's Mainland Affairs Council, in a statement to Reuters on Thursday, said the four employees had been detained in China's Zhengzhou, home to a major Foxconn plant assembling Apple's iPhones, on suspicion of the equivalent of "breach of trust."

"The circumstances of this case are quite strange," it said.

The case may be connected to corruption and abuse of power by a small number of Chinese security officials, the council added, without giving details.

Foxconn declined to comment.

The Mainland Affairs Council said Foxconn had stated the company had "suffered no losses and that the four employees had done nothing to harm the company's interests."

"This has seriously damaged the confidence of companies. We call on relevant departments on the

other side of the Taiwan Strait to investigate and deal with it as soon as possible."

Calls to China's Taiwan Affairs Office seeking comment outside of office hours went unanswered.

In June, Taiwan's government raised its travel warning for China, telling its citizens not to go unless absolutely necessary, following a threat from Beijing to execute those deemed "diehard" Taiwan independence supporters.

China claims democratically governed Taiwan as its own territory, over the strong objections of the government in Taipei.

Taiwanese businesses have invested billions of dollars in China since the country began landmark economic reforms four decades ago, drawn by a common culture and language and much lower costs.

US says Taiwan speech no justification for China military pressure

10 October 2024, [Reuters](#), Michael Martina, David Brunnstrom and Trevor Hunnicutt

China has no justification for using an annual national day speech by Taiwan as a pretext for military pressure, the United States said on Wednesday, ahead of scheduled remarks by the island's president that Taiwan officials say Beijing is likely to follow with military drills.

China has been using every possible means to cause "chaos", a Taiwan source said ahead of President Lai Ching-te's keynote address on Thursday, describing the context around it.

A senior U.S. administration official told reporters the Oct. 10 speech marking the 113th birthday of the Republic of China, Taiwan's official name, was no cause for Chinese military exercises.

"Even though we have not seen significant military activity or exercises following previous 10/10 speeches, we are prepared that Beijing may choose to use this as a pretext this year," the senior official said.

"Again, we see no justification for a routine annual celebration to be used in this manner. Coercive actions like this against Taiwan and in the cross-strait context, in our view, undermine cross-strait stability," the official said.

China staged "punishment" war games around Taiwan shortly after Lai's May inauguration but has not announced any new Taiwan-related military drills. The Chinese embassy in Washington did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The U.S. official said Taiwan had briefed diplomatic partners on Lai's speech, but that the content of his remarks were "entirely up to Taiwan officials."

Lai, who took office in May after winning election in January, is detested by China which calls him a

"separatist". Beijing claims Taiwan as its own territory, a view Lai and his government reject.

China's military has significantly ramped up its activities around Taiwan in recent years and has never renounced the use of force to bring the island under its control.

National day in Taiwan marks the overthrow of the last Chinese dynasty in 1911 and the ushering in of the Republic of China. The defeated republican government fled to Taiwan in 1949 after losing a civil war with Mao Zedong's communists. No peace treaty or armistice has ever been signed, and Beijing has never renounced the use of force to bring Taiwan under its control.

Most Taiwanese believe China is unlikely to invade in the coming five years but do see Beijing as a serious threat to the island, a poll by Taiwan's top military think tank showed on Wednesday.

The U.S. and China had discussed in late August holding fresh talks between presidents Joe Biden and Xi Jinping, as both countries have sought to maintain stability in difficult bilateral relations.

The U.S. official did not offer new details on when such a leaders call might occur, and said it had been "tough to schedule" due to holidays and domestic issues in both countries.

No one can stop China's reunification: mainland slams Lai's separatist remarks

10 October 2024, [China Military](#)

A Chinese mainland spokesperson on Thursday said that no individual or force can stop China's reunification, slamming Taiwan leader Lai Ching-te's latest separatist remarks.

Chen Binhua, a spokesperson for the State Council Taiwan Affairs Office, made the remarks in response to a speech Lai delivered in Taipei on Oct. 10.

Lai's speech continued to propagate the new "two states" theory and fabricate "Taiwan independence" fallacies, Chen said, adding that it has deliberately heightened cross-strait tensions and gravely undermined peace and stability in the Strait.

Noting that the future of Taiwan lies in national reunification, Chen said that nothing Lai has said can change Taiwan's legal status as a part of China or the fact that both sides of the Taiwan Strait belong to one China.

Lai's remarks have demonstrated his unwavering "Taiwan independence" stance, along with his confrontational mindset and continuous provocations, Chen said.

Since 1949, due to the continuation of China's civil war and foreign interference, the two sides of the Taiwan Strait have been locked in a prolonged state of political confrontation, he noted.

However, Taiwan has always remained an inalienable part of China's territory, and Taiwan's people have always been members of the Chinese nation, Chen stressed.

The government of the People's Republic of China is the sole legal government representing the whole of China, including Taiwan, he added.

He noted that the current fight against separatist forces advocating for "Taiwan independence" is not a fight over political systems but a fight over the reunification or splitting of the motherland.

Lai is attempting to hijack Taiwan for his "Taiwan independence" aims, and his related provocations are the root cause of instability in the Taiwan Strait, which will bring disaster to Taiwan people, Chen said.

He emphasized the mainland's firm opposition to any separatist activities or external interference, calling for the promotion of cross-strait exchange and cooperation, further integration, and the unwavering pursuit of national reunification.

Taiwan willing to cooperate with China, but not as subordinate to it as 'motherland'

10 October 2024, [Tibetan Review](#)

Taiwan's president William Lai Ching-te has said the People's republic of China (PRC) cannot claim to represent his Republic of China (ROC) which he has pointed out is older – having been founded on Jan 1, 1912 – hitting raw nerves in Beijing which has not ruled out armed invasion to "reunite" the two sides.

China marked its 75th national day on Oct 1, and Taiwan its 113th on Oct 10.

Beijing has accused Lai of escalating hostility after his recent comments that the PRC could not be the island's motherland.

Zhu Fenglian, a spokeswoman for the mainland's Taiwan Affairs Office, has said Lai had not only tried to deceive and intimidate the Taiwan people, harming their interests, but was covering up his efforts to provoke separatism and damage cross-strait relations. "Lai Ching-te's Taiwan independence fallacy is just old wine in new bottles, and again exposes his obstinate stance on Taiwan independence and his sinister intentions of escalating hostility and confrontation," the *scmp.com* Oct 9 quoted Zhu as saying.

But Lai, giving a keynote national address outside the presidential office in Taipei on his country's national day of Oct 10, has reiterated that the ROC – the island's formal name – and the PRC are "not subordinate to each other".

But such an assertion goes against the grain of China's claim that Taiwan, a "renegade province", belongs to it.

Nevertheless, Taiwan rejects the claim, saying it has never been a part of the PRC, which was established on Oct 1, 1949.

Taiwan, on the other hand, marks as its national day the anniversary of the 2011 revolution, known as the Xinhai Revolution, which toppled China's last imperial dynasty.

"On this land, democracy and freedom are growing and thriving. The PRC has no right to represent Taiwan," *Reuters* Oct 10 quoted Lai as saying.

Taiwan's determination to defend its sovereignty, maintain peace in the Taiwan Strait and seek equal and dignified talks with China all remain unchanged, he has added.

While holding out an offer of cooperation with China, Lai has made it clear, "I will also uphold the commitment to resist annexation or encroachment upon our sovereignty."

"We are willing to work with China on addressing climate change, combating infectious diseases, and maintaining regional security to pursue peace and mutual prosperity for the well-being of the people on the two sides of the Taiwan Strait," he has added.

Beijing has repeatedly denounced the Taiwanese leader as an "obstinate separatist" and has been angered by his attempts to reframe the relationship between the two sides.

He has promoted the concept of "mutual non-subordination", presenting Taiwan and the mainland as separate entities to cement a distinct Taiwanese identity, noted the *scmp.com* report.

The ROC government of China led by the Kuomintang, or Nationalist, forces, fled to Taiwan after their defeat by the communists in the civil war, and set up an interim government there under Chiang Kai-shek.

While Chiang had hoped to regain control of the mainland, Lai has added: "We will no longer attack the mainland, but we are also unwilling to be ruled by the Communist Party."

Taiwan's Kuomintang party, now the single largest in parliament, sees democracy and respect for human rights as preconditions for holding talks on a political settlement between the two sides. Lai's Democratic Progressive Party, on the other hand, is seen as favouring a separate national identity for the island.

Most Taiwanese believe China unlikely to invade in coming five years, poll shows

09 October 2024, [NBC](#)

Most Taiwanese believe China is unlikely to invade in the coming five years but do see Beijing as a serious threat to the democratic island, a poll by Taiwan's top military think tank showed on Wednesday.

Over the past five years or so, China's military has significantly ramped up its activities around

Taiwan, which Beijing views as its own territory over the strong objections of the government in Taipei, and has never renounced the use of force to bring the island under its control.

The survey of around 1,200 people conducted last month by the Institute for National Defense and Security Research showed 61% of people think it was "unlikely or very unlikely" that China would attack Taiwan in the coming five years.

"Most people do not think China's territorial ambitions will manifest themselves in the form of attacking Taiwan," said Christina Chen, an INDSR researcher.

Taiwan's people are also concerned about other Chinese threats, including military drills and propaganda campaigns, she said.

"Most people see China's territorial ambitions as a serious threat," Chen said.

The poll presents a contrast to a warning by the head of U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, who said last year that Chinese President Xi Jinping had ordered his military to be ready to conduct an invasion of Taiwan by 2027.

"That means Taiwanese people are aware of the threat but remain calm and rational with the expectations of an imminent war," the INDSR said.

More than 67% of respondents to the poll said they would fight back if China attacked, but they were split almost evenly on whether Taiwan's armed forces were capable of defending the island, half expressing confidence and half no confidence.

Lee Kuan-chen, another INDSR researcher, said Taiwan's military should continue to boost its defense capacity to build public trust.

The poll also showed a split in opinion on whether the United States would help defend Taiwan.

While some 74% believed the U.S. government was likely to "indirectly" help Taiwan by providing food, medical supplies and weapons, only 52% thought the U.S. military would dispatch its armed forces to intervene, the poll showed.

Lee said Taiwan's government should be more transparent about Taiwan-U.S. security cooperation.

"That way, people will not have expectations that are too high or too low on U.S. assistance," Lee said.

U.S. President Joe Biden has upset the Chinese government with comments that appeared to suggest the United States would defend Taiwan if it were attacked, a deviation from a long-held U.S. position of "strategic ambiguity."

Taiwan's President Lai Ching-te said on Saturday that it is "impossible" for the People's Republic of China to become Taiwan's motherland because Taiwan has older political roots.

Lai, who took office in May, is condemned by Beijing as a "separatist". He rejects Beijing's sovereignty claims, saying that the island is the Republic of China, which

traces its origins back to the 1911 revolution that overthrew the last imperial dynasty.

The republican government fled to Taiwan in 1949 after losing a civil war with Mao Zedong's communists who set up the People's Republic of China, which continues to claim the island as its "sacred" territory. Taiwan's China policy making Mainland Affairs Council said it was an objective fact that since 1949 the People's Republic of China had never ruled the island. Speaking at a concert ahead of Taiwan's national day celebrations on Oct. 10, Lai noted that the People's Republic had celebrated its 75th anniversary on Oct. 1, and it would be the Republic of China's 113th birthday on Thursday.

"On the contrary, the Republic of China may be the motherland of the people of the People's Republic of China who are over 75 years old," Lai added, to applause.

"One of the most important meanings of these celebrations is that we must remember that we are a sovereign and independent country," he said.

In response, the Chinese government said Lai is escalating tensions with "sinister intentions," saying that he continues to peddle a theory that the two sides of the Taiwan Strait are two separate countries.

"Lai Ching-te's Taiwan independence fallacy is just old wine in a new bottle, and again exposes his obstinate stance on Taiwan independence and his sinister intentions of escalating hostility and confrontation," China's Taiwan Affairs Office said in a statement.

"The Taiwan Affairs Office's remarks have made Taiwan's people see clearly that the Chinese communists regard themselves as the sole legitimate government of China and simply do not allow any room for the survival of the Republic of China," it said. Lai, who is called a "separatist" by Beijing, is set to give a keynote speech in Taipei on Thursday.

China criticizes Taiwan president for his 'motherland' comment

09 October 2024, [NHK World](#)

China has denounced Taiwan President Lai Ching-te for his remark that it is impossible for China to become the motherland of Taiwan's people.

A spokesperson for the Taiwan Affairs Office of the State Council on Tuesday issued a statement about the remark Lai made on Saturday ahead of Double Tenth Day. Taiwan considers October 10 its national day.

Zhu Fenglian said Lai exposed his stubborn adherence to a "Taiwan independence" stance and his malicious intent to escalate hostility and confrontation.

Zhu expressed hope that many compatriots in Taiwan will staunchly oppose "Taiwan independence" and external interference.

China claims Taiwan as part of its territory, and is wary of Lai, labeling him a separatist.

Since he took office in May, China has intensified military pressure through exercises by its forces around Taiwan.

Communist China not the motherland, says Taiwan's president, because our republic is older

07 October 2024, [The Guardian](#)

Lai Ching-te argues the reverse may be true because the Republic of China – the mantle that nationalists carried with them to Taiwan – predates the People's Republic

It is "impossible" for the People's Republic of China to become Taiwan's motherland because Taiwan has older political roots, the island's president has said.

Lai Ching-te, who took office in May, is condemned by Beijing as a separatist. He rejects Beijing's sovereignty claims, saying the island is a country called the Republic of China that traces its origins back to the 1911 revolution overthrowing the last imperial dynasty.

The Chinese nationalist government fled to Taiwan in 1949 after losing a civil war with Mao Zedong's communists. Mao set up the People's Republic of China, which continues to claim self-governed Taiwan as its territory.

Speaking at a concert ahead of Taiwan's national day celebrations on 10 October, Lai noted that the People's Republic had celebrated its 75th anniversary on 1 October and in a few days it would be the Republic of China's 113th birthday.

"Therefore, in terms of age, it is absolutely impossible for the People's Republic of China to become the motherland of the Republic of China's people. On the contrary, the Republic of China may be the motherland of the people of the People's Republic of China who are over 75 years old," Lai added, to applause.

"One of the most important meanings of these celebrations is that we must remember that we are a sovereign and independent country."

China's Taiwan affairs office did not answer calls seeking comment outside office hours, the Reuters news agency said.

The Chinese president, Xi Jinping, in a speech on the eve of his country's national day, reiterated his government's view that Taiwan is its territory.

Lai, who will give his own keynote national day address on 10 October, has needled Beijing before with historical references. In September, he said that if China's claims on Taiwan were about territorial integrity then it should also take back land from Russia signed over by the last Chinese dynasty in the 19th century.

Taiwanese people ready to fight as China ramps up aggression, ambassador says

05 October 2024, [WFIN](#)

Taiwan's top official in the U.S. is warning that China has ramped up its aggression toward the island, and that its people are ready to fight.

"Yes, of course," Alexander Yui, the Taiwanese representative to the U.S., told Fox News' Aishah Hasnie when asked whether the island's residents were willing to meet the moment, if China were to invade. "We've seen Ukraine."

Taiwan has been intensely watching the conflict in Eastern Europe as Kyiv's forces have battled a Russian invasion for more than two years.

Yui said he hoped to not need help from U.S. troops, which Ukraine also does not have, but suggested they would be eagerly accepted if offered.

"If your house is under fire, and they respond to help you with a bucket of water, would you say no?" Yui posed.

The diplomat said Chinese President Xi Jinping has escalated regional tensions since former President Donald Trump left office, but he stopped short of blaming the Biden administration for emboldening China.

"Xi Jinping has been emboldened because he wants to realize what he calls his China dream," Yui said. "It's not about which administration is in the United States . . . but rather, what are the thoughts of Xi Jinping?"

Taiwan's ministry of defense tracked eight Chinese military aircraft and two naval ships near the island earlier this week. The defense ministry said four of the eight planes crossed the median line dividing China and Taiwan's territory in the Taiwan Strait – though Beijing, which claims ownership of Taiwan, does not recognize the geographic delineation.

A week prior, on Sept. 25, Taiwan's defense ministry said it had detected 43 Chinese military aircraft in a 24-hour period, with 34 having crossed the median line. The next day saw 41 Chinese military planes detected near Taiwan.

Xi is believed to be preparing his country for an invasion of Taiwan by 2027 – meaning the U.S. response would fall to whoever wins the presidency in November.

Asked if he had a message for Americans about Taiwan ahead of Election Day, Yui said it was a "peace-loving nation."

"We believe in democracy and freedom. We have to share the same values. And we want to be incorporated in the world, because we've been isolated for many decades due to the conflict that we have . . . with mainland China," he said.

China wants Taiwan to make mistakes and is looking for excuses to trigger a blockade, Taiwan's navy commander says

04 October 2024, [Business Insider](#)

China is trying to force Taiwan into making mistakes and is looking for excuses to trigger a blockade, according to Taiwan's navy commander.

Adm. Tang Hua told The Economist that China is "slowly, but surely" ramping up its military presence around Taiwan and is ready to blockade Taiwan "at any time they want."

He described the tactic as an "anaconda" strategy meant to "squeeze the island."

"They give you extreme pressure, pressure, pressure," Tang said. "They're trying to exhaust you."

At the same time, Tang said that Taiwan is focused on avoiding confrontation. "The PLA is trying to force Taiwan to make mistakes," he said, using the acronym for China's People's Liberation Army.

Concerns about a possible Chinese invasion of Taiwan have grown since Phil Davidson, then the US Indo-Pacific commander, said in 2021 that China could invade Taiwan by 2027.

Since then, military experts and former defense officials have made similar assessments, with variations on the timeline and approach.

Many point to China's rapid modernization of its armed forces over the past two decades and military drills around Taiwan.

According to recent updates shared by Taiwan's defense ministry, China's aircraft, vessels, and ships now operate around Taiwan almost daily, sometimes crossing the median line in the Taiwan Strait and causing its neighbor to scramble its planes. Experts from the American Enterprise Institute and the Institute for the Study of War said in May that an aggressive Chinese coercion campaign — short of war but still threatening — was more likely than a full-scale invasion.

Even so, in its Global Peace Index 2023, the Institute for Economics and Peace estimated that a Chinese blockade of Taiwan would result in a \$2.7 trillion loss in world economic activity in the first year alone, equivalent to a 2.8% decline in global GDP.

Bloomberg's modeling, meanwhile, estimates that a total blockade of Taiwan and Western sanctions on China could result in a 5% worldwide GDP decline, with US GDP falling by 3.3% and China's by 8.9%.

Earlier this year, Taiwan's military leadership issued new rules of engagement around self-defense.

"We restrain our guys, not to provoke or escalate," Tang told The Economist.

According to an unofficial translation by the Lieber Institute for Law and Land Warfare at West Point, Taiwanese soldiers can launch attacks against a target that is clearly identified as a legitimate military

objective and that displays clear hostile acts or intentions, as long as it is in keeping with the nature of the unit, the mission, and the specific tasks assigned by the superior.

Taiwan's defense minister, Wellington Koo, raised similar concerns last month, telling the Financial Times that it will become harder to spot early signs of a Chinese attack due to China's growing military activity around the country.

On Monday, as part of the 75th anniversary celebrations of the People's Republic of China, Chinese leader Xi Jinping pledged to achieve China's "complete reunification" with Taiwan.

"It is where the greater national interest lies, and it is what the people desire," he said, adding: "The wheel of history will not be stopped by any individual or any force."

Not subordinate to China, says Taiwan in response to Xi Jinping's "one-China principle"

03 October 2024, The Economic Times

Taiwan's foreign ministry has made it clear that the country is not subordinate to China in response to China's President Xi Jinping's claim that "Taiwan is a sacred territory of China," Taiwan News reported. During his speech, Xi insisted on adherence to Beijing's "one-China principle" and the "1992 Consensus" and opposed Taiwan independence, while also saying Beijing would achieve "reunification" with Taipei. In response, Jeff affirmed Taiwan's 23 million citizens uphold a free and democratic constitutional system, the Taiwan News reported.

Further, he added Taiwan's sovereignty must not be infringed upon and that it is opposed to annexation, while the country's future must be determined by the Taiwanese.

Liu highlighted Taipei's calls for peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait, the right to its own space in the global arena, and participation in international organisations.

He also hoped Taiwanese would no longer face interference when cheering for Taiwan's athletes at the Olympics.

On Monday, the Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) called on China to "face up to the reality that the two sides of the Taiwan Strait are not affiliated with each other, rationally face the mainstream public opinion in Taiwan, and engage in pragmatic dialogue with Taiwan's democratically elected government." It called on Beijing to build goodwill to foster favourable conditions for the development of cross-strait relations.

The 'One China principle' is a position held by the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the ruling Chinese Communist Party (CCP) that there exists only

one sovereign state under the name China, with the PRC serving as the sole legitimate government of China, and Taiwan.

The 1992 consensus refers to the outcome of a meeting in 1992 between the representatives of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP)-led People's Republic of China (PRC) in mainland China and the Kuomintang (KMT)-led Republic of China (ROC) on Taiwan. They are often credited to creating a diplomatic basis between the two.

Xi vows to 'reunify' Taiwan, warns of 'rough seas' ahead, on low-key 75th National Day

02 October 2024, [Tibetan Review](#)

Marking a subdued 75th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China on Oct 1 in the face of daunting, drawn-out economic challenges, and their adverse corollary effects, President Xi Jinping has vowed to "reunify" the self-governing democratic island nation of Taiwan. Earlier, in the run up to the anniversary, Xi had called for "consolidating and developing the unity of the Chinese nation" by "fostering a strong sense of community for the Chinese nation" in ethnic minority areas.

No festivities have been announced for the Oct 1 occasion, save for a flag-raising ceremony at Tiananmen Square, with an honour guard marching from the entrance of the sprawling palace that in past centuries was the home of Chinese emperors. The entirely state-controlled media ran constant reports on China's economic progress and social stability, with no mention of challenges ranging from a declining birth rate to the disruption in supply chains that has harmed the largely export-driven economy, reported *indiatvnews.com* Oct 1.

Like all his predecessors, Xi has reiterated his pledge to achieve "reunification" with Taiwan, underscoring his resolve to achieve the "complete reunification of the motherland."

China's ruling Communist Party claims Taiwan as its own, despite having never controlled it, and has vowed to "reunify" with the self-governing democracy, by force, if necessary, noted the *cnn.com* Oct 1.

"Taiwan is China's sacred territory. Blood is thicker than water, and people on both sides of the strait are connected by blood," Xi has told a banquet attended by more than 3,000 people, including officials, retired party leaders and foreign dignitaries.

But many in Taiwan view themselves as distinctly Taiwanese and have no desire to be part of Communist China.

But Xi does not care. "(We must) resolutely oppose 'Taiwan independence' separatist activities," he has said.

Xi has been China's most assertive leader on Taiwan in decades. He has ramped up the rhetoric and aggression against the democratic island – fuelling tension across the strait and raising concerns for a military confrontation with a series of large-scale military exercises.

On the situation within China, Xi has warned of “rough seas” ahead, saying, “The road ahead will not be smooth, there will definitely be difficulties and obstacles, and we may encounter major tests such as high winds and rough seas, or even stormy waves.”

Xi has greatly tightened control over the CPC and Chinese people during his more than 10-year rule.

The world's second-largest economy and second most populous nation has struggled to bounce back after the Covid-19 pandemic and major issues in its housing sector – two of the biggest drivers of an economic downturn that is also affected by an ageing population and low consumer spending, noted *theguardian.com* Oct 1.

The banquet where Xi spoke was one of few events marking the 75th anniversary. This Oct 1 was a surprisingly muted affair, marked in Beijing only by a flag raising ceremony in Tiananmen Square. Past milestone years have seen opulent ceremonies and big military parades, the report noted.

On the eve of the Oct 1 anniversary, the *economist.com* Sep 30 ran a commentary saying Fear of a Soviet-style collapse keeps Xi Jinping up at night, noting that China's Communists had now been in power longer than the Soviets.

While general security measures are routine in any country marking an occasion like the National Day, in China this goes much further. Police have been following rights activists and lawyers, detaining their family members, or preventing them from entering Beijing, while the phones of outspoken journalist Gao Yu remained blocked ahead of the National Day holiday, *rfa.org* Sep 30 cited rights lawyers and activists as saying.

Rights activists in Wuhan, Shanghai, Changsha and other parts of China have also told *RFA* Mandarin that they had also been told by local authorities not to go anywhere during the National Day celebrations, and that they will be under close surveillance during the holiday period.

The moves form part of China's “stability maintenance” operations, which kick in ahead of politically sensitive dates or major events, in a bid to stave off potential threats to the ruling Chinese Communist Party before they can occur, the report said.

China-Xinjiang

China's idyllic Xinjiang grasslands hid a salty soiled secret that's been solved

28 October 2024, [SCMP](#), Mandy Zuo

Years of research have yielded productive plains that offer China more food security in the face of geopolitical upheaval and extreme weather

Nationwide efforts to convert salty soil into arable grasslands have extended to a high-elevation part of China's Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region where a quartet of mountains converge and the arid climate has long quelled attempts to cultivate crops.

After eight years of intensive work in the region's Pamir Plateau, about 1,300 hectares (3,200 acres) of salt-affected desert in Tashkurgan Tajik county have been transformed into productive plains, the official People's Daily reported over the weekend.

The announcement came as Beijing has been sowing the seeds of agricultural security to ensure that 1.4 billion Chinese people continue to have adequate food supplies while geopolitics affect trade supplies and an influx of extreme weather events wreak havoc on farmlands.

With a vegetation coverage rate exceeding 85 per cent, and a hay yield of more than 4,500kg (9,920 pounds) per hectare, the achievement is reportedly the first large-scale success in cultivating high-quality forage across the dry and salty lands of the plateau.

The breakthrough will relieve demand pressure on high-altitude livestock feed and allow for the natural grasslands to recuperate, Professor Xi Linqiao, deputy chief scientist of Xinjiang's high-quality-forage production initiative and a professor with the region's Tarim University, was quoted as saying.

Tashkurgan, with 418,000 hectares of natural grassland, supports 250,000 livestock, including the Tashkurgan sheep and Pamir yak, both designated as national genetic resources.

But with poor natural pasture growth due to climate conditions forcing the county to import hay from other areas, the county launched its saline-soil reclamation project in 2017 and built a research team in partnership with several local institutions. People's Daily said the team managed to lower the pH level, a measure of acidity, from 9.5 to approximately 8 using acid-base balancing agents and halophilic bacteria – extremophilic organisms that thrive in high salt conditions.

The initiative also included irrigation infrastructure, eco-restoration, and innovative “dry seeding, wet germination” techniques to maximise irrigation effectiveness, addressing the region's uneven terrain.

Reclaiming and improving this portion of saline-alkali land could significantly expand usable land

“Reclaiming and improving this portion of saline-alkali land could significantly expand usable land”

-Wang Guangzhou, China Agricultural University

With decades of urbanisation and economic expansion reducing China’s arable land, the reclamation of saline-alkali soil has gained national importance as a vital reserve for agricultural use. Efforts to transform saline land into productive farmland have intensified across China in recent years. In a paper published in September, Professor Wang Guangzhou from China Agricultural University said that China had about 36.7 million hectares of saline land, of which 12.3 million hectares have agricultural potential while 6.67 million hectares could be converted into farmland.

“Reclaiming and improving this portion of saline-alkali land could significantly expand usable land, boost grain production and safeguard national food security,” he wrote.

Local media reports illustrate the success of these initiatives, as seen in Tangshan, Hebei province, where about 80 per cent of the city’s saline land had been transformed into arable land by the end of 2022.

China hosts World Media Summit in Xinjiang amid human rights concerns

17 October 2024, [VOA](#), Kasim Kashgar

China hosted its sixth World Media Summit this week in Urumqi, the capital of Xinjiang, in northwestern China. Organizers say more than 500 participants from 208 leading media organizations participated in the event, which was cohosted by state-run Xinhua News Agency and the Xinjiang regional government.

The three-day summit, which ended on Thursday, focused on "Artificial Intelligence and Media Transformation."

Chinese media highlighted the potential benefits of global AI collaboration, but the choice of Xinjiang as the event's venue was criticized by activists concerned about China's alleged human rights abuses in the region.

Adrian Zenz, director of China studies at the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation, told VOA he believes organizers chose Urumqi to draw attention away from human rights concerns in Xinjiang.

"This event appears to be designed to normalize the situation in Xinjiang, making Xinjiang a location for discussing modern technology and developments," Zenz said in an emailed response.

"As Erkin Tuniyaz [chairman of the region] told the media at the event, 'Xinjiang is open for business.' This points to the current strategy of Xinjiang's [Chinese Communist] party secretary Ma Xingrui to focus on

economic development and technological modernization," Zenz told VOA.

Zenz said that this is "an integral part of Xinjiang's strategy to present itself as a modern, developed and safe region — showcasing the alleged success of China's 'deradicalization' measures."

In Xinjiang, China faces numerous allegations of human rights abuses against Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslim minorities, including mass detentions and forced labor. Since 2017, more than 1 million people have reportedly been detained in internment camps, with human rights groups estimating that more than half a million have been sentenced through unfair trials.

The U.S. has labeled these actions as genocide, imposing sanctions on Chinese officials and companies. The Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act, enacted in 2022, bans products from Xinjiang unless proven free of forced labor.

China denies these claims, asserting that the camps serve as vocational training centers to combat extremism. However, satellite imagery, survivor testimonies and leaked documents contradict these assertions, resulting in widespread global condemnation.

Summit reactions

Originally launched in 2009, the World Media Summit was initiated by the Chinese state-run Xinhua News Agency, with participation from leading international media organizations such as The Associated Press, Reuters and Russia's TASS, according to Xinhua.

Some attendees at this year's session dismissed allegations of human rights violations in Xinjiang as "fake news," according to a Xinhua report.

"Actually, what I found during my visit to Xinjiang was amazing. Because in the media, we hear about fake news about Xinjiang. But when we came to the field and we see the development of Xinjiang, it's amazing," Waref Komaiha, president of the Silk Road Institute for Studies and Research, told Xinhua.

Representatives from global media organizations, including Reuters, participated in the summit.

Ling-Sze Gan, Reuters head of media sales for the Asia Pacific, said at the summit's opening, "We are particularly excited about the potential of generative AI ... augmenting our journalists with machines to supercharge their ability to do their jobs."

Uyghur activists voice concerns

Uyghur activists condemned the summit, calling it an endorsement of China's policies in Xinjiang.

Mamtimin Ala, president of the Washington-based East Turkistan Government in Exile, or ETGE, which seeks the independence of Xinjiang from China, criticized the involvement of major media organizations.

"It is disheartening that these esteemed media organizations have chosen to partake in a Chinese propaganda event. Their presence provides unwarranted legitimacy to China's colonial and genocidal policies in East Turkistan," he said in a statement posted on the organization's website.

Uyghur activists refer to the region of Xinjiang as East Turkistan, a name tied to the area's historical and political background. Xinjiang, which means "new frontier" in Chinese, is the official name used by the Chinese government.

Similarly, ETGE's foreign affairs chief Salih Hidayar voiced concern that the summit could further China's global propaganda efforts.

"We fear that events like this summit, coupled with China's geopolitical influence, will lead to an even more extensive campaign of media manipulation and propaganda aimed at transforming global perceptions of its atrocities in East Turkistan," Hidayar told VOA.

Former political advisor of Xinjiang arrested for suspected bribe-taking

15 October 2024, [Xinhua](#)

Dou Wangui, a former senior political advisor of northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, has been arrested on suspicion of taking bribes, the Supreme People's Procuratorate (SPP) said in a statement on Tuesday.

The case was handed over to prosecutors for examination and prosecution following the conclusion of an investigation by the National Commission of Supervision, the SPP said.

Dou was formerly a member of the leading Party members group of the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Regional Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference and vice chairman of the committee.

Further investigation into this case is still underway.

Rights groups blast Skechers over new store in Xinjiang

10 October 2024, [RFA](#), Jijil Kashgary

Controversial Hong Kong actor Donnie Yen appears at a glitzy mall opening.

Rights groups are condemning U.S. footwear and apparel company Skechers as it used the star power of martial arts actor Donnie Yen to open a new store in Xinjiang despite allegations that ethnic Uyghurs in China's far west are used for forced labor.

In a video Yen posted to Instagram, crowds inside a glitzy shopping mall in the regional capital of Urumqi clamored to catch a glimpse of the Hong Kong actor, who is a Skechers brand ambassador — and is known to have pro-China sympathies.

The company promoted its Sept. 28 Urumqi store opening heavily on Chinese social media, and Yen encouraged his nearly 130 million followers on Weibo to visit the outlet and explore its "comfortable treasures," Voice of America reported.

The brand is big in China: Of Skechers 5,200 retail stores worldwide, China has the most with more than 940.

But the big promotional event — and opening a store in Urumqi — showed that Skechers was "completely tone deaf" to concerns about the use of Uyghur forced labor in Xinjiang, said Jewher Ilham, the forced labor project coordinator at the Worker Rights Consortium.

"Skechers isn't yet taking seriously the need to extricate its business from the Uyghur region, even after it was previously linked to forced labor by U.S. Customs and other institutions," Ilham said.

The United States has taken a strict stance on the issue. Under the 2021 Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act, imports from Xinjiang are banned from entering the United States unless they are certified as not made with forced labor.

In June 2022, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security added Skechers supplier Dongguan Oasis Shoes Co., Ltd., to a list of companies suspected of using Uyghur slave labor.

The Australian Strategic Policy Institute issued a 2020 report titled "Uyghurs For Sale" which found that 83 global companies and brands, including Skechers, were directly or indirectly benefiting from the use of Uyghur forced labor in 27 factories in China from which they sourced products.

'Distasteful'

Skechers has been identified as a company within that risk, said Henryk Szadziewski, research director at the Uyghur Human Rights Project in Washington.

"For me, even if the question of forced labor is in dispute, the very fact that you're opening a shop [and] profiteering in a region where there's ongoing crimes against humanity, I'd have to question the decision of Skechers here and ask them what kind of ethical guidelines and clearance were made to make this decision," he told Radio Free Asia.

"So, it's not just the forced labor," he said. "[In] this region are ongoing crimes against humanity, and [Skechers'] decision is to open a shop and make money. That's very distasteful."

When RFA contacted Jennifer Clay, vice president of corporate communications at Skechers, for comment, her assistant said Clay was traveling and "too busy to deal with that right now."

Yen, whose breakout film in the West was "Ip Man" in 2008, is a controversial figure because of his pro-China comments. He most recently appeared in "John Wick 4" in which he had a prominent role along with American actor Keanu Reeves.

His appearance at the Oscars in Hollywood in March 2023 prompted protesters to gather outside the venue, criticizing him for his lack of support for Hong Kong's 2019 pro-democracy movement, which he had called "a riot." Some critics even called on event organizers to disinvite Yen.

Many Hong Kongers have boycotted Yen's movies over his pro-Beijing stance during the 2019 protests against the erosion of Hong Kong's promised freedoms and judicial independence that saw pitched battles between protesters armed with bricks, Molotov cocktails and other makeshift weapons against fully equipped riot police who fired rubber bullets and tear gas.

EU Parliament urges China to release Uyghur doctor Gulshan Abbas, economist Ilham Tohti

10 October 2024, [ISHR](#)

The European Parliament adopted today an urgent resolution condemning Beijing's persecution against Uyghurs, demanding the release of prominent figures Gulshan Abbas and Ilham Tohti. Following this landmark call, Abbas' daughter, Ziba Murat, and ISHR urge EU leaders to step up EU action on the fate of Uyghurs at the United Nations.

The European Parliament (EP) in session in Strasbourg adopted a landmark motion urging the People's Republic of China (PRC) to 'immediately and unconditionally release Ilham Tohti and Gulshan Abbas, as well as those arbitrarily detained in China' and whose cases have been mentioned by the European Union (EU) at the Human Rights Council.

The text lays out a strongly-worded demand that the PRC halts its 'repression and targeting of Uyghurs', including forced sterilisation, birth prevention measures, the destruction of Uyghur identity and other abuses 'which amount to crimes against humanity and a serious risk of genocide'.

The EP lamented that 62-year-old retired doctor Gulshan Abbas is 'serving a 20-year sentence on fallacious terrorism-related charges relating to activities of her sister, a defender of the human rights of persecuted Uyghurs in the PRC'.

The resolution also regretted that Uyghur economist Ilham Tohti, winner of the EP's 2019 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought, was sentenced to life imprisonment on charges of 'separatism' despite striving to 'foster dialogue between Uyghurs and Han Chinese'.

This resolution reflects a growing global consensus and the mounting diplomatic pressure on China to

release all wrongfully imprisoned individuals in the Uyghur region, like my mother.

Ziba Murat, daughter of detained Uyghur doctor Gulshan Abbas

Today's resolution was adopted by an overwhelming majority of 540 out of 610 voting members of the European parliament (MEPs), with only 23 oppositions and 47 abstentions.

In September, ISHR joined Dr. Abbas' daughter, Ziba Murat, in an advocacy mission to engage extensively with MEPs leading to today's historic resolution.

Dr. Abbas has been arbitrarily detained since 2018, and held incommunicado most of that time. In June 2024, UN experts sent a letter to the Chinese authorities and later released a statement on Dr. Abbas' situation. Under mounting pressure from UN bodies and Western governments, Beijing finally disclosed Dr. Abbas' whereabouts, sentence, and stated date of release, scheduled for 2038.

This was the first written acknowledgement that the Chinese authorities are holding Dr. Abbas ever since her abrupt forced disappearance six years ago. However, China failed to address UN experts' request for disclosure of detailed information on her health, of her court judgment and evidence used to convict her.

My mother is a medical professional who devoted her life to helping people and saving lives. She is a non-political, warm-hearted and loving mother. The charges against her are preposterous and baseless. My mother is suffering the consequences because her family in the United States spoke out against the Chinese government's unfair treatment of Uyghurs. This is a clear example of kin punishment and transnational repression.

Ziba Murat

Dr. Abbas was forcibly disappeared on 10 September 2018, in retaliation for her sister Rushan Abbas' public advocacy in the United States against the persecution of Uyghurs in China a few days prior.

She has multiple health concerns which require medication and medical attention, including severe high blood pressure, back pain often leading to immobilisation, osteoporosis, and recurring migraines. Both her eyes have undergone multiple surgeries and require monitoring.

In March 2023, the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention released an authoritative, quasi-judicial opinion determining her detention to be arbitrary and calling for her prompt release. The EU also raised her case during its latest human rights dialogue with China in June 2024.

This EU resolution and UN actions follow a concerted campaign of global advocacy, including by Dr. Abbas' relatives, who have remained in the dark about her fate for six long years. It is also indisputable evidence that when governments and UN experts press Beijing publicly on individual cases, in a coordinated and

sustained fashion, the wall will eventually crack. It is not time to give in: it is now the moment for global actors to step up pressure until Dr. Abbas is released on medical parole.

Raphaël Viana David, ISHR's China Programme Manager

On 11 September 2024, Murat addressed the UN Human Rights Council on behalf of ISHR to call for Dr. Abbas' release and urge the Council to 'step up monitoring and reporting and hold the [Chinese] government accountable for gross violations of international law' – watch a recording of the statement [here](#).

Stepping up UN monitoring and reporting

The EP's motion 'strongly condemns the PRC for not implementing the recommendations of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)' and urges Beijing to 'allow the OHCHR independent access to the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region'. It further encourages the OHCHR to issue a 'comprehensive situational update and an action plan for holding the PRC accountable'.

We now expect EU Members States to measure up to the Parliament's motion and to demonstrate leadership and commitment to supporting Uyghurs through bold global action. This includes leading a joint statement on China at the ongoing UN General Assembly session and ensuring a united EU position around it. It is deeply regrettable that four EU members – Greece, Cyprus, Malta and Hungary – have refused since 2019 to align with their peers and endorse such statements at high-level UN fora.

Raphaël Viana David

The EU parliament text calls on EU Member States to suspend extradition treaties with the PRC and Hong Kong and 'respect the non-refoulement principle'. It further urges EU governments to 'address the transnational repression of Chinese dissidents and Uyghurs on their territory and prosecute individuals responsible'.

EU Member States must exert persistent and coordinated pressure on China to implement UN expert recommendations and ensure that individual cases are prioritised in bilateral and multilateral talks. They should not shy away from demanding my mother's release. She is innocent and must be released.

Ziba Murat

On 27 August 2024, in a rare public statement on the matter, the OHCHR stressed that 'many problematic laws and policies' documented in its 2022 Xinjiang report remain in place, that abuses still need to be investigated, and that fear of reprisals against sources and lack of access to information hinder the OHCHR's monitoring of the situation.

The Office further echoed its urgent calls on China to release all those arbitrarily detained, to clarify the status and whereabouts of those disappeared, and to fully review the legal framework governing counter-terrorism, national security and minority rights.

Chinese vice premier urges bolstering Xinjiang's development

08 October 2024, [The State Council](#)

Chinese Vice Premier He Lifeng on Monday urged efforts to bolster Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps (XPCC) to boost Xinjiang's development.

He, also a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee, made the remarks at a meeting celebrating the XPCC's 70th founding anniversary in Urumqi, capital of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region.

The vice premier led a central delegation to Xinjiang for the occasion.



Chinese Vice Premier He Lifeng, also a member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee, delivers a speech at a meeting celebrating the 70th founding anniversary of Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps (XPCC) in Urumqi, capital of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region on Oct. 7, 2024. The vice premier led a central delegation to Xinjiang for the occasion. A congratulatory letter sent by the CPC Central Committee, the State Council and the Central Military Commission was read out at the meeting. [Photo/Xinhua]

Entrusted by Xi Jinping, general secretary of the CPC Central Committee, He extended congratulations and greetings to people from various ethnic groups of the XPCC on behalf of central authorities.

A congratulatory letter sent by the CPC Central Committee, the State Council and the Central Military Commission was read out at the meeting.

The XPCC was founded in 1954 by demobilized military personnel in Xinjiang and has over the past seven decades made pivotal contributions to boosting Xinjiang's development, strengthening ethnic unity and social stability, as well as guarding the borders, according to the letter.

He said the XPCC has blazed a new trail of land reclamation and development under the system of socialism with Chinese characteristics over the past 70 years. Generations of people from the XPCC have made tremendous sacrifices and contributions, and have accumulated many valuable experience, the vice premier said.

He called on the XPCC to fully tap its strengths in maintaining stability and defending border areas to serve Xinjiang's social stability, foster new industrial and sci-tech drivers to promote high-quality development, and leverage the reform and opening-up to construct the region into a "golden channel" between Asia and Europe and a bridgehead for China's westward opening up.

For Companies in China, Pulling Out of Xinjiang Poses 'Messy Dilemma'

04 October 2024, [The New York Times](#)

Beijing's investigation of the parent of Calvin Klein and Tommy Hilfiger, which stopped buying goods from Xinjiang, has put global firms in a difficult position.

An investigation by China of an American clothing retailer has escalated concerns among foreign companies about their dependence on Chinese supply chains and the future of their operations in the country.

China's Ministry of Commerce said last week that it was investigating PVH, the corporate parent of the Calvin Klein and Tommy Hilfiger brands, for allegedly taking "discriminatory measures" against products from Xinjiang, a region in China's far west that produces a fifth of the world's cotton.

At issue is whether PVH violated Chinese law by pulling back from purchasing cotton or garments from Xinjiang, where researchers have cited evidence of forced labor, mass arrests and confinement to re-education camps among the region's predominantly Muslim ethnic groups, particularly the Uyghurs.

The investigation has made clear that China will not tolerate companies that shun Xinjiang. That puts some multinationals in a legal vise grip because a growing number of governments, including the United States and the European Union, restrict or ban imports from Xinjiang.

The case is the first time Beijing has wielded a rule it put in place four years ago, known as the Unreliable Entity List, against a company for complying with another country's prohibition on goods from Xinjiang. "Since this investigation is the first of its kind, companies in all sectors have been forced to reassess what it means for them," said Sean Stein, the chairman of the American Chamber of Commerce in China. "Many are seeing higher risk," he added.

For companies, the PVH investigation adds to the public relations problems that doing business in Xinjiang can bring — inside and outside China.

In 2021, H&M, Nike and other brands faced a damaging backlash from consumers in China after the companies said they would break ties with Xinjiang. This spring, several global automakers became the focus of a congressional investigation for buying parts from a supplier flagged by the U.S. government for participating in forced labor programs tied to the region.

Many international companies are heavily dependent on Chinese suppliers. From cars to solar panels, China is the world's largest manufacturer by far. More than 90 percent of China's cotton is produced in Xinjiang.

"European companies find themselves increasingly caught between a rock and a hard place," the European Union Chamber of Commerce in China said in a statement. "If they cease operations in, or sourcing from, regions like Xinjiang they may face a severe backlash from both government and consumers in China," the chamber continued. "If they stay, they risk negative consequences from their home and other international markets."

Western companies have already grown warier of China because of geopolitical issues. Larry Fink, the chief executive of BlackRock, one of the world's largest asset management companies, said at a conference on Tuesday that global companies needed to re-evaluate investments in China because it is the biggest economic supporter of Russia, which is waging war on Ukraine.

The PVH investigation could provide another reason for companies to shift away from China, according to advisers for global companies.

"It is a serious and growing concern for many multinational corporations and may aggravate the incentive to decouple," said Lester Ross, the partner in charge of the Beijing office of Wilmer Hale, a law firm. Companies in joint ventures with Chinese firms in Xinjiang are particularly stuck. Such arrangements are hard to change without official approval. The Chinese government, typically quick to push back against criticism, has made clear it wants foreign companies to stay in Xinjiang, a poor region that it wants to develop. BASF, the German chemical giant, started trying to sell its stakes in both of its Xinjiang manufacturing joint ventures to its state-owned partner in late 2023. Last week, BASF said the sales had not been completed and were "subject to negotiations and required approvals of the relevant authorities."

Volkswagen, the German automaker, said in February that it was examining "the future direction" of its small joint venture in Xinjiang, where the staff and scale of operations had already shrunk considerably. China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs responded by saying

companies should “cherish the opportunity to invest and develop in Xinjiang.”

VW has yet to announce any changes.

PVH was given 30 days to respond to the government’s claims. If PVH is found to have violated China’s laws, penalties could include fines and travel limits on PVH employees, or even a halt to the company’s exports from China, the ministry said.

In recent years, human rights groups and corporate responsibility organizations have pushed retailers, in particular, to avoid purchases from Xinjiang.

In July 2020, PVH said that within 12 months, it would stop buying garments, fabric and cotton from Xinjiang.

The company responded last week to the Ministry of Commerce announcement by saying, “As a matter of company policy, PVH maintains strict compliance with all relevant laws and regulations in all countries and regions in which we operate.”

PVH said this week that it had no further comment.

The Ministry of Commerce has not explained the timing of its decision to begin investigating PVH, which came against a backdrop of persistent trade frictions between the United States and China.

In the United States, the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act bans all imports from Xinjiang unless the importer can prove that the goods are not tainted by forced labor. The United States also has a separate ban on any imports that contain even traces of Xinjiang cotton or tomatoes, two crops grown mainly on state-owned farms that researchers have linked to human rights abuses.

Companies in the European Union and Canada must comply with a patchwork of national regulations that ban the import of goods made by forced labor.

China has banned independent investigations of labor conditions in Xinjiang and has cracked down broadly on due diligence firms, making it almost impossible for companies to prove how their goods were produced.

Nury Turkel, a lawyer and senior fellow at the Hudson Institute, a think tank, said repression and forced labor involving minorities were continuing, both within Xinjiang and around China.

China has stopped publishing the number of people sent to re-education camps. Those detainees have not been released but instead transferred to prisons, fields or factories, he said.

Mr. Turkel said the United States needed to work with more countries to ban Xinjiang products, and toughen penalties for companies that violate bans.

The U.S. Commerce Department declined to comment. The White House did not respond to a request for comment.

Senator Ron Wyden of Oregon, the Democratic chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, said the Chinese government was “trying to harass and intimidate” American companies that were complying with U.S. law.

“The United States must not let this bogus investigation stop our country from cracking down on China’s ongoing human rights abuses,” he said.

The Chinese government denies that human rights abuses have taken place. The government also portrays programs to send rural Xinjiang residents to jobs in distant factories as an effort to alleviate poverty, not forced labor.

Steve Vickers, a former senior Hong Kong police officer who runs a corporate security consulting firm there, said companies “are now caught in the middle of what is truly a messy dilemma.”

CHINA- US

Exclusive: China's Xi pressed Biden to alter language on Taiwan

29 October 2024, [Reuters](#), Trevor Hunnicutt, Laurie Chen and Yimou Lee

Chinese President Xi Jinping asked U.S. President Joe Biden last year to change the language the United States uses when discussing its position on Taiwanese independence, according to two U.S. officials familiar with the private conversation.

During last November's Biden-Xi meeting near San Francisco, Xi and his aides asked Biden and his team to tweak the language in U.S. official statements.

China wanted the U.S. to say "we oppose Taiwan independence," rather than the current version, which is that the United States "does not support" independence for Taiwan, said the people, who requested anonymity to speak about private diplomatic exchanges they participated in or were briefed on.

Xi's aides have repeatedly followed up and made the requests in the months since, according to two U.S. officials and another person familiar with the exchanges.

The U.S. has declined to make the change.

The White House responded to a request for comment with a statement that repeated the line that Washington does not support Taiwan independence. "The Biden-Harris administration has been consistent on our long-standing One China policy," the statement read.

China's foreign ministry said: "You should ask this question to the U.S. government. China's position on the Taiwan issue is clear and consistent."

Taiwan's foreign ministry declined comment.

The defeated Republic of China government fled to Taiwan in 1949 after losing a civil war with Mao Zedong's communists.

The Republic of China remains Taiwan's formal name and the government says it has no plans to change that given they are already a sovereign, independent state and Beijing has no right to claim Taiwan as its own.

SENSITIVE ISSUE

For several years, Chinese diplomats have pushed the United States to make changes to how it refers to Taiwan's status, which remains the most sensitive area in U.S.-China relations. The unusually direct and renewed push at the leader level has not been reported previously.

The United States severed official relations with the government in Taipei in 1979 but is bound by law to provide democratically governed Taiwan with the means to defend itself. China claims Taiwan as its own territory and has never renounced the use of force to bring the island under its control.

It was not clear why Xi chose to raise the issue with Biden, but he has made opposition to Taiwan

independence a focus of his time in office and China's military has significantly ramped up its activities around the island in recent years. The Biden administration regards the proposed language change as a non-starter. Taiwan was briefed on the recent overtures at a high level by Washington, said one of the sources.

Intel invests US\$300 million in China chip packaging and testing plant

28 October 2024, [SCMP](#), Coco Feng

The US chip giant aims to expand an existing chip packaging and testing facility in China, its largest market

US semiconductor giant [Intel](#) said it would expand its chip packaging and testing base in Chengdu, in a show of commitment to the mainland market despite a recent call by a Beijing-backed cybersecurity group to review the company's products.

In addition to enlarging packaging and testing capacity for server chips, the facility will also establish a "customer solutions centre to improve the efficiency of the local supply chain, increase support for Chinese customers and improve response time", Intel China said on Monday on its WeChat account.

The Santa Clara, California-based company will inject US\$300 million into its local entity, Intel Products (Chengdu), to support the expansion, according to a WeChat post published by the city's Reform and Development Commission.

Launched in 2003, Intel's Chengdu plant is responsible for the packaging and testing of more than half of the company's laptop processors shipped worldwide. Packaging and testing is the final step in semiconductor manufacturing, ensuring the quality and reliability of a product.

The facility plays a critical role in Intel's global supply chain, while Chengdu provides a "favourable" business environment that paves the way for the company's "stable growth", Intel CEO Patrick Gelsinger said during a visit there last year. Chengdu is the capital of China's southwestern Sichuan province.

The fresh investment comes less than two weeks after the Cyber Security Association of China recommended a cybersecurity review of Intel products sold in the country, citing a series of vulnerabilities previously found in the firm's central processors.

Intel's China unit said at the time that it would "maintain communications with the relevant authorities" and demonstrate its "commitment to product safety and quality".

Despite rising tensions between Beijing and Washington, China remains Intel's largest market,

contributing 27 per cent of the firm's total revenue last year, compared with 26 per cent from the US.

Intel, which is struggling to compete against rivals in a chip market that is increasingly focused on artificial intelligence, reported a loss of US\$1.6 billion in the second quarter, swinging from a year-earlier profit of US\$1.5 billion. The firm warned of "weaker spending across consumer and enterprise markets, especially in China".

Chinese Hackers Are Said to Have Targeted Phones Used by Trump and Vance

25 October 2024, [The New York Times](#), Devlin Barrett, Jonathan Swana and Maggie Haberman

The targeting of the Republican presidential ticket's phones is part of what appears to be a wide-ranging effort to gather information about American leaders. Chinese hackers targeted data from phones used by former President Donald J. Trump and his running mate, Senator JD Vance of Ohio, as part of what appears to be a wide-ranging intelligence-collection effort, people familiar with the matter said on Friday. Investigators are working to determine what communications data, if any, was taken or observed by the sophisticated penetration of telecom systems, according to these people, who spoke on the condition of anonymity to describe an active and highly sensitive national security case.

The type of information on phones used by a presidential candidate and his running mate could be a gold mine for an intelligence agency: Who they called and texted, how often they communicated with certain people and how long they talked to those people could be highly valuable to an adversary like China. That sort of communications data could be even more useful if hackers could observe it in real time.

The Trump campaign team was made aware this week that Mr. Trump and Mr. Vance were among a number of people inside and outside government whose phone numbers had been targeted through the infiltration of Verizon phone systems, the officials said. People briefed on the matter said Democrats were among the targets, including staff members of Vice President Kamala Harris's campaign and prominent figures on Capitol Hill, including Senator Chuck Schumer of New York, the majority leader.

The targeting of a presidential ticket's communications underscores the aggressiveness, scope and potential severity of the hacking attack, which Western cybersecurity experts believe was carried out by a group they have called Salt Typhoon.

The investigation is continuing, but the F.B.I. and national security officials have signaled that they are deeply concerned about the potential extent of

compromised data and the wide range of possible victims.

Without identifying those who were targeted, the F.B.I. and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency issued a joint statement attributing the hacking to “actors affiliated with the People’s Republic of China.”

The agencies said they “are collaborating to aggressively mitigate this threat and are coordinating with our industry partners to strengthen cyberdefenses across the commercial communications sector.” They said they had informed potential victims.

It was unclear whether the hackers could have gained access to text messages, especially those sent through unencrypted channels.

Trump campaign officials were told that the hackers might still be inside Verizon’s systems, but that it was unclear whether they were actively trying to take out data. In hacking investigations, observing hackers’ activities within a compromised system can sometimes provide valuable information to investigators.

Data about the communications of a presidential and vice-presidential candidate — even absent the content of the calls and messages — could also help an adversary like China better identify and target people in Mr. Trump’s inner circle for influence operations.

The revelation came in the closing stages of a campaign in which Mr. Trump’s team has also been targeted by Iranian hackers, who have repeatedly sent his inner circle spearphishing emails that were at least partly successful in gaining access to his campaign’s communications and documents.

Security around Mr. Trump has also been tightened as a result of assassination threats from Iran.

A Trump campaign spokesman did not directly address whether the phones used by Mr. Trump and Mr. Vance had been targeted. But in a statement, the spokesman, Steven Cheung, criticized the White House and Ms. Harris and sought to blame them for allowing a foreign adversary to target the campaign.

Earlier this year, security officials discovered the presence in American telecommunications systems of a China-affiliated hacking group. But investigators determined only recently that the hackers were targeting specific phone numbers, the officials said.

The infiltration by the hackers extends beyond the 2024 political campaign, with multiple people said to be targeted, people familiar with the investigation said, suggesting it could have far-reaching national security implications.

The investigation into the extent of the hacking and any national security damage is in its early stages. Whether such an attack could monitor or record phone conversations is difficult to know, and whether the hackers could read or intercept texts, for example,

would depend in no small part on which messaging apps the targets used and how that data moved over the phone company’s systems.

The Wall Street Journal reported last month that a cyberattack linked to the Chinese government had infiltrated some U.S. broadband providers’ networks and might have been able to get information from systems used by the federal government in FISA court wiretap efforts.

A spokesman for Verizon, Rich Young, said in a statement that the company was “aware that a highly sophisticated nation-state actor has reportedly targeted several U.S. telecommunications providers to gather intelligence.” He said Verizon is assisting law enforcement agencies in the investigation and working to address any continuing problems.

Oversight Committee Releases Report Exposing the CCP’s Destructive Political Warfare and Influence Operations

24 October 2024, [Oversight](#)

Staff report finds that the Biden-Harris Administration lacks a government-wide strategy to counter China’s tactics and provides recommendations to help federal agencies secure America

House Committee on Oversight and Accountability Chairman James Comer (R-Ky.) released a staff report today titled “CCP Political Warfare: Federal Agencies Urgently Need a Government-Wide Strategy.” The report, which includes information obtained during the **Committee’s government-wide investigation** into 25 federal sectors, details how the Biden-Harris Administration is dangerously behind in implementing measures to combat the Chinese Communist Party’s (CCP) influence and infiltration campaign. The Oversight Committee conducted multiple hearings, held dozens of briefings, and found that most agencies’ solutions and policies either ignore, placate, or only weakly address the CCP’s efforts to influence and infiltrate the United States. To counter CCP political warfare, the report offers recommendations for federal agencies to use existing resources to defend America and critical U.S. industries.

“The House Oversight Committee has exposed the CCP’s political warfare and is working to ensure the federal government formulates a cohesive strategy to combat CCP threats and protect all Americans. The CCP is successfully infiltrating and influencing communities and critical sectors across this nation and the Biden-Harris Administration is asleep at the wheel. Today’s report details how federal agencies have failed to understand, acknowledge, or develop a plan to combat CCP political warfare and Americans are left to fend for themselves. It is past time for federal agencies to take this threat seriously and fulfill their

responsibilities to the American people. Our report offers several solutions federal agencies can implement now with existing resources to address the CCP threat and protect the American people,” said Chairman James Comer (R-Ky.).

Below are some key findings from the report:

- The report exposes the CCP for what it is—a totalitarian force that enslaves its own people, surveils and harasses critics of the Party and people of Chinese descent around the world, poisons tens of thousands of Americans every year with fentanyl, and actively seeks to destroy America. It seeks the downfall of the United States because the CCP views the American way of life as a threat to the authoritarian grip it desperately seeks to maintain.
- The CCP has identified America as its main enemy—against which it has waged infiltration and influence operations for decades. Unlike the first Cold War, the adversary is already within, having entrenched itself within U.S. borders, institutions, businesses, universities, and cultural centers by capturing elites in influential circles.
- The report details what federal agencies, who work for the American people, are doing and failing to do to defend against CCP unrestricted warfare. While CCP infiltration and influence operations target every sector and community in America, much of the federal government under the Biden-Harris Administration has failed to understand, acknowledge, and strategically combat CCP political warfare.
- It is wholly unacceptable that federal agencies have failed to deter CCP unrestricted warfare, let alone to establish a cohesive government-wide strategy to do so, when the CCP has waged this war without weapons for decades.
- To assess how each agency is fulfilling its duties to the American people, the Committee has scored each agency on key metrics—including strategy, knowledge and expertise, transparency and outreach to the American people, and collaboration with relevant partners and stakeholders.

Below are some recommendations from the report:

- Federal agencies should use existing resources to defend America from CCP unrestricted warfare. A successful government-wide strategy must include four components: (1) acknowledgment of and transparent communication about CCP

political warfare; (2) rejection of country agnostic and foreign malign influence-focused approaches and embracing of targeted strategies; (3) fostering the depth of knowledge needed to defeat unrestricted warfare; and (4) engaging the American people about the CCP threat and providing resources when appropriate that thwart CCP ambitions.

- Principled leaders who are willing to speak candidly about CCP infiltration of influential circles, communities, and businesses across the United States can turn the tide in America’s favor.

Read the report, including all key findings and recommendations, here.

China rivalry will continue 'into the next decade,' U.S. ambassador tells NBC News

24 October 2024, [NBC](#), Janis Mackey Frayer and Jennifer Jett

Ambassador Nicholas Burns said the world’s two biggest economies will remain locked in competition even as they try to improve ties.

The U.S. will judge China “on its actions, not just its words,” the U.S. ambassador to China, Nicholas Burns, told NBC News, as the two rival powers try to improve ties even as they remain locked in competition that he said would continue “into the next decade.”

Both countries have expressed the desire for a stabler relationship, especially after relations plunged to their lowest level in decades early last year when the U.S. military shot down an alleged Chinese spy balloon that had been spotted over the continental U.S. Last month, the U.S. and China’s top commanders in the Indo-Pacific resumed formal communications for the first time since 2022, which is vital for avoiding inadvertent military conflict.

“It’s very important that we have these channels of communication,” Burns said in an exclusive interview in Beijing on Wednesday. “But you know, we’re going to judge the People’s Republic of China on its actions, not just its words.”

The world’s two biggest economies are increasingly viewing each other through the lens of national security, including in strategically important sectors such as semiconductors, quantum computing, artificial intelligence and biotechnology.

“We’re structural rivals,” Burns said. “So I see this competition extending for years into the next decade.” President Joe Biden has maintained and in some cases expanded tariffs imposed by former President Donald Trump that China views as intended to restrict its development in areas such as electric vehicles and solar panels. U.S. officials in turn accuse the Chinese

government of “overcapacity” in those areas that results in overseas markets being flooded with lower-priced Chinese goods that undercut domestic competitors.

The two countries are also competing for influence in the Asia-Pacific, where China has been increasing its military activity in the South China Sea and around Taiwan, the Beijing-claimed island democracy whose most important international backer is Washington. Burns criticized live-fire drills and other military exercises that China, which has not ruled out the use of force to achieve unification, has held near Taiwan in recent days.

In addition to continuing to arm Taiwan, the Biden administration has made a point of strengthening relations with allies in the region, including South Korea, Japan and the Philippines, to counter China’s growing power.

Farther afield, the U.S. has accused China of supplying Russia with dual-use technology for use in its war against Ukraine, sanctioning a number of Chinese companies.

“What’s troubling for us is the fact that China says that it’s neutral in the Russia-Ukraine war, and yet its actions are the opposite,” Burns said, “so that is a major problem in this relationship.”

China, which has strived to portray itself as neutral in the conflict, says it has never supplied weapons to Russia and that it strictly controls exports of dual-use goods. On Thursday, the Chinese Commerce Ministry reiterated its opposition to U.S. sanctions.

The “most profound difference” in U.S.-China relations, Burns said, “is that we believe in human freedom and human rights, and so we are a critic of what’s happening in Xinjiang, in Tibet, in Hong Kong, the lack of religious freedom.”

China, which denies rights abuses in its western region of Xinjiang, responded to criticism from the U.S. and others at the United Nations on Tuesday by saying the world’s primary concern right now should be the “living hell” in the Gaza Strip, where there are warnings of “catastrophic” levels of hunger as Israel continues its assault on the Palestinian enclave.

Though the relationship is primarily competitive, the Biden administration also seeks opportunities for cooperation with China, Burns said, in areas of vital global importance such as illicit drugs, artificial intelligence and climate change. China and the U.S. are the world’s two biggest greenhouse gas emitters.

“We want to be responsible for our own people but also for the world as we conduct this relationship,” Burns said.

Biden administration officials and U.S. lawmakers have made a series of visits to China in recent months, and Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping had a face-to-face meeting in California in November and a phone call in April.

During their summit last year, the two leaders said there should be more people-to-people exchanges between their countries, including in academics, business and tourism.

But change has been slow.

Since the Biden-Xi summit 11 months ago, Burns said, Chinese security services have tried to impede 94 different U.S. Embassy events meant to bring Chinese and American people together, including by pressuring Chinese citizens not to attend and intimidating those who do.

“They can’t have it both ways,” Burns said. “You can’t say you want to promote people-to-people contacts and then try to actively impede them.”

China denied similar allegations by Burns in June, with a Chinese Foreign Affairs Ministry spokesperson calling them “factually inaccurate.”

The number of direct commercial flights between the two countries is still far below the number before the Covid-19 pandemic, and there are only about 800 Americans studying in China, down from a high of about 15,000 a decade ago.

By contrast, there are about 300,000 Chinese students in the U.S., though some have complained of being subjected to lengthy interrogations or having even been turned away by immigration officials despite having valid visas.

American views of China have hit an all-time low, according to a poll released Thursday. A majority of Americans, 55%, say the U.S. should actively work to limit the growth of China’s power, according to the poll, from the Chicago Council on Global Affairs.

Optimism among U.S. businesses in China is also at a record low, according to a survey released last month by the American Chamber of Commerce in Shanghai, with companies citing geopolitical tensions as their top concern.

Burns, who has been in his role for 2½ years, declined to comment on the U.S. presidential election.

He said U.S. officials did not discuss it with the Chinese government except to warn against election interference, though he declined to comment on whether there was any evidence of Beijing doing so. China has said it has no intention of interfering in the election.

Burns said the Biden administration is “clear-eyed” about the threat China poses to the U.S. but that there are also times when the two countries’ interests overlap.

“It’s a complicated relationship. It’s a very challenging relationship,” he said. “But it’s without any question the most consequential relationship that we Americans have with any other country.”

Cold War legislative barrage: House passes 25 anti-China bills in one week

21 October 2024, [People's World](#), Duncan McFarland And Krista Chan

Reflecting U.S. determination to escalate tensions with China, the House of Representatives passed 25 bills in one week in September aimed at “countering” supposed Chinese influence and addressing alleged national security concerns.

Initiated by the Republican-led Select Committee on the Chinese Communist Party, the stated goal of the legislative onslaught was to deal with “the threat posed by the Chinese Communist Party and develop a plan of action to defend the American people, our economy, and our values.”

In reality, the anti-Communist, anti-China policy program is based on racial profiling, xenophobia, and the desire to maintain U.S. global hegemony.

H.R. 1398, entitled “Protect America’s Innovation and Economic Security from the Chinese Communist Party,” is a revival of the Trump-era “China Initiative.” This Department of Justice program targeted primarily Chinese and Chinese American scientists accused of doing research that threatened U.S. national security. The bill’s declared aim is to “curb spying by the Chinese Communist Party on United States intellectual property and academic institutions.” Under the Trump administration, the DOJ targeted hundreds of Chinese American academics and scientists, many of whom lost their jobs, but not a single supposed Chinese spy was ever prosecuted.

Instead, the climate of fear and racism led many Chinese scientists to return to China.

Jane Wu, a prominent neuroscience researcher at the University of Illinois, was persecuted and her lab was shut down; she then took her own life. Rep. Judy Chu, D-Calif., chair of the Asian Pacific American Caucus, denounced the bill as “an egregious outcome of xenophobic and fear-mongering rhetoric.”

Also notable is H.R. 1157, the Countering the PRC Malign Influence Fund Authorization Act of 2023, which allocates \$1.6 billion over five years for the State Department and USAID to fund media and civil society groups around the world to counter China’s “malign influence.”

The real goal of this heavy spending is to smear and undermine China’s Belt and Road Initiative, an international development and cooperation plan that includes 150 participating countries. The bill passed with a bipartisan 351-36 majority.

The House also passed the BIOSECURE Act, aimed at prohibiting contracts with biotechnology companies that have relationships with a “foreign adversary.” While China is not named in the bill, five Chinese companies are explicitly mentioned.

After the release of the bill, one of the companies, WuXi AppTec, said its inclusion in the ban was “a preemptive and unjustified designation without due process that the Company strongly objects to.” Additionally, members of Congress failed to acknowledge the strong reliance of U.S. pharmaceutical supply chains on some of the targeted Chinese companies and the danger their anti-China legislative crusade could pose to health in the U.S.

H.R. 9456, “Protecting American Agriculture from Foreign Adversaries Act” would prohibit the sale of farmland to Chinese immigrants and nationals if they are deemed a national security threat, such as by purchasing land located near a U.S. military installation.

The Countering CCP Drones Act attempts to block the sale of Chinese-manufactured drones, already widely in use in the U.S. The “Securing Global Telecommunications Act” is aimed at Chinese telecommunications equipment manufacturers, such as Huawei. The various other measures target a long list of products, such as Chinese EVs and batteries—crucial to managing climate change—and even profitable Wall Street investments in Chinese tech companies.

Many Asian and Chinese American advocacy groups have spoken out against the 25 anti-China bills. Having passed the House of Representatives, the bills are now being considered by the Senate.

While their final passage is uncertain, what’s already confirmed is that the latest barrage of anti-China propaganda helps prepare U.S. public opinion for conflict or war with China—an outcome that would be a disaster for the working class in this country and everywhere.

Racist “yellow peril” stereotypes are being whipped up, reminiscent of McCarthy-era repression targeting progressives and Communists. Countering the anti-China hate speech and fear-mongering with factual and balanced narratives and reporting is an urgent necessity. The reality is that China is not an “enemy” but rather a country that continuously seeks to cooperate with the U.S. on urgent global issues such as climate change, health, and peace.

US to curb AI investment in China soon

21 October 2024, [Reuters](#), Karen Freifeld

U.S. rules that will ban certain U.S. investments in artificial intelligence in China are under final review, according to a government posting, suggesting the restrictions are coming soon.

The rules, which will also require U.S. investors to notify the Treasury Department about some investments in AI and other sensitive technologies, stem from an executive order signed by President Joe

Biden in August 2023 that aims to keep American investors' know-how from aiding China's military.

The final rules, which target outbound investment to China in AI, semiconductors and microelectronics and quantum computing, are under review at the Office of Management and Budget, the posting showed, which in the past has meant they will likely be released within the next week or so.

"It looks to me like they're trying to publish this before the election," said former Treasury official Laura Black, a lawyer at Akin Gump in Washington, referring to the Nov. 5 U.S. presidential election. Black added that the Treasury office overseeing the regulations generally provides at least a 30-day window before such regulations go into effect.

The Treasury Department published proposed rules, opens new tab with a raft of exceptions in June and gave the public a chance to comment. The draft rules placed the responsibility on U.S. individuals and companies to determine which transactions will be restricted.

A Treasury Department spokesperson declined to comment.

Black expects the final rules to further clarify the scope of coverage over artificial intelligence and the threshold for limited partners.

The proposed rules banned transactions in AI for certain uses, and involving systems trained in using a specified quantity of computing power. They required notification of transactions related to the development of AI systems or semiconductors not otherwise prohibited.

Publicly traded securities such as index funds or mutual funds, certain limited partnership investments, and certain syndicated debt financings were among proposed exceptions.

DJI sues US department of defence over military company blacklist designation

19 October 2024, [MyIndMakers](#)

Chinese drone manufacturer DJI has filed a lawsuit against the U.S. Department of defence (DoD), contesting its inclusion on a blacklist of Chinese military companies. The company announced the legal action on Saturday, challenging the Pentagon's classification, which it claims is incorrect.

"On October 18, DJI filed a lawsuit to challenge the Department of Defence's (DoD) erroneous designation of the company as a 'Chinese military company,'" DJI said in a statement to AFP. The company firmly asserted its independence from the Chinese military, stating, "DJI is not owned or controlled by the Chinese military, and the DoD itself acknowledges that DJI makes consumer and commercial drones, not military

drones." DJI added, "DJI is a private company and should not be misclassified as a military company."

DJI has been under increased scrutiny by Washington in recent years, partly due to allegations that its drones have been used to surveil ethnic minorities in China. Additionally, its drones have reportedly been deployed by both sides in the ongoing Ukraine war. In 2022, the Pentagon included DJI on its list of Chinese military-linked companies, claiming that China uses civilian entities such as DJI to access advanced technologies that contribute to military advancements. The Pentagon's statement highlighted concerns about China's Military-Civil Fusion strategy, which aims to modernise the People's Liberation Army (PLA) by leveraging civilian technology.

DJI, founded in 2006, said it had engaged with the DoD for over 16 months in an effort to address the classification before resorting to legal action. The company reiterated, "DJI is not owned or controlled by the Chinese military, and the DoD itself acknowledges that DJI manufactures consumer and commercial drones, not military drones. DJI is a private company and should not be misclassified as a military company."

The lawsuit is the latest development in a series of actions by the U.S. government targeting Chinese technology companies over national security concerns. Last month, the U.S. Department of Commerce banned the sale of vehicles incorporating Chinese technology due to similar risks. DJI, a global leader in consumer and commercial drone manufacturing, produces drones used in various industries, including aerial photography, filmmaking, agriculture, search and rescue, and public safety.

Controversy has also followed DJI in the context of the Russia-Ukraine conflict. The Ukrainian government accused DJI of assisting Russia by providing its AeroScope system, which allegedly helped guide missile strikes. DJI has denied these allegations and suspended business operations in both Russia and Ukraine in April 2022 to reevaluate compliance with international regulations.

In addition to the current lawsuit, DJI was blacklisted by the U.S. Department of the Treasury in 2021 over claims that it supported the surveillance of the Uyghur minority in China's Xinjiang region, further straining its relationship with U.S. authorities.

The outcome of DJI's legal battle against the Department of Defence could have broader implications for Chinese tech companies operating under increasing scrutiny in the U.S.

Xi says China willing to be a partner, friend with the US

16 October 2024, [Reuters](#)

Chinese President Xi Jinping said a successful partnership between China and the United States is an opportunity for the two countries to be enablers for each other's development rather than an obstacle, according to state media on Wednesday.

"China is willing to be a partner and friend with the United States. This will benefit not only the two countries, but the world," Xi said in remarks from a letter to the 2024 annual awards dinner of the National Committee on U.S.-China Relations, according to a CCTV news report.

Xi pointed out that China-U.S. relations are among the most important bilateral relations in the world, which have a bearing on the future and destiny of mankind, according to the letter.

The two countries have been at odds over national security concerns, ongoing trade spats as well as China's actions in the South China Sea and intensified military drills around Taiwan.

Trade relations soured over the past year and have centred around issues including restrictions on electric vehicles and advanced semiconductors.

"China has always handled China-U.S. relations in accordance with the principles of mutual respect, peaceful coexistence and win-win cooperation, and has always believed that the success of China and the United States is an opportunity for each other," Xi said.

China slaps sanctions on 3 US firms, 10 senior execs over weapons sales to Taiwan

10 October 2024, [Reuters](#)

China's foreign ministry on Thursday announced it had imposed sanctions on three U.S. military-linked firms and 10 senior executives over U.S. weapons sales to Taiwan.

The steps taken against the firms, including Edge Autonomy Operations LLC, Huntingdon Ingalls Industries Inc and Skydio Inc, became effective on Thursday and will freeze any property within China, the foreign ministry said in a statement.

Chinese hackers access US telecom firms, worrying national security officials

06 October 2024, [CNN](#), Sean Lyngaas and Evan Perez

A highly skilled group of Chinese government-linked hackers has in the last several months infiltrated multiple US telecommunications firms in a likely search for sensitive information bearing on national security, multiple sources briefed on the matter told CNN.

US investigators believe the hackers potentially accessed wiretap warrant requests, two of the sources said, but officials are still working to determine what information the hackers may have obtained. US broadband and internet providers AT&T, Verizon and Lumen are among the targets, the sources said.

US officials are concerned about the potential national security damage done by the hacking, which they only recently discovered. It's the latest sophisticated hack targeting US federal agencies that investigators have linked to China, and it comes amid tensions between Washington and Beijing over cyber-espionage and other high-stakes national security issues.

As the backbone of internet and phone communications, US telecom firms hold enormous volumes of caller and user data. US law enforcement agencies request access, through a warrant, to specific portions of that data as part of criminal and national security investigations.

Some of those investigations would be of keen interest to Beijing. The US government has in recent years brought charges against Chinese government agents for allegedly harassing Chinese nationals on US soil and for hacking political dissidents and American companies.

AT&T and Lumen declined to comment. Verizon did not respond to multiple requests for comment.

The Justice Department and the FBI declined to comment.

The Chinese Embassy in Washington, DC, denied that Beijing-backed hackers had breached US telecom firms, calling that information "a distortion of the fact." Embassy spokesperson Liu Pengyu accused the US of "politicizing cybersecurity issues to smear China."

The Wall Street Journal first reported on the hacking activity.

US officials have briefed the House and Senate intelligence committees on the Chinese hacking campaign, two sources said. Cybersecurity experts from Microsoft and Google-owned firm Mandiant have been helping to investigate the hacking activity. People probing the hacks have been struck by the hackers' skill, persistence and ability to burrow into computer networks, the sources briefed on the matter said. The Chinese hacking team in question is known in the cybersecurity industry as Salt Typhoon.

"We track Salt Typhoon and have seen activity consistent with public news reports," a Microsoft spokesperson told CNN. "When we see nation state activity, we provide customers with information to investigate as appropriate."

Yet the Chinese government has an array of other hacking teams at its disposal that can conduct espionage or disrupt computer networks, according to US officials and private experts. FBI Director Christopher Wray has said that Chinese government-

backed hackers outnumber FBI cyber personnel 50 to 1.

Another Chinese government-backed hacking group has been lurking in US transportation and communication networks, waiting to use that access to disrupt any US response to a potential Chinese invasion of Taiwan, US officials have alleged.

Yet another Chinese group broke into the unclassified email accounts of senior US diplomats last year on the eve of a high-profile visit by Secretary of State Antony Blinken to China, CNN reported.

Seeking to sway public opinion in the face of detailed US government allegations, China has increasingly accused the US government of conducting cyberattacks against Chinese organizations.

Hacking and information operations are a regular point of contention in bilateral meetings. Chinese leader Xi Jinping told US President Joe Biden that China would not interfere in the 2024 presidential election when the two men met in California last year, CNN previously reported.

Transnational repression endangers Americans: US diplomat

09 October 2024, [RFA](#)

China's model of authoritarianism is not limited by sovereign borders, the official said.

Growing efforts by China to silence critics living in the United States are "extremely dangerous" threats to the security of Americans, the top U.S. diplomat for human rights said at a forum Wednesday.

Dafna Rand, who was confirmed in August as the new assistant secretary of state for democracy, human rights and labor after being vetted by senators in February, said regular Americans should care about the "great power competition" with China because Beijing's human rights abuses were being exported to their backyards.

At an event hosted by the International Republican Institute, Rand said she viewed the emerging power rivalry with China as one centered on values, with the United States backing open society and democracy.

By contrast, she said, Beijing acts zealously to crush dissent.

"Not only do they go after dissidents and political oppositionists and civil society and journalists and bloggers within the PRC, but now are emboldened to go after dissidents ... who have been exiled, or fled," Rand said, using an acronym for the People's Republic of China.

"This is extremely dangerous to the American taxpayer – this means that the United States is fair game for PRC and others," she said. "This is a world where security is not confined to the nation state."

Transnational repression

China's government has been repeatedly accused of trying to silence critics living in the United States by making threats, harassing or even outright attacking dissidents who dare to speak out against it.

People protesting against Chinese President Xi Jinping during his visit to San Francisco last year were attacked by pro-Xi supporters, for instance, and Chinese students studying in American colleges say they fear being monitored by fellow students if they criticize Beijing.

Uyghurs living in the United States have likewise reported fears about speaking publicly against the genocide occurring against their people in China due to threats against family still trapped in the country.

However, Chinese officials have denied any orchestration of attacks on government critics. In some cases, they have turned the blame back on U.S. officials for apparently fabricating the claims due to an anti-China bias, and in others have said regime supporters are the real victims.

Liu Pengyu, a spokesperson for the Chinese Embassy in Washington, repeated those denials in an email to Radio Free Asia.

"The Chinese government strictly abides by international law and fully respects other countries' sovereignty in law enforcement. There is no such thing as 'transnational repression' of so-called 'dissidents,'" Liu said. "This is an issue concocted by the U.S. to slander China."

"By attacking China's reasonable and lawful law enforcement operations, the U.S. will encourage more Chinese criminals to seek political asylum in the U.S. and serve as a 'haven for crime,' which will eventually shoot itself in the foot," the spokesperson said.

Double standards

At the event on Wednesday, Rand also acknowledged that for geopolitical reasons the United States often supports governments that have been found to have committed human rights violations.

She said she viewed her role as the new head of the State Department's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor as advocating for changes that chip away at that double standard.

"This is the core of DRL's *raison d'être* and daily work," Rand said, adding that State Department officials were "having really fruitful and productive and constructive debates every day" on the issues.

U.S. foreign policy would always be about "balancing" Washington's "global security concerns" with its human rights agenda, she explained, with her office in charge of gradually convincing rights-abusing U.S. partners that "essentially, this is not good for our partnership."

Joe Biden 'sent Xi Jinping congratulatory message' to mark China's 75th National Day

05 October 2024, [SCMP](#), Kinling Lo

Chinese foreign ministry publicises US leader's message on its website in press briefing format, saying only that it was received 'recently'

Chinese President Xi Jinping received a congratulatory message from US President Joe Biden to mark the 75th anniversary of the People's Republic of China this week, marking the latest top-level exchange as tensions persist in China-US relations.

The news was made public by the Chinese foreign ministry in a statement published on its website on Saturday evening.

The ministry reported the message in a question-and-answer format, noting that it was a response to media questions.

"President Joe Biden recently sent a message of congratulations to President Xi Jinping on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China," the official English-language statement said.

"In the message, President Biden noted that 'on behalf of the people of the United States, I send our congratulations to you and the people of the People's Republic of China as you celebrate the 75th anniversary of its founding. The American people and I convey our best wishes to the people of the People's Republic of China'."

The statement did not specify when the message was sent and in what format.

China celebrates the founding of the People's Republic on October 1, which usually marks the start of a week-long national holiday.

The diplomatic move comes at a delicate time in bilateral ties, with the two countries engaged in a wide-ranging rivalry, from trade and tech to influence in the Asia-Pacific.

China carried out military drills in the contested South China Sea on October 1, following a joint exercise in the region by the navies of the US, Philippines, Japan, Australia and New Zealand at the weekend.

The last exchange between the two presidents was in April, when they held a phone call on topics including cybersecurity and climate change. Their last in-person meeting was nearly a year ago, held on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in California last November.

The presidential message also came as the US Department of State appeared to deviate from its past diplomatic practice of sending a formal congratulatory message ahead of China's National Day.

The department published a congratulatory message from Secretary of State Antony Blinken on its website at 8am Beijing time, on Thursday, October 3. It has traditionally congratulated China before its National

Day, as it does with all countries with which it has diplomatic ties.

It did so on September 29 last year and on September 30 in 2022.

The White House had not released any official statement on Biden's message as of Saturday evening. On October 1, the official Chinese government website also posted an article published each year by state news agency media Xinhua on congratulatory messages received by China on its National Day.

The article did not note any messages received from the US.

The first few paragraphs mentioned messages from Russia and North Korea, the same as last year.

In 2019, when China celebrated the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic, the article noted Russia's message first, followed by the United States and then North Korea.

US bans Chinese steel and food-additives firms over Xinjiang human rights

03 October 2024, [SCMP](#), Bochen Han

Latest additions to Uygur Forced Labour Prevention Act's entity list show American drive to rid its supply chain of forced labour presses on

The US is banning imports from two more Chinese companies over alleged human-rights abuses involving Uygurs, it was revealed on Wednesday, the latest development in America's drive to eliminate goods made with forced labour from its supply chain.

The companies joining the Department of Homeland Security's Uygur Forced Labour Prevention Act (UFLPA) entity list are Baowu Group Xinjiang Bayi Iron and Steel, a subsidiary of the world's largest steelmaker, and Changzhou Guanghui Food Ingredients, a food-additives manufacturer. The restrictions take effect on October 3.

Wednesday's announcement marks the first time that steel and aspartame companies have been added to the list, which also includes entities in the agriculture, apparel, batteries, chemicals, electronics, household appliances, plastics and polysilicon sectors.

Now the total number of sanctioned mainland China-based companies stands at 75, according to the department.

"No sector is off-limits," said Robert Silvers, an undersecretary for policy at Homeland Security.

"We will continue to identify entities across industries and hold accountable those who seek to profit from exploitation and abuse."

The UFLPA, signed into law in 2021, created a "rebuttable presumption" that any materials produced in the Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region are at risk of being tainted with forced labour.

The “guilty-until-proven-innocent” principle effectively inverted US customs laws related to forced labour.

Companies can appeal if they provide “clear and convincing” evidence to customs authorities that their supply chains are free of forced labour.

Homeland Security on Wednesday said state-owned Xinjiang Bayi has “repeatedly participated” in the transfer and receipt of ethnic minorities from Xinjiang, such as Uyghurs and Kyrgyz, by way of Xinjiang government labour programmes.

As for Changzhou Guanghui, the department said the Jiangsu-based company sourced aspartame and aspartame inputs from Xinjiang.

The international community in recent years has increasingly voiced concern about the situation in Xinjiang, where the Chinese government has been accused of committing genocide and crimes against humanity targeting Uyghurs and other religious and ethnic minority groups.

The alleged crimes include arbitrary detention, destruction of religious sites, forced labour, rape, sterilisation and torture.

Beijing has repeatedly and vehemently denied claims of forced labour, instead portraying its government work schemes as poverty-alleviation programmes.

“The US is again spreading false stories on Xinjiang, putting sanctions illegally on Chinese companies in the name of human rights,” said Liu Pengyu, spokesperson for the Chinese embassy in Washington.

In blacklisting the companies, the US was “hurting the right to subsistence, employment and development of people in Xinjiang”, Liu added.

Since the UFLPA took effect in 2022, US Customs and Border Protection has inspected 9,791 shipments totalling US\$3.56 billion, denying entry to 3,976 of them.

Still, US House lawmakers last week voiced concern that the act has been insufficiently enforced and called for stronger implementation.

China, US to hold talks on economic and trade issues, Xinhua reports

01 October 2024, [Reuters](#)

Chinese Commerce Minister Wang Wentao and his U.S. counterpart will hold a call in the near future on trade and economic ties, China's state-run Xinhua news agency reported on Tuesday, citing people familiar with the matter.

They will exchange views on bilateral economic and trade relations and key issues of mutual concern, including restrictions on electric vehicles (EVs), Xinhua reported.

During a two-day working group meeting in Beijing last month with a U.S. delegation, Chinese officials expressed “grave” concerns about additional U.S. tariffs, investment restrictions, and Russia-related sanctions.

A new round of U.S. tariffs on \$18 billion of Chinese goods including EVs, EV batteries and solar panels took effect in late September, with lithium-ion batteries bearing the brunt of the levies by value. The U.S. imports nearly zero Chinese EVs.

The tariffs were imposed after a review by the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative of levies that had been previously introduced by former U.S. President Donald Trump in 2018.

The Biden administration said the tariffs were aimed at bolstering protections for strategic domestic industries from China's state-driven excess production capacity. Beijing has vowed retaliation.

China has long accused the United States of containing its economic development and suppressing its technological advancement out of what it says is sheer paranoia. But Beijing has remained open to talks and negotiations, especially given the prospect of Trump returning to the White House.

Trump has said he would consider imposing more tariffs of 60% or more on Chinese goods should he be elected as president again in November.

“In state-to-state relations, the No.1 and overarching question is: are we rivals, or partners?” said Xie Feng, China's ambassador to the United States, at a reception on Monday, the eve of China's National Day. “China's success does not have to mean a failure of the United States,” Xie added.

Trump has said he would consider imposing more tariffs of 60% or more on Chinese goods should he be elected as president again in November.

“In state-to-state relations, the No.1 and overarching question is: are we rivals, or partners?” said Xie Feng, China's ambassador to the United States, at a reception on Monday, the eve of China's National Day. “China's success does not have to mean a failure of the United States,” Xie added.

China's relations with the European Union have also come under renewed strain as Brussels accuses Beijing of flooding the European market with EVs that it says are backed by unfair Chinese industrial policies and subsidies.

The EU is slated to cast a vote on introducing definitive levies on China-made EVs this month.

SINO-INDIAN RELATIONS

Indian And Chinese Troops Gift Sweets At Contested Border

31 October 2024, [Barron's](#)

Indian and Chinese troops exchanged boxes of sweets on Thursday at two points on their contested high-altitude border, a week after the leaders of the Asian rivals held a rare meeting.

China and India, the world's two most populous nations, are intense rivals and have accused each other of trying to seize territory along their unofficial divide, known as the Line of Actual Control.

However, Chinese President Xi Jinping and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi met on the sidelines of a BRICS gathering in Russia on October 23, the pair's first formal meeting in five years.

In their meeting, Xi said they should "strengthen communication and cooperation", while Modi said "mutual trust" will guide ties with China.

It signalled a potential thaw between the nuclear-armed neighbours since clashes between their troops in 2020 over their border, which killed at least 20 Indian and four Chinese soldiers.

On Thursday, photographs released by the Indian army showed soldiers shaking hands and handing gift-wrapped boxes of sweets in the rugged icy mountains of Ladakh and Arunachal Pradesh, to mark India's Hindu festival of lights, Diwali.

After the 2020 clashes, more than 20 rounds of military talks were held.

Both sides pulled back tens of thousands of troops and agreed not to send patrols into a narrow dividing strip. But two major points remained with troops and tanks on both sides staring at each other.

On October 21, days before Xi and Modi met, a deal was struck to pull back a few hundred soldiers deployed at forward positions, a term dubbed "disengagement", and resume military patrols.

An Indian army official who was not authorised to speak to journalists confirmed that "sweets were exchanged between troops of India and China at several border points on the occasion of Diwali".

Rajnath Singh, India's defence minister, said Thursday that New Delhi's "efforts will be to move the matter beyond disengagement", but added that that "will have to wait a little longer", the Press Trust of India news agency quoted him as saying.

India is wary of its northern neighbour, and disputes over their 3,500-kilometre (2,200-mile) frontier have been a perennial source of tension.

Rajnath Singh to celebrate Diwali with soldiers at Bum La Pass in China border

29 October 2024, [Arunachal Observer](#)

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will visit Tawang district on October 31 to celebrate Diwali with soldiers posted along the India-China border, highly placed official sources told this daily on Monday.

Set against the stunning backdrop of the eastern Himalayas, Tawang has long symbolized India's commitment to securing its borders. Singh's visit comes at after India-China agreement on disengagement of deployed forces in Ladakh and both neighbouring nations achieved a breakthrough in patrolling the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Eastern Ladakh.

In recent years, Tawang has become one of the focal points of friction, especially in areas like Yangtse, where troops of Indian Army and China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) has clashed in December 2022 leading to injuries on both sides.

During this incident, Indian Army had successfully prevented PLA soldiers from advancing their patrols into the Yangtse, reinforcing India's control over the sensitive region.

After the incident, both sides actively engaged in dialogue to de-escalate tensions around Yangtse. According to sources within the defence establishment, there is an emerging proposal to allow PLA patrols in designated areas, aiming for a controlled and mutually agreeable presence on both sides.

This diplomatic effort underscores a potential breakthrough in easing tensions in this disputed sector, as India and China seek ways to balance security with stability.

Before Singh's visit, Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu and Deputy Chief Minister Chowna Mein would also welcome the Indian Air Force's Uttarakhand War Memorial car rally that will reach Tawang on October 30. Diwali, a major Hindu festival, this year will be celebrated from October 29 to November 3.

The Defence Minister's move is to boost up the morale of soldiers who guard the frontier against all odds in inhospitable freezing locations. He had celebrated Vijaydashami on 24.10.23 with troops at Bum La Pass and extended his wishes to the troops. He had commended the soldiers for securing the borders in sub-minus temperatures at an altitude of 15,000 feet above sea level. Singh had emphasized the need to strengthen the country's security apparatus and highlighted the efforts being made by the government to enhance indigenous production of defense equipment. He also visited the 4 Corps Headquarters at Tezpur in Assam and reviewed the operational readiness of the troops.

Bum La, a border pass between China's Tsona County in Tibet and India's Tawang district, is 37-km away from Tawang district HQs Tawang, an agreed Border Personnel Meeting point for security forces of China and India also serves as a trading point between Arunachal Pradesh and Tibet since 2006.

The Bum La Pass road is historic as the PLA had invaded India during the 1962 Sino-India War and the pass had witnessed one of the fiercest battles, known as Battle of Bum La Pass. *Arunachal Pradesh alone shares 1,129-km of total 3,488-km Indo-China border.*

India: Border issues far from fully resolved, normalizing China ties to take time

28 October 2024, [Tibetan Review](#)

India's External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has said Oct 26 that the breakthrough agreement with China on patrolling arrangement along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh's Demchok and Depsang plains does not mean that all issues between the two countries have been resolved. However, the disengagement allows us to look at the next step, the *PTI* news agency Oct 27 cited him as saying.

Apart from that, normalizing relations will naturally take time and requires rebuilding a degree of trust and willingness to work together, Jaishankar has said at an event in Pune.

He has explained that when Prime Minister Narendra Modi met Chinese President Xi Jinping at Kazan in Russia on the sidelines of the BRICS summit, it was decided that the foreign ministers and National Security Advisors of the two countries would meet and see how to move forward.

"The latest step (of disengagement) was the Oct 21 understanding that patrolling will take place in Depsang and Demchok. This will allow us now to look at the next step. It is not like everything has been resolved but the disengagement which is the first phase we have managed to reach that level," Jaishankar has said.

While China's huge border infrastructure advantage in Tibet had given its People's Liberation Army the upper hand thus far, Jaishankar has said India has made great stride in recent years on its side of the border.

Over the decade, India improved its infrastructure, he has said, adding that part of the problem is that in the earlier years, the border infrastructure was really neglected.

"Today we have put in five times more resources annually than there used to be a decade ago which is showing results and enabling the military to actually be effectively deployed. The combination of these (factors) has led to where it is," he has said.

The Oct 21 deal on patrolling along the LAC in eastern Ladakh was a major breakthrough in ending the over four-year-long military standoff.

Since 2020, the situation on the border has been very disturbed which understandably negatively impacted the overall relationship. Since Sep 2020, India has been negotiating with the Chinese to find a solution, Jaishankar has said.

Emphasizing the immediate issues to be resolved before talking about any long-term settlement, Jaishankar has said one of the immediate pressing issues is disengagement because troops are very, very close to each other and the possibility of something happening existed.

Then there is de-escalation because of troop buildup on both sides, he has added.

And then “there is a larger issue of how you manage the border and negotiate the boundary settlement. Right now everything that’s going on is concerning the first part which is disengagement,” he has explained.

Meanwhile, following the agreement, the two countries have begun troop disengagement at the two friction points at Demchok and Depsang Plains in eastern Ladakh and this process is likely to be completed by Oct 28-29. This will be followed by the resumption of patrolling from both sides in accordance with the protocol reached during the Oct 21 deal.

Similar deal has not been reached on the other three or so troubled Tibet-border areas in Ladakh on which there has only been withdrawal of troops with moratorium on patrolling and creation of buffer zones reportedly on the Indian side as temporary solutions.

India and China disengaging at Ladakh border after reaching a patrolling deal

25 October 2024, [Tibetan Review](#)

In a promising start to the implementation of a patrolling arrangement reached between them recently, India and China have begun the disengagement of their troops at two critical friction points in the Eastern Ladakh sector — Demchok and Depsang Plains.

The development comes after India and China successfully negotiated an agreement to resolve their ongoing military standoff in eastern Ladakh, which began in 2020.

Disengagement process at the LAC started within hours after the two sides reached an agreement to end the nearly four-year military stand-off in eastern Ladakh. Some temporary tents from Depsang and Demchok have already been removed by both the countries, reported the *firstpost.com* Oct 25.

Apart from this, some temporary structures have also been dismantled in the area, with Indian soldiers

moving back to the west side of the Charding Nala, and Chinese personnel retreating to the east side of the Nala, the report said.

The temporary posts and structures which were erected at both the face-off sites after May 2020 were now being dismantled in a “controlled manner as part of the modalities worked out by the tactical commanders on the ground,” the *timesofindia.com* Oct 25 cited its sources as saying.

It further cited the sources as saying the dismantling and pullback by the troops will take around a week’s time, following which, the local commanders will verify it physically on the ground before the coordinated patrolling begins.

There are about 10 to 12 temporary structures and around 12 tents on both sides, all of which are set to be removed. Once all tents and temporary structures have been fully removed, a joint verification process will begin, both on the ground and through aerial surveys, said *Indiatoday.com* Oct 25.

The Chinese army reduced the number of their vehicles in the area, and the Indian army also withdrew some troops in the area. After this process is completed, patrolling is expected to resume in Depsang and Demchok within the next 4-5 days, the report cited sources as saying.

The ongoing process is also in keeping with India’s Defence Minister Rajnath Singh’s remark Oct 24 that a “broad consensus” had been achieved to restore the “ground situation” in certain areas based on the principles of equal and mutual security.

The announcement of the deal, made by India on Oct 21, marked a major breakthrough, although experts have struck a note of caution, given China’s well established record of not abiding by deals.

The current disengagement process, carried out by local commanders, is being done as per broad terms decided at a senior level, the *CNN-News18* Oct 25 cited sources as saying.

As per the “patrolling arrangements” deal, Chinese troops will no longer block Indian soldiers at the “Bottleneck” area in the strategically-located Depsang Plains, which is around 18-km inside what India considers its own territory, said the *timesofindia.com* report.

“The aim is to ensure no clashes and violence takes place.”

Discussions on the four buffer zones, including Galwan, have not yet taken place, said the *Indiatoday.com* report.

The announcement of the border patrolling deal was followed, on Oct 23, by a meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the 16th Brics Summit in Kazan city of Russia.

The two leaders issued directions to revive various bilateral dialogue mechanisms, signalling attempts to

normalise ties that were affected by the mind-2020 military clash at Galwan in eastern Ladakh.

Two Nepalese nationals arrested in Lucknow for digital fraud linked to Chinese operative

25 October 2024. [Times of India](#)

In a late-night operation, the Uttar Pradesh Special Task Force (STF) arrested two Nepalese nationals in Lucknow for their involvement in extensive digital fraud operations using fake documents, especially 'digital arrest'.

The suspects, Saroj Khanal from Dharan, Sunsari, and Shivram Rimal from Kathmandu, were apprehended near Saroj Hospital on Dubagga Road. They were reportedly meeting someone to arrange a bank account for transferring funds obtained through scams.

STF said that the two were connected to Chinese native Ben who is currently based in Nepal. STF officials revealed that the duo was using fake identities, posing as Indian nationals Rahul Kumar and Pankaj Sridhar, with fabricated addresses in Lucknow's Avash Vikas Yojna area. During the arrest, the STF seized two Nepalese passports, ID cards, forged Indian Aadhaar cards, and mobile phones.

Deputy SP of STF, Deepak Kumar Singh stated that the STF had been receiving multiple reports over the past few months about a gang posing as senior officials from various law enforcement agencies, including the Police, ED, and CBI. These individuals would intimidate victims, threatening them with false legal charges, including the concept of 'digital arrest.' "Further investigation revealed that Khanal and Rimal were connected to an individual named "Ben" from China, currently based in Nepal. Initially, they had collaborated with Ben in Dubai before returning to Nepal, where he introduced them to cybercrime. Operating in India with fake Aadhaar cards, they opened bank accounts and obtained SIM cards used for scamming activities. Ben facilitated their operations by transferring scammed money into these accounts and covering their living expenses in India through cryptocurrency commissions," said Singh.

The STF is now investigating other gang members and bank accounts linked to this extensive fraud operation. The electronic devices seized during the arrest will undergo forensic examination. A case has been registered at Para Police Station in Lucknow, with further legal actions in progress.

China and India should manage their differences, Xi tells Modi in first formal talks in 5 years

24 October 2024, [NBC News](#)

The two leaders' meeting on the sidelines of the BRICS summit in Russia came after a deal to resolve a four-year military standoff over their disputed Himalayan border.

Chinese President Xi Jinping and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi agreed on Wednesday to boost communication and cooperation between their countries and resolve conflicts to help improve ties that were damaged by a deadly military clash in 2020. The two leaders met on the sidelines of the BRICS summit in Russia for their first formal talks in five years, signaling that ties between the Asian giants have begun to recover from the diplomatic rift caused by the clash along their disputed Himalayan frontier. India and China, two of the world's biggest economies, have maintained strong trade ties despite the military and diplomatic tensions. The rapprochement is expected to boost Chinese investment in India.

India said the two leaders have directed their officials to take further steps to stabilize all aspects of bilateral ties.

The Xi-Modi meeting in the city of Kazan came two days after New Delhi said it had reached a deal with Beijing to resolve the four-year military standoff in the Himalayan region of Ladakh, although neither side has shared details of the pact.

The two sides should strengthen communication and cooperation, resolve conflicts and differences, and realize each other's development dreams, Chinese state broadcaster CCTV reported Xi as telling Modi.

Modi put forward ideas for improving and developing bilateral relations, to which Xi agreed in principle, CCTV added without elaborating.

In response, Modi told Xi that peace, stability, mutual trust and respect were crucial for relations.

"We welcome the agreement on the issues that had come up over the last four years," Modi told Xi in comments aired on India's state broadcaster Doordarshan.

"It should be our priority to maintain peace and tranquility on the border. Mutual trust, mutual respect and mutual sensitivity should be the basis of our relationship," Modi said.

Relations between the world's two most populous nations — both nuclear powers — have been strained since a clash between their troops on the largely undemarcated frontier in the western Himalayas left 20 Indian and four Chinese soldiers dead in 2020.

The neighbors have added tens of thousands of troops and weapons along the icy frontier over the last four years.

Modi and Xi had not held formal bilateral talks since then, although both participated in multilateral

events. Their last bilateral summit talks were held in October 2019 in the southern Indian town of Mamallapuram.

The two spoke briefly on the sidelines of the G20 summit in Bali in November 2022. They spoke again on the sidelines of the BRICS summit in Johannesburg in August 2023 but released different versions of the conversation, suggesting they didn't see eye to eye.

Xi skipped the G20 summit hosted by New Delhi the following month, a decision seen as another setback to relations.

Diplomatic efforts gained momentum in recent months after the two countries' foreign ministers met in July and agreed to step up talks to ease the border tensions.

India had made improving the wider political and damaged business ties contingent upon finding a solution to the border standoff.

New Delhi had increased the scrutiny of investments coming from China, blocked direct flights between the two countries and had practically barred issuing any visas to Chinese nationals since the Ladakh clashes.

Speaking in Kazan, Indian Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri said there was hope for better India-China relations.

"As we have maintained during the last four years, the restoration of peace and tranquility on the border areas will create space for ... normalization of our bilateral relations."

Amid Modi-Xi meet, Indian Army opens museum to counter China's claims about Arunachal Pradesh

23 October 2024, [Deccan Herald](#), Sumir Karmakar

'This unique institution recognizes and showcases the martial, cultural, and heritage prowess of Arunachal Pradesh and celebrates the historical linkages of this ancient region with Bharatvarsh,' said Arunachal Pradesh CM Khandu.

Guwahati: Indian Army on Wednesday opened a museum in Arunachal Pradesh's Dirang district, one of the theatres of the 1962 Sino-India War, in order to display the frontier state's ancient ties with "Bharatvarsh" and counter China's repeated claims over the state.

This coincided with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's bilateral meeting with his Chinese counterparts Xi Jinping during the BRICS Summit in Russia.

The museum displays 343 traditional heirlooms dating back to the Neolithic period, many ancient artefacts, catalogue highlighting the bravery of the local heroes and Indian soldiers who had sacrificed their lives while fighting against the Chinese troops during the 1962 war, beside other items.

"This location of the Museum, at Nyukmadung is of special reverence to all of us as it proudly marks the

sacrifice, bravery and honour of the Indian Army during the 1962 war along with the camaraderie and compatriotism of local people. This museum is not just a repository of artefacts, heirlooms and memories but a living bridge between the past and future," Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu said, after inaugurating the museum.

The museum, named as Kameng Culture and Heritage Museum, is situated at Nyukmadung village in Dirang district, situated atop 1,600 meters.

"This unique institution recognizes and showcases the martial, cultural, and heritage prowess of Arunachal Pradesh and celebrates the historical linkages of this ancient region with Bharatvarsh," said Khandu

Khandu hoped that the museum would place Nyukmadung and Dirang on the country's tourist map, boosting religious and adventure tourism. "It will not only contribute to the local economy but also foster a deeper understanding of the region's cultural canvas on the national and global stage." The Indian Institute of Heritage curated the museum.

Khandu expressed gratitude to the Army's Sela Brigade, 16 Madras and 18 Sikh Light Infantry, who worked hard to deliver the project. A film by Captain Praveen Chaturvedi, CEO, Moonlight Pictures and his team, was also screened during the event that highlighted the deep-rooted connection of Arunachal Pradesh and Bharat, said a statement issued by the Chief Minister's Office, on Wednesday evening.

India has repeatedly rejected China's claims over Arunachal Pradesh. China, on the other hand, reacted sharply to infrastructure development projects taken up by India in Arunachal Pradesh claiming that the region was part of its South Tibet province.

A Modi-Xi Meeting Could Signal a Thaw Between India and China

23 October 2024, [The New York Times](#), David Pierson, Valarie Hopkins and Alex Travelli

A meeting between the two leaders comes just two days after they settled a tense border dispute in the Himalayas. But experts said their long-term geopolitical rivalry would persist.

China's top leader, Xi Jinping, and Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India met officially for the first time in more than five years on Wednesday at a summit of emerging market countries in Russia, raising the prospect of a potential thaw between the two Asian powers.



From left, Xi Jinping, China's top leader, President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia and Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India at the BRICS summit in Kazan, Russia, on Wednesday. Credit...Sergey Bobylev/BRICS-Rossia2024.ru, via EPA, via Shutterstock

The session came two days after China and India reached a deal on patrolling their shared Himalayan border, the site of a deadly clash between Chinese and Indian forces in 2020. Relations between Beijing and New Delhi have been frosty ever since, with India drawing closer to the United States through a regional security grouping called the Quad.

In separate statements, both Mr. Xi and Mr. Modi highlighted the need for the neighboring countries to address their differences peacefully.

Mr. Xi told Mr. Modi a rapprochement was “in the fundamental interests of both countries,” according to Chinese state media, adding that China and India should “set an example for developing countries.”

Mr. Modi called for “stable, predictable and amicable” relations between the two nations, the world’s most populous, saying it would have “a positive impact on regional and global peace and prosperity,” according to India’s Ministry of External Affairs.

Both leaders underscored their desire for a more “multipolar” world, an inference to the current global order, where the United States dominates, wielding what China and India regard as unfair influence.

The meeting between Mr. Xi and Mr. Modi took place at the 16th annual BRICS summit, a group of non-Western countries whose acronym stems from its earliest members: Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. It expanded this year to include Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran and the United Arab Emirates, growing to represent almost half the world’s population.

Established as a counterweight to U.S.-led forums like the Group of 7 and intended to give developing countries more influence, BRICS has struggled to speak with a unified voice. That, in no small part, is because of the competing interests of its two biggest members.

China wants to use the grouping to weaken the dominance of the United States and burnish its credentials as a leader of the so-called Global South.

India also claims leadership of the Global South, but unlike China, remains firmly nonaligned and does not want BRICS to develop into an explicitly anti-Western body.

Experts said little would change within BRICS as a result of China and India’s moving to ease tensions. Beijing has ambitions to be the pre-eminent power in Asia.

“The thaw between India and China will not fundamentally alter the dynamics of BRICS because while the détente between the two Asian giants is in the interest of both players, their long-term geopolitical rivalry will remain,” said Stewart Patrick, a senior fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

India “has no desire to replace U.S. hegemony for Chinese hegemony,” Mr. Patrick continued, “and it is disinclined to have BRICS become an anti-Western bloc.”

During a round table session earlier on Wednesday, leaders of the BRICS conference discussed a range of issues, including creating financial platforms outside the reach of the U.S. dollar. President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia offered a proposal to create a BRICS grain exchange that could evolve into a commodities exchange. Russia is the world’s largest wheat exporter, and its war in Ukraine, another top grain exporter, sent prices soaring in 2022.

While improved ties between China and India could make BRICS a more cohesive group, a lasting thaw is anything but assured. Analysts warned that the border deal struck this week could fall apart, as details remained murky about how the two sides would patrol the disputed area, considered some of the least habitable terrain in Asia.

For China, easing tensions with India would help drive a wedge between New Delhi and Washington. It would also provide Beijing with one less headache at a time when it is struggling to turn around its sputtering economy, which has been battered by a property crisis.

As for India, a lasting border deal would come as a relief for Mr. Modi’s government, which took the largely symbolic step of banning dozens of Chinese apps, including TikTok, after the clash in 2020. Since then, Mr. Modi has tried to deflect attention from the conflict. He refused to take questions about it in Parliament.

Smoother relations with China will leave India in a position straddling geopolitical forces within Asia. Washington has been courting New Delhi as a strategic counterweight to China, as it seeks to corral various states, most of them democracies, into a ring of defensive arrangements around Asia.

Indian foreign policy has long been defined by its overlapping and sometimes contradictory set of friends. It is the only country that sits inside both the

Quad — the loose, defense-oriented club where it joins the United States, Japan and Australia — and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, which is dominated by China and Russia. The Shanghai group also includes Pakistan, India's fiercest foe.

The United States has been working to tighten its ties with India for about 25 years. That has accelerated under both the Trump and Biden administrations, as India has been drawn into greater and greater economic, technological and military coordination with Washington. In the latest example, India signed a \$3.5 billion deal last week to buy American Predator drones.

China's Xi and India's Modi meet after border accord between two countries

23 October 2024, [Aljazeera](#)

Narendra Modi and Xi Jinping hold talks on the sidelines of the BRICS summit in the Russian city of Kazan.



Chinese President Xi Jinping and India Prime Minister Narendra Modi meet on the sidelines of the BRICS summit [China Daily via Reuters]

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping have held their first formal talks in five years, a sign that icy relations are thawing after a deadly military clash in 2020.

The two leaders met on Wednesday on the sidelines of the BRICS summit in the Russian city of Kazan, the Indian government and Chinese state media said.

The meeting comes days after the two countries agreed a deal to resolve a four-year military standoff on their disputed Himalayan border.

Xi and Modi shook hands against a backdrop featuring their national flags, and both stressed the importance of handling their disputes.

The Chinese leader said the two countries were at a crucial stage of development and "should carefully handle differences and disagreements and facilitate each other's pursuit of development aspirations."

"It's important for both sides to shoulder our international responsibilities, set an example for boosting the strength and unity of the developing countries, and contribute to promoting multi-

polarisation and democracy in international relations," Xi said.

The clash in 2020 on the largely undemarcated frontier of Ladakh in the western Himalayas killed 20 Indian and four Chinese soldiers.

Relations between Beijing and New Delhi were strained as a result, with both sides beefing up their military presence along their shared border.

Modi and Xi had not held formal talks since although they were present at a number of multilateral events. Their last summit talks were held in October 2019 in the southern Indian town of Mamallapuram.

The clash in 2020 on the largely undemarcated frontier of Ladakh in the western Himalayas killed 20 Indian and four Chinese soldiers.

Relations between Beijing and New Delhi were strained as a result, with both sides beefing up their military presence along their shared border.

Modi and Xi had not held formal talks since although they were present at a number of multilateral events. Their last summit talks were held in October 2019 in the southern Indian town of Mamallapuram.

The two spoke briefly on the sidelines of the G20 summit in Bali in November 2022. They spoke again on the sidelines of the BRICS summit in Johannesburg in August last year.

Xi skipped the G20 summit hosted by New Delhi the following month, a decision seen as another setback to their relations.

Diplomatic efforts gained momentum in recent months after foreign ministers of the two countries met in July and agreed to step up talks to ease the border tensions.

The standoff had resulted in New Delhi increasing the scrutiny of investments coming from China, blocking direct flights between the two countries and barely issuing any visas to Chinese nationals.

The pact agreed to this week related to military patrols along the frontier. But the announcement on Tuesday did not explain whether it covered the length of the border or just points where the clashes occurred in 2020.

Border tensions are a thorny issue between Beijing and New Delhi. China claims India's eastern state of Arunachal Pradesh in its entirety, considering it part of its Tibet region, and the two fought a border war in 1962.

China confirms pact with India to 'resolve' conflict over disputed border

22 October 2024, [Aljazeera](#)

China has confirmed reaching a deal with India over their disputed border in the Himalayan region, a day after New Delhi said it had struck an agreement with Beijing for military patrols along the frontier.

But the announcement on Tuesday did not explain whether the pact covered the length of the border or just points where the two sides have been involved in a standoff since 2020.

Relations between the world's two most populous, nuclear-armed neighbours have been strained since clashes between their troops on the largely undemarcated frontier in the western Himalayas' Ladakh region four years ago killed 20 Indian and four Chinese soldiers.

Since the skirmish in 2020, both sides pulled back tens of thousands of soldiers and agreed not to send patrols into a narrow strip surrounding the Line of Actual Control, which is an unofficial division about 3,488km (2,167 miles) long in the Himalayas, with China claiming a considerably shorter section.

It separates Chinese and Indian-held territories from Ladakh in the west to India's eastern state of Arunachal Pradesh, which China claims in its entirety considering it part of its Tibet region.

In 1962, Chinese troops crossed the frontier with India during a dispute over the border's demarcation, sparking a four-week-long war. China retained Aksai Chin, a strategic corridor linking Tibet to western China.

"Recently, China and India have maintained close communication through diplomatic and military channels on issues relating to the China-India border," China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesman Lin Jian told a news briefing in Beijing on Tuesday.

"At present, the two sides have reached a solution to the relevant issues, which China views positively," Lin said.

Arunachal's Siang valley dam project on fast track to counter China threat

21 October 2024, [Business Standard](#)

The project has been facing protests from the local population which fears severe ecological impact because of the construction of the dam.

With an eye on China developing a mega hydro project in the vicinity of Arunachal Pradesh, the Centre has accelerated the development of its colossal dam in the Siang upper valley, which will be the country's biggest to date. The recently announced financial assistance by the Union Cabinet for hydropower (or hydel) projects is aimed at the initial project management of the Siang upper valley dam, said senior officials.

The proposed project has a three-pronged agenda — flood management, water flow correction, and power generation as a by-product. State-owned hydropower major NHPC has been entrusted with developing a detailed project report (DPR) and project feasibility report (PFR). According to estimates by NHPC, the dam will have the capacity to generate 10-12 gigawatts

(Gw) of hydropower, making it the largest hydel project in India. The projected cost is expected to be Rs 1 trillion, said officials.

NHPC executives said while discussions were ongoing among different central ministries, such as power, Jal Shakti, and the state of Arunachal Pradesh, the latest fund infusion by the Centre has kick-started the project. In August, the Union Cabinet approved Rs 4,136 crore for the northeastern states to develop hydropower projects worth 15 Gw. Last month, the Cabinet also approved Rs 12,461 crore for creating "enabling infrastructure" for upcoming hydropower projects and Pumped Storage Projects (PSPs) in the country.

Officials indicated that funds from these two allocations would be directed towards the PFR for the Siang valley project and to conduct awareness programmes for the locals. An emailed questionnaire to the NHPC spokesperson remained unanswered until the time of going to press.

The project has been facing protests from the local population, which fears severe ecological impact due to the construction of the dam. According to local reports, data collection efforts by NHPC have been thwarted by locals who are apprehensive that the project will harm aquatic ecology. NHPC, however, is advocating for the project on the grounds of national security and the adverse impact of the Chinese dam.

In 2021, the People's Republic of China approved the construction of the 60 Gw Motong hydropower station on the Yarlung Tsangpo, which falls in the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR). The Yarlung river connects with the Brahmaputra (Siang in Arunachal) river on the Indian side. According to initial studies by NHPC and the state government, water flow to India can be reduced by up to 80 per cent due to China's project. In a recent presentation, authorities also hinted at the possibilities of China using it as a 'water bomb' or even to induce floods in Indian territory.

The Siang river has previously witnessed flash floods at least three times due to breaches in dams on the Chinese side. A recent official presentation by NHPC said: "It is estimated that 40 billion cubic meters (BCM) of water may be diverted by the Chinese project. The total annual yield at the Siang Upper Project is around 112 BCM. During the lean season, the flow may reduce by about 60 per cent at Pasighat and 25 per cent at Pandu (Guwahati) without the Upper Siang Project."

The presentation also said that the project would neutralise the adverse effects of reduced lean season water availability. "The project is mainly aimed at flood moderation and ensuring water security in the area. The hydropower generated would be essential in meeting peaking power requirements," officials said. Around 12 per cent of the total energy generated from the project would be provided for free to the state of Arunachal Pradesh.

The project was first conceptualised in 2018 by the Ministry of Jal Shakti as an irrigation-cum-power project. Lack of funds and support from the state government, coupled with local protests, caused no progress, said officials. Some officials also indicated that the rehabilitation of the local population continues to be a major challenge, as they fear loss of jobs and arable land for cultivation, especially rice. The 3 Gw Dibang Valley hydro project on the Siang river has faced years of protests over similar concerns.

What's at stake

Project significance: Largest hydropower project in India with a capacity of 10-12 Gw

Estimated cost, storage capacity: Rs 1 trn; 14-15 bn cubic meter

Strategic importance: Aimed at flood management, water security, and mitigating risks posed by China's 60 Gw Motong project on Yarlung Zangbo

Funding boost: Recent approvals of over Rs 16,000 crore by the Union Cabinet for hydropower and allied infrastructure in the Northeast

Key concerns: Loss of arable lands, displacement of heritage tribal lands and communities

National security focus: Project seeks to counter potential diversion of 40 bn cubic meters of water by China and mitigate risks of flash floods by Chinese dam breaches

India calls out China's non-transparent subsidies that stifle competition at WTO meet

19 October 2024, [Tibetan Review](#)

While India's border problem with China is serious enough to render it a hindrance to the normalization of their overall bilateral ties, the former also has grave concerns over the business practices of the latter. The country has made known this fact during a WTO meeting. Indian officials pointed out that China's policies not only affect Indian exporters but also threaten the stability of the broader international trading system, reported the *psuconnect*.in Oct 19.

The officials have put under scrutiny China's non-transparent subsidies that lead to an influx of low-priced, inferior goods into the country, adversely affecting local industries.

The report said India strongly criticized China's trade policies, labelling them as unfair and harmful to equitable global trade practices, raising issues related to China's state subsidies, intellectual property violations, and market access barriers that hinder Indian businesses.

India's position was stated to reflect increasing frustration with China's aggressive trade tactics that disrupt competition. Its officials have noted that these policies not only impact Indian exporters but also pose a threat to the stability of the wider international trading system.

During the discussions, India called for enhanced transparency and accountability from China, urging the WTO to address practices that breach trade agreements. The Indian delegation highlighted the necessity for a level playing field and advocated for reforms within the WTO to ensure that all member countries comply with fair trade practices, the report noted.

The ongoing dialogue at the WTO was stated to underscore the rising tensions in international trade, particularly among major economies, with India reflecting its commitment to assert its rights on the global stage.

China urges India to handle Taiwan issue cautiously after Mumbai office opening

17 October 2024, [Reuters](#)

China urged India on Thursday to handle Taiwan issues with caution and avoid interference in the improvement of Sino-India relations following the opening of another Taiwan de facto consulate in Mumbai.

China opposes moves by any countries it has ties with to engage in official contacts with Taiwan, said Mao Ning, a foreign ministry spokesperson, at a regular news conference.

The Taiwanese government opened its third representative office in India on Wednesday, Taiwan's official Central News Agency reported, adding to existing offices in New Delhi and Chennai.

The video player is currently playing an ad.

00:12Cyclone Dana dumps rain on eastern India as it makes landfall

The opening came amid ongoing efforts from China and India to ease tensions and resolve conflicts on their Himalayan frontier, a point of contention that has strained bilateral ties.

China, which views democratically-governed Taiwan as its own territory, staged a new round of war games around the island earlier this week.

Taiwan's government rejects China's sovereignty claims and Beijing's claim of the right to speak for and represent the island on the international stage

"China has lodged solemn representations with the Indian side," Mao said.

"The one-China principle is a serious political commitment made by the Indian side and the political foundation of Sino-Indian relations."

China urges India to strictly abide by its commitments, handle Taiwan-related issues prudently and properly, and refrain from conducting any form of official exchanges with Taiwan, she added.

Satellite pics show new Chinese settlement under construction near Pangong Lake

14 October 2024, [India Today](#), Shivani Sharma

Satellite imagery accessed by India Today shows significant Chinese construction activity, 38 km from the 2020 standoff point, raising fresh concerns over border infrastructure.



New Chinese settlement near Pangong Tso. (Satellite image @ 2024 Maxar Technologies via India Today)

As India and China continue diplomatic efforts to ease tensions along the border, recent satellite imagery reviewed by India Today reveals the ongoing construction of a large Chinese settlement near the north bank of Pangong Tso Lake.

The settlement is located approximately 38 kilometres east of one of the 2020 standoff points between Indian and Chinese forces, though it lies outside India's territorial claims. Pangong Tso, the world's highest saltwater lake, straddles India, China-administered Tibet, and the disputed border between them.

The satellite images, captured on October 9 by US-based Maxar Technologies, show rapid construction over an area of about 17 hectares. Situated near Yemagou Road at an elevation of 4,347 meters, the site is bustling with construction and earth-moving machinery. According to Y Nithyanandam, Professor & Head of the Geospatial Research Programme at the Takshashila Institution, "More than 100 buildings, including residential structures and larger administrative buildings, are being built. Open spaces and flattened land suggest possible future use for parks or sports facilities."

He also pointed out a 150-meter-long rectangular strip in the southeast corner, speculating it could be prepared for helicopter operations.

Analysis of open-source satellite imagery indicates that construction began in early April 2024 on a riverbed sloping towards the lake. The settlement appears to be divided into two parts, possibly distinguishing between administrative and operational zones, according to military sources.

Shadow analysis of the structures reveals a mix of single and double-story buildings, with smaller hutments nearby, likely accommodating six to eight people each. Two larger structures may serve as administration and storage facilities. The layout, designed in staggered rows rather than straight lines,

suggests an intention to reduce vulnerability to long-range attacks.

The settlement's location behind high peaks further enhances its strategic advantage, limiting visibility from nearby areas. "The surrounding high peaks obscure the site from land-based surveillance equipment," Nithyanandam noted. Military sources speculate that if used for military purposes, the settlement could function as an "ad-hoc forward base," reducing reaction times for Chinese forces.

A SETTLEMENT FOR TIBETAN NOMADS?

Nature Desai, an observer of the Indo-Tibetan frontier, offers another interpretation. He suggests that the settlement could be intended for Tibetan nomads, identifying the site as Changzun Nuru, a historic campsite mentioned in Swedish geographer Sven Hedin's Central Asia Atlas: Memoir on Maps. Desai argues that the design is more consistent with the style of permanent housing built for Tibetan nomads by the Chinese government over the past two decades, rather than typical Xiaokang-style border defence villages.

If so, this would be the first such settlement close in the area, reflecting China's ongoing efforts to settle Tibetan nomads permanently. China could frame this development as "a long-awaited gift to its loyal nomads along the Indian frontier," Desai noted.

Nithyanandam pointed out that while the proximity to a water source likely resolves water supply issues, the settlement's energy needs will likely rely on renewable sources. The rapid pace of construction suggests that residential buildings are nearing completion, and significant progress has been made over the past six months. However, the settlement's completion timeline could be impacted by extreme weather conditions in the coming months.

India expresses cautious optimism in Tibet-border talks with China

13 October 2024, [Tibetan Review](#)

India's Defence Minister, Mr Rajnath Singh, has on Oct 11 expressed cautious optimism about ongoing diplomatic-military talks with China, while emphasizing that troop disengagement was key to resolving tensions.

India remains "cautiously optimistic" about the ongoing diplomatic-military talks with China to resolve the troop standoff in the eastern Ladakh border with Tibet, *business-standard.com* Sep 12 quoted Singh as saying Oct 11.

Singh has also expressed full confidence in the Indian Army's ability to handle any situation should tensions escalate along the border.

Speaking at the Army Commanders' Conference in Gangtok, capital of the Tibet-border state of Sikkim,

Singh has made it clear that progress of discussions with China would be contingent on “actual progress” being made on the ground, specifically with the disengagement of troops in eastern Ladakh.

While China is said to be stubbornly reluctant to withdraw from the two remaining conflict points in eastern Ladakh, namely Depsang and Demchok, India has been advocating for a phased process, starting with troop disengagement there. This should be followed by de-escalation and eventually the withdrawal of the 50,000 Chinese troops stationed along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the region, if normalcy in bilateral ties are to be restored.

Singh has spoken by video conference, which was chaired by General Upendra Dwivedi, Chief of the Army Staff, from Sukna in Darjeeling as he could not travel to Gangtok as scheduled due to bad weather.

The choice of Gangtok as the conference location was stated to be symbolic, signalling India’s readiness in the eastern sector, where China has also increased its military presence by deploying 90,000 additional troops.

General Dwivedi had earlier this month described the situation along the LAC as “stable but sensitive and not normal”, noting that “trust has become the biggest casualty” in India’s relationship with China.

He has added that while political-diplomatic efforts had generated some “positive signalling” in recent months, implementation depended on military commanders on the ground.

Given this situation, the Indian Army will continue to maintain its forward positions in preparation for the fifth consecutive winter in the harsh terrain of eastern Ladakh, Arunachal Pradesh, and Sikkim, the report said.

Singh has called on the Indian armed forces to continuously modernise and adapt to emerging threats.

On Oct 12, Singh inaugurate several Border Road Organization projects in Sikkim, including 22 roads, 51 bridges, and two additional projects, totalling Rs 2,236 crore. These include 19 projects in Jammu and Kashmir, 18 in Arunachal Pradesh, 11 in Ladakh, nine in Uttarakhand, and six in Sikkim, the report added.

India launches major strategic infrastructure projects and plans, procurements as China threat simmers

13 October 2024, [Tibetan Review](#)

As India’s trust-deficit towards China on the border issue continues amid continuing standoff in eastern Ladakh, the country has announced more major strategic infrastructure projects to achieve parity with the developments on the occupied Tibet side of the border. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Oct 12 virtually inaugurated 75 infrastructure projects

“dedicated to the nation” from Sherathang, near the Indo-Tibet border, most of them in the Tibet-bordering states, reported *eastmojo.com* Oct 12.

India has also approved plans for the launch of 42 spy satellites and plans to procure over 20,000 new-generation anti-tank guided missiles (ATGMs), along with 1,500 launchers and simulators, for the Indian Army, according to latest media reports.

The 75 projects launched by Mr Singh were stated to include 51 bridges, 22 roads, and two miscellaneous projects, aimed at strengthening connectivity in critical regions.

The road projects were stated to include four for Sikkim, seven for Jammu and Kashmir, three for Arunachal Pradesh, two for Ladakh, besides two for Rajasthan and one each for one for Nagaland and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

The 51 bridges were stated to cover key locations, including 14 for Arunachal Pradesh, 12 for Jammu and Kashmir, nine for Ladakh, and others spread across Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Mizoram, and Sikkim. Those in Sikkim were stated to include the upgradation of the Sherathang-Kupup road, which plays a crucial role for the armed forces, offering an alternative route from East Sikkim to the Siliguri corridor. In Ladakh, the newly constructed Hemiya Bridge on the Leh-Loma road will improve connectivity to Dungi, the report said.

Singh has inaugurated the projects virtually from Sukna Military Base as inclement weather prevented his planned personal attendance. Sikkim Chief Minister Prem Singh Golay, along with other state dignitaries, has attended the ceremony at Sherathang. Meanwhile the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) led by PM Narendra Modi has quietly approved the phase III of the Space Based Surveillance (SBS-III) for launching an array of spy satellites in low earth and geostationary orbits.

“CCS on Monday gave the approval for launching 52 satellites under the SBS-III project, which would cost around Rs 27,000 crore,” the *timesofindia.com* Oct 12 quoted a source in the ISRO, India’s space agency, as saying.

“If India is able to launch satellites at this scale, threats to the country can be better mitigated,” the source has said. The recent Cabinet clearance to purchase 31 weaponised Predator drones from US-based General Atomics will add more teeth to the surveillance capability of the SBS-3 mission.

Also, India’s Defence Ministry has issued a Request for Information (RFI) to procure over 20,000 new-generation anti-tank guided missiles (ATGMs), along with 1,500 launchers and simulators, for the Indian Army, reported *indiatoday.in* Oct 11.

This initiative is aimed at enhancing the Army’s operational capabilities to effectively target and

destroy tanks and other armoured vehicles, the report said.

These ATGMs are expected to operate in diverse terrains, including plains, deserts, high altitudes up to 5,500 meters (18,000 feet), as well as coastal areas and islands.

The requirement is that the new-generation missiles must function effectively in both day and night conditions, adapting to various weather scenarios such as rain, fog, humidity, and dust. Additionally, they are required to operate in extreme temperatures ranging from -45°C to 45°C.

And the ATGMs should be able to neutralize a range of targets, including enemy tanks, armoured personnel carriers, low-flying helicopters, concrete structures, and other weapon platforms.

They will be strategically deployed along India's western border with Pakistan and the northern border with Chinese ruled Tibet, the report said.

The move is a step toward bolstering the Indian Army's capabilities in modern warfare.

India 'cautiously optimistic' about border talks with China: Rajnath Singh

12 October 2024, [Business Standard](#), Rimjhim Singh

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh expressed cautious optimism about ongoing diplomatic-military talks with China, emphasising troop disengagement as key to resolving tensions

India remains "cautiously optimistic" about the ongoing diplomatic-military talks with China to resolve the troop standoff in eastern Ladakh, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said on Friday. However, he also expressed full confidence in the Army's ability to handle any situation should tensions escalate along the border.

Speaking at the Army Commanders' Conference in Gangtok, Singh emphasised that the progress of discussions with China is contingent on "actual progress" being made on the ground, specifically with the disengagement of troops in eastern Ladakh.

India has been advocating for a phased process, starting with troop disengagement at the two remaining conflict points in Depsang and Demchok. This would be followed by de-escalation and eventually the withdrawal of the 50,000 Chinese troops stationed along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the region.

The defence minister's comments come against the backdrop of concerns about China's inconsistent actions, as the People's Liberation Army made several incursions into eastern Ladakh in April-May 2020, despite diplomatic assurances.

Although Singh was scheduled to attend the conference, chaired by General Upendra Dwivedi, in person, bad weather forced him to address it via videoconference from Sukna in Darjeeling. The choice of Gangtok as the conference location, near the China border, was symbolic, signalling India's readiness in the eastern sector, where China has also increased its military presence by deploying 90,000 additional troops.

Earlier this month, General Dwivedi cautioned that "trust has become the biggest casualty" in India's relationship with China, describing the situation along the LAC as "stable but sensitive and not normal". He added that while political-diplomatic efforts have generated some "positive signalling" in recent months, implementation depends on military commanders on the ground.

In preparation for the fifth consecutive winter in the harsh terrain of eastern Ladakh, Arunachal Pradesh, and Sikkim, the Army will continue to maintain its forward positions. Meanwhile, the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) is working to improve India's border infrastructure, attempting to close the gap with China.

Rajnath Singh to inaugurate BRO projects in Sikkim today

On Saturday, Rajnath Singh is set to inaugurate several BRO projects in Sikkim, including 22 roads, 51 bridges, and two additional projects, totalling Rs 2,236 crore. These include 19 projects in Jammu and Kashmir, 18 in Arunachal Pradesh, 11 in Ladakh, nine in Uttarakhand, and six in Sikkim.

Defence minister Singh highlighted the need for the armed forces to prepare for "asymmetric warfare", a lesson underscored by current global conflicts. He noted that unconventional and asymmetric warfare, including hybrid war, will be integral to future conflicts, and added that the forces should continuously modernise and adapt to emerging threats.

EXPLAINED: Is China taking away people's passports?

08 October 2024, [RFA](#), Luisetta Mudie

Beijing steps up travel curbs on Communist Party members and state employees amid concerns they won't return.

The ruling Chinese Communist Party has been gradually stepping up controls on officials' personal trips overseas since pandemic restrictions ended, with many working in state organizations required to hand in their passports for "safekeeping," amid concerns that they may not return.

The party's disciplinary arm warned members earlier this year not to make overseas trips without getting the approval of their employer first, on pain of "severe disciplinary punishment."

Those who don't have a valid private passport may not be allowed to apply for one, while those who do are being told to hand them over on pain of disciplinary action, according to official documents and people within the government system.

In July, Radio Free Asia reported that the authorities were stepping up travel restrictions on teachers, schoolchildren and state-owned bank staff ahead of summer vacation by requiring them to hand over their passports or ask permission before leaving the country.

A recent report in the *Financial Times* also quoted teachers as saying they were being told to hand in their passports.

Is this a new development?

Teachers were being ordered to hand in their passports as early as 2018, with authorities in the southeastern province of Fujian, the eastern province of Shandong and the northern region of Inner Mongolia warning them that any plans for overseas travel must first get government approval.

Similar warnings were issued to teachers, schoolchildren and state-owned bank employees ahead of the summer vacation this year, too.

Official websites have been warning of travel restrictions on employees of the Chinese state since President Xi Jinping took power in 2012, but travel curbs intensified during the three years of the zero-COVID policy, when people started leaving the country in droves in a phenomenon called the "run" movement.

Arriving air passengers in the southern city of Guangzhou told Radio Free Asia in May 2022 that border police had stepped up controls on incoming Chinese citizens, questioning them about their overseas activities and confiscating their passports.

In April of the same year, police in the central province of Hunan ordered local residents to hand over their passports, promising to return them "when the pandemic is over," amid a massive surge in people looking for ways to leave China or obtain overseas immigration status.

Who is affected by the travel restrictions?

The Chinese Communist Party's 99 million members are barred from obtaining foreign nationality or permanent residency in another country, and from applying for private passports without prior approval, according to a post on the official website of its Central Commission for Discipline Inspection.

They must also submit details of their proposed itinerary when taking private trips, and not deviate from the agreed route or engage in unauthorized activities, it said.

Officials in government departments, employees of state-owned companies and banks, and children have all been issued with warnings over private overseas

travel in recent years, covering a large swathe of the population.

Travel bans have long been used by the Chinese authorities to target religious minorities and ethnic groups.

In 2022, Christians in eastern China told RFA Mandarin they were finding it harder to gain approval for their private passport applications, with applications rejected after Entry-Exit Bureau officials discovered the family's religious beliefs.

Passport recall orders and restrictions on new applications have been used to limit overseas travel by mostly Muslim Uyghurs since the beginning of the century, while similar restrictions have also been imposed on Tibetans under Xi's rule.

But restrictions are also sometimes extended to all citizens, should the government deem it necessary, as happened during the zero-COVID years.

Why is the government imposing such bans?

"Firstly, they're afraid that people will leave and never return," the wife of a high-ranking executive in a state-owned enterprise in the northeastern province of Jilin, who gave only the surname Liu for fear of reprisals, told RFA Mandarin in a recent interview.

The number of people fleeing China to seek asylum in the United States spiked sharply in 2023, as people made the grueling and dangerous overland trip to Mexico through Central America.

But there are also concerns that sensitive information could leak to overseas media or security services, as China's secret police step up warnings about potential foreign spies everywhere.

"Particularly those who work in government departments, who know more of the details about the Chinese Communist Party's internal operations," Liu said. "They strictly prohibit people from disclosing that kind of detail abroad."

Liu said her husband, who recently took a less demanding role at the company, is still subject to travel restrictions as a state employee.

"He may no longer be a leader ... but he's not retired yet, so they won't let him have a passport," she said, adding that the government is likely worried that officials will contribute to capital outflows by taking their money with them. "When people leave China, so does their money," Liu said.

A recent op-ed in the state-backed *Shenzhen Special Zone Daily* warned that state employees "must not keep hold of his passport for the sake of his own convenience, and must not take chances and conceal his overseas travel itinerary."

"Unauthorized illegal travel abroad is not a trivial private matter, but a major public matter related to discipline ... and political consciousness," the Feb. 8, 2024, article said.

"Ready to enhance communication with India, increase mutual trust": Chinese Foreign Ministry

08 October 2024, [ANI](#)



"Ready to enhance communication with India, increase mutual trust": Chinese Foreign Ministry

After President Droupadi Murmu sent messages to Chinese President Xi Jinping on the 75th anniversary of China, Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Mao Ning emphasised the country's willingness to strengthen communication and mutual trust with India, aiming to promote a stable development of the China-India relationship.

The remarks by Mao came while she was addressing a regular press briefing on Tuesday. Responding to the congratulatory message sent by President Murmu to Chinese President Xi on the 75th Anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, Mao said, "Recently, leaders of neighbouring countries in Asia, including Indian President Droupadi Murmu, sent messages or letters of congratulations to President Xi Jinping on the 75th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China. We express our appreciation for that." She further said, "China attaches importance to President Murmu's remarks on the China-India relations. We stand ready to enhance communication with India, increase mutual trust and jointly promote the sound and steady development of China-India relations."

Notably, on September 27, President Murmu in her message emphasised the significance of fostering peaceful and stable relations, stating, "As two large neighbours with many common developmental challenges and shared regional interests, it is important that we work towards peaceful and stable relations between our two countries." In her communication, President Murmu expressed a desire to enhance bilateral cooperation, saying, "I look forward to working with you to realise a mutually beneficial relationship and leverage our respective strengths for the benefit of people of both countries

and the region and world." Meanwhile, elaborating further on the disengagement process going on between India and China, Mao said that the two nations have successfully disengaged in four key areas, including the Galwan Valley. She said, "China and India maintain close communication on issues concerning the border areas through diplomatic and military channels, and the two countries have realised disengagement in four areas in the Western sector of the China-India border, including the Galwan Valley."

"The situation on the China-India border is currently stable on the whole. At the recent 31st meeting of the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination on China-India Border Affairs (WMCC), the two sides further narrowed down differences, expanded common understandings and agreed to find early resolution to the situation on the border," Mao added further.

Earlier on September 13, Mao had spoken about the disengagement process and said, "In recent years, front-line armies of the two countries have realised disengagement in four areas in the Western sector of the China-India border, including the Galwan Valley. The China-India border situation is generally stable and under control."

New air force chief calls for India to 'catch up' with China on defence tech

07 October 2024, [SCMP](#), Enoch Wong

Air Chief Marshal Amar Preet Singh says the country is lagging behind its neighbour on technology and production of equipment

The new Indian Air Force chief has warned that the country has fallen behind China on defence technology and equipment and says it needs to "catch up".

Air Chief Marshal Amar Preet Singh made the remarks at a press briefing in New Delhi on Friday, days after taking up the role and ahead of the 92nd anniversary of the air force on Tuesday.

Singh pointed to a delayed order of supersonic fighter jets being built by state-owned Hindustan Aeronautics Limited, saying none of the 83 Tejas Mark-1A combat aircraft that were promised this year had been delivered, according to The Hindu.

"I am very confident that as far as the human angle is concerned – as far as our people behind the machines are concerned – we are way ahead of [China]," Singh was quoted as saying.

"We were ahead of [China] in technology some time back, but we have lagged and need to catch up," he said.

“As far as production rates are concerned, we are way behind. We need to catch up with that. And that will happen over time. It cannot happen overnight.”

India and China have a long-running dispute over their undemarcated 3,488km (2,167-mile) border, known as the Line of Actual Control. Tensions worsened after a clash in the Himalayan border area in 2020 in which at least 20 Indian and four Chinese troops were killed – the first deadly skirmish between the two sides in at least 45 years.

Meanwhile, China has been rapidly modernising its air force fleet. That includes the J-20 fifth-generation fighter jet with stealth and supersonic cruise capabilities.

According to Air and Space Forces Magazine, China currently produces more than 100 J-20s every year, solely for domestic use.

China’s air force is said to have more than 300 J-20s in service, with recent reports that some of the fighter jets have been deployed near the border with India, in Tibet and Xinjiang.

Testifying before Congress in March, the former head of the US Indo-Pacific Command, Admiral John Aquilino, said China could soon have the world’s largest air force due to its modernisation efforts.

India has also been trying to modernise its air force but despite efforts to become more self-reliant it remains heavily dependent on imported weapons and equipment.

It currently has a fleet of 31 fighter jet squadrons but the target is 42 – a number that could be revised up given the military’s shift in focus from Pakistan to China, Indian news magazine *The Week* reported on Friday, citing an anonymous senior air force official.

Singh’s remarks follow a number of air force incidents in recent months. In September, a Mikoyan MiG-29 fighter jet crashed in Rajasthan during a routine night training mission. Three months earlier, a Sukhoi Su-30 MKI fighter jet went down in Maharashtra. In both incidents the pilots managed to eject safely. In April, a remotely piloted aircraft crashed during a training sortie in Rajasthan in April, and the previous month a Tejas light combat aircraft crashed in a student hostel compound in the same state – the pilot also ejected safely.

Jaishankar refutes Chinese incursion claims in Arunachal Pradesh

06 October 2024, [Arunachal24](#)

Speaking at The Conclave 2024 in New Delhi, Jaishankar responded sharply, “China entered the border in 1959! What are you talking about?”

External Affairs Minister (EAM) S Jaishankar, on Saturday, refuted claims of a recent Chinese incursion

into Arunachal Pradesh, highlighting India’s steadfast patrolling along the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

Speaking at the Conclave 2024 in New Delhi, Jaishankar responded sharply, “China entered the border in 1959! What are you talking about?”

The EAM reiterated that India’s patrolling along the LAC, particularly in Arunachal Pradesh, has remained robust for over a decade. “There’s been no major change in the last five to tens years or maybe even longer,” he said.

China has persistently claimed Arunachal Pradesh as its own, further attempting to assert its stance by renaming 30 locations in the state earlier this year. India, however, firmly rejected these actions, stating, “Assigning invented names will not alter the reality that the state will always be an integral and inalienable part of India.”

On India’s diplomatic ties with Bangladesh, Jaishankar stressed the importance of maintaining sturdy relations amid potential political disruptions. “In every country, in politics, there are changes... Foreign policy should plan for this change,” he explained, adding that the India-Bangladesh relationship has significantly deepened over the last decade.

Jaishankar also addressed India’s long-standing bid for a permanent seat at the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), calling the process “complicated.” He noted, “More and more countries today accept that there should be change and that India should be one of the countries.” The EAM, however, acknowledged that further work, persuasion, and negotiation are still needed to achieve this goal.

Meanwhile, the External Affairs Minister is set to lead a delegation to Pakistan for the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit which will be held in Islamabad on October 15 and 16. The visit will mark the first high-level visit from India to Pakistan in about ten years.

China’s restrictions drive Indians to undertake helicopter Mt Kailash pilgrimage from own country

05 October 2024, [Tibetan Review](#)

As the Mt Kailash–Lake Mansarovar Yatra for Indian pilgrims has continued to remain closed or prohibitively regulated since 2020 both for government-organized travellers and those wishing to make the trip privately from Nepal, The Uttarakhand Tourism Department has on Oct 3 resumed providing aerial pilgrimage for them, reported *thestatesman.com* Oct 3.

The pilgrimage has remained closed for Indian visa holders since 2020 due to various reasons, beginning with the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent travel restrictions following clashes between the two border

armies along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh.

In Nepal, the prohibitive restrictions on Indian pilgrims were previously reported to have ruined the business of the country's tourism industry catering to them annually.

The first batch of five pilgrims – who were from Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Punjab – paid obeisance to the abode of Lord Shiva in Tibet for the first time from Indian soil on Oct 3.

The Old Lipulekh Peak, which offers a clear view of Mt Kailash, was discovered a few months ago by a team of officials from the Uttarakhand Tourism Department, the Border Roads Organisation (BRO), and the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP). Following this discovery, the Uttarakhand Tourism Department made the necessary preparations to launch a five-day, four-night tour package. The mode of darshan was aerial via helicopter, taking sorties from Pithoragarh to Gunji and back, the report said.

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami has said, "The implementation of the Mt Kailash pilgrimage plan from Indian soil demonstrates the commitment of both the state government and the central agencies. Now, Shiva devotees need not wait for their turn to begin the Kailash-Mansarover Yatra and can pay their respects from Indian territory."

India's renewed push for permanent UN Security Council seat faces persistent China roadblock

03 October 2024, [SCMP](#), Amy Sood

India's chances remain poor due to tensions with China, but more support from Global South nations could boost its bid, analysts say

India has renewed its long-standing bid for a permanent position in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) as it seeks to represent the Global South, but resistance from China is expected to continue to present a significant hurdle.

For decades, India has been pushing for a seat at the table with the UNSC's five permanent members, also known as the P5 – United Kingdom, China, France, Russia and the United States.

The council – which held its first session in 1946 – represents the victor nations of World War II and is responsible for maintaining international peace and security among the UN's 193 member states.

China, the only Asian member of the council, has remained outwardly opposed to admitting India to the exclusive group.

In his address at the United Nations General Assembly last Saturday, India's External Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar called for a "more representative" UN.

"Large parts of the world cannot be left behind when it comes to deciding the key issues of our times," he said, reflecting Prime Minister Narendra Modi's previous critique of the current council's skewed representation.

In July last year, Modi said: "How can we talk of it as a primary organ of a global body, when entire continents of Africa and Latin America are ignored? How can it claim to speak for the world when its most populous country, and its largest democracy, is not a permanent member?"

Last week, British Prime Minister Keir Starmer and French President Emmanuel Macron publicly endorsed India's bid to join the council. And during a visit by Modi to the US last month, US President Joe Biden said Washington recognised a need to reform global institutions to "reflect India's important voice". Russia has also backed India's effort, with Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov saying in July that his country was in support of India getting a permanent seat on the council.

However, analysts caution that India's chances of joining the UNSC remain slim due to its escalating tensions with China, stemming from a territorial dispute in the Himalayas and ongoing competition for regional influence.

"China is the only Asian power in the UNSC, so it definitely would not want a big competitor like India there," said Dhananjay Tripathi, an associate professor in the Department of International Relations at South Asian University in New Delhi.

Beijing would like to maintain its position as the only Asian country with a permanent seat on the council, he added, noting it was unlikely that there would be any "fundamental changes" in its relations with India that would change this view.

Veto power

The five permanent members of the council have veto power to single-handedly block any UN resolutions. China has previously used this blocking power in support of Pakistan over the Kashmir conflict with India.

Analysts say this presents a challenge for India, which aims to assert itself as a leading global power, maintain influence in the Asia-Pacific, and position itself as a champion of the Global South.

"India has wanted to play a certain role in world politics that at times can get curtailed because it's not a part of the UNSC's permanent membership," Tripathi said. "On some issues, India feels that it has to be on the high table to defend its interest in world politics."

For China, the issue also lies in its perception that India is growing closer to the West and, more specifically, the US, according to Srikanth Kondapalli, dean of the School of International Studies and a professor of China studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University in India.

"If India joins the Security Council with veto power, there may be concerns it may not side with China on certain issues," he said. "As of now, the five countries don't have to accommodate any other countries when it comes to a vote."

Tripathi said more clarity was needed from the other permanent members on whether they supported India's bid to join the UNSC with or without veto powers.

"If India joins without the veto power, it may not be able to play a vital, critical or relevant role in the UNSC," he added.

Alongside India, the other members of the "Group of Four" countries – Germany, Japan and Brazil – have also sought permanent seats on the UN body.

While China has said it supports reforms to give developing nations "a greater say", it has stopped short of providing specific proposals or naming countries.

Last year, China's top diplomat Wang Yi said reform should "increase the representation and voice of developing countries, allowing more small and medium-sized countries to have more opportunities to participate in the decision-making of the council".

Analysts suggest that another factor fuelling China's resistance to India's membership is that both countries see themselves as champions of the Global South, competing for greater influence in the region.

Kondapalli said while the "China factor is unlikely to go away", India could strengthen its bid by further aligning itself with countries in the Global South.

"But China could be a spoiler in this by convincing some countries not to align with India," he said. "It very much depends on India's ability to convince these countries."

Tripathi concurred, saying that greater support from Global South countries would also allow India to "put more pressure" on the current council members for more immediate reform.

"There is a closer eye on India now more than ever as a growing economic power ... how India engages with its neighbours, whether it is playing a constructive role in the issues that are critical to the region will all be very important," he said.

India: Tension with China to remain amid trust deficit, continuing border standoff

04 October 2024, [Tibetan Review](#)

So long as the forward deployments of militaries on the border continues, which resulted from China's violation of a series of signed agreements, tension in bilateral relations will remain, India's External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has said Oct 1.

China has recently been trying to sweet talk India into restoring normal bilateral ties while keeping talks

ongoing on the continuing border standoff amid heavy deployment of troops and relentless building of strategic infrastructure.

Speaking at an event hosted by Carnegie Endowment in the US, Jaishankar has said: "In terms of our relationship with China, I think it's a long story, but the short version is that we have agreements on how to keep the border peaceful and tranquil, and those agreements were violated by China in 2020. And ...because we have forward deployments of our militaries, there are resultant tensions. And until those forward deployments are addressed the tensions would continue. If the tensions continue, it casts a natural shadow over the rest of the relationship. So our relationship hasn't been built for the last four years."

India and China have been in a territorial face-off since 2020 after the Chinese Army transgressed into multiple areas from the Galwan Valley to the Finger area along the Pangong Lake, noted the *ndtv.com* Oct 3.

The standoff at the border is continuing as multiple rounds of military and diplomatic discussions did not reap results, the report said.

Jaishankar earlier said the two sides had carried out 75% of the disengagement in eastern Ladakh after a series of talks at various levels but that the trust deficit continued to remain due to China's propensity to renege on signed agreements and its unwillingness to carry out the remaining disengagements for restoring the pre-2020 border situation.

India cites 'trust deficit' to continue winter troop deployment on China-ruled Tibet-borders

01 October 2024, [Tibetan Review](#)

With the huge trust deficit with China continuing along the Line of Actual Control (LAC), India is going full steam ahead with preparations to maintain its forward deployment of troops for the fifth successive winter in the forbidding terrain of eastern Ladakh and Arunachal Pradesh-Sikkim, reported the *timesofindia.com* Sep 30.

With this decision., India has continued to avoid falling into China's trap of the waiting game, thereby maintaining its strategic troops deployment and preventing the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) from making any further unjust advancements, said *zeenews.india.com* Sep 30.

Dismissing the significance of the possible suggestions of "progress and narrowing of differences" following recent political-diplomatic talks, top sources in India's defence establishment have told the *timesofindia.com* that "the trust deficit on the ground with the PLA remains very high".

They have pointed to the way China continues to strengthen its forward military positions as well as build “permanent defences” and infrastructure all along the 3,488-km LAC. “It is quite clear the PLA will not be returning to its peacetime locations in the near future,” the sources have added.

As the Indian Army transitions from “the summer to winter posture”, with massive “winter stocking” underway for the additional troops forward deployed along the frontier, General Upendra Dwivedi and the commanders-in-chief of the force’s seven commands will also review the operational situation at a meeting to be held in Gangtok (Sikkim) on Oct 9-10, the report said.

Talk of a possible breakthrough in the military confrontation in eastern Ladakh has been fuelled by a flurry of bilateral political-diplomatic talks over the last couple of months. These included the 30th and 31st meetings of the Working Mechanism for Consultation & Coordination on India-China Border Affairs (WMCC) on Jul 31 and Aug 29, which were followed by a meeting between national security advisor Ajit Doval and Chinese foreign minister Wang Yi on the side-lines of a BRICS meet at St Petersburg on Sep 12.

However, in the end, there was no change in China’s position, which was made explicit when the rival military corps commanders held their 21st round of talks way back on Feb 19. At that time, China again rebuffed India’s push for defusing the two major continuing face-offs at the strategically-located Depsang Plains, which is towards the crucial Daulat Beg Oldie and Karakoram Pass in the north, and the Charding Ninglung Nallah track junction near Demchok, the report said.

Besides, “disengagement at Depsang and Demchok, if it happens, will only be the first step. Till the subsequent de-escalation and de-induction of troops take place for restoration of status quo ante, the threat will remain,” a senior officer has said.

As the situation now stands, the creation of buffer zones after the earlier troop disengagements at Galwan Valley, Pangong Tso-Kailash Range and Gogra-Hot Springs up till Sep 2022 as well as the confrontation at Depsang and Demchok has meant that Indian troops cannot access 26 of their 65 patrolling points (PPs), which begin from the Karakoram Pass in the north and go down to Chumar in the south in eastern Ladakh, the report said.

“Even the buffer zones were meant to be only temporary arrangements. China continues to make unreasonable demands and is playing the long waiting game. India has to be careful about not falling into China’s trap,” the officer has said.

There is said to be a growing realization, as the military stalemate persists, that only politico-diplomatic talks can break the deadlock.

“If the two sides agree to a broad framework, the actual disengagement modalities at Depsang and Demchok can be worked out at the military level,” the officer has added.

* * *

India’s External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has on Sep 28 taken a veiled dig at China during his address at the United Nations General Assembly, stating that the sanctioning of global terrorists by the United Nations should not be impeded for political reasons.

He was obviously referring to China’s repeated moves over the past several years to prevent the UN security Council from sanctioning Pakistan based terrorists when sought by India and other countries.

“Terrorism is antithetical of everything that the world stands for. All its forms of and manifestations must be resolutely opposed. The sanctioning of global terrorists by the United Nations should also not be impeded for political reasons,” *timesnownews.com* Sep 28 quoted Jaishankar as having said.

REVEALED: Inside the CIA's (largely) secret role in the Tibetan resistance

30 October 2024, [RFA](#), Tenzin Pema, Dorjee Damdul, Passang Dhonden and Lobsang Gelek

The last surviving CIA officer, who trained Tibetan resistance fighters in Camp Hale, Colorado in 1958-64, speaks to Radio Free Asia in an exclusive interview.



Tibetan resistance fighters are seen here adorned in Tibetan traditional dress during Tibetan New Year or Losar celebrations, between 1961 and 1964. (STCIRCUS Archive of Tibetan Resistance via Hoover Institution Library & Archives)

COMMENTARIES

High up in the Southern Rocky Mountains of Colorado, at 2,800 meters (9,200 feet), lies Camp Hale – widely known as the birthplace of backcountry skiing and the training grounds of the U.S. Army's 10th Mountain Division soldiers who fought the Nazis in World War II. Lesser known, however, is the camp's storied past as the CIA-operated secret training facility for Tibetan resistance fighters in the early 1960's.

The Tibetan fighters who trained there – from 1958 to 1964 – were a part of a nationwide armed resistance movement in Tibet against Communist China.

Sixty years after the end of the operation, Camp Hale has yielded a new secret. Called "The Ranch" by the CIA and fondly referred to as "Dumra," or garden, by the Tibetans, it was the training ground for at least 259 Tibetan fighters who were then parachuted back into Tibet and what is today Nepal to aid the Tibetan resistance against China.

Yet, until recently the exact location of the CIA's training facility for Tibetans was lost to history. Quite like the story of Tibet's armed resistance against China and the CIA's role in it, it had remained shrouded in secrecy for many decades.

Decades after the CIA dismantled Camp Hale, leaving no trace of the site— save for a few ruins of bunkers— the original footprint of the Tibetan training camp was finally identified in 2024 within the 53,804-acre expanse of alpine valley, thanks to the work of a dogged academic, a local hiker, and a former CIA trainer.

In June, the families of former fighters, their supporters, and the Central Tibetan Administration's

Cabinet Minister for Security, Gyari Dolma, gathered to honor the resistance movement.

Bruce Walker, now 91, is the last surviving CIA case officer out of about 30 officers who trained the Tibetan fighters at Camp Hale.

"I'm the last speaking CIA officer who can tell the story," Walker told Radio Free Asia in an exclusive interview on the sidelines of the June commemoration ceremony.

His tale of the time spent there reveals the spirit of a people deeply committed to their cause who drew on a wellspring of grit, ingenuity and ability to learn the skills Camp Hale had to offer.

Finding Dumra

Following the People's Liberation Army's invasion of Tibet in 1949, thousands of ordinary Tibetans rose up in a series of independent uprisings in the 1950s to defend their country and religion against Chinese troops. In 1958, the Chushi Gangdruk army, a unified resistance force, was formally established.

Led by Gompo Tashi Andrugtsang, a charismatic trader living in Lhasa, it later became known as the Chushi Gangdruk Tensung Danglang Magar or Tibetan National Volunteer Defence Army, a name it was given by a tutor to His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

In 1960, they set up a base in Mustang, then a small kingdom in Nepal, where they were exiled, until they were eventually forced to lay down their arms in 1974.

For a large part of this period, the movement received covert financial support and training from the CIA, with four contingents of Tibetan troops flown in to train at Camp Hale from 1958 to 1964.

Yet it was a secret even to those who lived nearby the Colorado training grounds.

"The local community here in Colorado still don't know the Tibetan history of Camp Hale – much in the same way that the Tibetan community still don't know much of the history of Chushi Gangdruk or CIA in Camp Hale," said Carole McGranahan, an anthropologist and scholar of Tibet who spent years working to locate the site.

Indeed, a false story was circulated at the time to maintain the secrecy of the training site and keep the locals at bay. "Atom Unit Making Tests Near Leadville," read a headline from the Denver Post in July 1959, after the press was informed that the Defense Atomic Support Agency would soon be conducting atomic testing programs at Camp Hale.

"I like to think of it now as that it was hidden in plain sight," said McGranahan, noting how the CIA maintained the secrecy of the camp for over four decades.

Word of the camp and the CIA's role in training Tibetan fighters there only began to trickle out in the early 2000s following the declassification of a 1964-dated CIA memorandum.

A documentary released just before, titled *Shadow Circus: The CIA in Tibet*, by filmmakers Tenzing Sonam and Ritu Sarin, also drew attention to the Tibetan resistance movement, even as additional details began to emerge from books, such as McGranahan's *Arrested Histories*, and interviews of former CIA trainers.

Still, the site itself continued to remain hidden. In 2010, a plaque was installed to mark the U.S. government's first public acknowledgment of the CIA-Tibet training camp. But even then, the exact location of the training site was unknown.

Following a ceremony to mark its installation, retired CIA officers and former Tibetan fighters went looking for the original Camp Hale training grounds. The group included Roger McCarthy and Ken Knauss, the two CIA officers who had worked on the original campaign. But they came back frustrated and dismayed that they couldn't locate the site where they had lived and worked for several years, McGranahan said. She promised to make it her mission to locate the original site.

It would take years, but true to her word, McGranahan, with the help of Vail Valley local resident and hiker Tracy Walters, took on the mission. The duo took with them old photographs of Camp Hale and, while snowshoeing, matched the 1963-1964 photos to the current landscape by carefully aligning specific ridgelines to locate Dumra.

In February 2024, they found the first location – rather easily, McGranahan says. "The second one was more difficult," she added, explaining that it required matching up the visual angles of old photographs to the physical topography of the land until they hit on the right spot.

"But we found it," she said.

She then turned to Walker and to filmmakers Sonam and Sarin for final confirmation on whether the site they had located was indeed Dumra.

Walker, who was the only Tibetan-speaking CIA trainer from 1960 until the CIA shut the site in 1964, responded the very next day. "You nailed it," he wrote. "You found the site. And I'm the one who took those photographs."

An operation misunderstood?

Along with his wife and few friends, Walker came to Camp Hale from California in June to honor the Tibetan soldiers who he trained in the covert operation which the CIA code-named ST Circus.

Now an elegant white-haired nonagenarian, Walker lit up as he recalled his time working on ST Circus, his voice filled with energy as he explained the backstory of the secret mission and smiling fondly as he recalled the commitment of the Tibetan fighters whom he had trained.

"The covert operation was misunderstood in some respects... [there's] the impression that the Americans

in the CIA were taking advantage of the Tibetans. We were not,” Walker told RFA Tibetan.

“Tibetans in the 1950s and 60s had very few international friends... in the late 1950s, the American government and the CIA were the few from the international community that were willing to come to the aid of the Tibetans,” he said.

Indeed, the CIA would support the movement with training, aid, and arms until the early 1970s.

“We did what we could to get them their aid. We were not going to send an army and we were not going to send tanks, but we tried to send help to Chushi Gangdruk to fight and to make progress in the rest of the country,” said Walker.

At Camp Hale, over a dozen CIA case officers trained Tibetan fighters on a full range of combat and operations skills.

“This site was specifically used for the purpose of training radio teams who would be parachuted back to Tibet to join the resistance forces and to send back messages about the situation – the resistance inside Tibet – on a real-time basis,” Walker told RFA Tibetan. Over the years, the soldiers who trained there were air dropped into Tibet and in Mustang, Nepal, where they aided and trained the thousands of resistance fighters stationed at those locations.

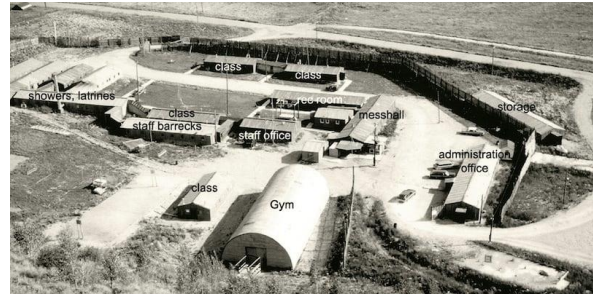
It was actually not the first site for ST Circus. Earlier, the CIA had piloted the project with a group of fighters who were trained at Saipan, Northern Mariana Island. The first radio team to be dropped back into Tibet by Operations St Circus took place in September, 1957 – but the training grounds were moved to Camp Hale when it became apparent that the Tibetans were not used to the hot weather conditions of the island, and Colorado was selected because its terrain and weather conditions resembled that of Tibet.

Life at Camp Hale

Walker’s first assignment with the Tibetan project had been as a caretaker and cook for six weeks for the small contingent of Tibetans who trained at Saipan.

He first arrived in Camp Hale as a case officer in April 1960, but he would not be at the camp on a permanent basis until two years later, after the CIA sent him for periods of more language training.

Sporting a red beard and looking like an “adventurous American”, Walker returned to Camp Hale in September 1962, where he found the site had been renovated with new quarters added and ready to open its doors to the fourth and final batch of trainees who arrived in October that year.



Facilities available at Camp Hale are seen in this archival image. (STCIRCUS Archive of Tibetan Resistance via Hoover Institution Library & Archives)

The camp had four classrooms, one recreation room, one staff barracks, one administration office, a gym, a mess hall, and a storage room.

The Tibetan fighters had a rigorous training program there. “It was a very busy campus,” Walker recalled, with the trainees always “practicing one thing or another, or they were in the classrooms.”

It was a huge time of learning for Walker too. “I started out as a case officer who was not speaking Tibetan, giving instruction and compass reading to find locations on a very special map made by the CIA,” he said.

He eventually gained enough proficiency to communicate directly with the trainees. “It was a very different career change in speaking a different language to an entirely different people who I had never met before,” he reflected.

The Tibetans were trained in radio operation; surveillance and combat maneuvers; parachuting at Fort Carson, another military base in Colorado; intelligence collecting; clandestine exchange of written material and film; world history and geography; and small armament training with bazookas, grenades and rifles.

“All were given training with the M1-Garand rifle, and the old 10th mountain division rifle range. Two marine sharpshooters were seconded to this project and they also gave the Tibetans instructions in self defense and jiu jitsu,” Walker said.

Walker and the other CIA officers admired the Tibetan fighters, who had volunteered for the movement and had been recruited as exiles in India. They represented Tibetans from all over Tibet and came with varying backgrounds; they even included monks who had temporarily given up their vows to fight for the Tibet cause.

“They were not paid. They were simply willing and able... And boy, were they able,” said Walker.

They were also quick learners, he recalled. “They were enthusiastic, they listened, and they took to the training immediately. Above all, they were happy to be here... And it was a real pleasure to work with them in that respect because they made it easier for us to get to know them and to try to accomplish through the training,” he added.

Tibetan curiosity, resilience

The CIA officers were amazed by the Tibetan curiosity and ability to invent solutions to problems with the materials at hand, said Walker.

There was one instance, where the fighters had reportedly made a portable rocket, apparently out of a wooden trough, using gunpowder, homemade napalm, and a small warhead, he said, citing a local Vail Daily report.

The Tibetans also had a natural gift for volleyball and engaged in highly competitive tournaments. On weekends, movies would be projected in the recreation room and headquarters would send new movies on a rotation basis. The Tibetans, without any surprise, liked western movies. But their favorite was *The King and I*.

“Their response was a pure delight to watch,” Walker said.



A 1963 brochure created by Ken Knaus and Tibetan trainees portrays Chinese leader Mao Zedong leading the destruction to Tibetan way of life. (STCIRCUS Archive of Tibetan Resistance via Hoover Institution Library & Archives)

They also had a “remarkable talent” for drawing, Walker said. Crayons and colored pens were made available for drawing and few of their drawings became collectibles, including an illustration that a Tibetan fighter had made representing Chinese desecration of Tibetan culture and religion which was used in CIA material.

On Saturday nights, the Tibetans took over the kitchen from the CIA cooks Joe and Bill, and would make Tibetan dishes like momo and shabaley.

But they didn’t (strictly) stick to this routine. One day, a shepherd from the area — who had a longstanding agreement with the government for him to traverse Camp Hale with his sheep as he led them to summer pastureland — found one sheep missing when he returned with the sheep after a month of their grazing. “His route happened to go directly past the Tibetan compound. Not wanting to cause suspicion by denying the shepherd his annual drive, we arranged for the compound to close up tightly, presumably with

everyone inside the compound and out of sight,” said Walker.

Upon his return, having led his herd through the compound and out of Camp Hale, the herder soon counted his sheep and found he was missing one. “He reported his loss to army authorities and the situation was brought to our attention. We had no recourse but to suggest the sheep must have drifted from the herd, gone astray and could not be found,” Walker said.

“Somehow we found out that two Tibetans had waylaid the sheep and later roasted it and brought it into the compound for the fellow Tibetans to eat. The herder was angry and unsatisfied but as far as we were concerned, it was out of sight, out of mind.”

Carole McGranahan and the CIA training site for Tibetan resistance fighters at Camp Hale (RFA Tibetan)

Best and bravest

In 1960, part of the training was to practice parachute landing in advance of being airdropped in Tibet. However, after a U.S. civilian pilot was shot down over Russia in May 1960, President Eisenhower banned further overflights into Tibet.

Thereafter, the radio teams and the support teams were flown back to Thailand, and over land to border posts in India and Nepal, including Mustang.

Walker acknowledged the grim reality that awaited these men upon their return to Tibet. “They knew what would be the consequences if they were parachuted to Tibet,” Walker said somberly.

“A lot of the Tibetans who were trained on the radio teams that were parachuted in gave their lives. They were captured. Some of them went to jail, and a few of them were released, in time,” he said. “But there were a lot of heroes — as this will attest — who sacrificed their lives as Tibetans.”

An important legacy

The training program at Camp Hale was closed in 1964 as the U.S. began to take a more conciliatory approach to China. CIA support for the Tibetan resistance movement ended altogether in the early 1970s as the Nixon administration took an approach of engagement with Mao’s Communist regime. Along with increased pressure from the Nepali government, which also began to cultivate warmer ties with China and internal fissures that emerged within the movement itself, the Chushi Gangdruk was forced to lay down its arms by 1974.

Though the program wound down, a legacy, including crucial successes, came from the Operation ST Circus trainings that has significance today, even if the resistance movement ultimately did not achieve independence.

For example, the first radio team ever trained as part of the CIA operation at Saipan — two fighters, Athar Norbu and Gatsetsang Lotse (codenamed Tom and Luke, respectively) — were airdropped in September 1957.

The team, known as Team A, were able to contact local Chushi Gangdruk members in Kham, eastern Tibet, and reach Lhasa, making contact with Tibetan leaders such as the Lord Chamberlain, Thupten Phalha.

As explained by Gyolo Thondup in his book *The Noodle Maker of Kalimpong*, the Dalai Lama was not directly involved in the CIA operations, as it was impossible for him to condone any use of violence when his entire life was committed to nonviolent Buddhist practice.

But some high-ranking officials such as Lord Chamberlain Phalha knew about the resistance from the beginning and were sympathetic to its cause.

"It was Phalha who organized the Dalai Lama's escape... Team A accompanied the Dalai Lama on his journey to the Indian border from where they radioed CIA Langley that the Dalai Lama had arrived safely," said Walker.

In the Dalai Lama's personal autobiography titled *My Land, My People*, the spiritual leader acknowledged the bravery of the Tibetan freedom fighters who accompanied him undercover into exile in 1959.

"In spite of my beliefs, I very much admired their courage and their determination to carry on the grim battle they had started for our freedom, culture, and religion," he wrote.

"I thanked them for their strength and bravery, and also, more personally, for the protection they had given me."

The Dalai Lama's escape into exile and the role the Chushi Gangdruk played in his safe escort from Lhasa to India is till today regarded as the movement's most significant achievement.



Bruce Walker looks at the plaque commemorating Camp Hale and Tibetan resistance fighters in June 2024. (Passang Dhonden/RFA)

Today, plans are afoot to build a memorial on the now-re-discovered exact training ground. The plaque that was installed in 2010 stands not too far away, its inscription attesting to the bravery of those involved: From 1958 to 1964, Camp Hale played an important role as a training site for Tibetan Freedom Fighters. Trained by the CIA, many of these brave men lost their lives in the struggle for freedom. 'They were the best and bravest of their generation, and we wept together when they were killed fighting alongside their countrymen.' (*Orphans of the Cold War*, by John

Kenneth Knaus). This plaque is dedicated to their memory.

Standing by the plaque, at the site he'd played a part in re-discovering and which brought back so many memories, Walker mused over the friendships gained and lost to history.

"It was an emotional parting because we became very good friends with the Tibetans and they with us. We bonded, and we were sorry that we had to break it up the way we did," he said.

Has India made friends with China after the Modi-Xi agreement?

29 October 2024, [Brookings](#)

"Modi and Xi make friends" announced the Economist following Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping's meeting in Kazan. The newspaper subsequently declared that, following an agreement on disengagement and patrolling, the Sino-Indian border stand-off had been "resolved."

These developments are noteworthy, but they must not be over-read. It is significant that, if implemented, the agreement could ease tensions between China and India stemming from their border crisis in 2020. But current and former Indian officials are striking notes of caution, including about getting "lulled into a false sense of security."

Modi and Xi's meeting—their first in five years—signals a tactical thaw rather than a strategic shift away from Sino-Indian rivalry. Steps remain to resolve the 2020 border row, and the two countries have several serious differences beyond their broader border dispute. So, think of this as akin to Washington's effort to stabilize or set a floor to the U.S.-China relationship, rather than the beginning of a beautiful friendship between New Delhi and Beijing. For India, China will remain the pacing challenge.

The context

It has been evident for a few months that China and India were working toward an agreement. Military and diplomatic officials have met for the last four years to discuss the border stand-off. But New Delhi seemed to detect a window of opportunity recently, as Beijing faces strategic and economic pressure, and is uncertain about the U.S. election (or tries to take advantage of it).

India, too, has reasons to try to ease the situation. These include preventing another border escalation; recognition that India needs time to build its capabilities and partnerships; the need to grapple with the adverse impact of global crises; uncertainty about the next American president's approach to China; concern that its partners' outreach to Beijing could leave India vulnerable; perhaps a desire to create some leverage vis-à-vis with those partners;

and calls for selective Indian economic re-engagement with China (including from some American companies).

What we know about the agreement

Specifics are still emerging, but we do know that the agreement heralds a return to dialogue. Beyond the Modi-Xi meeting, the countries announced the revival of suspended consultations, including the special representatives' talks, and regular foreign ministerial and other exchanges.

Indian officials announced that the first part of resolving the 2020 border stand-off, i.e. disengagement, has been completed, with new patrolling arrangements at some points of friction (around Depsang and Demchok in the western sector, and Yangtse—site of a 2022 skirmish—in the eastern sector).

However, this is not a return to the status quo ante. Questions remain about how the new patrolling and grazing terms compare with what existed before, and whether new buffer zones created at other friction points would persist. Moreover, two further steps—de-escalation and de-induction of troops that have been forward deployed—have not been taken.

The agreement also doesn't signify a normalization of Sino-Indian ties, as some observers contend. The Indian foreign secretary said that it opens the pathway to more normal ties, but stressed that is contingent on both sides actually walking that path.

Given the Indian sense that China violated previous bilateral agreements in changing the status quo at the border in 2020, there is little, if any, trust that Beijing *will* walk that path. So, India will closely watch Beijing's implementation of the agreement and seek to verify that China is following through on its commitments. Further Indian steps vis-à-vis border negotiations or other issues may be linked to Beijing doing so.

If there is progress, there are several areas where India could review the limitations it has imposed on cooperation with China. A few possibilities: restarting various dialogues (diplomatic, military, and economic) that have been suspended, restoring direct flights, more civil society interactions, granting more visas (including for journalists), specific cooperation on multilateral issues (e.g. global economic governance reform), and selective economic re-engagement.

There is no consensus—even among Indian businesses—on the desirability or extent of economic ties with China. But if there is progress at the border or in negotiations, India could ease restrictions in areas that are less sensitive or where there is hope that, on balance, cooperation will be beneficial in the short term for Indian labor, manufacturing, and exports. A blanket lifting of restrictions is unlikely; streamlining the scrutiny or case-by-case approval process is possible.

There have already been some approvals of visas and imports when the Indian government saw those as necessary to enable companies—from India or friendly foreign countries—to make India part of global supply chains and generate jobs. In certain areas, India could make the condition of any Chinese investment a joint venture with a local company. Eventually, Delhi wants to do to Beijing what Beijing did to the world: take its expertise and components and then eventually take its markets.

Different readouts, different vibes

Most Indian officials don't seem to be under any illusions that the path ahead will be easy. The persistent gap between China and India has already been evident in how they have messaged these agreements.

Both the Indian and Chinese readouts stated that they reached an understanding on the border and agreed to enhance strategic communication.

But that's where the similarities ended. India emphasized its "border before broader" prioritization, reinforcing border peace and tranquility as a prerequisite for broader ties. China, on the other hand, maintained its "broader before border" focus, stressing that "specific disagreements" should not derail the broader relationship.

In addition, China suggested that India had agreed to return to economic cooperation to enable development, while India was more non-committal, saying it was open to exploring it. More broadly, the Chinese readout also suggested that Modi who was the one interested in proposing ways to deepen ties, with Xi then agreeing "in principle" to consider it.

The countries' diverging visions of their global and regional roles were also striking. India noted that both leaders affirmed that stable and amicable ties would "contribute to a multipolar Asia and a multipolar world" but the Chinese statement only mentioned the desire for a multipolar world. This will only reinforce Indian concerns that Beijing seeks a unipolar Asia. India, in turn, did not echo or endorse Xi's declaration that China was "a member of the Global South."

The gap between India's worldview and that of China (and Russia) was also clear in Modi's remarks at the BRICS summit. He cautioned against the group being seen as divisive (i.e., anti-Western) and out to upturn the international order. His words also conveyed concern that BRICS expansion, encouraged by Beijing and Moscow, would dilute India's role and influence.

Important step, but not a strategic reset

These divergences, among others, reveal that New Delhi and Beijing aren't on the same page. Moreover, absent a significant change in China's intentions and actions, the recent agreement will not herald a strategic shift away from India's rivalry with China.

For one, the border has changed for good. De-escalation and de-induction will be difficult, if not

impossible, given the troop, equipment, and infrastructure buildup on both sides of the Sino-Indian border since 2020. India also distrusts China and will want to remain prepared if the People's Liberation Army takes action again. One former Indian ambassador to China has already cautioned that it would be tougher for India (than China) to re-induct troops into that sector of the border if Beijing reneges from its commitments.

Even beyond the ongoing border dispute, there are several other bilateral, regional, and global differences between India and China—and there has been no let-up in Chinese assertiveness on any of those fronts yet. Moreover, the mistrust seems mutual. China sees India as a regional, and possibly global, competitor—in its own right and due to its close partnership with Beijing's other rivals (especially the United States).

Thus, even as New Delhi reengages Beijing in dialogue, it will keep trying to strengthen its resilience and deterrence. It will maintain its de-risking approach and likely limit exposure to China in critical infrastructure, technology, and telecom sectors. It will enhance Indian capabilities and capacities across the board, though it will have to guard against calls from certain quarters that there's less urgency to do so. And it will likely continue to deepen its balancing partnerships, including with Washington.

Some partners might wonder if India will become more reticent to cooperate with them, so as not to derail its reengagement with China. But even as it has been negotiating with Beijing, New Delhi has not held back—as it might have pre-2020—on taking several steps. These include Modi's reply to Taiwanese President Lai Ching-te; India's welcoming of a U.S. Congressional delegation that met with the Dalai Lama and criticized China; the Quad summit, which included tougher language on China's assertiveness in the South China Sea and security cooperation initiatives; hosting maritime exercise Malabar and multilateral air force exercise Tarang Shakti; participating in a maritime reconnaissance exercise with its Quad partners on the sidelines of Australia's exercise Kakadu; and the opening of a third Taiwanese representative office in India.

This might be due to a change from the sentiment that deepening ties with the United States and Western partners would provoke China, to believing—since 2020—that deeper ties with balancing partners would deter Beijing.

Nonetheless, it won't be surprising if partners continue to monitor the possibility of Indian hesitation to cooperate with them vis-à-vis China in the future. It would be helpful if New Delhi is as transparent as possible with its partners about its discussions with China and their implications—something its partners

should reciprocate regarding their own outreach to Beijing.

EXPLAINED: What's Hong Kong's role in China's hi-tech military plans?

29 October 2024, [RFA](#), Ha Syut

The city is named in a U.S. ban on AI, semiconductors and quantum computing investments in 'countries of concern.'

The U.S. Treasury Department finalized an investment ban aimed at curbing China's military-linked high-tech ambitions in artificial intelligence, advanced computer chips and quantum computing this week, prompting angry reactions in Beijing and Hong Kong on Tuesday. New rules issued Monday bar U.S. businesses and citizens from investing in a slew of advanced technologies in "countries of concern," and specifically list mainland China, Hong Kong and Macau among them.

"U.S. investments ... must not be used to help countries of concern develop their military, intelligence and cyber capabilities," Paul Rosen, assistant Treasury secretary for investment security, told the Associated Press, warning that such investments also bring with them other benefits including managerial help and assistance finding top talent and tapping other sources of financing.

Violators can be hit with a fine could be as high as twice the value of the prohibited transaction or US\$368,136, whichever is greater. The rules will be enforced by a newly created Office of Global Transactions, the agency reported.

China "strongly deplores and firmly opposes" the ban, foreign ministry spokesperson Lin Jian told a news briefing in Beijing, while Hong Kong Chief Executive John Lee said it would damage global supply chains, warning that "American politicians will suffer the consequences" of pursuing what he called their "political interests."

Why has Hong Kong been named in the latest investment restrictions?

There is growing evidence that the ruling Chinese Communist Party is leveraging Hong Kong universities and private companies for research funding, expertise and links to global supply chains.

A low-orbit AI surveillance satellite jointly designed and developed by the Chinese University of Hong Kong that was successfully launched on Sept. 24, 2024, ostensibly for use in "disaster prevention."

But experts say the technology used in such hardware, which can monitor the movements of people and vehicles to distances of less than one meter, can very easily be modified for military use.

The university's Chinese partner in the project, state-owned Nationstar Aerospace, was named by national

security expert Elsa Kania at a U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission hearing last year as an example of “military-civil fusion,” a key goal of Chinese President Xi Jinping’s military modernization program, which seeks to blur the line between military operations and the civilian economy in an all-out bid to modernize the People’s Liberation Army.

Are other Hong Kong universities involved in these plans?

At least four universities, including the Chinese University of Hong Kong named in the above example, are known to have worked on the development of remote-sensing satellite technology, which is also used in military reconnaissance.

Hong Kong’s Polytechnic University has boasted of having “more than 30 years’ experience” in aerospace research, and has participated in Chinese space missions on many occasions, and was involved in the joint development of a “surface sampling execution device” for China’s Chang-e-6 lunar probe and in the 2021 Tianwen-1 Mars rover mission.

In September, it signed a cooperation agreement with Nationstar Aerospace, sanctioned by the United States in 2022 for allegedly trying to steal sensitive technology, to set up a remote sensing lab to “jointly conduct scientific research that contributes to national development.”

In August 2023, the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology collaborated with China’s Changguang Satellite Technology, another key player in Xi Jinping’s military-civil fusion strategy, in the successful launch of the first earth observation satellite, the Xiongbn-1.

Changguang Satellite Technology was sanctioned in June by the European Union for “supporting the Russian military-industrial complex” in the Ukraine war.

The University of Hong Kong’s space lab researchers also worked on the Lobster Eye dark matter detection satellite, launched in July 2020, alongside companies in the China Aerospace family of state-owned companies, which includes missile-maker China Aerospace Science and Industry Corp.

In 2021, lunar exploration third phase designer Hu Hao predicted “more collaboration between the Chinese mainland and Hong Kong in the country’s aerospace projects in the future,” state media reported, adding that the University of Hong Kong had a “competitive edge” in remote sensing technology.

“We certainly hope to work with competitive and strong institutions to research and design aerospace facilities and equipment,” Hu said.

What role do Hong Kong companies play in this process?

According to Shu Hsiao-huang, associate researcher of the Chinese military at Taiwan’s Institute for National Defense and Security Research, some Chinese state-owned conglomerates and universities have well-

documented ties to the People’s Liberation Army, and are obvious targets for international sanctions, while private sector companies in Hong Kong are far more likely to be able to evade scrutiny.

“They’re taking the opportunity now to find some loopholes via universities and private companies, especially in the field of AI, which absolutely needs private innovation, investment and development,” Shu told RFA Cantonese in a recent interview. “State-owned enterprises are too easily targeted because they’re so big, so private enterprises are used to inject innovative power into state-owned companies.”

Hong Kong is also a great place to source supplies by setting up companies not perceived to have military links, with a straightforward company registration process that has seen a proliferation of shell companies in recent years.

“[China is] using Hong Kong’s advantages to set up companies just to help with sourcing, or that could then collaborate with universities in Hong Kong, for example, or with other private companies, as a way around this,” Shu said.

How much is Hong Kong spending on such projects?

Investment in national innovation and high-tech schemes became a policy priority after the government rewrote election rules to exclude opposition candidates from public office.

But precise breakdowns are hard to come by.

In 2020, the city’s government pumped HK\$2 billion (US\$257 million) into its Innovation and Technology Fund to fuel innovative start-ups in the Greater Bay Area that includes neighboring cities in mainland China, but has never published a detailed account of where the money goes.

In his October 2024 policy address, John Lee announced a HK\$10 billion Innovation & Technology Industry-Oriented Fund “to guide more market capital to invest in specified emerging and future industries of strategic importance, including life and health technology and artificial intelligence.”

Officials at the city’s Innovation and Technology Bureau said they had funded 76,000 projects since the fund began on June 30, 1999 to the tune of around HK\$45 billion (US\$5.8 billion), but declined to provide a breakdown requested by RFA Cantonese.

The universities mentioned in this article declined to respond when asked for details of funding for their collaborations with military-linked Chinese enterprises.

Yet it seems there’s plenty of money around in the sector.

According to the National Bureau of Statistics, China invested more than 3.3 trillion yuan (US\$462 billion) in research and development last year, a rise of 8.4% on the previous year. China’s nationwide R&D expenditure is currently second only to that of the United States.

China also saw the creation of more than 110,000 new aerospace companies last year, a rise of nearly 30% from the previous year, with the country launching hundreds of satellites in the past three years. That is likely to rise to more than 10,000 over the next decade.

Confronting the Growing Threat of the Chinese Communist Party

29 October 2024, [Congressman Dan New House](#)

Over the past two years, as a member of the House Select Committee on Strategic Competition between the United States and the Chinese Communist Party, we have uncovered the malign influence the CCP has in American institutions. With these revelations, we have committed to finding real, actionable solutions to prevent the CCP from tightening their grip on our nation's security and way of life.

The Select Committee has exposed numerous CCP schemes aimed at undermining our national security. From increased land purchases near sensitive sites to directly incentivizing the illicit fentanyl trade, the CCP is one of the greatest threats to our nation. Standing strong against them is imperative, which is why the House of Representatives has passed over twenty-five pieces of necessary legislation to safeguard our military, economic, ideological, and technological interests, including legislation I wrote to protect American agricultural land. We also passed several bills which originated directly from the Select Committee, reflecting the policy recommendations we have been developing since last year.

Securing our supply chains—from electric vehicle batteries to healthcare and critical infrastructure—is essential. As the CCP works to ensure the United States is dependent on Chinese companies for the products we use daily, I proudly supported legislation like the *BIOSECURE Act*, which would prohibit United States companies from using biotechnology from companies associated with foreign adversaries like the CCP. We also passed the *End Chinese Dominance of Electric Vehicles in America Act* and the *Decoupling from Foreign Adversarial Battery Dependence Act*, both of which take steps to protect taxpayer dollars from being used by the CCP to advance its leverage over our supply chains.

As we know, the CCP has also increased their investment in U.S. agricultural land tenfold, which raises serious concerns about their growing influence over our food security. To address this, the House of Representatives passed my bill, the *Protecting American Agriculture from Foreign Adversaries Act*, which adds the Secretary of Agriculture to the Committee on Foreign Investment in the U.S. for transactions and requires them to report any updates

that could be a threat to national security. This issue is part of a broader pattern of economic influence that the CCP exerts on vital American industries, and the federal government must stay aware.

Where we see the CCP's strongest grip on global resources and our supply chains is through critical mineral production—an industry essential to electric vehicles and lithium batteries. With China controlling the vast majority of mineral resources needed for battery manufacturing, I introduced legislation to promote U.S. production of these critical minerals. The *Securing America's Midstream Critical Materials Processing Act* establishes a framework to bring critical material processing back to American soil, away from foreign adversaries like the CCP, and reduces the unworkable permitting barriers to help secure supply chains. The United States produces energy cleaner and more cost-effective than anywhere else, and this bill would allow us to end our dependence on an adversary that could bring this industry to a halt at any time.

The CCP's campaign of malign influence poses a direct threat to American industry, jobs, and national security, and it is past time we take decisive action. By relying heavily on a nation intent on weakening the United States, we expose ourselves to unprecedented threats. I will continue advancing policies that will decouple our supply chains from our greatest adversary and ensure our nation is not beholden to those who oppose our values and way of life.

Data shows the Chinese government is less popular than state media makes it seem

29 October 2024, [East Asia Forum](#)

The White Paper protests, which spread across China in November 2022, were triggered by the death of ten people during a fire in a quarantined apartment building in Urumqi. The protests reflected widespread dissatisfaction with the Chinese government's COVID-19 policies, which forced observers of Chinese politics to question whether the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) really enjoys widespread popular support.

In contrast with the majority of protests in China driven by discontent with local governments, the White Paper demonstrations offered critiques of the central government and the CCP's rule more generally. The CCP's legitimacy—resting on the party's achievements in developing China's economy and reducing poverty, maintaining social stability through censorship and repression, and, increasingly, promoting a nationalist vision of China's future—depends to a great extent on public perceptions of the regime.

Popular political attitudes in China have shaped the regime's domestic stability, the reception of its

policies, and constrained its foreign policy decisions. These pillars of CCP legitimacy appear to be shifting beneath the regime's monolithic facade, as demonstrated by the White Paper protests. Whether due to China's slowing economy, the concentration of power under Xi Jinping or the heavy-handedness of the country's COVID-19 response, researchers and policymakers must carefully analyse these changes in popular attitudes or risk greatly misunderstanding state-society dynamics.

For scholars of Chinese politics, the most common tool applied to gauge public opinion is a direct survey, in which respondents are asked about their attitudes towards the Chinese government via in-person enumerators or online forms.

One prominent study, published by the Ash Center for Democratic Governance at Harvard University, has traced popular attitudes toward the Chinese government since 2003. Their surveys place regime support above 90 per cent, suggesting that favourable views of the Chinese government are as ubiquitous as party propaganda might suggest. These results have been covered by China Central Television, Xinhua, China Global Television Network, China Daily and other CCP propaganda outlets, becoming part of the state's efforts to substantiate its legitimacy — both at home and abroad.

But does the CCP really enjoy such widespread support? Or do survey respondents conceal their opposition to the regime due to the threat of repression? And if so, what share of Chinese citizens really support the CCP? To answer these questions, we employed a survey technique known as a list experiment. In a list experiment, respondents are provided with a short list of nonsensitive statements, such as 'I consider myself a sports fan', and are asked to tally up the number of statements they agree with. Respondents were randomly assigned to either a control group or a treatment group, with treated individuals receiving an additional sensitive statement, like 'I support comrade Xi Jinping' or 'the CCP government works for the people'.

The results, which were published in the *China Quarterly*, reveal widespread preference falsification. With direct questions, individuals reported their support for Xi, the CCP and the Chinese government at rates similar to those found in prior direct survey research, reaching upwards of 90 per cent support for the regime. With list experiments, support for the regime dropped to between 50 per cent to 70 per cent. Since list experiments may not fully obviate respondents' concerns about online surveillance, this is more likely an upper bound on regime support. Respondents were more willing to express opposition to 'the system of government' than to Xi or the CCP directly.

Across questions and survey waves, support for the regime varied consistently across three characteristics. Ethnic Han respondents supported Xi about 20 percentage points more than minority respondents. College-educated respondents were between 10–20 percentage points more supportive of the CCP than respondents who completed early middle school. This may be because the CCP's efforts to shape educational curricula have succeeded, or because college-educated Han perform considerably better in the labour market. CCP members are about 10 percentage points more supportive of the regime. This makes sense, since they elected to join the Party and benefit from its rents.

The difference between regime support under direct questioning and regime support under list experiments is known as the preference falsification rate. The survey experiments reveal a preference falsification rate in Xi's China of around 25 percentage points. A recent meta-analysis examined all known list experiments in autocratic contexts and found an average preference falsification rate of around 14 percentage points. This makes Xi's China a clear outlier and demonstrates its citizens are far more fearful of expressing opposition to the regime.

These results suggest observers should be sceptical about public opinion surveys in China that rely on direct questioning. The CCP's sprawling internal security apparatus compels citizens to engage in widespread self-censorship, at a rate nearly three times higher than in Vladimir Putin's Russia. The pervasiveness of self-censorship has caused observers to overstate the amount of legitimacy that the CCP enjoys. This legitimacy, the conventional wisdom goes, is born of its record of economic growth and a propaganda and censorship apparatus that persuades citizens of the regime's merits.

The results, most broadly, suggest the CCP confronts widespread frustration. Its recent policies, including the increase in repression and sabre-rattling over Taiwan, should be seen as an effort to contain this frustration.

Is Tibet forgotten?

29 October 2024, [The Statesman](#), Raju Mansukhani

There seems to be euphoria in diplomatic and media circles after the meetings of Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Xi Jinping, President of the People's Republic of China, on the sidelines of 16th Brics Summit at Kazan on 23 October 2024.

There seems to be euphoria in diplomatic and media circles after the meetings of Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Xi Jinping, President of the People's Republic of China, on the sidelines of 16th Brics Summit at Kazan on 23 October 2024. The agreement

for complete disengagement and resolution of issues that arose in 2020 in the India-China border areas is being widely welcomed as India underscored the importance of properly handling differences and disputes, not allowing them to disturb peace and tranquility.

Reading between the lines of diplomatic statements emphasizing 'the management of peace and tranquility in border areas and to explore a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable solution to the boundary question', what has gone completely missing is Tibet. The focus now is on stability, rebuilding bilateral relations, and as the Indian Foreign Secretary briefed the media, "to boost communication and cooperation between their countries and resolve conflicts to help improve ties that were damaged by a deadly military clash in 2020." At the United Nations, around the same time as the Brics Summit, on 22 October 2024, James Larsen, Australia's Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations, delivered a joint statement on behalf of a coalition of 15 countries, expressing serious concern over grave human rights violations in East Turkistan and Tibet, and calling for urgent action from China. The statement was presented during the general discussion on human rights at the 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly's Third Committee. Representing Australia, alongside 14 other countries including Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Japan, Lithuania, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States, Ambassador Larsen highlighted grave concerns based on evidence gathered by the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and other UN bodies. The assessment, released two years ago, described these violations as potentially amounting to crimes against humanity. It is significant to note that India was not part of the 15-nation coalition stating its concerns over human rights abuses in Tibet. The Tibetan Government in Exile website has detailed the erosion of cultural, educational and religious rights and freedom in Tibet; arbitrary detentions for the peaceful expression of political views, restrictions on travel, forced labour, and the forced separation of children from families in boarding schools. Ambassador Larsen noted that despite repeated international calls for transparency, China has dismissed these concerns and labeled the OHCHR's assessment as "illegal and void" during its Universal Periodic Review adoption in July 2024. China has yet to undertake a comprehensive human rights review of its policies in Xinjiang, with its problematic legal framework on national security and counterterrorism remaining unchanged, according to an OHCHR statement from August 2024. The 15 nations called on China to uphold its international human rights obligations and fully implement the

recommendations from the OHCHR and other UN mechanisms.

The Tibetan Government in Exile, also referred to as the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) has been proactively conducting its public diplomacy across the world. Sikyong Penpa Tsering, in a vision document of the CTA released on 10 April 2023, said, "Our work as representatives of the Tibetan people and in securing the future of Tibet is more timely and crucial than ever (before). The PRC (People's Republic of China) has increased its efforts to destroy Tibetan culture and identity through the imposition of draconian measures. The PRC government has coerced our children into colonial boarding schools and imposed a ban on teaching all subjects in the Tibetan language. Our monasteries are increasingly controlled by Beijing, and even our tradition of reincarnation is politicised. In the name of maintaining national security and stability, with the existing control by the permanent work teams stationed down to the village level, Tibetans are subjected to intrusive state security through constant surveillance by the PRC using artificial intelligence and grid management system."

Given the paradigm shift in geopolitics and the international system post-Covid, Ukraine crisis and particularly with the escalation of sporadic tension between different nations, Sikyong Penpa Tsering emphasized "Tibet's strategic importance increasingly matters because of its geographical position and historical role as a buffer zone between China and India. Moreover, rivers originating from Tibet's mountains feed the rivers of ten nations downstream that provide water to a population of about 2 billion people. Due to the number of glaciers and permafrost on the Tibetan plateau, Tibet is also called 'Asia's Water Tower' and the 'World's Third Pole'.

Spiritually and culturally, the Tibetan people's steadfast belief in the Buddhist principles of non-violence and compassion under the leadership of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, even in the face of brutal attacks serves as an inspiration for the violence-ridden world." The vision document highlights the two fundamental missions of the CTA which are inextricably linked: "Mobilising Tibetans and our allies to reopen the Sino-Tibetan dialogue to seek genuine autonomy for the Tibetan people and to develop a sustainable Tibetan community in exile. Both missions ensure the survival of our identity and contribute to the furtherance of our cause." While 2024 marks the 70th anniversary of the famous Panchsheel Agreement of 1954, it was in 2004 to commemorate its 50th golden anniversary that the Indian Ministry of External Affairs published a document simply titled 'Panchsheel'.

It declared that Panchsheel, or the Five Principles of Peaceful Co-existence, were first formally enunciated in the Agreement on Trade and Intercourse between

the Tibet region of China and India signed on 29 April 1954, which stated, in its preamble, that the two Governments “have resolved to enter into the present Agreement based on the following principles: Mutual respect for each other’s territorial integrity and sovereignty, Mutual non-aggression, Mutual non-interference, Equality and mutual benefit, and Peaceful co-existence.” Two months later, during the visit of Premier Zhou Enlai to India, he and Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru issued a joint statement on 28 June 1954 that elaborated their vision of Panch sheel as the framework not only for relations between the two countries but also for their relations with all other countries, so that a solid foundation could be laid for peace and security in the world.

Panch sheel, as envisioned by its creators, gave substance to the voice of newly established countries who were seeking the space to consolidate their hard-won independence, as it provided an alternative ideology dedicated to peace and development of all as the basis for international interaction, whether bilateral or multilateral. At that time, the two Prime Ministers also expressed the hope in the Joint Statement that the adoption of Panchsheel “will also help in creating an area of peace which as circumstances permit can be enlarged thus lessening the chances of war and strengthening the cause of peace all over the world.” The treaty of 1954 provided for withdrawal of all Indian influence from Tibet. Wrote S Gopal in Volume II of Pt Nehru’s biography: “Nehru had no regret about this, for it embarrassed him to lay claim to the succession of an imperial power which had pushed its way into Tibet.

Anxious to make the agreement purely non-political, the Chinese at first resisted mention of the Five Principles which they themselves had elaborated, but ultimately agreed to it as a concession. India was keen on the inclusion of these principles as explicit reference to mutual respect for each other’s territorial integrity and sovereignty, and mutual non-aggression suggested, at least by implication, that China had no frontier claims; but this was clutching at straws after the main opportunity had been deliberately discarded. The only real gain India could show was a listing of six border passes in the middle sector, thereby defining, even if indirectly, this stretch of the boundary.

On the other hand, the Chinese had secured all they wanted and given away little; and that they regarded even this sanction of some Indian trade agencies and markets in Tibet as an interim concession was made clear by their objection to automatic renewal of the treaty after its first term of eight years.” The historian in Gopal commented, “the chance of securing a clear and explicit recognition of India’s frontier at a time when India had something to offer in return had been lost. This was not because of Nehru’s unrealistic assessment of China’s intent and strength or of his

failure to attach importance to this issue but because he allowed his own views, and those of his senior advisers, to be set aside...

The argument that the best defence of the frontier was a friendly neighbour was sound, provided the frontier was a settled one. This was India’s case: But that case could have been immeasurably strengthened by directly making it a part of the negotiations leading to the 1954 treaty.”

This diplomatic lapse, call it an omission, made India give priority to setting up borders and check posts strung out along its entire length, priority to building communications, strengthening the intelligence system. To Nehru’s biographer, “the impact of government would have to make up for remiss diplomacy.

A silent resistance is growing in Tibet

27 October 2024, [The Sunday Guardian](#), Khedroob Thondup

The Beijing-recognized Panchen Lama, Gyaltzen Norbu, is seen by many Tibetans as a political puppet.

In the heart of Tibet, a silent yet powerful form of resistance is taking place. Across monasteries, homes, and public spaces, the image of the 10th Panchen Lama, Choekyi Gyaltzen, is prominently displayed. This act is not just a tribute to a revered spiritual leader but a profound statement against the Chinese government’s attempts to control Tibetan Buddhism.

The 10th Panchen Lama, Choekyi Gyaltzen, is deeply respected among Tibetans for his unwavering dedication to preserving Tibetan culture and religion under Chinese rule. Born in 1938, he became a vocal advocate for Tibetan rights and criticized the Chinese government’s policies in Tibet. His 70,000-character petition in 1962, which detailed the suffering of Tibetans under Chinese rule, remains a seminal document of resistance.

In stark contrast, the Beijing-recognized Panchen Lama, Gyaltzen Norbu, is seen by many Tibetans as a political puppet. In 1995, the Chinese government rejected the Dalai Lama’s choice of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima as the 11th Panchen Lama and instead installed Gyaltzen Norbu. Gedhun Choekyi Nyima was subsequently taken into custody and has not been seen since. This move was widely perceived as an attempt by Beijing to control the spiritual lineage and diminish the influence of the Dalai Lama.

Displaying the photo of the 10th Panchen Lama is a way for Tibetans to honour his legacy and assert their cultural identity. It is a reminder of his courage and his commitment to the Tibetan cause. For many, the 10th Panchen Lama symbolizes the true spirit of Tibetan Buddhism, untainted by political interference.

Moreover, this act of defiance is a form of non-violent resistance. By rejecting the Beijing-recognized Panchen Lama, Tibetans are making a clear statement about their refusal to accept Chinese control over their religious practices. It is a way to keep the memory of the 10th Panchen Lama alive and to inspire future generations to continue the struggle for religious and cultural freedom.

The Chinese government's attempt to control the reincarnation process of Tibetan lamas is part of a broader strategy to assimilate Tibetan culture into the dominant Han Chinese narrative. By installing a state-approved Panchen Lama, Beijing aims to weaken the influence of the Dalai Lama and ensure that Tibetan Buddhism aligns with state ideologies. However, the widespread display of the 10th Panchen Lama's photo shows that these efforts have not succeeded. It highlights the resilience of the Tibetan people and their determination to preserve their cultural and religious heritage. This act of resistance is a powerful reminder that despite decades of repression, the spirit of Tibetan Buddhism remains strong.

The choice to display the photo of the 10th Panchen Lama is a deeply symbolic act for Tibetans. It honors a leader who stood up for their rights and serves as a form of peaceful resistance against Chinese control. As the world watches, it is crucial to support the Tibetan people's right to religious freedom and cultural preservation. The legacy of the 10th Panchen Lama continues to inspire and empower Tibetans in their ongoing struggle for autonomy and dignity.

The changing dynamics of India-China relations amidst India-U.S. tensions

27 October 2024, [The Sunday Guardian](#), Savio Rodrigues



Prime Minister Narendra Modi meets Chinese President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the BRICS Summit, in Kazan on Wednesday. ANI

The decline in India-US relations played a pivotal role in changing the dynamics of the Sino-Indian border negotiations.

The recent agreement between India and China to restore patrolling arrangements along their disputed border to pre-June 2020 status has marked a significant step toward reducing tensions between the two countries. The deal, finalised on the sidelines of the BRICS Summit in Kazan, came after China finally complied with India's longstanding demand for disengagement along the Line of Actual Control (LAC). While the agreement is a notable diplomatic achievement, the context in which it was reached reveals deeper geopolitical shifts influenced by deteriorating Indo-US relations.

Since the June 2020 Galwan Valley clashes, which resulted in casualties on both sides, India and China have held multiple rounds of diplomatic and military talks to resolve their border dispute. However, little progress was made until the recent agreement. The breakthrough coincided with a downturn in Indo-US relations, which began to sour following a scandal in the summer of 2023 involving allegations of an Indian assassination attempt on a US citizen with ties to separatist movements.

This incident, coupled with subsequent US actions—including support for Canada in escalating a diplomatic spat with India—fuelled distrust between New Delhi and Washington. As a result, China reassessed its strategic calculus regarding its border dispute with India, no longer perceiving India as a potential partner in the US' containment policy aimed at countering China's influence. This shift in perception allowed China to consider a pragmatic approach to the border issue, leading to the recent agreement.

The decline in Indo-US relations played a pivotal role in changing the dynamics of the Sino-Indian border negotiations. Historically, China viewed any concession on the border issue as a sign of weakness, potentially emboldening other regional claimants, such as those involved in the South China Sea disputes. However, the realisation that Indo-US trust had been severely compromised encouraged China to see the border resolution as a strategic move to prevent India from aligning too closely with the US.

The US has long pursued a divide-and-rule strategy in Asia, attempting to exploit historical tensions between India and China to maintain its influence in the region. The pressure on India to adopt Western sanctions against Russia and comply with US foreign policy objectives has only served to underscore the limits of the partnership between New Delhi and Washington. This realisation has allowed India to manoeuvre diplomatically, using its rapprochement with China to signal its unwillingness to be coerced into a subordinate role.

The agreement with China signifies more than just a resolution of a longstanding border issue; it reflects a shift in India's strategic orientation amidst growing friction with the US. The 2023 scandal, US meddling in

South Asian politics, and the imposition of foreign policy demands have all contributed to India's re-evaluation of its partnership with Washington. The latest border breakthrough, therefore, can be seen as a signal to the US that India will not be compelled into playing a role in an anti-China coalition.

While military and trade relations between India and the US remain stable for now, the political rift between the two countries raises questions about the future trajectory of their ties. As India and China move toward improving bilateral relations, the US risks losing a key partner in its Indo-Pacific strategy. If India and China can continue to find common ground, it could significantly alter the power dynamics in the region and weaken the effectiveness of the US's containment strategy.

The possibility of closer India-China ties, with the border issue no longer serving as a primary irritant, could unleash significant economic and strategic potential. The world's two most populous nations have natural economic complementarities that could drive regional development and accelerate the transition towards a multipolar world order. This would mark a departure from the US-centric global system that has dominated since the end of the Cold War.

Should Sino-Indian relations continue to improve, it would signal a shift in global strategic dynamics, with Asia emerging as a central axis in world affairs. A partnership between India and China would not only strengthen regional stability but also challenge the current balance of power by reducing US influence in the region. This potential realignment could reshape the global order, paving the way for a new era of international relations driven by Asian powers. In retrospect, the US pressure campaign against India—spanning diplomatic, economic, and political dimensions—might inadvertently prove to be a turning point in global geopolitics. By pushing India to its limits, the US may have accelerated the very outcome it sought to prevent: a Sino-Indian rapprochement that undermines its efforts to maintain unipolar dominance. While it remains to be seen whether the current momentum in Sino-Indian relations will be sustained, the recent agreement offers a glimpse into a world where traditional rivalries are redefined in response to shifting global power structures. The restoration of pre-Galwan Valley patrolling arrangements along the India-China border marks a significant diplomatic achievement for both nations and a potential game-changer in the strategic dynamics of the region. The deal's timing, amid growing Indo-US tensions, underscores the complex interplay between regional disputes and global power politics. As India and China navigate this new phase in their relationship, their ability to resolve longstanding issues and enhance cooperation will be pivotal in shaping the future of the international order.

Whether the US adjusts its approach in response to these developments remains uncertain, but one thing is clear: the old strategic assumptions no longer hold. The world is witnessing a recalibration of alliances, driven not by coercion or containment but by a recognition of shared interests and the desire for a more balanced global order. The implications of this evolving landscape will be felt far beyond the borders of Asia, heralding a new era of international relations where traditional rivalries give way to strategic pragmatism.

LAC patrolling agreement with China doesn't mean everything is resolved: Jaishankar

27 October 2024, [The New Indian Express](#)

The External Affairs Minister credited the military, which worked in 'very very unimaginable' conditions, and deft diplomacy for the breakthrough agreement with China.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Saturday said the breakthrough agreement with China on patrolling along the LAC does not mean that issues between the two countries have been resolved, however, the disengagement allows us to look at the next step.

He credited the military, which worked in "very very unimaginable" conditions, and deft diplomacy for the breakthrough agreement with China.

"The latest step (of disengagement) was the October 21 understanding that patrolling will take place in Depsang and Demchok.

This will allow us now to look at the next step.

It is not like everything has been resolved but the disengagement which is the first phase we have managed to reach that level," Jaishankar said at an event in Pune.

Responding to a question during a separate interaction with students, Jaishankar said it is still a bit early for normalisation of relations which will naturally take time to rebuild a degree of trust and willingness to work together.

He said that when **Prime Minister Narendra Modi met President Xi Jinping** at Kazan in Russia for the BRICS summit, it was decided that the foreign ministers and National Security Advisors of the two countries would meet and see how to move forward.

"If today we have reached where we have. One is because of the very determined effort on our part to stand our ground and make our point.

The military was there (at LAC) in very very unimaginable conditions to defend the country, and the military did its part and diplomacy did its part," Jaishankar said.

Over the decade, India improved its infrastructure.

Part of the problem is that in the earlier years, the border infrastructure was really neglected, he added.

"Today we have put in five times more resources annually than there used to be a decade ago which is showing results and enabling the military to actually be effectively deployed. The combination of these (factors) has led to where it is," he said.

Earlier this week, **India announced it had reached an agreement with China** on patrolling along the LAC in eastern Ladakh, in a major breakthrough in ending the over four-year-long military standoff.

Since 2020, the situation on the border has been very disturbed which understandably negatively impacted the overall relationship.

Since September 2020, India had been negotiating with the Chinese on how to find a solution, he said.

The EAM said there were different aspects of this solution.

The pressing one is disengagement because troops are very very close to each other and the possibility of something happening existed. Then there is de-escalation because of troop buildup on both sides, he added.

"Then there is a larger issue of how you manage the border and negotiate the boundary settlement.

Right now everything that's going is concerning the first part which is disengagement," he said.

He said India and China came to an understanding at some places after 2020 on how troops return to their bases but a significant segment was related to patrolling, the external affairs minister pointed out.

"There was blocking of patrolling and that is what we had been trying to negotiate for the last two years. So what happened on October 21 was that in those particular areas **Depsang and Demchok we reached an understanding that patrolling would resume how it used to be before,**" Jaishankar added.

Following the agreement, the two countries have begun troop disengagement at the two friction points at Demchok and Depsang Plains in eastern Ladakh and this process is likely to be completed by October 28-29.

On "string of pearls", a chain of civilian/naval ports perceived as a strategy for encircling India, Jaishankar said the development has to be viewed seriously, and India needs to be ready to compete.

The term refers to the network of Chinese military and commercial facilities and relationships along its sea lines of communication.

"Unfortunately when it was happening, people (did not see it seriously). Frankly, we are paying the price for it. We did not respond the way we had to. It was done for ideological reasons. The view of China was very different in the political circles of the government," the EAM added.

The Man Who Shaped China's Strongman Rule Has a New Job: Winning Taiwan

26 October 2024, [The New York Times](#), Chris Buckley

Xi Jinping's top adviser, Wang Huning, is credited with shaping the authoritarianism that steered China's rise. But can he influence Taiwan?

When Xi Jinping held the first-ever talks in Beijing with a former president of Taiwan, seeking to press the island closer to unification, a bookish-looking official stood out for his ease around China's leader.

While others treated Mr. Xi with stiff formality, the official, Wang Huning, spoke confidently in his presence and sat next to him during the meeting, said Chiu Kun-hsuan, a member of the delegation that accompanied Ma Ying-jeou, the former Taiwanese president.

The scene gave a glimpse of one of the most important, yet little understood, relationships in China: between Mr. Xi, the country's most powerful leader in decades, and Mr. Wang, the ruling Communist Party's most influential ideological adviser in decades.

"He has the top leader's full trust," Professor Chiu, an emeritus scholar at National Chengchi University in Taipei, Taiwan's capital, said of Mr. Wang. "Wang Huning's influence has been in ideology, but now in China under Xi Jinping, ideology connects everything." Given the opaque nature of Chinese politics, the world often fixates on Mr. Xi, who since taking power in 2012 has centralized control and surrounded himself with loyalists, making it hard to know whose views he most values. In his circle, Mr. Wang stands out for rising to the top despite never having led a province or city, and for advising three successive Chinese leaders across three decades — a rare feat of adaptability and survival.

The New York Times spoke to more than a dozen people who have known Mr. Wang or met him, including during a visit to the United States in the late 1980s, and read dozens of his papers and books. The interviews and writings illuminate how he rose to the apex of power by developing ideas that he put to the service of China's leaders, with a lasting influence on how the country is ruled.

Mr. Wang is credited with honing the Communist Party doctrines that have guided China's rise, founded on the conviction that only the unyielding dominance of the party can secure the country's success in the face of rapid economic change and intensifying competition with Western powers.

More recently, Mr. Xi has entrusted Mr. Wang with handling the fraught political relations with Taiwan, the island democracy that Beijing wants to absorb. Taiwanese officials say Mr. Wang has been overseeing efforts to deepen Chinese influence over the island,

through selective displays of good will and covert influence activities.

Yet Mr. Wang, 69, is little known to outsiders. A professor turned party theorist, he stopped giving interviews after he began working at the Communist Party headquarters in 1995, cutting off contact with most former colleagues and staying aloof from foreign visitors.

Since 2012, he has been central to distilling Mr. Xi's vision for China into an ideological program for a superpower that is technologically advanced, unabashedly authoritarian and increasingly fortified against American-led containment.

Mr. Wang "provided the ideological spirit for authoritarianism over the last 30 years," said Rush Doshi, a former deputy senior director for China on President Biden's National Security Council who is now at the Council on Foreign Relations and Georgetown University. "He has helped craft the national narrative."

Winning Over Taiwan

Now Mr. Wang is turning his ideas, political acumen and influence with Mr. Xi to Taiwan. He appears to be sharpening strategies for reaching deeper into Taiwanese society and rolling back its people's deepening rejection of China, including Taiwan's cultural links with the mainland.

"He's also someone who knows how to use both a soft touch and a hard fist," said Chao Chun-shan, a professor emeritus at Tamkang University in Taiwan, who has been in meetings with Mr. Wang in the early 1990s and twice since last year.

Mr. Wang has assiduously wooed dozens of members of Taiwan's opposition Nationalist Party, which favors stronger ties with China, treating them almost as a Taiwanese government in waiting — one that Beijing would rather deal with. He has politely quizzed Nationalist lawmakers: Who has old roots in Taiwan? Who came from families that fled mainland China in 1949? He asked them to describe their concerns, making a point that he was paying close attention, said several members of the delegations.

His overtures to the opposition fit with Beijing's strategy of isolating Taiwan's president, Lai Ching-te, and his governing Democratic Progressive Party, which rejects China's claim of sovereignty over the island.

Behind the scenes, Mr. Wang has overseen Chinese efforts to influence Taiwanese public opinion with online campaigns, which amplify messages that are skeptical of American power, scathing about Mr. Lai and admiring of China, according to two Taiwanese security officials who spoke on the condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the matter.

At the same time, China has hardened its military approach to Taiwan; it recently held exercises encircling the island. It is also using legal measures to intimidate Taiwanese people, like the recently issued

rules calling for execution, in extreme cases, for supporters of independence.

Such efforts may appear crude and likely to alienate many Taiwanese, but over time, their chilling effect could make a difference politically, said John Dotson, the deputy director of the Global Taiwan Institute in Washington. "Even if it only moves public opinion by a few points, that can be decisive," he said.

Mr. Wang may also have considerable influence over China's plan for unification. Mr. Xi has said Taiwan must accept the "one country, two systems" formula that Beijing used for Hong Kong, but that arrangement is widely rejected in Taiwan. Instead, Chinese officials like Mr. Wang now speak of a "comprehensive plan" for Taiwan, a phrase that allows for adjustments to the formula.

"If his past roles are any guide," Mr. Doshi said, referring to Mr. Wang, "he's likely been tasked with figuring out an approach to Taiwan that involves crafting long-term strategy, as well as the ideological framework for unification."

From Democratic Hopes to 'Neo-Authoritarianism'

Mr. Wang, like Mr. Xi, is the son of Communist officials and was one of the few Chinese youths chosen to go to university during the 1966-76 Cultural Revolution, a decade of violence and zealotry when students were drilled in Marx, Lenin and Mao.

But as Mr. Wang started graduate school at Fudan University in Shanghai in 1978, many in China were starting to look to Western countries for inspiration. Talk of democracy, suppressed under Mao, crept into classrooms, and Mr. Wang, who specialized in political science, became an avid student of Western political traditions.

"He was quite open and lively," Chen Kuide, who shared a dormitory room with Mr. Wang at Fudan, said in an interview. "He also wrote contemporary poetry." Mr. Wang became fascinated with the "political culture" of democracies: the shared public faith in government that kept countries stable as leaders came and went. A strong web of public values was a key pillar of solid political order, he wrote, often citing American scholars like Samuel P. Huntington and Sidney Verba.

Mr. Wang stayed on at Fudan as a lecturer and joined the Communist Party in 1984. He was never a rebel, but he shared in the hopes, widespread in China in the 1980s, that the party could absorb some democracy.

"In today's world, democracy has become the goal of political development," Mr. Wang wrote in a Shanghai newspaper in 1986. "Without a highly democratic political system, there can be no talk of standing tall as a modernized, powerful country among the world's advanced nations."

But as the decade progressed, China confronted growing public anger over inflation and corruption. Student protests for democracy broke out in 1986.

Even as Mr. Wang continued to praise democracy as a long-term aspiration, he cautioned against rapid political liberalization.

Abrupt political opening could bring upheaval and derail China's economic takeoff, Mr. Wang wrote, arguing that its leaders could learn from South Korea, Taiwan and other Asian "dragons" that had grown rapidly under authoritarian rulers.

"He became more of a realist," said Mr. Chen, the former roommate, who later worked alongside Mr. Wang. "He had the ways of a politician or political operator."

Mr. Wang wrote a report saying that China needed a "centralized" model of modernization, not a democratic one, to loosen the state's hold on the economy — which would cause a painful surge in prices for food and other necessities — while keeping a lid on instability.

The report circulated among policymakers in Beijing, according to a memoir by Wei Chengsi, an official in Shanghai who had commissioned it, and it became a seed for "neo-authoritarianism," a school of thought arguing that China needed a strongman leader.

"His support for a strong central government and central leader was obvious," said Ming Xia, a former student and colleague of Mr. Wang at Fudan University.

American Lessons

In 1988, Mr. Wang began a six-month visit to the United States, his first immersion in the superpower that China was coming to both admire and fear.

"He was deeply struck by how developed the United States was," Hsu Chang-mao, a journalist from Taiwan who got to know Mr. Wang at that time, said in an interview. "After he returned, he dressed more attractively and stylishly; you could see that he'd been influenced by the American sense of fashion."

But Mr. Wang's travels across America, as a visiting scholar at the University of Iowa and other campuses, also seemed to deepen his view that Western-style democracy had flaws and could not be easily copied in China.

The United States lacked the social discipline and cohesion of Japan, Mr. Wang wrote in "America Against America," a 1991 book about his visit. He was repulsed by a camp for homeless people in Berkeley, which he described as dirty. He followed the 1988 presidential race and concluded that voters ultimately had limited say in government.

His American sojourn appeared to reinforce his belief that a country had to instill the correct attitudes in its citizens, including respect for authority and tradition, or disorder would weaken it from within. Mr. Wang approvingly cited Allan Bloom, a political theorist whose book denouncing liberal cultural trends, "The Closing of the American Mind," was a best seller at that time.

After Mr. Wang returned to China in 1989, his skepticism of democratization deepened. That spring, student-led pro-democracy demonstrators occupied Tiananmen Square in Beijing. The Chinese military crushed the movement on June 4 with tanks and troops, killing hundreds, if not thousands, in the capital and across the country.

In the aftermath, Mr. Wang warned that the party still faced deeper threats. China's leaders, he wrote, needed a "comprehensive overhaul of the entire system of social control" to tame the effects of economic growth, especially corruption, as well as an influx of Western investment and cultural influence.

Mr. Wang urged leaders in Beijing to reassert their control over revenues and state-owned companies. Their grip on economic resources had weakened in the previous decade, and revenue-rich local officials sometimes chafed at orders from Beijing, he warned.

He argued that as China opened to the outside world and the party retreated from directing people's lives, leaders needed new ways to retain their loyalty. The new challenges, he wrote in 1992, "demand that China's system of social control respond more firmly, flexibly and vigorously." He advised Beijing to develop new ways to monitor and shape people's values.

"He was really writing about what they were trying to figure out: how do you maintain political order through very fundamental social and economic change?" said Timothy Cheek, a historian of the Chinese Communist Party at the University of British Columbia.

In 1995, Mr. Wang was plucked from academia by Jiang Zemin, the former Shanghai party secretary who had become China's leader in 1989. He joined the party's Central Policy Research Office and was later credited with helping shape Mr. Jiang's "Three Represents" concept, a policy for bringing private entrepreneurs into the party's embrace.

After Mr. Jiang stepped down, Mr. Wang remained a top adviser to the next Chinese leader, Hu Jintao. When Mr. Xi came to power in 2012, he retained Mr. Wang.

The Man Behind 'Xi Jinping Thought'

Mr. Wang's continuing close access to Mr. Xi suggests that he remained an influential source of advice as the Chinese leader grappled with a pandemic, economic troubles and growing antagonism with Western governments.

Experts credit Mr. Wang with a big role in shaping Mr. Xi's ideas into an official credo — Xi Jinping Thought — focused on China's resurgence as a great power. To combat the dangers he sees to party rule, Mr. Xi has demanded ideological conformity, restricted Western cultural influences, expanded censorship and sought to silence even mild dissent.

Mr. Wang became office director for a commission on policy reform, which has pushed Mr. Xi's ideas of state-

steered growth, and he continues to shape major policy documents. He defended China's tight control over the internet before an audience of multinational executives. He accompanied Mr. Xi on trips abroad, including summits with American presidents.

Mr. Wang gained "a real policy-shaping role, not just as an ideologue," said Matthew D. Johnson, a research director at Garnaut Global, a consultancy, who has studied Mr. Wang. "I don't think he's a one-trick pony."

In 2017, Mr. Xi rewarded Mr. Wang by promoting him to the Politburo Standing Committee — the top tier of party power. And Mr. Xi kept him on the committee for a second term in 2022, as others stepped aside.

During a party congress in 2022, Mr. Wang's standing with Mr. Xi played out in front of television cameras. The tightly choreographed proceedings were briefly interrupted when Mr. Hu, the retired leader, apparently agitated and confused, seemed to resist being led out by an usher.

When Li Zhanshu, a senior official, tried to help Mr. Hu, Mr. Wang tugged at Mr. Li's suit and whispered to him, apparently urging him to sit down. In theory, Mr. Li had a higher rank, but that didn't deter Mr. Wang.

Explainer: India and China troops disengage at disputed Ladakh border, easing decades-long tensions

26 October 2024, [The Tribune](#), Vijay Mohan

Explainer: India and China troops disengage at disputed Ladakh border, easing decades-long tensions
The current phase of bilateral ties has been particularly strained since the violent standoff at Galwan in 2020, which resulted in the deaths of 20 Indian soldiers and an estimated 40 Chinese troops, marking the worst tensions since the 1962 war

The ongoing disengagement between Indian and Chinese troops at two friction points along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh – Demchok and Depsang – marks another watershed in the tumultuous relations between the two Asian giants since the late 1950s. File photo

The ongoing disengagement between Indian and Chinese troops at two friction points along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh – Demchok and Depsang – marks another watershed in the tumultuous relations between the two Asian giants since the late 1950s. The current phase of bilateral ties has been particularly strained since the violent standoff at Galwan in 2020, which resulted in the deaths of 20 Indian soldiers and an estimated 40 Chinese troops, marking the worst tensions since the 1962 war.

The Sino-Indian War (October 20 – November 21, 1962) marked a turning point in India-China relations, which had previously shared a strong cultural and historical bond, significantly impacting India's security establishment. Reports of occasional run-ins with China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) began surfacing as early as 1951, gradually increasing toward the decade's end.

Following India's grant of asylum to the Dalai Lama in 1959, PLA intensified its activities in Tibet and adopted a more aggressive stance. PLA resumed regular border patrols in previously dormant regions, leading to an escalation in skirmishes along the border.

On October 20, PLA launched simultaneous offensives along the 3,225-km disputed border in Arunachal Pradesh and Ladakh, capturing Indian positions and seizing significant territory. However, on November 21, China declared a ceasefire and pulled back to its pre-October 20 positions. Since then, tensions have persisted along the LAC as both nations maintain conflicting territorial claims.

India became independent in 1947, while the People's Republic of China (PRC) was established in 1949, which then annexed Tibet in 1950. Chinese maps showed about 120,000 sq km of Indian territory in Aksai Chin and Arunachal as part of China. The then-Indian Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, raised the subject with Chinese Prime Minister Zhou Enlai, but despite promises, there was no resolution.

In 1954, China and India negotiated the 'Panchsheel' or Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, by which both sides would settle their disputes. However, China did not acknowledge Indian claims. The construction of roads and military.

The construction of roads and military posts by China in the Aksai Chin region in the 1950s was perceived as aggression by India, prompting India to establish its own posts. China's 1,200-km road connecting Xinjiang and western Tibet, 180 km of which passed through Aksai Chin, made the region easily accessible from China, while India lacked communication links.

In July 1958, China intruded into Ladakh near Kurnak Fort. Similar incidents occurred in 1959 at Migyitui and Pangong Tso. In October 1959, an Indian patrol was ambushed near Kongka Pass, killing nine Indian policemen.

In 1960, Zhou Enlai proposed that India drop its claims over Aksai Chin in exchange for China withdrawing claims over the North-Eastern Frontier Agency (now Arunachal Pradesh) but India refused. In 1961, India adopted a "forward policy" to counter Chinese activity.

The India-China border disputes have led to numerous incidents and confrontations since 1962. That summer, India directed its air force to avoid direct conflict, despite the potential benefits of close air support for ground troops. In June, a skirmish resulted in

significant Chinese casualties, prompting India to advance troops and probe Chinese resolve. The period from June to October saw multiple incidents in the east, including the Thagla Ridge confrontation in Arunachal Pradesh.

Subsequent clashes occurred in 1967 at Nathu La and Cho La, where Indian forces successfully repelled Chinese attacks. In 1975, four Indian soldiers were ambushed and killed by Chinese troops in Indian territory. Another major standoff took place in 1986 in the Sumdorong Chu Valley, Arunachal Pradesh, but was resolved after India's external affairs minister visited Beijing in 1987.

Despite the absence of armed clashes since, China's PLA has regularly incursed into Ladakh and Arunachal, sometimes advancing several kilometres into the Indian territory, as seen in the 2013 Depsang Plains incident. Frequent confrontations and face-offs along the LAC have led to scuffles and physical altercations. Approximately two dozen sensitive areas have been identified along the LAC, with 13 experiencing frequent incursions. Seven friction points in eastern Ladakh, including Galwan, Hot Springs, Gogra, Pangong Tso, Depsang Plains, and Demchok, remain contentious since 2020, with ongoing disengagement efforts at Depsang and Demchok.

Opinion | China-India border detente paves way for a more balanced world order

26 October 2024, [SCMP](#), Sagina Walyat

While Beijing and New Delhi have their own interests in settling tensions, greater cooperation is a net positive for the Global South

Just before the 2024 Brics summit, India and China reached a significant agreement on de-escalating border tensions. In an interview on NDTV, Indian Foreign Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar said the deal would allow border patrols to be conducted the way they used to be in 2020, ostensibly before the deadly Galwan Valley clash.

On Tuesday, this position was echoed by Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lin Jian, who confirmed the progress, saying that China "will work with India to properly implement [the] resolution".

In a larger geopolitical context, the deal reflects the shaping of a new world order with a non-Western bloc that does not necessarily oppose the West but seeks to challenge its long-held hegemony.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping held their first formal bilateral dialogue in five years on Wednesday, on the sidelines of the Brics summit in Kazan, Russia. Xi acknowledged the responsibilities of both nations – key members of the Global South – to boost the strength and unity of developing countries. After the meeting, Modi

underscored the significance of peace, not just for bilateral ties but for global stability.

The groundwork for the border deal has been laid over the past two months through high-level engagement, including two meetings between Jaishankar and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi in July. Wang also met Indian National Security Adviser Ajit Doval last month in St Petersburg.

India has consistently made it clear that settling the border issue was a necessity for advancing relations with China. Both nations stand to benefit from this development. India seeks to further grow its economy while China needs India to secure vital partnerships amid its economic slump.

China and India have engaged in dialogue for a long time but bilateral tensions have only seemed to increase, especially since the Galwan Valley clash. India has challenged China on multiple fronts, recently flagging concerns at the World Trade Organization about "non-transparent" Chinese trade practices.

Despite these challenges, the Brics grouping has emerged as a platform for bridging divides, especially with Russia likely to favour more cooperation between China and India.

As Brics expands its membership, Sino-Indian cooperation is crucial for the grouping's future, particularly for achieving its strategic goals. These goals are not necessarily anti-Western in nature but part of a broader attempt to build a popular alternative to the West in the world system. Russia also stands to benefit, as having India and China on cordial terms is essential for challenging Western dominance.

India's recent diplomatic spat with Canada over the Khalistan separatist movement, in which Ottawa was supported by other members of the Five Eyes intelligence alliance, seems to have pushed New Delhi further towards working with its non-Western partners.

The US has increased its involvement in South Asia, including in domestic Indian politics. Last month, high-level American officials met activists who reportedly have pro-Khalistan independence sympathies. And, just before Modi's visit to the US, an American court reportedly issued a summons against Indian officials in a civil suit filed by Gurpatwant Singh Pannun, whom New Delhi designated a terrorist in 2020. Given these developments, India has a strong rationale to explore improved ties with China.

However, India is likely to keep pursuing its non-alignment policy, maintaining a balanced engagement with the West, particularly Europe. Beijing, meanwhile, has concerns of its own, given New Delhi's growing relations with Taiwan and its increasing interest in the Tibet autonomous region.

Since 2010, India has stopped mentioning the One-China policy, reportedly in response to Chinese authorities issuing stapled visas to residents of disputed areas such as Arunachal Pradesh and the territory of Jammu and Kashmir. Under Modi's leadership, India has significantly advanced its technological, economic and diplomatic relations with leaders in Taiwan.

Taiwan recently opened its third representative office in India, which sparked a strong rebuke from Beijing. However, like most countries, India still does not recognise Taiwan as an independent state. With Beijing seeking a peaceful reunification with Taiwan, its interest in resolving the border dispute with India has grown.

While India and China have their own strategic reasons for settling the dispute, Russia also stands to gain from this new-found cooperation. For Brics to become a credible global counterweight to the West, Moscow needs New Delhi and Beijing to work as cordial partners, if not allies.

As the Brics grouping expands and pursues transformative initiatives such as de-dollarisation and creating multilateral alternatives to Western institutions, alignment between India and China can help to ensure the success of these projects.

The de-escalation at the Sino-Indian border plus the high-level meeting between Xi and Modi could pave the way for further cooperation, the relaxation of investment restrictions and the improvement of people-to-people ties through direct flights and exchanges.

While these developments signal an improvement, it is still too soon to tell if India and China will function as fully fledged partners. Their trust deficit and trade imbalance still loom large. Nevertheless, this week's bilateral breakthroughs have certainly melted the ice and opened the door to further dialogue.

Improved Sino-Indian relations could benefit the entire region, especially countries in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the Global South, which stand to gain from reduced tensions between two of Asia's largest powerhouses.

The 2024 Brics summit marks the beginning of a new geopolitical reality – one in which India and China constructively manage their differences and contribute to the emergence of a more balanced world order that challenges Western hegemony.

Brahmaputra's challenges: A call for strategic cooperation and sustainable solutions

25 October 2024, [The Sentinel](#)

The recent drop in the Brahmaputra's water level, resulting in the suspension of the vital ferry service between Jorhat and Majuli

The recent drop in the Brahmaputra's water level, resulting in the suspension of the vital ferry service between Jorhat and Majuli, raises serious concerns about the future of Assam's most critical waterway. As the river that sustains the region's ecosystem and economy, any fluctuations in the Brahmaputra's water system, particularly during the lean winter months, deserve the immediate attention of both policymakers and the scientific community. This isn't merely an isolated occurrence—there's growing evidence to suggest a combination of environmental and geopolitical factors may be at play, contributing to the potential crisis facing the Brahmaputra and the broader riverine landscape of Assam.

Seasonal variability or anomaly? The Case for Serious Scrutiny

It is well established that the Brahmaputra's flow decreases during winter. However, the unprecedented scale of reduction in recent years has raised legitimate concerns among local communities, experts, and government officials. A particularly troubling pattern of dwindling water levels during the lean season has been observed, sparking debates about the underlying causes. While a certain degree of reduction is expected due to natural seasonality, the abnormal scale of receding water volumes suggests that other factors might be altering the Brahmaputra's hydrology. One key suspect behind these changes lies beyond India's borders: In the upper reaches of the river, China has been engaged in large-scale dam construction on the Yarlung Tsangpo (as the Brahmaputra is known in Tibet). The massive damming efforts undertaken by China could potentially have far-reaching implications for the river's natural flow, especially in Assam and the lower riparian regions. These developments, coupled with the accelerating impacts of climate change, make the Brahmaputra's future uncertain.

China's Damming and Diversion: A Brewing Geopolitical Tension

China's dam-building activities on the Yarlung Tsangpo have long been a matter of contention between Beijing and New Delhi. There are well-documented instances of China's efforts to harness the power of the Brahmaputra's upper stretches for hydroelectricity and irrigation. These initiatives, while economically beneficial for China, could spell disaster for downstream countries like India and Bangladesh, which rely heavily on the river's uninterrupted flow. The Chinese government's lack of transparency concerning the scale and nature of these projects only

adds to the concerns, as does its history of ignoring international water-sharing norms.

International treaties and protocols mandate cooperation between countries that share transboundary rivers. Yet China has a track record of resisting adherence to such conventions. The Centre, as the representative of India's geopolitical interests, has so far been hesitant to take a firm stance against China's unilateral river management practices. With mounting evidence of the impacts on water flow, New Delhi faces increasing pressure to engage diplomatically, urging China to honour established water-sharing agreements and protocols. This is essential not only for India's water security but also for the preservation of the Brahmaputra Valley's socio-economic fabric.

The Climate Dimension: Glacier Melt and Rainfall Volatility

The climate crisis is an undeniable force contributing to the Brahmaputra's altered hydrology. Glacial retreat in the Himalayas has accelerated in recent years, driven by rising global temperatures. Since the Siang (Yarlung Tsangpo) accounts for a significant share of the Brahmaputra's total water volume, especially during winter, any reduction in glacier-fed contributions could have a cascading effect on the river's flow downstream.

Moreover, the changing climate is affecting rainfall patterns across the region. Unpredictable monsoons, extreme weather events, and extended droughts have become more frequent, impacting not just the Brahmaputra but the entire ecosystem it supports. If the Brahmaputra transitions from a perennial to a predominantly rain-fed river, the consequences for agriculture, fisheries, and hydropower in Assam could be devastating.

According to a study by the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), the Himalayas, which supply a significant portion of water to the Brahmaputra, are warming at a rate faster than the global average. A report by NASA's Earth Science Division corroborates that the Himalayan glaciers have lost nearly a third of their ice mass in recent decades. This loss directly influences river systems like the Brahmaputra, making it increasingly vulnerable to seasonal variability.

Hydrological Impact: Dredging and Waterway Management

Addressing the water flow irregularities of the Brahmaputra requires a multifaceted approach, beginning with better management of the river itself. Experts suggest dredging the Brahmaputra to deepen its channel, which would reduce flooding during the monsoon season and improve navigability year-round. Transforming the Brahmaputra into a fully functional national waterway holds promise for bolstering Assam's economic potential, but such interventions

should be grounded in a thorough understanding of the river's unique ecosystem and hydrodynamics.

Effective dredging could reduce sedimentation, a major problem in the Brahmaputra, which is one of the most sediment-heavy rivers in the world. This would not only ease the chronic flood situation in Assam but also facilitate smoother inland navigation—a critical aspect of economic integration in India's Northeast. However, implementing such measures requires extensive research and collaboration between governmental agencies, scientists, and local communities to avoid unintended ecological consequences.

The Role of International Cooperation and Governance
The Brahmaputra's challenges underscore the need for robust international cooperation. It is crucial that India engages with China through diplomatic channels to establish a reliable information-sharing mechanism concerning the river's water flows. In the absence of formal treaties, informal dialogues and back-channel negotiations could pave the way for more structured cooperation. Additionally, multilateral platforms like the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, and Nepal (BBIN) Initiative offer opportunities to address shared water concerns collectively.

The World Bank has previously advocated for regional river basin management initiatives, which could serve as a template for the Brahmaputra. If all stakeholders—including China—commit to a shared vision of sustainable river management, it would mitigate the risks associated with unilateral actions. This approach could also bring additional benefits, such as improved flood management, enhanced agriculture, and greater regional stability.

Preserving the Brahmaputra Valley Civilisation: A Call for Action

The Brahmaputra is more than just a river; it is the lifeblood of Assam's cultural, social, and economic identity. The rising threats to its stability—from the unpredictable impacts of climate change to the geopolitical maneuvers by neighboring countries—demand a comprehensive and well-coordinated response. This includes stricter enforcement of environmental regulations, enhanced data collection on river flow dynamics, and increased investment in adaptive infrastructure to cope with future uncertainties.

The state government, in coordination with the Centre, must take proactive measures to mitigate these challenges. A dedicated Brahmaputra River Commission could serve as a centralised body to oversee the implementation of sustainable river management practices, coordinate with international partners, and ensure the ecological health of the river system. Additionally, the scientific community must be empowered with greater resources to study the

Brahmaputra's changing hydrology, focusing on predictive models that account for both climatic and geopolitical variables.

Navigating a Complex Future

The crisis surrounding the Brahmaputra's receding waters is a stark reminder of the complex interplay between nature and politics in South Asia. Addressing this issue requires a blend of science, diplomacy, and regional cooperation. For Assam, ensuring the long-term sustainability of the Brahmaputra is not just an environmental necessity but an existential imperative. The challenge is daunting, but with a clear-eyed, unified strategy, the region can safeguard its future, ensuring that the Brahmaputra continues to flow as a perennial source of life and prosperity for generations to come.

What's next for China and India as Modi, Xi start over?

24 October 2024, [DW](#), Murali Krishnan

At the BRICS summit in Russia, Narendra Modi and Xi Jinping triggered a diplomatic thaw after years of icy relations between India and China. But is it enough for the two Asian rivals to overcome their mutual distrust? A diplomatic reset between India and China seems to be underway after **the leaders of the two countries met at a BRICS summit in Kazan, Russia**, this week.

Both India's **Narendra Modi** and China's **Xi Jinping** made public pledges to improve ties, and praised the recent progress towards **solving territorial disputes in the Himalayas**.

Chinese President Xi said both **China** and **India** were ancient civilizations in a phase of intense development and modernization, and should adhere to the principle of being "partners rather than competitors."

Modi called for "[m]utual trust, mutual respect, and mutual sensitivity" between the two most populous nations in the world.

Border conflicts as a stumbling block

The talks between Xi and Modi come at the heels of a recent deal on patrolling the remote and **highly disputed border area** between India and China. While the rivalry between the two Asian powers is deep and wide-reaching, **their troops clashing in the Himalayas** could be seen as a trigger point for the latest diplomatic freeze.

In June 2020, **a border clash reportedly caused the deaths of 20 Indian soldiers** and an unknown number of Chinese troops. In the years between that event and the Kazan BRICS summit, Modi and Xi have not held any formal face-to-face talks, although they have briefly met each other on the sidelines of other international conferences.

The reported border deal will enable Indian troops to resume patrols up to the two major friction areas,

Depsang and Demchok. Details remain scarce, however, it is worth noting that China did not use the word "agreement" in its readout of the Modi-Xi meeting, instead labelling it "important progress in resolving relevant issues."

According to a Xinhua report: "Modi put forward ideas and suggestions on improving and developing bilateral relations, to which Xi Jinping agreed in principle."

De-escalation still to come

India's Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri said Beijing and New Delhi would initially focus on disengagement before taking up de-escalation and de-induction of forces at the "appropriate time."

"We will have to make continuous efforts that the mechanics of the agreement will be such that such clashes can be stopped," he said.

While experts have welcomed the intent on both sides to improve their relations, they warned that the talks would not lead to a renewal of business as usual.

"We do not expect any miracles. There will be the need to continue the dialogue and work towards improving the relationship," Alka Acharya, honorary director of the Institute of Chinese Studies in India, told DW.

The grouping of five major emerging economies comprising Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa represent over 40% of the world's population and almost a third of the global economy. The club decided to expand last year, with six new countries — Egypt, Ethiopia, Argentina, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Iran — joining it.

The grouping of five major emerging economies comprising Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa represent over 40% of the world's population and almost a third of the global economy. The club decided to expand last year, with six new countries — Egypt, Ethiopia, Argentina, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Iran — joining it.

Russia wants India and China to close ranks

While **China and Russia push a narrative of using BRICS as a counterweight to the US and G7**, other members have been more subdued. Their political systems differ, with India, Brazil and South Africa being democracies, while China and Russia are autocratic. This and other differences tend to hold BRICS back from acting as a cohesive political or economic unit.

"It would appear that the efforts this time have resulted in a breakthrough," Acharya said. "The multilateral groupings are also an important platform for India — which they cannot cede entirely to China. And Russia is a very critical partnership," she added.

Srikanth Kondapalli, a professor of China studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University pointed that China was facing problems such as "economic headwinds, decoupling and derisking from the West, uncertainty about the course of the next US president, and territorial disputes in the neighborhood."

"In forums like BRICS, Russia would also like to see India and China come together so that it can expand the multipolar camp, neutralize sanctions, and reduce reliance on the US dollar as a reserve currency," Kondapalli told DW.

Why is China-India thaw important?

The Modi-Xi meeting in Kazan could "pave the way for normalization" in many areas, former diplomat Sujan Chinoy told DW.

"Resuming direct flights, addressing the trade deficit, and reinstating visa services between India and China could significantly contribute to normalizing relations and enhancing bilateral ties," added Chinoy, who now serves as the head of the Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defense Studies and Analyses.

He also pointed out that BRICS allows India and China to be on the same platform, including in terms of developmental priorities for the **Global South**, which looks to both Asian giants to play a leadership role.

"In recent years, the multilateral space for cooperation between India and China has shrunk and the BRICS and SCO can help retrieve some ground on key issues, including combating terrorism, climate change, green transitions, and reforms of global institutions," said Chinoy.

The curious case of China renaming locations in India's Arunachal Pradesh

24 October 2024, [The Border Lens](#), Tejaswini S S and Rajesh A M



China's claim of Arunachal Pradesh as per China's Standard Map 2023 (Photo: [Global Times](#))

Explore the recent Chinese renaming of Indian territory in Arunachal Pradesh. Understand their

motivations & the geopolitical implications of this move.

Deciphering territorial claims and reasons behind exclusion of few districts

If William Shakespeare were alive today, China would have questioned his "What is in a name?" line from 'Romeo and Juliet' and defended its renaming efforts (of locations) countering that 'naming of things is relevant'.

The renaming spree in Arunachal Pradesh (names in standardised Chinese, Tibetan and Pinyin characters with latitude and longitude and a high resolution map) was started in 2017 and has spatial and temporal history including in Tibet, Xinjiang, South China Sea (SCS) and East China Sea (ECS). For example, People's Republic of China (PRC) has Chinese names for all the islands of Spratly Islands Group (the Nansha Islands) and Paracel Islands (Xisha islands).

The renaming covered a total of 62 locations including villages and towns (25), mountain peaks and passes (25), land segment (3), and rivers, streams, and lakes (9) with six locations in first batch (April, 2017), fifteen in 2nd batch (December, 2021), followed by eleven in April, 2023 and thirty in March, 2024.

Wu Qian, spokesman of Defence Ministry of China had rejected (March, 2024) India's right to Arunachal Pradesh by saying : "It is an undeniable fact that Zangnan has been Chinese territory since ancient times, where does the so-called 'Arunachal Pradesh' come from?".

This statement justifies the fact that it took China almost seven years for renaming and official publication of 62 Indian locations. This long, staggered duration adopted by China is possibly due to efforts by Chinese scholars (at the directions of People's Republic of China) to bake data to attach historical and cultural ties of renamed locations with Tibet and other parts of China, which can then be used to satisfy and justify, if need arises, the audience both domestic and global.

China does not claim whole of the state of Arunachal Pradesh, at least if one goes by the 2023 edition of China's Standard Map of Standard Map Service of the Ministry of Natural Resources, PRC.

Arunachal Pradesh currently has 26 districts and however districts like East Kameng, Kamle, Leparada, Lohit, Siang, Changlang, Tirap, Longding, and Namsai did not feature any of the renamed locations. East Kameng, Kamle, Leparada, Lohit, and Siang districts fall within the boundary of China's claimed territory formed by 62 renamed locations. If one carefully looks at the China's Standard Map of 2023 and Chinese version of Google Earth map, China's claims on Arunachal Pradesh exclude the whole of the districts of Changlang, Tirap, Longding, Namsai and most of Lohit district and parts of Anjaw district.

As per the 2011 Census Data of India, there were 5587 villages in Arunachal Pradesh. If we remove 845 villages (115 of Lohit district, 178 of Namsai district and 362 of Changlang and 190 villages of Tirap district & Longding district), theoretically China claims over 4735 villages.

But there is a notable discrepancy in China's claims over Arunachal Pradesh. According to sources including the Chinese, the so called South Tibet (Zangnan) encompasses an area of approximately 90,000 to 93,000 square kilometre and is said to have a population of approximately one million. When Arunachal Pradesh is only 83,743 square kilometre as per Government of India, where is the additional 6000-9000 square kilometre of territory in the so called Zangnan.

Also, 2023 edition of China's Standard Map excludes 13,816 square kilometre area comprising Changlang, Tirap, Longding, Namsai and most of Lohit district and parts of Anjaw district. Therefore, China needs to tell the world where is this additional claim of 19,816-22,816 square kilometre area of the so called Zangnan (13,816 square kilometre combined with 6000-9000 square kilometre).

It could be possible that Zangnan has parts of it in Bhutan and or Myanmar and China does not want to admit this in public to avoid diplomatic collision or there is something seriously wrong with Survey of India's measurement of the Arunachal Pradesh or PRC is confusing the stakeholders as its claims are baseless and unsubstantiated. Looking at the China's history of territorial claims, the latter is the most plausible explanation. It appears that China is following Sun Tzu's quote "the whole secret lies in confusing the enemy, so that he cannot fathom our real intent" in letter and spirit.

China kept these districts of Arunachal Pradesh out of the Standard Map 2023 due to following reasons: districts of Changlang, Tirap, Longding have strong presence of National Socialist Council of Nagalim-Yung Aung (NSCN-YA), United National Liberation Front of Asom- Independent (ULFA-I), and National Socialist Council of Nagalim-Isaac/Muivah (NSCN-IM) who reportedly received China's support (financial, training, weapons) and are three of the many North East India origin Insurgent Groups with various demands including a separate nation state and more autonomy. These IIGs do operate under the China's umbrella of influence and act as its eyes and ears. So by not including these districts, China has kept them on its side. Another reason is China would be avoiding administrative and strategic inconvenience of not getting surrounded by India and Myanmar in districts of Changlang, Tirap, Longding, Namsai, Lohit and parts of Anjaw in which case it will be China's chicken's neck. By renaming locations in Arunachal Pradesh what China (from its strategic perspective) has done is

delimitation of Arunachal Pradesh which (delimitation) is usually the first step in any sacred bilateral relations for establishment of boundary and or resolution of any boundary issue. The other two steps being delineation and demarcation (usually in that order). Through delimitation one intends to identify the dots (may be residential areas, mountains and passes, rivers etc) in a particular area in order to conceptualise the boundaries or limits which in turn gives a sense of where the boundary of the area in question begins and ends.

Plotting latitudes and longitudes of all the 62 Indian locations renamed by China since 2017, gives a sense of geographical area covered (where the boundary begins and ends) which can later be delineated and demarcated by drawing lines on a map and construction of boundary pillars respectively. It covers almost all the districts except for the whole of the districts of Changlang, Tirap, Longding, Namsai and most of Lohit district and parts of Anjaw district which do not form part of Chinese claimed Indian territory of Arunachal Pradesh as can be seen in China's Standard Map, 2023.

A critical analysis events surrounding Cha's actions in Arunachal Pradesh reveals that some of the 62 renamed locations have earlier been transgressed by Chinese PLA wherein they had set up their tent and stayed for a few hours including hiring of Indian porters as happened in October, 2018 during which Chinese troops had entered approximately 14 kilometre inside near the banks of Mathu and Emra Rivers in Dibang valley. Emra River is a right-bank tributary of the Dibang River located in Dibang Valley district which eventually flows into the Brahmaputra River. Emra River (with the Chinese Pinyin name Niangmuri He) was in the fourth list of renamed locations released by China in March, 2024. The recent example of PLA spray painting rocks in Kapapu, near Chaglagam of Anjaw District is a testimony.

China needs reason/s to sustain its aggression especially in disputed territories. In case of Taiwan, it is that (China's claim) it is one of the last remaining symbols of China's reported history of centuries of humiliation and for SCS, it is the imaginary nine dash line. The renaming attempts in hitherto undisputed Arunachal Pradesh are because China needs to convince its domestic audience, allies and if necessitated the international jury with reasons for its claims before making any strategic decisions to carry on with its aggression tactics along the McMahon line and attempts to (if) occupy.

According to American Mandarin Society, China's PLA has India specific military doctrine called "Border Self-Defense Counterattack Operations" detailed in Science of Military Strategy, 2013 Edition of Academy of Military Science's Military Strategy Research Department, Beijing. From China's point of view, this is

a euphemism for “joint” PLA operations to fight along the China-India border with the objective to capture disputed territory (allegedly currently controlled by India) in order to improve China’s “defensive” position; thereby resolutely “protecting territorial sovereignty and restoring border area peace and stability.”

By renaming locations and giving baked history of their association with China, the latter is building a narrative to its domestic and global audience (as it is answerable to them, at least in theory!) that India is the aggressor here allegedly occupying its territory and China is only legitimately trying to reclaim them (in case it launches such operations). Therefore renaming locations and associating them with China is the first step before it can pursue its India specific military doctrine called “Border Self-Defense Counterattack Operations” .

Should China make attempts to occupy Arunachal Pradesh is best left to the wisdom of leaders of CCP and PRC as most countries including China and global institutions understand the reality that India, as a rising power, of 21st century is different and has moved on from 1962. China also understands that any such cross border attempts will be nothing but a mutually assured destruction of both nuclear powers. However, it is a totally different subject matter which will be explored in an another article another day.

Map aggression is one of the tactics of China that are intentionally ambiguous to create confusion among the stakeholders as it does in SCS without any concrete progress in ‘Declaration on the Conduct of the Parties’ and ‘Framework for a Code of Conduct in the SCS’. It is much easier for any aggressor like China to continue with its geopolitical game of keeping the claimants guessing particularly in boundary disputes as it gives much larger space to manoeuvre the stakeholders.

Similarly in Arunachal Pradesh, China is keeping policy makers in India guessing and confused. India should tread this China’s design with utmost planning and counter China’s efforts by augmenting its current policy of enhancing border civilian and military infrastructure along the McMahon line. In addition, coordinated efforts be made along with other stakeholders in SCS and ECS to expose China’s falsified claims and records in order to send a united message to China’s domestic and global audience that China cannot succeed in its ill designs to capture territories of other sovereign nations.

Thaw in Sino-Indian relations: Trust, but keep verifying

24 October 2024, [FirstPost](#), Chintamani Mahapatra

China has a well-known record of springing surprises and India needs to remain alert all the time

The Narendra Modi-Xi Jinping meeting on the sidelines of the BRICS Summit in the Russian city of Kazan

symbolises a thaw in the relationship between the two most powerful Asian countries that had turned bitter about four years ago in the wake of Chinese Army’s unexpected attacks on Indian soldiers in the Galwan Valley.

India’s commercial and political ties with China was moving in an upwardly positive trajectory when the Galwan incident occurred and Sino-Indian ties nosedived. In a way, a restrained Cold War type rivalry emerged with China more fiercely expanding its influence in countries around India and at the same time feeling jittery about deepening India-US security relations. India’s proactive engagements in the Indo-Pacific, strengthening of the Quad, and Delhi’s ability to navigate the turbulent geopolitics emerging from the Ukraine War with continuation of stronger ties with Moscow and Washington appeared to be Beijing’s envy.

Moreover, Beijing also witnessed India’s robust economic growth amidst downturn in global political economy, including in China.

China clearly sees the benefits of normalising ties with India, which has the tenacity to face Chinese muscle flexing along the LAC and the wisdom to maintain trade ties with China at the same time.

In addition, persistently taking unfriendly steps against India in the backdrop of US alliance politics in the Indo-Pacific, such as the Camp David Defence Pact with Japan and South Korea, AUKUS pact with Australia and Britain are now seen in Beijing as counterproductive. China is undoubtedly suspicious of Quad as well, but respects India as a country that maintains its strategic autonomy.

The way India has been able to keep Pakistan at bay also sends a clear signal to China that Islamabad may be proud of its all weather friendship with China, but an unstable Pakistan cannot be a durable strategic asset and may actually become a liability.

Chinese think in the long term and take steps with a strategic vision. The high level dialogues between the two sides at multiple levels to restore peace and stability along the border and its positive outcome is the byproduct of current Chinese strategic thinking.

India too is a responsible international actor with deep strategic calculations. The Modi government has successfully deterred further Chinese advances along the LAC, reinforced the military presence in the border regions, built critical infrastructure in the difficult Himalayan terrain, and simultaneously refused to normalise ties with China unless peace along the border is maintained and status quo of April 2020 is restored.

The latest agreement by both the parties is a welcome development and the very first step to restore normalcy is mirrored in the Modi-Xi meeting in Kazan. Both China and India support a multipolar world order, both oppose unilateralism in principle, both seek to

champion the cause of the Global South, and both are members of multiple multilateral mechanisms, including BRICS, East Asia Summit, ASEAN Regional Forum, and many others.

Prime Minister Modi has aptly said that Sino-Indian cooperation can bring dividends for regional and global security. External Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar has often stated that the 21st century cannot become an Asian Century without deeper and expansive Sino-Indian cooperation.

However, the Modi-Xi meeting in Russia is only a first necessary step. It perhaps gives satisfaction to the strategic community and the peace lovers in the Indo-Pacific region. After all, many Indo-Pacific countries face their own dilemmas in navigating the Sino-Indian differences and disputes. Thaw in Sino-Indian ties is certainly good news for them. But it is not a positive sign for countries that played China against India or saw strategic gains in emerging Sino-Indian competition in certain areas. Thus, complications will arise on the way to normalising India's relations with China. Some hardliners from both sides may also hold on to their conventional views that normalisation of relations is not possible until the entire boundary disputes are resolved. Besides, India needs to be cautious, careful and diligent to progress through myriad dialogue mechanisms that have remained stalled since 2020.

China has a well-known record of springing surprises and India needs to remain alert all the time. Trust is an imperative to conduct international relations, but history teaches us that it is important to keep verifying the moves of other countries, so that words, written and spoken, match actions on the ground.

Decoding Chinese Military Diplomacy in South Asia

24 October 2024, [ORF](#), Col (DR) DCS Mayal

Introduction

"To win one hundred victories in one hundred battles is not the acme of skill.

To subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill."

~ Sun Tzu

Nations are increasingly using military power as a form of diplomacy,^[1] with a notable surge in military diplomacy^[a] stemming from overt displays of hard power. This escalation is largely attributed to the engagement of armed forces in civilian affairs through what is referred to as Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW)^[b] both domestic and overseas, with minimal risk, cost, and time. A revolution in communication technologies has led to increased interactions and interdependencies in the global community, resulting in the influence of soft power extending beyond government domains. Non-

traditional threats such as terrorism and climate change have further underscored the significance of military diplomacy in addressing new challenges that transcend geographical and political boundaries.

In this context, the role of the military has transformed from traditional defence, deterrence, compulsion, and intervention to non-traditional peace-time activities such as crisis prevention, early warning, and post-conflict rebuilding. The aim is to establish stability and security through a "disarmament of the mind", i.e., a change in the attitudes and perceptions of participants and stakeholders. Countries are forming alliances, coordinating operations, working towards interoperability, and sharing technology to achieve a pragmatic strategic outlook towards lasting peace.^[2]

Chinese military diplomacy has played a crucial role in advancing the overall political and diplomatic objectives of Beijing and safeguarding the country's strategic interests. Since the beginning of the 21st century, China has departed from Deng Xiaoping's policy of "Hide your strength, bide your time"^[c] and replaced it with a more aggressive policy that emphasises defence and security and seeks to address the historical grievances the nation endured during the period referred to as the 'Century of Humiliation'.^[d] The United States' (US) heightened focus on Afghanistan, Iraq, terrorism, and the 2008 financial crisis created space for China to strengthen its international presence, enabling it to expand its global influence and enhance regional security.^[3] The People's Liberation Army (PLA) has become more active in military diplomacy, as emphasised by Chinese military writings over the past decade. The stated objectives of military diplomacy, derived from broader PLA missions, include supporting national foreign policy, protecting sovereignty, advancing the national interest, and shaping the international security environment.^[4]

China's Military Diplomacy

Despite possessing the second most powerful army in the world, China is a late entrant in military diplomacy. Eventually, military diplomacy emerged as an important tool for China to leverage its global influence, assisting in the development of a comprehensive approach to evolving multidimensional security threats. China's approach since the beginning of the 21st century has been marked by a paradigm shift from inward to outward, with the expansion and modernisation of the PLA aimed at protecting China's expanding overseas interests. Historically, the PLA has played a minor role in Chinese foreign policy. However, following the establishment of a more nationalist and assertive Chinese foreign policy, the PLA began serving strategic and operational goals to aid the national diplomacy and security strategy.^[5] Thus, tracking the PLA's diplomatic activities^[e] could help in better

understanding the trends in China's diplomatic goals and interests.

China's expanding international interests necessitate enabling a favourable security environment that can facilitate overseas investments and safeguard its citizens and assets globally. Chinese leadership has also indicated that it expects the PLA to play a larger role in expanding Chinese national and security interests abroad through military diplomacy. At an All-Military Diplomatic Work Conference and the 16th Military Attaché Working Conference in 2015, President Xi Jinping highlighted the role of military diplomacy by stating that the PLA's external activities must serve China's larger foreign policy strategy, uphold national security and sovereignty, and promote the military's development. One of the key elements of this goal is building and maintaining the ability to control the narrative and shape favourable global perceptions.^[6]

Indeed, military diplomatic activities have increased under Xi. From 2003 to 2012, China averaged 151 **military diplomatic** activities^[f] per year. The average from 2013 to 2018 was 20 percent higher, at nearly 179 activities per year.^[7] The April 2024 edition of the *China Maritime Report* highlights a notable but partial recovery in China's military diplomacy activities in 2023, following a decline in engagements with foreign militaries during the COVID-19 pandemic.^[8] This international exposure has also provided valuable insights into foreign military strategies, training methods, management techniques, technologies, equipment, and tactics.^[9]

A 2019 defence white paper stated that China's security cooperation around the world supports Xi's vision to create a "community with a shared future for mankind" and "building a new model security partnership".^[10] Articles published in January 2023 reiterated the importance of military diplomacy in achieving China's national rejuvenation, serving the country's diplomatic interests, and protecting or defending national interests abroad. A number of authoritative books from PLA institutes on military diplomacy were also published around 2015, highlighting the emphasis placed on military diplomacy by the Chinese leadership.^[6]

To counter Western domination and highlight its role as global security provider, Chinese military diplomacy aims to cultivate relationships with developing and underdeveloped countries. The year 2023 was the first year for fully implementing the guiding principles laid down at the 20th CCP National Congress. In the area of military diplomacy, the PLA relied on the "*Xi Jinping Thought on Strengthening the Military*"^[h] and "*Xi Jinping Thought on Diplomacy*",^[i] followed the lead of the head of state, and undertook high-level exchanges focused on practical cooperation, with an emphasis on multilateral platforms.^[11] China's military diplomacy

activities in 2023 included senior-level visits and meetings, joint exercises, naval port calls, humanitarian activities, and academic exchanges.^[12] According to Ministry of National Defense (MND) spokesperson Wu Qian, China's military diplomacy in 2023 "served the overall political and diplomatic objectives of China"; "resolutely safeguarded national sovereignty, security and development interests"; "expanded foreign-related military operations"; "made innovative efforts in multilateral diplomacy"; and "contributed to building a community with a shared future for mankind."^[13]

Beijing also promotes various global and regional initiatives, the largest of which are the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and three other global initiatives—i.e., the Global Development Initiative (GDI),^[j] the Global Security Initiative (GSI),^[k] and the Global Civilization Initiative (GCI).^{[l], [14]} These three have been introduced as part of the country's foreign policy under Xi, with the aim of establishing China as a leader in global governance and offering alternatives to the Western-led global order. The complementary and amorphous GDI, GSI, and GCI concepts in China's "Community of Common Destiny"^[m] can be viewed as components of a larger push to establish China as a leader in global governance.^[15]

The GDI and GSI can support military diplomacy by fostering strategic partnerships and military economic activities through dual-use infrastructure and development projects, enhancing security cooperation through joint exercises, intelligence- and infrastructure-sharing agreements, defence industrial cooperation, technology transfer, humanitarian aid, military training, educational exchanges, and peacekeeping efforts. These actions would boost China's global influence and reinforce military relations.

Following purges of the foreign ministry and military in 2023,^[16] Xi is likely to install new field commanders to marshal the civilian and military envoys he has called on to forge a "diplomatic iron army".^[n] In December 2023, former Navy chief Dong Jun was appointed defense minister—a rank-and-file Central Military Commission role whose primary responsibility is liaising with foreign militaries.^[17]

Every Chinese leader since Mao Zedong has implemented a programme to compel the commercial and civil sectors to support the PLA. These programmes are known by various terms, including the Civil-Military Integration (CMI) and the Military-Civil Fusion (MCF). Under Xi, the role of the military and the MCF have been increasingly promoted.^[18] The MCF replaced the CMI and has been frequently discussed in China's Five-Year Plans (FYP) and academic literature.

The MCF strategy is more complex than the CMI; the CMI refers to the cooperation between government

and commercial facilities in Research & Development, manufacturing, and maintenance operations, whereas MCF is a state-led, state-directed programme that leverages state and commercial power to strengthen the PLA. The strategy is aimed at promoting the sharing of resources and collaboration in research and applications to ensure mutually beneficial economic cooperation and national defence construction.^[19] MCF aims to enable China to become an economic, technological, and military superpower by fusing the country's military and civilian industrial and Science & Technology resources.^[20] The PLA also uses military diplomacy through the MCF to gather intelligence, learn new skills, benchmark PLA capabilities against those of other nations, and build interoperability with foreign partners.^[21]

The exposure to innovative Western scientific technologies has enabled China to redirect its intelligence collection towards acquiring advanced dual-use technologies and equipment and leveraging the capabilities of research institutes, universities, and companies. Additionally, collaborative operations with foreign armed forces have not only contributed to the enhancement of Chinese military capabilities but also stimulated the Chinese economy and exports by showcasing cheap Chinese military technologies on the global stage. The military use of Chinese-operated foreign infrastructure is also set to increase as key projects and security relationships mature. Chinese integration into global transport networks allows China to monitor, delay, and potentially obstruct the activities of US and other competitors.^[22] For the purposes of analysis, Chinese military diplomacy objectives can be divided into strategic and operational goals (see Table 1).

Table 1: Chinese Military Diplomatic Activities

Activity	Strategic Goals		Operational Goals	
	Support PRC Diplomacy	Shape Security Environment	Collect Intelligence	Learn New Skills and Benchmarking
Senior-Level Visits				
Hosted	X	X	X	
Abroad	X	X	X	
Dialogues				
Bilateral	X	X	X	
Multilateral	X	X	X	
Military Exercises				
Bilateral	X	X	X	X
Multilateral	X	X	X	X
Naval Port Calls				
Escort Task Force (ETF)	X	X	X	X
Non-Escort Task Force	X	X	X	
Functional Exchanges	X		X	X
Non-Traditional Security Operations				
HA/DR	X	X	X	X
Peacekeeping	X	X	X	X

Source: Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies^[23]

In its Annual China Military Power Report 2023, the US Department of Defense highlighted that, besides the existing overseas military base in Djibouti, China has likely considered adding military logistics facilities in 19 countries.^{[o],[24]} PLA Navy (PLAN) vessels make extensive use of Chinese firms' network of commercial transport infrastructure around the globe to safeguard

China's overseas interests and carry out far-seas protection across the long, vulnerable sea lanes stretching to coastal China. The most significant observations of this existing dual-use capability emerge from the network of nearly 100 ocean ports owned and/or operated by Chinese firms in foreign jurisdictions.^[25] PLAN warships have now made port calls at over one-third of these facilities, utilising China's trade-centric infrastructure network.^[26]

A number of Chinese multinationals, including the China Ocean Shipping Corp (COSCO) and China Merchants Group (CMG), operate global port terminals. Their assets form a vertically integrated transport network that supports China's international trade. These facilities are preferred by the PLAN and also enable PLA peacetime operations far from China. Domestic laws require Chinese firms to give PLA vessels preferential access, share information, and support defence mobilisation. Additionally, these ports collect extensive data on vessels, routes, cargos, and personnel, providing valuable intelligence, especially since military vessels often use commercial ports.^[27] Notably, the PLAN has surpassed the PLA in exercise involvement, underscoring China's commitment to building a blue-water navy.^[28]

China has integrated the trillion-dollar BRI connectivity project with military diplomacy to leverage its leadership role on security issues. Following the launch of the BRI in 2013, China has made infrastructure developments in the vicinity of South Asia, including in Djibouti, the Melaka Gateway port in Malaysia, and an industrial park near Duqm port in Oman.^[29] In South Asia, Chinese military diplomacy footprints are being created in Gwadar (Pakistan), Hambantota (Sri Lanka), Coco Island (Myanmar), and Uthuru Thila Falhu Island (Maldives).^[30] In the Indian Ocean and the West Philippine Sea, a covert conflict is underway, driven by China's maritime militia, known as the Third Sea Force which, disguised as civilian research vessels, pursue Beijing's geopolitical ambitions.^[31] Despite international rulings against its South China Sea claims,^[32] China is militarising the region by building artificial islands and releasing a "new standard" map to assert territorial claims and position itself at key maritime routes to challenge its rivals.^[33]

Besides supporting foreign policy objectives and securing the lines of communication for energy resources and raw materials, military diplomacy has provided China with the opportunity to expand the range and geographic reach of PLA operations globally without raising red flags. Between March 2020 and April 2021, the PLA provided military medical assistance and donations to 56 countries around the world and participated in a UN peacekeeping mission. With the exception of two countries, all of the PLA's medical diplomatic activities targeted BRI

countries.^[34] Beijing is the 10th largest troop and police contributor (2,274 personnel) of any country and the second largest financial supporter, providing nearly 19 percent of UN peacekeeping programme funding.^[35] Four out of six major BRI continental/maritime projects are located in South Asia and are in close proximity to India, including the Chinese China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) flagship project.

The integration of the Silk Road Economic Belt (SREB), the Maritime Silk Route (MSR), the Digital Silk Route (DSR), the Space Information Corridor (SIC), and the Health Silk Road (HSR) with the BRI has further placed China in an unassailable position to monitor, scan, and govern global dynamics at critical choke points through military diplomacy.

Most South Asian countries, with the exception of Bhutan, have joined the BRI. Since 2018, China has committed or invested over US\$150 billion in the economies of Bangladesh, the Maldives, Myanmar, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Afghanistan; China is now the largest overseas investor in the Maldives, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.^[36]

South Asia has long been the hotbed of Sino-Indian strategic competition. A strategically located South Asia in the Western periphery of China, which has almost a quarter of the global population concentrated in only 3.5 percent of the total landmass, provides an ideal opportunity for Chinese westward expansion to the Middle East, Africa, and Europe through both continental and maritime routes and would be instrumental in relieving China from its 'Malacca Dilemma'^[p] and helping fulfill its 'Middle Kingdom Dream'.^[q] An underdeveloped but fertile South Asian region also provides China with ample opportunities to ensure uninterrupted connectivity for its energy, raw materials, and finished products to fuel its economy, ensure food security for its largest population, and absorb surplus capital, production, and construction capabilities particularly to fill the vacuum created after the withdrawal of NATO forces from Afghanistan. China could also use the BRI to win the favour of the large youth population in South Asia to overcome challenges such as unemployment, rampant corruption, illiteracy, and ageing populations. Chinese military diplomacy in South Asia, with the exception of Pakistan, was limited till the end of the 20th century. Chinese approach in the region shifted in the beginning of the 21st century. The approach aims to encircle India through continental and maritime routes for effectively pursuing its String of Pearls strategy.^[r] India contributes 68 percent of the total landmass, 75 percent of the population, and 79 percent of the economic output in South Asia.

The PLA's military diplomacy has grown in the last three decades.^[37] China has prioritised military interactions over civilian engagements, viewing

military diplomacy as more enduring and conducive to advancing security objectives. Almost half of all official visits or exchanges with other nations have been spearheaded by military officers. PLA military diplomacy places emphasis on Asia, which accounted for 41 percent of all interactions in 2003 to 2016. ^[38] Since 2013, the PLA has increased its military diplomacy activities, especially joint military exercises. Nearly a third of these exercises between 2003 to 2016 were with Pakistan, and India was among the top five PLA partners globally for such drills. Sri Lanka and Pakistan were among the top five global destinations for port calls.^[39] Since 2020, however, joint military exercises with South Asia have declined compared to pre-COVID years, due to geopolitical tensions between China and India, leaving Pakistan as the only partner.^[40]

To augment its expeditionary capabilities and protect its overseas strategic interests, China is increasing the strength of its marine corps from 20,000 in 2017 to 100,000 according to latest data.^[41] There are speculations about China's plans to deploy these personnel overseas at the Gwadar Port and Djibouti. China has also enlisted Pakistan to deploy 30,000 Pakistan military personnel to protect Chinese citizens in the CPEC and is also in talks with the Taliban about the safety of Chinese citizens.^[42] After the March 2024 suicide attack on Chinese engineers at Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in Pakistan, China is also considering deploying PLA personnel for the protection of its CPEC assets.^[43]

China has enacted laws and regulations to strengthen the legal framework for implementing military strategies both domestically and internationally. The extraterritorial application of these laws aims to secure cooperation from Chinese citizens, diaspora, and foreign entities, posing distinct challenges to global freedom of expression. Key laws that bolster the legal basis for security and military activities abroad include the National Security Law (2015), the National Intelligence Law (2017), the new maritime law (2021), and the new land border law (2022). Additionally, in June 2022, China signed an order to implement the "Action Guidelines on Military Operations Other Than War" on an experimental basis, allowing the Chinese military to conduct "special military operations" abroad.^{[s],[44]}

While China tailors its public diplomacy approach for each South Asian country, the following tools are common:

- Direct communication and visits between leaders of the Central Military Commission (CMC) and the defence and military leadership of the country.^[45]
- Hosting peace and security fora to introduce BRI and other Chinese initiatives.^[46] Similarly,

military signalling of Chinese leadership displeasure through the cancellation of high-level engagements, dialogues, and exercises.

- Military economic activities through the construction and overseeing of dual-use port/infrastructure/Special Economic Zone (SEZ) facilities, infrastructure-sharing agreements, foreign military bases, defence industrial cooperation, technology transfer, and military production at pivotal chokepoints and use of Chinese space technology for navigation.
- Showcasing, export, maintenance, and training/handling of Chinese military equipment/technologies, including vaccine diplomacy with foreign militaries.^[47]
- Shaping/signalling of military expeditionary capabilities through joint operations, training, exercises, games, and cultural activities in international security operations.^[48]
- Intelligence-sharing agreements.
- Military research/funding/academic collaboration for pursuing higher studies, dual technology identification/transfer, and talent hunting.
- CMF incorporating civilians abroad to reinforce China's security.
- Salami-slicing tactics or carefully calibrated non-war military activities to pursue territorial/maritime claims, including the construction of border defence villages in Tibet.
- Illegal, Unlawful, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing activities in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR)
- New laws to strengthen the legal basis for security and military activities abroad

China's Footprints in South Asian Military Diplomacy

Pakistan

Pakistan is a lynchpin for China to leverage its military diplomacy footprints in South Asia. Chinese military diplomacy in Pakistan can be identified from China's clandestine assistance in the nuclearisation of Pakistan,^[49] the manufacture of military hardware including ballistic missiles at *National Defense Complex, Rawalpindi*^[50] and JF-17 fighter jet

at *Pakistan Aeronautical Complex (PAC) Kamra*,^[51] leasing land to China in Gilgit-Baltistan,^[52] Pakistan gifting two Sindh islands to China,^[53] and the repatriation of Uighurs to China.^[54]

After the March 2024 suicide attack on Chinese nationals in Pakistan, there are speculations that Beijing may push Islamabad to accept Chinese security agencies to guard CPEC projects.^[55] China and Pakistan are also reportedly about to sign a deal that would involve setting up joint security companies and deploying Chinese security personnel for the protection of Chinese projects and workers.^[56]

Nepal

Chinese military diplomacy in Nepal can be identified from professional military and language training, capacity-building for UN Peacekeeping forces, the establishment of a defence university,^[57] the installation of a 5G tower on Mount Everest,^[58] restrictions on Nepalese citizens joining the Indian Army Agniveer Scheme, the possible employment of Gurkhas in the PLA,^[59] the construction of the Lumbini airport,^[60] and the elimination of Tibetan activism in Nepal.^[61]

Bangladesh

Bangladesh is China's second-largest arms importer (17 percent of total export between 2016-20), after Pakistan.^[62] Chinese military diplomacy footprints in Bangladesh can be identified from the delivery/training of military equipment,^[63] regular military exchanges, the construction of a submarine base in Cox Bazar in 2023,^[64] and the modernisation of Chittagong Port. Bangladesh has also allocated two SEZs to China—in Chittagong Port and Dhaka.^[65]

Maldives

Since Muizzu became president in November 2023, there has been an increase in Chinese military diplomacy in the Maldives. The Feydhoo Finolhu island is leased to China,^[66] artificial islands are being developed,^[67] Indian troops have withdrawn from the country,^[68] and the China-Maldives military agreement was signed in March 2024.^[69]

Bhutan

Chinese military diplomacy footprint in Bhutan remains insignificant despite sharing a land border. Through their salami-slicing strategy, the Chinese have built roads and erected new villages and administrative centres for their military in Bhutan.^[70]

Afghanistan

Following US withdrawal, Chinese military diplomacy in Afghanistan can be identified from the setting up of a mountain brigade by China, the reported PLA deployment in Wakhan corridor,^[71] and the creation of the Quadrilateral Coordination and Cooperation Mechanism.^[72] In May 2023, the Taliban agreed to allow China to extend BRI infrastructure into Afghanistan from Pakistan.^[73]

Sri Lanka

In addition to the lease of Hambantota port, Chinese military diplomacy in Sri Lanka is seen in the provision of Mandarin language classes for the police,^[74] the construction of an artificial island off Colombo,^[75] the docking of a surveillance ship at a Sri Lankan port,^[76] and the supply of arms and ammunition to Sri Lanka. There are also rumours that Beijing plans to build a radar facility at Dondra Bay, to monitor maritime activities in the IOR.^[77]

Conclusion

Since the beginning of the 21st century, China has increased its military diplomacy footprint in South Asia. With financial and military support, China is increasing its influence in South Asia, which could pose a security threat and isolate India in its IOR backyard.^[78]

China's military diplomacy leverages the MCF to extend its global reach through economic initiatives like the BRI for dual-use infrastructure projects, defence industrial cooperation, arms export, Chinese space technology, salami-slicing tactics, IUU fishing, and strategic bases at key global chokepoints, including South Asia. In contrast, India's military diplomacy is focused on counterbalancing China in South Asia and the Indian Ocean.

India appears to be ambivalent about using military diplomacy to further its national interests. Instead, it emphasises humanitarian aid, joint exercises, defence cooperation, and regional engagement to build strategic partnerships and regional stability. Overall, India's military diplomacy is yet to reach the desired levels. However, there have been a few qualitative developments in the last decade.^[79]

To offset the military diplomacy by the Chinese as an extra-regional power in South Asia, there is a need to take cognisance of growing Chinese footprints in the region and initiate appropriate timely steps. India's armed forces have versatile capabilities across terrains and climates for conventional and non-traditional operations. Adopting military diplomacy similar to those of China could boost India's global standing and serve as a vital tool for achieving national objectives.

We need to talk about China

24 October 2024, [The Article](#), Stephen Rand

All good things come to an end. For China, that saying might finally be catching up. Since 1978, the country has defied economic gravity, becoming the world's growth engine. As Gordon Brown found out, if you think you've solved the riddle of boom and bust you're just storing up trouble. So brace yourself: the wheels seem to be coming off the Chinese economy, and the consequences will ripple far beyond Beijing's borders. In 2023, China's GDP grew by 5.2%—a figure that would be the envy of any developed nation, but for

China, it's sluggish, well below its pre-pandemic trajectory. Worse still, the World Bank forecasts an even slower 4.8% for 2024, signalling that deeper, structural problems are at play, and they're set to get worse before they improve.

China faces the same headwinds as the wider global economy — sluggish growth, weak international trade, tight monetary policies, and geopolitical flashpoints from the Middle East to Europe. But Beijing has an additional set of self-inflicted wounds: weak domestic demand, a limping property sector, and limited capacity for traditional stimulus measures. It's a toxic brew.

What's more troubling is that China's official numbers, always massaged by state-controlled reporting, may not even tell the full story. Beneath the surface lies a ticking real estate time bomb, a mountain of debt, and creeping social controls—all of which cast long shadows over China's economic future.

At the core of China's dilemma is the absence of a meaningful firewall between the state and the economy. The government wields the business world as just another lever of political control. This has worked fairly well in the past. The Chinese Communist Party forced the population to trade personal freedoms for economic prosperity, but the opening of the markets delivered one of the biggest reductions in poverty in history. That deal was predicated on uninterrupted growth. If the engine stalls, Xi Jinping could face an angry and restless populace.

In an attempt to stave off economic collapse, Beijing has been throwing the kitchen sink at the problem. In the wake of the pandemic, the Chinese government launched a series of fiscal stimuli, starting with \$450 billion in 2020. By 2023, an additional \$110 billion was added, followed by the largest-ever intervention—\$1.07 trillion in 2024. These measures aim to prop up infrastructure, keep the stock market afloat, and shore up the struggling property sector. But none of it seems to be working.

China's debt-to-GDP ratio now exceeds 280%, a figure comparable to Western economies like the UK and US. Yet it's the structure of this debt that's particularly worrying. The central government's debt-to-GDP ratio is a relatively modest 83.6%—low by international standards (the UK sits at 100%, and the US at 120%). But this statistic masks the real danger—soaring local government debt.

By 2023, local government debt in China had ballooned to over \$9 trillion, accounting for 45-50% of the country's GDP. In contrast, local government debt in the US and UK sits at just 15% and 4% of GDP respectively. The difference is stark, but it's not just the scale that's troubling. Chinese local governments rely heavily on off-balance-sheet entities, such as Local Government Financing Vehicles (LGFVs), to finance infrastructure projects and service debt. These LGFVs

are hard to track, prone to corruption, and largely funded by selling land to housing developers — fuel for China’s overinflated property market.

What this means is that central government has effectively offloaded its fiscal problems onto local government, making the latter dependent on land sales to keep afloat. If (or rather, when) the housing bubble bursts, this vital revenue stream will vanish, pushing heavily indebted local authorities into a fiscal crisis. With limited ways to raise funds, many will be forced to default on the mountains of debt they have accumulated. This isn’t just a local issue—it’s a ticking time bomb for the entire Chinese economy.

Every fiscal stimulus Beijing unveils feels like plugging a leaking dyke. Sooner or later, the dam will burst, and the long-term consequences will be devastating. Even if the Communist Party bureaucrats were to undertake serious structural reforms, which they won’t, it’s probably too late.

The property market is the canary in the coal mine for any economy. For decades, China’s real estate sector was the pillar of its economic boom, accounting for almost 30% of its GDP—a staggering figure when compared to the US, where real estate peaked at 18% before the 2008 crash. And now that Chinese pillar of growth is crumbling.

Take Evergrande, one of China’s largest developers, which went bust this year with liabilities exceeding \$300 billion. To put that in perspective, Boeing—currently a topic of international business scrutiny—has liabilities and shareholders’ equity of around \$130 billion. When Lehman Brothers collapsed in 2008, triggering the biggest financial crisis since 1929, its liabilities stood at \$613 billion. But Lehman was a bank. Evergrande is a property developer and a liability of \$300 billion is enough to bring down numerous Lehmans. Evergrande was a housing behemoth.

Yet, despite Evergrande’s failure, the full-scale crisis many expected hasn’t materialised—yet. The Chinese government stepped in, restructuring the company’s debts and managing the collapse. In a free market, such an implosion would have reverberated through the banking sector, potentially triggering a Lehman-style crisis. But in China’s state-controlled system, the damage has been contained. However, other over-leveraged developers are teetering on the edge, and the broader property market remains on the brink of collapse. There just isn’t enough money in the world for the Chinese Communist Party to keep papering over the cracks.

The Evergrande saga has been unfolding since 2021, when it first missed a bond interest payment. Had China allowed the market to take the hit then, it might have been a manageable crisis, a storm in a teacup. But Beijing’s instinct to avoid even small disruptions has simply stored up trouble. Now, China finds itself chucking good money after bad, delaying the

inevitable. A full-scale meltdown in the Chinese property market could dwarf the 2008 financial crisis, and the fallout would engulf not just financial institutions but wipe out local governments and millions of homeowners.

A deep recession in China wouldn’t stay within its borders. Countries in Asia and Africa, whose economies rely on China’s insatiable demand for raw materials, would be hit hard. A sharp drop in Chinese demand could push these nations into recession. Western markets, too, would be shaken, particularly in sectors exposed to China’s real estate and infrastructure spending. Western financial institutions have eagerly ridden the wave of China’s growth—part of your pension is likely invested in it.

But the biggest wildcard is China’s vast reserves of US dollars. Officially, China holds over \$3 trillion in reserves, with estimates suggesting another \$3 trillion in “shadow reserves”. If China released these dollars to prop up its domestic economy, the result could be global financial chaos. It would devalue the dollar and trigger a deflationary spiral—an economic nightmare. As any student of German history knows, it was deflation, not inflation, that brought down the Weimar Republic.

I’m not saying such a deflation is inevitable, but the risks are real. China’s future is increasingly uncertain. Its addiction to debt, a crumbling property market, and growing geopolitical isolation are creating a perfect storm. Without serious reforms, China could face an economic collapse that would send shockwaves across the globe, reshaping the financial landscape for decades to come.

The West, meanwhile, cannot afford to be complacent. We need to prepare for a potential Chinese collapse. The storm might still be gathering, but when it hits, it will be a storm of historic proportions.

From Orchards to Auctions: The Chinese Robbery of Uyghur Wealth. Part II

24 October 2024, [Bitter Winter](#), Abdulhakim Idris

Properties of Uyghur “dissidents” are auctioned on Taobao and end up in the hands of Han Chinese.

The judicial auction process of Uyghur properties is also one of the bitter consequences of the Uyghur Genocide. It begins with the arrest and imprisonment of Uyghur businesspeople, often on so-called “terrorism” or “extremism” charges. These arrests are typically carried out with little due process or transparency. Following arrest, Chinese authorities confiscate the assets of imprisoned Uyghurs. These assets include real estate, businesses, company shares, and personal property. Chinese courts then issue orders for the confiscated assets to be auctioned

off. These court orders are often the only official documentation of arrests and asset seizures.

The seized property is then listed on the judicial auction section of Taobao, an e-commerce platform owned by Alibaba Group. Taobao has been used by the Chinese judicial system since 2012 to auction properties seized in criminal cases and properties that serve as collateral for overdue loans. When a property is auctioned on Taobao, potential buyers can bid on assets ranging from household appliances to multi-million-dollar real estate. Once the auction is complete, the property is transferred to the highest bidder. The proceeds from these sales often go to the Chinese Communist Party rather than to the families of imprisoned Uyghurs.

One example cited in a report on this issue is that of Abduljelil Helil, a prominent Uyghur real estate developer in Kashgar. He was arrested in 2017 for allegedly “aiding terrorist activities.” Following his arrest, several properties owned by his company were auctioned on Taobao. One of these properties is a 17-story building in Kashgar, which was sold in 2021 for 750 million yuan (about \$116 million). Another case is that of Akbar Imin, a wealthy businessman from Khotan who was arrested in 2018 for allegedly making unauthorized Hajj pilgrimages. Following his arrest, his assets were seized and auctioned, including a valuable property in Urumqi sold on Taobao for 23 million yuan (about \$3.6 million).

Similarly, another Uyghur businessman, Rozi Haji Hemdul, was wrongfully arrested in 2017. Following his arrest, his assets were seized and auctioned on Taobao; a large commercial building in Urumqi was sold for over 100 million yuan (approximately \$15.5 million). The UHRP report also revealed a previously unreported case of a Uyghur individual whose property was auctioned in Hotan. The auction listing on Taobao included a court order stating that the individual had been imprisoned for “aiding terrorist activities.” The property being auctioned is a residential building worth several million yuan. In another case, the report found evidence of property auctions linked to multiple members of the same family. Three people, all over the age of 75, were accused of allegedly “aiding terrorist activities.” Shared family properties, including farmland and residences, were auctioned on Taobao.

Since 2019, courts in the Uyghur region have auctioned at least 150 assets on e-commerce sites, ranging from household appliances to real estate and company shares, belonging to at least 21 individuals and worth \$84.8 million. Amid a large-scale government campaign to assimilate Uyghur and other Turkic Muslim communities, tens of millions of dollars in assets belonging to imprisoned Uyghur business owners have been seized and auctioned off.

The role of the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps (XPCC), or Bingtuan as it is known, in confiscating Uyghur assets is also worth highlighting. Bingtuan has been involved in expropriating Uyghurs’ land for agricultural and industrial projects. These projects often prioritize Han Chinese settlers and workers, marginalizing Uyghur farmers and communities. The XPCC is not only involved in expropriating Uyghurs’ land but also manages critical natural resources in the region, including water and minerals. Profits from these resources primarily benefit state-owned enterprises and Han Chinese interests rather than local Uyghur communities.

Bingtuan has been involved in surveillance operations, contributing to the broader control system over the Uyghur population. Its dual role as an economic entity and a paramilitary force enables it to implement government policies effectively. This unique structure allows the XPCC to serve as both an instrument of economic dominance and social control, playing an essential role in the systematic marginalization of Uyghurs. The XPCC’s activities align with broader government strategies aimed at assimilating ethnic minorities and consolidating control over the region. The XPCC ensures that Uyghur communities remain economically dependent and politically repressed through its control over land, resources, and economic activities.

The destruction of Uyghur wealth through genocidal criminalization by the Chinese Communist Party in violation of human rights, international law and universal values is a calculated effort deeply intertwined with policies of control, assimilation, and economic domination. From the early land reforms that confiscated orchards and farms to the current auctions of Uyghur businesses and properties, this process has methodically eroded the financial and cultural foundations of the Uyghur people.

The introduction of organizations such as the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps (XPCC) further increases the scale and intensity of this economic repression, ensuring that the benefits of the region’s wealth flow to Han Chinese settlers and state-owned enterprises. At the same time, Uyghurs are left marginalized and economically powerless. What is happening to Uyghurs is not just a series of isolated incidents but part of a broader strategy to weaken Uyghur identity by removing the material and cultural wealth that sustains it. As the world watches, the brutal confiscation of Uyghurs’ assets continues to reshape the region, leaving behind a legacy of loss, displacement, and economic devastation.

From Orchards to Auctions: The Chinese Robbery of Uyghur Wealth. Part I

23 October 2024, Bitter Winter, Abdulhakim Idris



Sunday market in Khotan. Credits.

How confiscation of Uyghur wealth by China is pushing Uyghurs to poverty.

The genocide policy implemented by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in Xinjiang/East Turkestan is still continuing with all its violence. This genocide policy is felt in every aspect of life, from the placement of Uyghurs in concentration camps to forced sterilization, from the rape of women to the separation of children from their families.

An essential dimension of the Uyghur genocide is the confiscation of the assets of the Uyghur people and their impoverishment. The systematic confiscation of Uyghur wealth in the Uyghur region is not just a modern strategy but a long-standing method of control and repression with deep roots in Chinese policies dating back to the mid-20th century. What once began with land reform in Uyghurs' orchards and farms has evolved into a comprehensive campaign of economic displacement, with Uyghur businesses and property regularly confiscated and auctioned under the guise of counterterrorism or modernization.

Underlying this ongoing expropriation is a broader plan to undermine Uyghur existence, erode their economic base, and reshape the region for Han Chinese settlers' domination. This series explores the historical origins, methods, and effects of China's relentless campaign to deprive the Uyghur people of their wealth, from ancestral orchards to today's auction blocks.

Following the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the CCP initiated land reform policies that were particularly harsh in regions such as Xinjiang (East Turkestan). The government classified many Uyghur farmland owners as "landlords" and confiscated their land, homes, and property. These so-called land reforms were highly politicized and resulted in the indiscriminate confiscation of property from Uyghur families, especially in agricultural areas such as Kashgar.

The atrocities perpetrated by the CCP during the so-called land reforms have reached incredible

proportions. It is reported that the number of victims killed during land reform across China, including Uyghur lands, has exceeded one million. According to one study, families who owned even a pot of sugar or a water buffalo to plow the fields were reported so that their property could be confiscated. Thus, in some parts of China, the so-called land reform has become entirely arbitrary and out of control, with completely innocent peasants falling victim to an indiscriminate mob mentality.

Over the following decades, the Chinese Communist Party's repressive policies continued to erode Uyghurs' economic well-being. The Cultural Revolution, which began in 1966 and lasted for a decade, saw further attacks on Uyghur property owners and intellectuals, while the 1980s and 1990s brought waves of Han Chinese migration that began to change the demographic and economic landscape of the region.

After Xi Jinping took the helm of China in 2012, repression in the Uyghurs' homeland has intensified. In recent years, notably in 2014, he launched the "Strike Hard Campaign." Since its introduction, the confiscation of Uyghurs' assets has accelerated dramatically. On the other hand, Xi Jinping announced the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in 2013. While projects stretching from China to Europe and Africa were on the agenda, the Chinese Communist Party claimed that it aimed for the world's equal economic growth. Xi gives the message that China will eradicate poverty worldwide at every opportunity.

However, when it comes to Uyghurs, this so-called equal development disappears. Instead, the Chinese government has implemented repressive policies under the guise of fighting so-called extremism. The Beijing government uses a variety of methods to confiscate Uyghurs' assets under the guise of counterterrorism, economic development or modernization initiatives. One of the most common strategies is land expropriation, where large tracts of agricultural land are taken from Uyghur farmers for industrial development, resource extraction projects, or redistribution to Han Chinese settlers. The compensation given to Uyghurs whose property is confiscated is often far below market value and insufficient for Uyghurs to maintain their previous standard of living. The loss of fertile land that once belonged to Uyghurs represents a significant financial blow and severs Uyghurs' ties to their ancestral lands. When looking at the Chinese Communist Party's methods of confiscation, the expropriation of businesses, especially in sectors such as agriculture, textiles, and tourism, is also a common occurrence. Uyghur-owned businesses are forcibly transferred to state ownership or Han Chinese management. These seizures are often carried out under the pretext of so-called anti-terrorism investigations or allegations of

financial irregularities based on no evidence. Many Uyghur business owners have been detained in internment camps, and their assets have been frozen or confiscated in their absence. Another way in which Uyghurs' assets are being removed is through so-called urban renewal programs. For example, urban renewal projects have resulted in the demolition of traditional Uyghur neighborhoods in cities such as Kashgar, Khotan, and Urumqi. Residents are often relocated to modern apartment blocks located far from their communities and previous livelihoods. These displacements disrupt the social networks and economic patterns that have sustained Uyghur communities for generations.

Another tool often used by the authorities is asset freezes. Bank accounts and property of Uyghurs accused of so-called "extremism" or "separatism" are usually frozen, leaving families destitute. Even Uyghurs not directly accused of crimes see their assets frozen if they have suspected family members. In addition to financial assets, items of cultural and historical significance, including artwork, manuscripts, and religious artifacts, have been confiscated from Uyghur families and institutions. This is not only a financial loss, but also the erasure of Uyghur cultural heritage.

The confiscation of Uyghur wealth serves multiple purposes for the genocidal Chinese Communist Party. First, the government is weakening the economic base of Uyghur society, making the population more dependent on state support and employment, and increasing pressure on individuals and communities. The confiscation of Uyghur assets also facilitates the transfer of resources to Han Chinese settlers and state-owned companies, supporting the government's efforts to change the demographic and economic balance of the region.

Moreover, the relocation of Uyghurs from traditional neighborhoods to modern, easily monitored housing complexes provides for increased surveillance and control over Uyghur communities in violation of human rights. By separating Uyghurs from their traditional economic activities and living spaces, the government aims to remove the material basis of Uyghur culture and identity. Asset confiscation also serves as a powerful tool to punish those who do not demonstrate their loyalty to the Chinese Communist Party and to deter others from resisting government policies.

The systematic confiscation of Uyghurs' assets has led to widespread economic displacement and marginalization. Many Uyghurs have been forced from self-sufficient agricultural or small business lifestyles into low-wage labor or unemployment. This economic repression serves as a powerful tool of control and assimilation, making it increasingly difficult

for Uyghurs to maintain their traditional way of life or achieve economic independence.

The loss of agricultural livelihoods has been one of the most devastating impacts. As farmland has been converted for industrial use or confiscated for state-run agricultural projects, many Uyghur farmers have lost their primary source of income. Economic development has been concentrated in cities, leaving rural Uyghur communities behind. Urban renewal projects have often pushed Uyghurs to the peripheries of cities, away from economic opportunities. Discrimination in favor of Han Chinese in hiring is also widespread in the Uyghur region. Uyghurs face widespread discrimination in hiring, especially for high-paying jobs in the growing industrial and service sectors. Many job postings explicitly state preferences for Han Chinese applicants or require fluency in Mandarin, effectively excluding many Uyghurs.

China's Agents of Chaos

22 October 2024, [Foreign Affairs](#), Oriana Skylar Mastro

The Military Logic of Beijing's Growing Partnerships

At a joint press conference in June 2024, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg fretted over the strengthening ties between China, Iran, North Korea, and Russia. They are hardly the only politicians to have done so. The informal pact between these four autocracies has become a major focus in Washington, described by both Democratic and Republican officials as a new "axis of evil." These countries, analysts point out, coordinate military and diplomatic activity. They have similar rhetoric and common interests. And they seem to share one aim above all: weakening the United States.

Each of these countries, by itself, has formidable capabilities. But [China](#) is the bloc's central player. It has the biggest population and economy, and it doles out the most aid. Beijing is North Korea's primary trade ally and benefactor. It has helped Iran contend with international sanctions, signing a "comprehensive strategic partnership" agreement with Tehran in 2021. And China has provided Russia with over \$9 billion in dual-use items—goods with both commercial and military applications—since the latter's invasion of Ukraine. This support has kept Russia's economy from collapsing, despite Western sanctions aimed at crippling the country's war effort. (Chinese goods now make up 38 percent of all imports into Russia.)

But China doesn't want to be seen as the leader of this group. It doesn't even want to be viewed as a member. In April 2023, Chinese Premier Li Qiang claimed that "China-Russia relations adhere to the principles of nonalignment, nonconfrontation, and nontargeting of third parties." In 2016, Chinese Vice Minister of

Foreign Affairs Fu Ying said that Beijing had “no interest” in forming “an anti-U.S. or anti-Western bloc of any kind.” The government has, accordingly, refrained from signing defense treaties with Iran and Russia. It sometimes works against Iranian, North Korean, and Russian positions in international conflicts.

There is a reason for this ambiguity. China wants to supplant the [United States](#) as the world’s dominant power, and although partnering with Iran, North Korea, and Russia helps Beijing in that effort, the trio can also undermine its aims. The three states weaken Washington by attracting its resources and distracting it from Beijing. But they have also greatly antagonized powerful neighbors—such as Germany, Japan, and Saudi Arabia—that China doesn’t want to alienate. As a result, Chinese officials must walk a fine line. Their relationship with the axis must be close enough that they can wield it, but not so close that they are blamed for its misbehavior.

Unfortunately, the United States is letting China have the best of both worlds. Washington has been too focused on figuring out whether these countries will form a traditional defense alliance to understand Beijing’s existing entrepreneurial approach to partnerships—or to see that it is very successful. Under the present arrangement, [Iran](#), North Korea, and Russia all cause trouble for the West. Yet because those countries are not formal Chinese allies, Washington’s partners have not penalized China for their transgressions. In fact, if anything, the axis is splitting the U.S. alliance system. Many of the United States’ friends, preoccupied with their own regional troublemakers, have refused to join with Washington in its competition against Beijing.

China’s approach could be especially effective in the event of a war. If Beijing and Washington had to battle, the axis is now powerful enough and coordinated enough on military matters that it could fight together and defeat the United States. But because axis states are not a tightly coordinated bloc, they could just as easily launch separate conflicts that divide American resources, distract U.S. allies, and thus help Beijing prevail.

Washington must therefore change course. Rather than trying to guess how close these countries are to each other or working to pull them apart, the U.S. government must start treating them as the autocratic bloc they are. It must encourage its allies around the globe to do the same. And it needs to treat China as the master of the axis—whether or not that is the reality of the situation.

HALF IN, HALF OUT

In 1950, at the onset of the [Cold War](#), the Chinese Communist Party and the Soviet Communist Party formalized a 30-year Treaty of Friendship, Alliance, and Mutual Assistance. The agreement, forged in the

aftermath of the Communists’ victory over the Nationalists in the Chinese Civil War, was framed by both sides as the natural coming together of two revolutionary socialist states. As such, it called on Beijing and Moscow to defend and consult each other “regarding all important international questions affecting the common interests of the Soviet Union and China.”

In practice, however, the Chinese-Soviet relationship quickly became complicated. The countries did often collaborate, most notably by supporting North Korean founder Kim Il Sung in his war against South Korea. But they also clashed over who would lead the communist bloc. Beijing and Moscow, for example, vied to arm the North Vietnamese. China resisted Soviet efforts to forge a détente with the United States.

Today, China’s relationship with U.S. antagonists is again half in, half out. There is, on the one hand, plenty of cooperation. In 2021, Beijing renewed the Chinese–North Korean mutual defense treaty, and as of 2023, China purchases 90 percent of Iran’s oil. China, Iran, and Russia conduct regular joint naval exercises in the Gulf of Oman. And in 2018, China agreed to join Russia in a national military exercise in which the two countries practiced, among other things, how they might handle war on the Korean Peninsula. But Beijing has not endorsed the invasion of Ukraine, nor has it provided direct military aid. When Russian President Vladimir Putin and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un met in June and signed a treaty in which they pledged to support each other militarily if either was attacked, the Chinese Foreign Ministry called it a bilateral matter between Moscow and Pyongyang. When the United Arab Emirates had a maritime dispute with Iran, Beijing released a joint statement with the UAE declaring its support for a “peaceful solution.” And in January 2024, Chinese officials told their Iranian counterparts to curb Houthi attacks on Red Sea shipping, signaling that continued hostilities might jeopardize their economic relationship.

During the Cold War, China paid a price for sending mixed messages to its Soviet ally. Over time, Moscow moved away from Beijing, eventually leading to what analysts call the Sino-Soviet split. But this time, China’s authoritarian partners appear not to mind Russia’s behavior. Despite Beijing’s detachment, China is getting natural gas from Russia at a 44 percent discount compared with what Europe pays. Iran did not sign a letter condemning China for its violence against the Uyghurs in Xinjiang, and Tehran has offered Beijing political support for its takeover of Hong Kong and its claims to Taiwan.

All the while, Beijing has managed to stay on good terms with most U.S. allies. South Korea, and to a degree Japan, does not fully support U.S. deterrence efforts against China. Beijing remains both Japan’s and South Korea’s largest trading partner, even though it

aids North Korea. Beijing has put enough distance between itself and Moscow that the EU felt comfortable trading over \$800 billion in goods with China in 2023, or 15 percent of the EU's total trade. During his 2023 visit to China, French President Emmanuel Macron said that his country would not blindly follow the United States in crises that are not its concern, specifically in reference to Taiwan. German Chancellor Olaf Scholz has on multiple occasions claimed that Germany is not a part of a geopolitical bloc and will not join one. Similarly, China's partnership with Iran has not jeopardized its ties with the Gulf States or Israel.

ORDER OF DISORDER

At first, it may seem as if China's mixed approach to Iran, North Korea, and [Russia](#) should be tolerable for the United States. Under the status quo, after all, China is not giving Russia outright military aid with which to attack Ukraine. Beijing continues to support diplomacy to halt Iran's nuclear program. The EU-Chinese relationship, meanwhile, could moderate Iran's behavior.

The status quo is better than a situation in which Beijing provides full-throated support for these countries. But U.S. officials should take no comfort in the current situation. Neither the distance between China and its partners nor Beijing's outreach to the West has truly acted as a constraint. China may occasionally wag its finger at Iran or quietly criticize Russia, but when push comes to shove, it is giving an enormous amount of help to these states. Beijing, for example, bolstered a disinformation campaign in 2022 claiming that U.S.-funded Ukrainian biolabs were making biological weapons—helping provide the justification for the invasion of Ukraine. The states work together to challenge the traditional human rights language used by international institutions, arguing that concepts such as civil liberties and the rule of law are exclusively Western constructs. Iran, North Korea, and Russia all use Chinese technology to repress their populations.

Beijing's support for these states is most pronounced on matters of security and defense. It has provided them with sophisticated military technology and assistance. It has shared intelligence with Russia, including from its extensive satellite network, helping Moscow's war efforts. Moscow, in turn, supplies Beijing with billions of dollars in weapons annually. These shipments have dramatically improved China's ability to target U.S. jets, bases, and ships. Moscow has also given Beijing technology it can use to develop or enhance its domestic weapons production.

Russia's partnership with China adds a terrifying new dynamic to U.S. nuclear calculations.

Partly as a result of this cooperation, the United States may be at a military disadvantage for the first time in decades. China alone has more active soldiers than

does the United States. Beijing and Moscow together have more warships and tanks than Washington. Given how readily the former two governments cooperate, there is a good chance they might overpower U.S. forces if they fought together in a single military theater—for example, if China and Russia aid North Korea in a war against its southern neighbor or if Russia helps China with an attack on [Taiwan](#).

The autocratic quad could also wreak havoc by fighting separately but simultaneously. The United States would struggle to win a two-front war. Instead, the American armed forces are structured to fight one major war while deterring smaller regional conflicts. That means if wars were raging in Europe, in the Middle East, on the Korean Peninsula, and over Taiwan, the United States would have to leave all but one of those theaters to largely fend for itself, at least initially.

Many U.S. allies have capable militaries that could battle axis members. But because they face their own regional demons, they are reluctant to help other states with their conflicts. In the event of a multifront war, they will want to keep their forces at home for self-defense. That means Washington cannot count on its allies to help U.S. troops even where it needs them most. If, for instance, the United States focused on defending Taiwan while North Korea was trying to seize South Korea, then Seoul and Tokyo would be either entirely or largely unwilling to give the United States support. In fact, concerns about North Korea have already made South Korea reluctant to let U.S. forces stationed within its borders take any actions beyond the Korean Peninsula. Europe, trying to protect its commercial ties, would almost certainly stay out of such a conflict.

To be sure, China would struggle to help its partners with their own fights if it had to take on the United States. During the Chinese Civil War, the Communists lost Taiwan partly because they chose to aid North Korea, giving U.S. President Harry Truman time to dispatch the Seventh Fleet to the Taiwan Strait and prevent an invasion. Chinese leader [Xi Jinping](#) will not want to repeat that mistake.

But any of these axis members can create crises that divert U.S. and allied resources without launching risky, full-blown conflicts. They can also give China an edge without joining its war. Russia, for example, could help China withstand an energy blockade by sending it oil and gas overland. The Eastern Siberia–Pacific Ocean pipeline, which sends Russian oil to Asian markets, can export about 35 million metric tons annually to China. The Power of Siberia pipeline, which transports natural gas to China, is expected to send 38 billion cubic meters per year by 2025—nearly equal to the amount of natural gas consumed annually by Australia. Moscow could also contribute its capital and labor to help China with manufacturing. The two

states already have joint manufacturing systems in place, including those related to making weapons.

If Moscow chose to become just slightly more involved in a U.S.-Chinese war, it would create even bigger headaches. Russian fighter jets, for instance, could conduct defensive joint air patrols with Chinese forces, as they have done in the past. The United States might then refrain from hitting Chinese targets, if only to stop Russia from becoming a direct combatant.

Whatever Russia's degree of involvement, its partnership with China adds a terrifying new dynamic to U.S. calculations. In the past, the United States has never had to contend with more than one nuclear peer. Now, with Beijing and Moscow, it has two. Unfortunately for Washington (and the world), attempts to prevent conflict with one of these governments could undermine deterrence against the other. For example, the United States signed the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty with the Soviet Union in 1987 to eliminate their ground-launched intermediate-range missiles. It broadly succeeded and lowered tensions between the two countries. But the deal also left Beijing unconstrained, helping it gain a significant regional advantage in intermediate-range ballistic missiles. Future negotiations between any two of the three countries could again give the third an incentive for nuclear proliferation.

UNITE AND CONQUER

Some American strategists have suggested that to handle this axis, Washington should try dividing it. U.S. officials appear to be listening. In March 2023, for example, Blinken sought to drive a wedge between Beijing and Moscow by preying on the latter's insecurities: "Russia is very much the junior partner in this relationship," he said. Such efforts could hark back to the Cold War, when Washington worked to divide the fraught Chinese-Soviet axis. As Beijing and Moscow grew more distant, U.S. diplomats established channels of communication with their Chinese counterparts, leading to U.S. President Richard Nixon's visit to China in 1972. Seven years later, China and the United States established formal relations. Eventually, they even worked together to spy on the Soviets.

But today, such efforts would be for naught. The autocratic axis provides Beijing with political support, energy supplies, and technology that it just cannot get from the West. Attempts to convince any of these countries that their autocratic colleagues present a greater threat than the United States are as ineffective as they are foolish.

Instead of trying to split the bloc, the United States must do the opposite: treat its members as entirely interlinked. That means ensuring poor behavior on the part of one leads to penalties for the others. Instead of exclusively sanctioning Chinese companies that

support Russia's war effort, the United States could treat the Chinese state as a supporting entity and implement economic restrictions against the whole country. It could tell Beijing those restrictions will remain in place until Russia comes to the negotiating table. Beijing will cry foul, claiming it has no influence over Moscow. This might, indeed, be the case. But with skin in the game, China will work harder to acquire the influence it needs to successfully pressure Russia.

If Washington wants to be the leader of the whole world, it will need to gain support from autocracies.

Grouping China and its partners could also help Washington unify its own coalition. Europe may not fully grasp the threat Beijing poses to the international order, but it surely understands the dangers emanating from Moscow. Yet the United States has not done nearly enough to explain to European countries why China and Russia are broadly connected, instead emphasizing the narrow links Beijing has to Moscow's invasion. If Washington can explain the bigger relationship, Europeans will be more likely to take Beijing's security challenge seriously and be more proactive in attempting to shape its behavior.

Yet the United States should still avoid an ideological approach. Although it should treat these autocratic countries as a bloc, it should avoid framing the global competition as one of democracies against autocracies. Autocratic partners (such as Saudi Arabia) will not want to help Washington prevail against China if the contest is about systems of government. Neither will many potential democratic partners in the developing world, such as Brazil, Indonesia, and South Africa. In fact, China has built a wide network of friends by being regime agnostic and focusing on development. In his speeches to foreign audiences, for example, Xi loves to play up Beijing's respect for "state sovereignty," its commitment to "noninterference," and its desire to see poor countries grow rich. The developing world has listened. In the summer of 2024, when Xi met with José Ramos-Horta, the president of East Timor—a small, impoverished, and highly democratic state—Ramos-Horta declared that he did not care about great-power rivalries or the character of his country's allies. If China can alleviate East Timor's poverty and malnutrition, Ramos-Horta said, "then China is my hero."

Washington should take a page from Beijing's book. If it wants to be the leader of the whole world, not just the free world, it will need to gain support from developing democracies and autocracies alike. (According to Freedom House, 80 percent of people on earth live in countries that are either not free or only partly free.) It needs to be more agile, tailoring its offerings and messaging to address what each country cares about. This process involves not only offering

more aid but also contributing to the right types of projects, such as ones related to health care, higher education, and cybersecurity. It means greater diplomatic engagement, military cooperation, and people-to-people ties.

It is true that, by applying more pressure, Washington and its allies may push Beijing to forge stronger connections with Iran, North Korea, and Russia. But China already substantially benefits from these relationships, so the United States has no choice but to take a tougher stance. The reality is that anything the United States does to impose costs on China will upset Beijing. The only way to avoid that is to give it what it wants, which is territorial control over Taiwan, maritime control of the South China Sea, and economic, military, and political dominance in Asia. Washington cannot be afraid to make China pay for helping bad actors, especially when holding back lets Beijing pretend to be above the fray.

Guest Opinion: False narratives about Xinjiang won't halt its development

20 October 2024, [Xinhua](#), Mohammad Abu Shaikha

Xinjiang has come a long way, from a region hit by extremism to a thriving hub of development. The government's focus on unity and opportunity has dramatically changed the region.

When China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region was subjected to rampant acts of sabotage, violence and extremism for decades till about eight years ago, some Western countries saw an opportunity to spread disinformation and destabilize the Chinese economy. The extremists planned and carried out thousands of bombings, assassinations, poisonings, arson attacks and other violent crimes.

Western countries have misrepresented the treatment of Uygurs in the region. On a visit to Xinjiang in 2023, I attended an anti-extremism exhibition. No nation would shy away from addressing extremist forces.

Xinjiang is home to over 10 million Muslims belonging to the Uygur ethnic group. While there, we prayed in an ancient mosque. I observed Muslims leading joyful lives and experiencing the same freedoms as other Chinese citizens across the nation.

The roads are clean and wide, there are no traffic jams, and the road signs are written in three languages: Uygur, Chinese, and English. The Uygurs and various other ethnic minorities can engage in their cultural practices, traditions, and customs.



An aerial drone photo taken on April 25, 2024 shows a wind farm in Dabancheng District of Urumqi, northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. (Xinhua/Chen Shuo)

After 2016, the region began to recover from the disease that afflicted it and became safer day by day. It focused on development, with the government offering opportunities to anyone inclined to work and improve their living conditions. The government also established schools and education centers for Islamic studies throughout Xinjiang. These centers and religious institutions strive to provide clerics with accurate understandings of Islam, enabling them to teach Muslims more effectively.

Xinjiang has witnessed rapid transformation due to China's push for mega-development projects. It has become a vital hub on the Silk Road Economic Belt, connecting China with Southeast, South, and Central Asia and extending to Russia and Europe.

The Chinese government works around the clock to enhance the well-being of Xinjiang's residents and foster unity among all ethnic groups. Residents work in agriculture, industry, trade, and advanced technology, among other fields.

Xinjiang has become an investment hub for many foreign companies in various sectors, such as manufacturing, mining, leasing, business services, software, information technology, finance, agriculture, retail and wholesale industry.

Security and safety, in addition to the region's natural resources, such as oil, gas, and coal, plays a significant role in attracting investment.

China's relations with the Arab world are another shining point. The People's Republic of China seeks not to interfere in the affairs of any Arab country but instead provides humanitarian and logistical assistance and promotes joint cooperation. All Arab countries have signed cooperation documents with China on the Belt and Road Initiative.

Arab countries want good relations with all countries based on win-win outcomes and desire relations free of hegemonic intent.

Xinjiang has come a long way, from a region hit by extremism to a thriving hub of development. The government's focus on unity and opportunity has dramatically changed the region. Xinjiang's progress also strengthens China's ties with the Arab world, promoting collaboration and mutual benefit.

Value Vacuum: China's command versus India's concessions

19 October 2024, [The Economic Times](#)

Let's start with a comparison of two countries: Country A: Once highly protectionist, with tariffs over 30%, it still imposes significant trade restrictions. Capital flows are tightly controlled, the banking sector is state-regulated, and foreign asset ownership is limited. Corruption, lack of elections, and weak intellectual property laws persist, making it a piracy hub. Many state-owned enterprises survive on government subsidies despite losses. Country B has long maintained a highly protectionist trade policy, with industrial tariffs averaging 40-55%. Most of the population lacks voting rights, and electoral fraud is common. Corruption is rampant, with government positions sold to political backers, and civil servants are not hired through competitive processes. Public finances are unstable, marked by frequent defaults, and foreign investors face significant discrimination. In banking, foreign shareholders are barred from leadership or voting roles unless they reside locally. The absence of competition law enables unchecked monopolies, while intellectual property protection, especially for foreign copyrights, remains weak. Many may recognize Country A as [China](#) around 2010, but fewer may realize that Country B is the United States circa 1880, a time when it was poorer than China in 2010. As Ha Joon Chang notes in *23 Things They Don't Tell You About Capitalism*, nearly all wealthy nations, including Britain and the US, rose to prosperity through protectionism, subsidies, and policies they now discourage developing countries from adopting.

The Financial Times recently reported that Xiaohongshu, China's Instagram-like platform, achieved \$1 billion in sales and \$200 million in profits in the first quarter of the year. With over 300 million users and a valuation exceeding \$17 billion, its success is remarkable.

Xiaohongshu is part of a growing list of companies that have created significant wealth by adapting successful Western business models, including Tencent Holdings (WeChat, similar to WhatsApp, and QQ, akin to Facebook Messenger), Weibo and Toutiao (modelled after Twitter), Baidu (Google), Youku (YouTube), Zhihu (Quora), Dianping (Yelp), and Didi Chuxing (Uber).

Collectively, these companies have a combined market valuation exceeding \$1 trillion, based on the market capitalization of listed entities and estimates for those that remain private.

Richard McGregor writes in *The Party* that China's ability to maintain tight control over its population is rooted in the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP's) pervasive governance, which extends across all levels of society.

The CCP's mechanisms of control include the use of surveillance, centralisation of authority, and management of personnel, ensuring loyalty and compliance through appointments controlled by the Central Organization Department. This tight governance over the population allows the Party to implement policies that prioritize strategic national goals over individual liberties.

When combined with the CCP's ability to regulate which companies can operate within its borders, this control fosters an environment where domestic enterprises are heavily favoured. By ensuring that economic activities align with national interests and maintaining political loyalty within businesses, the party creates an ecosystem in which domestic companies can thrive, especially in sectors critical to China's global ambitions. The synergy between population control and business regulation has allowed China to build large, valuable domestic companies that are integral to its economy. In India, individual liberties, including economic freedom, are highly valued, which allows for minimal restrictions on which companies can operate within the country. Unlike countries that impose tight controls on the market and limit foreign or private enterprises, India fosters an open environment where companies of all kinds can compete, leading to significant opportunities for individuals, such as influencers, to earn substantial income. According to a study by *Kofluence*, social media influencers in India earn anywhere between Rs 20,000 to Rs 2,00,000 per month, depending on their following and engagement rate. For instance, fashion influencers earn between 40 to 60 paisa per view, while financial content creators can command Rs 3-4 per view.

However, despite the high potential earnings for individual influencers, this openness and lack of stringent regulation on companies mean that overall, businesses do not generate the same level of concentrated value as those in more controlled markets, like China. This results in a more fragmented ecosystem where individual successes are prominent, but domestic companies struggle to reach a large scale of influence and profitability.

For perspective, India's largest listed company has a market cap of around \$250 billion. And, only 83 Indian companies generate over \$1 billion in quarterly

revenue, and just 54 report quarterly profits exceeding \$200 million, highlighting the scale of China's Instagram-like startup in comparison. The contrast between China and India highlights the trade-offs inherent in different development models. China has leveraged state control to build dominant corporations aligned with national interests, while India has focused on creating opportunities for individuals in a free-market environment. As a result, India's vast demographic potential is increasingly being harnessed by global tech giants, rather than fuelling the growth of Indian corporate giants. The key challenge will be finding the right balance between individual opportunity and corporate power—between openness and strategic control—so that India's demographic potential benefits not only individuals but the nation as a whole.

Getting Hongkongers to retire in mainland China isn't the answer to poverty: experts

19 October 2024, [SCMP](#), Fiona Sun and Emily Hung

Measures unveiled in policy address do not tackle widening wealth gap and suggest government is shirking responsibilities, they say

Encouraging Hongkongers to retire across the border offers an alternative for some but cannot be the city's solution to poverty, welfare experts and groups have said while calling for a blueprint with long-term strategies.

They also urged the government to spend money more effectively on poverty alleviation and supporting those in need amid the city's surging expenditure on welfare.

The calls were made after Chief Executive John Lee Ka-chiu delivered his third policy address on Wednesday where he laid out plans to improve people's livelihood, which experts said were lacking.

"The expenditure on welfare has been on the rise while the poverty issue has not been solved. That is because the money was not spent effectively," Professor Paul Yip Siu-fai of the University of Hong Kong (HKU) said.

Lee highlighted in his policy address that more than HK\$300 million (US\$38.6 million) was spent on social welfare daily, topping the public expenditure of all policy portfolios.

Official statistics showed that the city set aside about HK\$127 billion for social welfare in the 2024-25 financial year, which translates to about HK\$350 million a day.

Such expenses have more than doubled over the past decade from about HK\$58 billion in 2015-16, according to the data.

"We should not be proud of the increasing welfare expenses," Yip, an associate dean of the faculty of social sciences, said.

He said that despite the rising expenditures, the circumstances of low-income families had worsened because of the impact of the economic slowdown on sectors such as the service industry that hit poor workers hard.

The academic urged authorities to review the effectiveness of the expenses on welfare policies and make better use of the funds.

Welfare policies encouraging elderly residents to settle in mainland China were laid out in this year's policy address, including a three-year pilot scheme to subsidise those living in designated care homes in neighbouring Guangdong province.

The scheme, to be launched next year, will offer HK\$5,000 a month to each of those receiving the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) allowance, with a quota of 1,000 in total.

Seven more care homes will be added to the Residential Care Services Scheme in Guangdong, taking the total for elderly Hongkongers to 11.

Under the scheme, the government will also pay the part of medical bills not covered by the urban-rural resident basic medical insurance, and also subject to a cap.

Another pilot scheme that allows elderly residents to use healthcare vouchers over the border will be extended to all the mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area, a policy push to link nine Guangdong cities, Hong Kong and Macau.

Nelson Chow Wing-sun, an emeritus professor at HKU's department of social work and social administration, said the incentives signalled a trend of authorities encouraging retirees to live in the bay area's mainland cities.

But he said such measures, with their quotas, would more benefit those who had already settled across the border and were not attractive enough to persuade others to uproot themselves.

"The Greater Bay Area is no longer just a concept but has already become a real choice for those who have retired," he said. "But still, people have to give up a lot of things, such as public housing, to move and settle across the border."

Chow urged the government to also look into supporting those who were willing to live in communities across the border rather than in care facilities and address their top concerns by subsidising them to buy local health insurance to cover medical expenses.

Social welfare lawmaker Tik Chi-yuen said that despite the alternative retirement option, sending older residents across the border was not going to solve the city's poverty and elderly support issues.

"Most people still intend to remain in Hong Kong after they retire," he said. "The government cannot shirk its responsibility of offering care for them."

The legislator noted that most of the welfare measures in this year's policy address simply involved the addition of quotas to existing schemes.

Among such measures is a 20 per cent increase in the number of vouchers for elderly people to pay for residential care to a total of 6,000.

Other policies include the expansion of the Strive and Rise Programme – a mentorship scheme targeting students from poor families – and the addition of three more community living rooms used by substandard housing households.

Sze Lai-shan, deputy director of NGO the Society for Community Organisation, said that even the scale of such expansion was limited, with many of those in need left without support.

Aside from rolling out or maintaining individual schemes, both Sze and Tik called on the government to formulate a blueprint with holistic, long-term strategies.

Tik said the blueprint should establish a clear definition of poverty, collect data on the poor population and set out targets on what should be achieved and when.

"A daily expenditure of more than HK\$300 million does not mean the job has been done, as Hong Kong is facing a widening wealth gap and a rapidly ageing population," Tik said.

PRC at 75: In China under Xi Jinping, people run or 'lie flat'

19 October 2024, [RFA](#), Hsia Hsiao-hwa

Xi's policies run counter to the economic reforms of Deng Xiaoping, sparking fears of a return to the Mao era.

When Xi Jinping took his place as leader of the ruling Chinese Communist Party in 2012, some commentators expected he would be a weak president beset by factional strife in the wake of the jailing of former Chongqing party chief Bo Xilai and cryptic official references to rumors of a coup in Beijing.

Yet Xi has evoked more comparisons with late supreme leader Mao Zedong than any other leader since Mao's death in 1976, with his cult of personality, his abolition of presidential term limits and his intolerance of any kind of public criticism or protest, including in Hong Kong.

Blamed by many outside China for his government's handling of the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic in Wuhan, Xi seriously damaged his reputation among the Chinese people with three years of grueling lockdowns that saw some people welded into their

own apartments and others carted off to mass quarantine camps in the middle of the night.

While the zero-COVID years eventually ended in late 2022 amid nationwide protests known as the "white paper" movement, a mass exodus of people dubbed the "run" movement was already under way. Refugees and dissidents, private sector executives and middle-class families with children have been willing to trek through the Central American rainforest to get away from life in China, in the hope of gaining political asylum in the United States.

"I left China for Ecuador and Colombia, then walked north through the rain forest," one migrant -- an author whose writings were banned under Xi -- told RFA Mandarin in a recent interview. "I left on Aug. 8 and entered the United States on Oct. 21."

"I was limping from my second day in the rainforest, and I was robbed by bandits," the person said. "I could have died."



A migrant from China, exhausted from the heat, rests on the shoulder of a fellow migrant from Nicaragua after walking into the U.S. at Jacumba Hot Springs, California, on June 5, 2024. (Frederic J. Brown/AFP)

Another recent migrant -- a writer -- said they left because everything they wrote had been banned.

"My articles were banned from newspapers and magazines, my name was not allowed to be mentioned, and I couldn't take part in public events," they said. "I realized if I stayed in China, my life would just be a huge disaster, so I fled in a hurry."

Xu Maoan, a former financial manager in a private company, said he used to make a good professional salary of 10,000 yuan (US\$1,400) a month, but lost his job due to the COVID-19 restrictions.

He never succeeded in finding another, despite sending out hundreds of resumes, and recently joined many others making the trek through the rainforest to the U.S. border.

"I didn't find out about the white paper movement until I got to the United States," Xu told RFA Mandarin. "All news of it was blocked in China."

Reversing course?

But it wasn't just the pandemic; Xu and many like him were growing increasingly concerned that Xi was reversing the investor-friendly policies of late

supreme leader Deng Xiaoping, with his confrontational attitude to Western trading partners and hair-trigger sensitivity to "national security," an elastic term used to describe any activity that could threaten or undermine the ruling Chinese Communist Party's official narrative.

"I have personally experienced how the government drove away foreign investors and cracked down on the private sector, in the name of national security," Xu said. "The government is in financial difficulty, so if they don't like you, they raid you."

"[Xi] quarreled with Europe and the United States, frightening foreign investors, who withdrew to Vietnam and India," he said. "His values are the opposite [of Deng Xiaoping's]."

"The domestic economy has collapsed, but they just won't admit it," he said. "I was afraid we would be going back to the days of famine and forced labor of the Mao era, so I left in a hurry."

Xi's abolition of presidential term limits in 2018 and the creation of what some fear is a Mao-style cult of personality around him is also driving concerns.

"Xi has deified himself as the 'core' leader with his own personality cult, but he lacks Mao's charisma," Ma Chun-wei, assistant politics professor at Taiwan's Tamkang University, told RFA Mandarin in a recent interview. "He requires everyone to study Xi Jinping Thought throughout the party and the whole education system."

Oppression of Uyghurs, Tibetans

Xi has also presided over the mass incarceration of Uyghurs in Xinjiang's "re-education" camps, the surveillance and suppression of Tibetans and their culture, as well as the upgrading the Great Firewall of internet censorship and the installation of surveillance cameras in schools to monitor students and teachers alike.

Under his tenure, private companies have been forced to set up Communist Party branches, and censorship is tighter than it has ever been, Ma said.

Yet Xi is one of the most ridiculed leaders in recent Chinese history, according to exiled author Murong Xuecun.

"He has had the most nicknames of any general secretary of the Chinese Communist Party in the past 70 years," Murong told RFA in a recent interview. "Some people calculate that he has more than 200 nicknames."

Many of Xi's nicknames are now banned from China's internet, including Xi Baozi, Winnie the Pooh and Xitler, and their use has led to imprisonment in some cases.



Pro-democracy activists tear a placard of Winnie the Pooh that represents President Xi Jinping during a protest in Hong Kong on May 24, 2020. (Isaac Lawrence/AFP)

"The key to all of this is the political system," Murong said. "Xi rose to lead the Communist Party and have power over appointments, the military, the party, the police and national security agencies through a series of opaque and intergenerational processes."

"He commands everything, yet his power isn't subject to any kind of supervision or restriction," he said. "He can purge or replace anyone he doesn't like."

Lying flat

Murong likened China under Xi's rule to "a runaway train rushing towards a cliff with him as the driver."

"China has now entered the garbage times, when everything it does is doomed to failure," he said. "The shadow of Xi will always haunt China."

He said the damage done by Xi is evident in the numbers of young people choosing to "lie flat" in the face of life's challenges. Even high-flying university graduates are moving back in with Mom and Dad and refusing to live up to social expectations like finding a job, marrying, mortgages and children.

"Those who can leave will leave, and those who can't will lie flat," Murong said.

Internationally, Xi has encouraged a far more expansionist and aggressive foreign policy than his predecessors, with island-building and military operations in the South China Sea and Taiwan Strait, and a barrage of nationalist rhetoric around Beijing's claim on democratic Taiwan, which has never been ruled by the Chinese Communist Party.

A Hong Kong-born researcher at the London-based think tank China Strategic Risk Institute who gave only the nickname Athena for fear of reprisals said Xi has strongly rejected international values like freedom, democracy and the rule of law, and cares little about international criticism of China's human rights record. Instead, China has taken the fight to international organizations, and was recently accused of "gaming" its human rights review at the United Nations.

Secret police stations

Xi is also pouring trillions of dollars into his Belt and Road infrastructure and supply chain network, and

engaging in colonial expansion across Africa, Murong Xuecun said.

China has become known under Xi for its aggressive "wolf-warrior" diplomats, some of whom have resorted to physical violence to get their point across, as well as its transnational network of secret police stations and its pursuit of its critics on foreign soil, as well as its army of "little pinks," who snarl at any criticism of the motherland.

Xi's administration was also instrumental in turning Hong Kong from a thriving financial hub and politically engaged city with freedoms of speech, association and publication intact to a city where the majority of people are being forced to toe the government line or risk imprisonment.

In recent years, international concerns are growing that Xi may be preparing for a military invasion of Taiwan, which he has vowed to "unify" with the rest of China.

Yet he may have more of an internal battle on his hands than he bargained for, according to former Lt. Col. Yao Cheng of the Naval Aviation Force.

"He has been messing with the military for more than 10 years, ever since he came to power," Yao told RFA Mandarin. "Between 2012 and 2015, he arrested hundreds of generals, yet his attempts to reform the military between 2015 and 2017 were a failure."

Part of the problem is that Xi has never been a soldier, despite wearing the uniform of a Commander in Chief, he said.

"Now Xi is commander-in-chief of the Joint Operations Command at the Central Military Commission, managing an army of several million people," Yao said.

"Yet he procured military equipment in a haphazard manner, spending money recklessly and winding up with a pile of scrap copper and iron."

Meanwhile Xi has backed up Beijing's claims of sovereignty in the South China Sea with newly built islands and military bases, as Chinese Coast Guard vessels regularly harass China's neighbors, as well as ordering repeated rounds of military drills around Taiwan.

The People's Liberation Army Rocket Force recently launched an intercontinental ballistic missile capable of carrying nuclear warheads into the Pacific Ocean.

Yet Yao believes that Xi ultimately lacks the support of most of China's generals.

"He took down the leaders of the Rocket Force, and wants to attack Taiwan now, but the military won't do this; they will wait and see," he said. "They may be engaging in busywork for now, but they won't do what Xi Jinping wants."

China's economy is set to have its slowest year of growth in decades

19 October 2024, [NPR](#), John Ruwitch and Scott Simon

SCOTT SIMON, HOST:

The world's second-biggest economy is struggling. New economic data shows that China is on track for a year of growth that's among the slowest since 1990, the year after the crackdown on protesters in Tiananmen Square. NPR's China correspondent John Ruwitch joins us. John, thanks so much for being with us.

JOHN RUWITCH, BYLINE: Happy to be here.

SIMON: What do the latest numbers show?

RUWITCH: Well, they show that the gross domestic product growth between July and September was 4.6% year on year. That is a slight slowing from the second quarter, but it's a little better than expected. On the plus side, industrial output was up, and retail sales exceeded expectations. That's an important one because weak consumption has been a really huge part of the problem with this economy. And the government knows it, and they're worried about it. Part of what drove retail sales this last quarter were subsidies for trade-ins on appliances, like air conditioners, fridges, those things.

SIMON: What seems to be behind the slowdown?

RUWITCH: The big thing is real estate, as it's been for the past year or two. Activity has been depressed pretty consistently since the government adopted measures to pop the bubble a couple of years ago. So property investment in the recent quarter fell. In the year-to-date, it was down more than 10%. New home starts also fell in the double digits. Property prices continued to slide. The overall situation still feels quite grim in China. I was in Beijing recently and spoke with a tailor named Li Jianjun. His customer base has shrunk, he says, since before the pandemic. And he says his income has dropped 40%.

LI JIANJUN: (Speaking Chinese).

RUWITCH: He says before the pandemic, a lot of people came in to get new clothing. Now they're coming in for alterations if their size has changed or whatnot because their income has shrunk. And when they do give him orders for new suits or shirts, he says customers are really opting for Chinese-made cloth rather than more expensive imports.

SIMON: And, John, what's the government trying to do in response?

RUWITCH: Well, there have been bits and pieces over the past few months to try to prop up the economy. Starting late in September, they really ramped that up with a string of new measures. They've got a more aggressive monetary policy in place now. They've lowered interest rates, for example. They've tried to prop up the stock market. They're taking steps to reflate the real estate market to a certain extent and

to capitalize developers. They're also poised to issue a bunch of new central government debt to recapitalize state-owned banks to help local governments out of their major debt problems. Alicia Garcia-Herrero is chief economist with the French investment bank Natixis in Hong Kong.

ALICIA GARCIA-HERRERO: Is that a stimulus? Not really, but they need to do it first. It's like a precondition because if not, it will be throwing good money on bad money, because there's too much bad debt in the system. There's systemic risk. There's deflation.

SIMON: So, John, do experts think it's going to work?

RUWITCH: Well, I think what this economist just now is saying is that these measures are focused on sort of addressing acute crises going on in the economy right now. Like, take local government debt, for instance - there are reports that some localities aren't able to pay government employees their wages. These are people in the middle class, right? How can China ramp up consumption if these people aren't even getting paychecks? Some economists say that the - you know, the measures they're taking are good. They're a good first step. They're not enough really to boost domestic demand and consumption or to change the structure of the economy.

The government is aiming for around 5% growth this year. After factoring in the latest data, though, some now think it'll fall short of that. What's interesting is the contrast. You know, China's economy is continuing to weaken, and it's happening at a time when the country is really amped up its sort of muscularity on the global stage. It just had military drills around Taiwan, for instance.

SIMON: NPR's John Ruwitch. Thanks so much for being with us.

RUWITCH: You're welcome.

Who really benefits from China's winter tourism promotion in Tibet?

19 October 2024, [Tibetan Review](#)

For the seventh year in a row, China-ruled Tibet has launched a winter tourism promotion drive in Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), with ostensible aim to bring more income to local residents, offering discounts, freebies, and what not.

China claims that the drive will attract more tourists and bring more incomes to local residents. Many of these local residents will no doubt be Tibetans. But Tibetans are overwhelmingly farmers and herders, having little concern with tourism.

So, one of the main aims of this policy may be to ensure the sustenance and prosperity of the Chinese immigrant population which dominate the businesses in Tibet, including in the tourism sector. They may

otherwise go back to China during winter season, like their counterparts in other sectors of Tibet's economy. This population is expected to eventually redefine the region's demographic and cultural identity in keeping with President Xi Jinping's signature call for the Sinicization of Tibet.

The TAR has launched its 2024 winter tourism campaign, offering discounted air tickets, hotel vouchers, and free admission to tourist attractions to draw more visitors during the off-peak season, reported China's state news agency *Xinhua* Oct 19.

As part of the "winter tour of Xizang" campaign, Xizang is offering 10,000 "buy-one-get-one-free" domestic flight tickets, 10,000 free domestic train tickets, and complimentary hotel vouchers at premium accommodations for tourists traveling to the region, the report said, using the Sinicized name for Tibet.

Special travel vouchers tailored for family tours and senior travellers have also been introduced, the report added.

Also provided again are free entry to A-rated tourist sites, including the iconic Potala Palace.

China's tourist attraction rating system classifies sites from 1A to 5A based on overall tourism quality, with 5A being the highest grade.

The initiative, launched on Oct 18 in capital Lhasa, was stated to be aimed at maintaining steady tourism growth year-round, with the current round of promotions running from Oct 15 to Mar 15, 2025.

The event was stated to have seen the regional culture and tourism department signing cooperation agreements with Chinese provinces and cities. Local travel operators were also stated to have formed partnerships with international tour operators from countries including Australia, Thailand and Germany. In 2023, TAR welcomed 55.17 million tourists, a year-on-year increase of 83.7%, generating total tourism revenue of 65.15 billion yuan (about 9.2 billion US dollars), up 60% from the previous year, the report said.

There has so far been little or no known study of tourism's impact on the territory's people, environment, society, and culture.

This bears relevance as the number of tourists visiting the region, who are overwhelmingly from China, exceeded 15 times the local population of 3.66 million as of last year.

Xi Jinping Has Further Boosted the Military-Industrial Group of China

18 October 2024, [The JamesTown Foundation](#), Arthur Ding, K. Tristan Tang

On June 28, Huang Qiang (黄强) was appointed as the party secretary of Jilin Province. Formerly secretary-general of the National Defense Science and

Technology Commission (国防科工委) and deputy director general of the National Defense Science and Technology Bureau (国防科工局), Huang's promotion marks a further development for the People's Republic of China's (PRC) group of military-industrial leaders (Xinhua, June 28). Alongside Hao Peng (郝鹏) in Liaoning and Xu Qin (许勤) in Heilongjiang, all three provincial Party secretaries for the major industrial bases in Northeast China now have backgrounds in the defense industry.

Supreme leader Xi Jinping has provided consistent support to the defense industry in recent years, and has increased his reliance on officials from defense industry backgrounds—as seen in the curricula vitae of Central Committee members unveiled at the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) 20th Party Congress in October 2022 (*The Diplomat*, September 12). These developments represented a culmination of personnel decisions that date back to at least the 19th Party Congress in 2017, when Xi's emphasis on the importance of military-industrial officials began to become observable. Research to date has tended to analyze this rising group of military-industrial personnel from a technocratic perspective (see *China Leadership Monitor*, December 1, 2022; February 29). Owing to the significant differences between military-industrial officials and technocrats in general, however, the PRC's military-industrial group merits attention as a growing force within both the defense industry and the CCP Central Committee, and has the potential to one day emerge as a key faction within the PRC's political system.

Structural Dynamics Suggest Emerging Military-Industrial 'Faction'

For the purposes of this article, the "military-industrial group" refers narrowly to those individuals who developed their careers in defense industry corporations or the "Seven Sons of National Defense (国防七子)" universities before being promoted to the vice-ministerial level. [1] It excludes those who merely studied at Seven Sons universities without either teaching at those same institutions or subsequently joining defense industry corporations, and those who joined the defense industry only after being promoted to the vice-ministerial level. The decision to set the rank at the vice-ministerial level is based on the understanding that officials at this level are "central management cadres (中管干部)" whose transfers and promotions are regulated by the Central Organization Department (*People's Daily*, September 16, 2014). The transfer of personnel to the defense industry later in their careers is primarily done for résumé-building purposes or for oversight. As such, these personnel differ significantly from those who gained early experience in the defense industry during their tenure as grassroots or mid-level officials.

The military-industrial group has the potential to develop into a faction. This is because the educational background and industrial operational models of the PRC's defense industry are likely to foster a shared identity, mutual trust, and a high degree of homogeneity within their interpersonal networks. There are two dynamics that underpin this emerging group.

First, most of these officials graduated from the Seven Sons universities. These institutions, established in the 1950s and 1960s, are oriented toward the defense industry. As such, their historical and institutional connections provide students with greater career opportunities in the industry than those from other universities. Often, key state-owned defense companies have agreements with—or are major contributors to—Seven Sons universities (Harbin Engineering University, June 11; Beijing Institute of Technology, August 25, 2022). The higher prevalence of graduates from these schools over other universities who join the industry is borne out in the statistics (CSET, December, 2020). This has resulted in a higher level of connectivity among these officials compared to graduates in other industries or fields (*Takungpao*, October 16, 2023). These institutions also foster a strong sense of belonging and honor among their students. This is achieved in part through the celebration of the technical defense achievements of earlier Chinese scientists, notably those involved in Mao's "Two Bombs, One Satellite (两弹一星)" project that was focused on building the country's first nuclear weapons, ICBMs, and satellites (Northwestern Polytechnical University, June 7, 2023).

Second, the PRC's defense industry is fairly closed off. The "block logic" that characterizes the PRC's broader bureaucratic system is also present in the defense industry, resulting in research and development being largely confined to specific defense companies or research units. An article published in 2017 by the Center for Advancing Military-Civil Fusion Programs (军民融合项目促进中心) lamented the industry's "confining nature of closed concepts, the constraints of the planning system, the limitations of monopolistic structures, the restrictions of policy standards, the impediments of [few] access points, and the siloing of information channels (封闭观念的禁锢、计划体制的束缚、垄断格局的限制、政策标准的制约、准

入门槛的阻碍和信息渠道的隔离)" (Development and Reform Commission of Gansu Province, December 26, 2017). This makes it difficult for other companies or universities to participate in core research, meaning that while interactions and collaborations between research institutes and factories within the defense industry are relatively frequent, they are less so with entities outside this ecosystem. Therefore, such a

closed industrial environment tends to foster a rich understanding and strong level of interaction among insiders, more so than for those in other sectors.

Military-Industrial Officials From the 19th and 20th CCP Central Committees

Among the two most recent Central Committees' 409 members, a total of 21 have had a background in the defense industry (see Table 1). Out of 17 members elected to the 19th Central Committee, 11—roughly two-thirds—were re-elected to the 20th Central Committee, along with the election of an additional four new members.

In terms of rank, the highest position held by military-industrial officials in the 19th Central Committee was that of Central Committee member. However, in the 20th Central Committee, four members were promoted to the Politburo: Vice Premiers Liu Guozhong and Zhang Guoqing, Xinjiang Party Secretary Ma Xingrui, and Chongqing Party Secretary Yuan Jiajun.

Regarding positions held within the Central Committee, three individuals have previously worked in the Office of the Central Commission for Military–Civil Fusion Development (中央军民融合发展委员会办公室) [2] or the Communist Youth League. These include Lei Fanpei, though his position as deputy director of the former is based on external media reports only (*Epoch Times*, February 2, 2023). There has been no formal announcement from state media, though he continues to be present in state media reports as part of the rank of ministerial-level officials (CASC, June 14, 2023).

In terms of positions held within the State Council, many ministries have installed military-industrial officials in key roles. Notably, in the 20th Central Committee, individuals who effectively control military-industrial resources and related industrial sectors within the State Council include Vice Premiers Zhang Guoqing (in charge of industry) and Liu Guozhong, State Councillor Wu Zhenglong, Minister for Industry and Information Technology Jin Zhuanglong, and Minister of Education Huai Jinping (see Table 3).

At the local level, a total of 21 military-industrial officials have held the positions of Party secretary or governor in 14 provinces, municipalities, and autonomous regions across the two most recent Central Committees. This represents a trend of negative growth, however, as military-industrial officials held top or deputy positions in 13 localities during the 19th Party Congress, but only in six following the 20th Party Congress. For example, in Hunan, Jiangsu, and Hebei, military-industrial officials held positions during the 19th Central Committee but not in the 20th Central Committee. In contrast, provinces such as Liaoning, Heilongjiang, and Shaanxi

continue to have military-industrial officials in office (see Table 5). The fact that military-industrial officials are in top positions in these three provinces is important, however, as they are home to research companies and institutes that are vital to the country's defense industry. For example, Heilongjiang has the Harbin Aircraft Industry Group (HAIG; 哈尔滨飞机工业集团), Liaoning Province has the Dalian Shipbuilding Industry Group (DSIC; 大连船舶重工集团), and Shaanxi Province has the Fourth and Sixth Research Institutes of the China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation (CASC; 中国航天科技集团). However, given that a number of military-industrial personnel who previously held positions in local governments are either being promoted or retiring—such as Wu Zhenglong, who was promoted from Jiangsu Province to secretary-general of the State Council, and Lin Duo, who retired from his post in Gansu Province—Xi Jinping may need to ensure that military-industrial personnel remain in regions most closely tied to the defense industry.

Military-industrial officials have been elected to positions within the China Association for Science and Technology (CAST; 中国科学技术协会), the National People's Congress (NPC; 全国人民代表大会), and the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC; 中国人民政治协商会议). In the 20th Central Committee, military-industrial officials serve as vice chairpersons and vice presidents in both the NPC and CPPCC, while CAST has been predominantly led by military-industrial officials during both the 19th and 20th Central Committees (see Table 4).

Authentic Military-industrial Faction Yet to Appear

Analysis of the interpersonal networks of military-industrial officials in the Central Committee after the 20th Party Congress indicates that many share educational or professional backgrounds. Looking at the group more closely, NPC Vice Chairman Zhang Qingwei could be a central node in this network. Due to his nearly three-decade career in the aerospace sector, most officials from the aerospace or aviation sectors have connections to him. For instance, Chongqing Party Secretary Yuan Jiajun, Xinjiang Party Secretary Ma Xingrui, Deputy Director of the Central Military-Civil Fusion Office Lei Fanpei, and Minister of Industry and Information Technology Jin Zhuanglong have all served as his deputies at various times. Another central figure may be Vice Premier Zhang Guoqing. Current State Councillor Wu Zhenglong and Shaanxi Governor Zhao Gang have previously worked alongside him (*Economic Daily*, December 31, 2017). Zhang and Wu worked together at the Chongqing Municipal Committee of the CCP between 2013 and

2014, while Zhang and Zhao worked together at China North Industries Group from 1993 to 1995, and again at China North Industries Corporation from 2011 to 2013 (Economic Daily, July 29, 2017; CPC News, October 24).

The military-industrial group has also formed a Chinese-style military-industrial complex within the 20th Central Committee. Currently, military-industrial officials occupy significant administrative and industrial roles, oversee major provinces that are home to crucial parts of the military-industrial sector, or participate in the operations of the top-level bodies (the NPC and the CPPCC). These officials have the capacity to promote the development of the military-industrial sector, through such methods as resource allocation (State Council Vice Premier), policy planning (Minister for Industry and Information Technology), regulation formulation (National People's Congress), policy execution (local government), and opinion transmission (CPPCC). Although the PRC operates under the one-party rule of the CCP, a large and complex bureaucracy means that the regime is far from unitary, and various interest groups still wield substantial power. As such, the ability to shape and wield regulations and public opinion is still important. This is particularly relevant for military-industrial officials, as they participate in the operations of the NPC and CPPCC as Central Committee members rather than merely as nominally retired individuals. This implies that they have a special status compared to other vice chairs.

Some obstacles currently preclude the assignation of a "faction" to this group, however. No military-industrial officials have been promoted to the Politburo Standing Committee (PBSC)—the very highest CCP body. They, therefore, do not meet the necessary criterion for a faction under the standard academic definition. This could change in 2027 following the 21st Party Congress. Apart from the relative cohesion of the group noted above, the logic of the CCP's norms surrounding the age of officials suggests that this is a distinct possibility. Three military-industrial officials in the current Politburo will still be under 67 years old in 2027, which theoretically qualifies them for promotion; and out of the 23 current Politburo members (excluding Xi Jinping), ten meet the conventional age eligibility criterion to become members of the PBSC in 2027, resulting in a competitive situation of ten officials vying for six positions. Notably, Chongqing Party Secretary Yuan Jiajun, Vice Premier Zhang Guoqing, and Liu Guozhong hold significant political positions and control substantial resources, making them well-positioned for such a promotion.

Conclusion

The personnel arrangements of the 20th Central Committee reveal that the development of the PRC's

military-industrial group has become even more robust compared to the 19th Party Congress. This strengthens the military-industrial sector's advantage in the overall allocation of resources and policy focus and suggests that the country's military technology and equipment production capabilities may be further enhanced than ever before. Whether this group of officials will grow to wield more significant power will depend on a number of factors, but future personnel movements will be a key indicator, with the makeup of the 21st Central Committee in 2027 likely to reveal the group's relative power within the Party-state system.

China's Political Mobilization Challenge

18 October 2024, [The Diplomat](#), Josh Freedman

In the face of cadre overwork and citizen apathy, China's leaders face a mobilizational challenge that raises the costs of achieving their domestic goals.

China's aggressive pandemic lockdowns are firmly in the rearview mirror, but observers agree that public sentiment has undergone a tangible change. Amid continuing political tightening and an economy struggling to rebound, writers argue that China has entered an age of "malaise" or "stagnation" that lacks the optimism and excitement that defined the heady days of the reform era. New words and phrases now pepper daily conversation: some people are choosing to "run" for the exits, while others are opting to "lie flat" and give up on their ambitions.

In my own extended discussions with individuals across China on multiple trips over the past year, the most common descriptor is always *juan*, short for *neijuan* (内卷 or involution) – a term similar to "endless hustle" and repurposed from an anthropological concept to describe more and more work for less and less output. The "less" in today's China is partially about money, as salaries are dropping; it also refers to less meaning, as people are working more but feeling alienated from why they are doing it.

In many ways, rising anomie and pessimism about the future are common sentiments across all modern societies, especially among youth. Yet the ubiquity of this sentiment from the top to bottom of Chinese society suggests that something significant has shifted among the Chinese public. Observers have identified the changing zeitgeist but struggled to make sense of what its political implications might be. While many commentators argue that rising disenchantment signals a threat to regime stability, there is no evidence to support the claim that the regime faces a fundamental legitimacy crisis. Even scholars who are keen to speculate about regime fragility acknowledge that the recent changes are unlikely to spur near-term

collapse of either the economy or the political system, as leading market analysts have pointed out.

An alternate way of framing China's new social normal is to think in terms of the costs of political mobilization. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has laid out an ambitious agenda to overcome the mounting challenges it faces: a sluggish economy, high levels of unemployment, technology and trade pressure, and a demographic cliff, to name just a few. These are challenges confronting numerous regimes, but they matter more for contemporary China. Not only has the CCP historically relied on mobilization to realize its political agenda, but the consolidation of political control and suppression of alternate forms of organization has left party-led mobilization as the only means for achieving these governance goals.

From tackling social issues such as reviving the dismally low birthrate to achieving "comprehensive security" in areas ranging from food to ideology, the CCP wants and needs an all-out effort from both bureaucrats and regular citizens. Yet the current mood in China suggests instead that mobilizing either of these groups is increasingly costly.

Throughout its modern history, the party has used mobilization as a key element of its political rule. It seeks not only to operate through standard bureaucratic channels, but also to encourage and motivate the participation of various groups to go above and beyond the normal limitations of institutional governance. At the apex of high socialism under Mao Zedong, politics revolved around mass mobilization: individuals had to attend public meetings, conduct collective criticisms and study sessions, and even read through the front pages of *People's Daily* (a task so dry and difficult that author and Sinologist Simon Leys described "reading Communist literature" as "akin to munching rhinoceros sausage"). Even after reform and opening up, the CCP continued to rely on campaigns and other mobilizational tactics, rather than formal institutions, to achieve major governance goals.

Mobilization in the reform era inherited key features of its Maoist forebears, but it also took on new elements in a more liberalized society. The targets of this mobilization have often been cadres and bureaucrats, rather than regular citizens. "Maoist campaigns mobilized the masses into politics," explained Zeng Qingjie in a study of poverty alleviation. "Reform-era campaigns, by contrast, entail a much lower degree of mass involvement. Instead, it is the bureaucrats who became the main targets of intense mobilization."

Elizabeth Perry described these mobilization efforts as "managed campaigns," which incorporate the framework of mass revolutionary campaigns but are more highly directed from the top and overlaid with technocratic terminology. These efforts include work

teams, local councils, linking cadres or localities to other targeted areas, and more – all of which focus mobilization on groups of elites, rather than the masses.

In the face of massive economic and social challenges, the new era under Xi Jinping is not just marked by a shift toward enforcing party unity and cracking down on political dissension – it is also about the CCP running into the limits of the existing mobilization strategy.

The reliance on mobilizing bureaucrats and cadres to carry out the agenda has overextended them to the point where they cannot possibly keep up with the demands. With the party and state responsible for more governance tasks than ever before, and with strict and inflexible targets for completing these tasks, bureaucrats are overworked (and, with local government budgets in some areas collapsing, underpaid). As a result, bureaucrats frequently describe disillusionment and feelings of involution.

At the same time, realizing many of the goals for development and social order also requires buy-in from a broader swath of the population. In an environment of growing political apathy, however, these calls to mass action are more likely to be met with indifference or contempt. The more the public ignores these entreaties, the more that bureaucrats are being mobilized to try to overcome these limits. They are tasked with carrying out more responsibility with less support from the people on the receiving end of the policies, and with less room for flexibility than in the past.

As one example, the CCP has implemented a policy campaign to improve food security and reduce reliance on foreign imports by establishing a quota for arable land that can grow staple crops like grain. Local officials are mandated to achieve targets of land reclaimed from other uses, which often requires getting elderly farmers to use their land to grow unprofitable and labor-intensive grains rather than more profitable cash crops like tea or fruit. Already struggling under the weight of overwork, local officials spend fruitless months trying to convince citizens to get on board, often to no avail. The only plausible way to convince locals to agree to the program is to offer massive subsidies, and even then many citizens are still reluctant to change their farming strategy.

Nowhere is the challenge of dealing with disenchantment more obvious than in the case of the falling birthrate. No matter how many pro-natal policies the party and state put in place, the number of new children in China continues to decline year after year, and the overall population is now shrinking. After years of resisting calls to change the family planning system, leaders not only scrapped the one-

child policy but are now scrambling to encourage young women to have two or even three children.

Population declines and lower fertility rates are now the norm across the modern world, especially in East Asia. A focus on careers, pressure to balance between individual goals and traditional family obligations, and the prohibitive costs of starting a family have all made marriage and child-rearing much less attractive to many young people. (As one of my friends in central China quipped, “Housing prices are the greatest contraceptive.”) Few, if any, policy solutions anywhere have made even a blip in birthrates. Facing a lack of policy solutions, Xi Jinping has called for party officials to actively promote a child-bearing culture and reshape young people’s views on marriage and family. Campaigns to encourage more births are underway.

Thus far, these attempts look like a fool’s errand. The response from women to these entreaties, as reporters have found, has been a resounding “no.” The stories in the media corroborate conversations I have had with young Chinese: the state’s attempts to mobilize, encourage, or cajole women and families to have more kids are met with a collective shrug. As these campaigns become more important, bureaucrats will have to spend more time trying to convince a reluctant population, and citizens will only become more reluctant in turn.

This is not to say that society-wide mobilization is impossible or that top-down mobilization is irrelevant. Instead, it is to point out that the costs of such mobilization are increasing in ways that limit the options available to a mobilization-oriented regime. China never officially made COVID-19 vaccination mandatory, but local officials – given strict instructions from their superiors – tried every possible way to pressure people to get vaccinated short of physically forcing them. Even then there was a significant percentage of the population, especially the elderly, who still refused. Studies show that more than a quarter of the oldest citizens (age 80-plus) and more than 10 percent of elderly (60-plus) had not been fully vaccinated when China abandoned its pandemic control policies – and local bureaucrats had to spend time and money trying to reach their targets.

Without effective mobilization over the long term, and with local officials facing impossible targets, the CCP is left only with the option for coercion – a last resort that is both extremely costly and threatens to inflict irreparable damage on both individuals and society at large. Reports of coercion in the face of intransigence have become so common in the case of arable land quotas that the national government had to reprimand local officials for going too far.

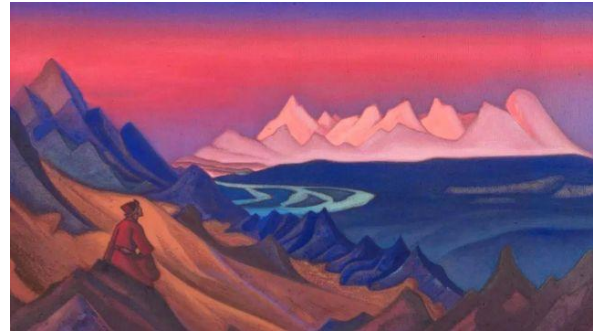
The rising costs of mobilization present an enormous challenge to China’s governance project. For China to be able to achieve its goals and fulfill what Xi and the leadership envision, they will have to overcome this

mobilization challenge; so far, many citizens are responding to mobilization efforts by further retreating from politics, while bureaucrats are floundering under the limits of what they can do. Rather than focus on legitimacy crises or regime stability, observers would be well-served to focus their attention on the mobilization challenge. Whether China’s leaders can address this challenge will define where China is headed and whether it will be able to achieve its ambitious agenda.

Nicholas Roerich, Shambhala, and Agartha. 1. Tibet and Paris

18 October 2024, [Bitter Winter](#), Massimo Introvigne

The notions of mythical and mystical kingdoms Shambhala and Agartha, as we know them today, are largely influenced by the views of the Russian painter.



Nicholas Roerich, “Tangla: Song of Shambhala” (1943)

We are down-to-earth Westerners, aren’t we? We leave to Asia, or to a past we believe the Enlightenment liberated us from, ideas of mysterious inaccessible lands where milk and honey flow, peace reigns, and all inhabitants have extraordinary abilities. Yet, many Western new religious movements also have teachings about earthly paradises, and not all derive from the Bible.

I would argue that this is largely due to the multiple (if neglected) influences of Western esotericism, and that a key figure in this respect is Russian painter Nicholas Roerich (1874–1947). To illustrate this thesis, we will travel to different parts of the world in the three parts of this series of articles.

Scene 1 – Tibet



Shambhala in a Tibetan thangka of the 19th century. From X.

Two notions often confused should be disentangled, Shambhala (the common spelling derived from Tibetan of the Sanskrit “Sambhala”) and Agartha. Shambhala is mentioned in the “Kalachakra Tantra” (early 11th century) as a mythical kingdom whose existence is physical, yet at the border with the metaphysical.

The “Kalachakra Tantra” includes a millennial prophecy: the king of Shambhala will come again, and fight a final battle for the triumph of righteousness and Buddhism, ushering in an earthly paradise.

The future manifestation of Shambhala is connected with two distinct sets of prophecies: about a latter-day kingdom of the Maitreya Buddha and about the return of the mythical King Gesar of Ling, which according to Tibetan, Mongolian, and other traditions was a legendary hero and ruler of the early Middle Ages.

Scene 2: The Hollow Earth—or Paris

Unlike Shambhala, the concept of Agartha is not traditional. We find it in Paris, used first by French occult novelist Louis Jacolliot (1837–1890) in 1873, more or less as a synonym of Shambhala. It became popular in Western esotericism in 1910, when the book “Mission de l’Inde,” by Alexandre Saint-Yves d’Alveydre (1842–1909), originally written around 1886, was published, one year after the death of his author.

Saint-Yves claimed that Agartha was actually a physical place, only it existed underground, under the mountains of Asia. It was the residence of the Master of the Universe and of the most advanced civilization of our world.

Saint-Yves combined two different narratives. That Masters hidden somewhere between India and Tibet wielded great power had been taught by Madame Helena Blavatsky (1831–1891) and her Theosophical Society. That a hollow Earth harbored an underground high-level spiritual center had been suggested in Britain, before Saint-Yves, by novelist and politician Edward Bulwer-Lytton (1803–1873) in “The Coming Race” (1871) and by medium and Theosophist Emma Hardinge Britten (1823–1899) in “Ghost Land” (1876). But was all this symbol, metaphor, or reality? Among the first to claim that it was absolutely real was Chicago lawyer and businessman Willis George

Emerson (1856–1918). In 1908, he published “The Smoky God,” allegedly an account written by a Norwegian sailor, Olaf Jansen, who had found near the North Pole the entrance to a subterranean kingdom, whose capital was the original Garden of Eden. Occultists quickly claimed Jansen had found Agartha. Much more seriously was taken Polish (although born in present-day Latvia) explorer Ferdynand Ossendowski (1876–1945). He had traveled to Central and Eastern Asia and had played an ambiguous role in the political game between Russia, China, and the West to control the three strategically crucial areas of Tibet, Mongolia, and present-day Xinjiang.

In 1922, Ossendowski published “Beasts, Men and Gods”. He claimed to have collected evidence about the underground kingdom of Agartha, where the King of the World reigned. He also mentioned a prophecy that, as human corruption will increase, “the peoples of Agartha will come up from their subterranean caverns to the surface of the earth” to establish a righteous kingdom.

We are still in Paris, though. There, on July 26, 1924, the editor of the prestigious “Nouvelles Littéraires”, Frédéric Lefèvre (1889–1949), invited Catholic philosopher Jacques Maritain (1882–1973), historian of Asia René Grousset (1885–1952), and esoteric author René Guénon (1886–1951) to debate Ossendowski, who was visiting France

Grousset and Maritain remained skeptical, but Guénon found in Ossendowski, together with “unbelievable” tales and passages simply derived from Saint-Yves and others, original and valuable information. The debate influenced Guénon’s decision to publish in 1927 “Le Roi du monde” (whose first part appeared in December 1924 in the Italian esoteric journal “Atanòr”), where he discussed the theory of a “King of the World” and of hidden spiritual centers located in Asia.

A plethora of secret societies mentioned Agartha and Shambhala. Their leaders were not necessarily experts of Asian religion and legends, and often confused the two notions. For a certain Western practical mentality, the main question was whether Shambhala or Agartha would come out from wherever secret place they were and really establish an earthly paradise, which would also imply dealing with the current political circumstances. This question will generate a special interest in Russia and the United States, as we will see in the next articles of this series.

Decision of The Court of the Citizens of World on the Proposed Indictment of Xi Jinping – The Opinion of Judge Bhavani Fonseka

17 October 2024, [OpinioJuris](#)

‘The Court of the Citizens of the World’ – a people’s tribunal – was organized by the Cinema for Peace Foundation, relating to alleged crimes committed by Xi Jinping, President of the People’s Republic of China. The tribunal considered confirmation of an indictment for the crime of aggression, the crime of genocide, and crimes against humanity as proposed by a Prosecution team, and challenged by a Defence team, and heard witnesses and received documentary evidence during 8 – 12 July 2024 in public hearings in The Hague. The three judges at this tribunal – Z. M. Yacoob, Stephen Rapp and Bhavani Fonseka – came to a decision regarding confirmation of the charges, and these posts are their individual opinions, in which all concurred, pronounced at the last hearing of the tribunal on 12 July 2024.

12 July 2024

Thank you, Judge Rapp.

At this stage of the confirmation of the charges I will be examining whether there are substantial grounds to indict the accused of the charge of-

Count 2: the Crime against Humanity of **Forcible Transfer of children**, between at least 14 March 2013 and 24 May 2024, contrary to Article 7(1)(d) of the Rome Statute

Count 3: the Crime against Humanity of **Imprisonment or other severe deprivation of physical liberty**, between at least 14 March 2013 and 24 May 2024, contrary to Article 7(1)(e) of the Rome Statute

Count 4: the Crime against Humanity of **Persecution**, between at least 14 March 2013 and 24 May 2024, contrary to Article 7(1)(h) of the Rome Statute

Article 7 of the Rome Statute sets out the acts that falls within Crimes against Humanity when committed as part of a **widespread or systematic attack** directed against any **civilian population**, with **knowledge of the attack**.

Thus, there are two elements to the crime-

A contextual element that entails “when committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against any civilian population” and

A mental element that requires “with knowledge of the attack”

It must also be noted that acts should not be random, accidental or isolated but evidence must demonstrate that the acts are committed in furtherance of a State or organizational policy to commit an attack

In addition to the Rome Statute, attention is also on whether violations fall under Customary International Law.

Evidence Presented

As the evidence provided to the court indicates, the accused is the general secretary of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and is the president of the People’s Republic of China (PRC). The court heard of how the accused has had effective authority over the PRC since 2013. It has also been submitted that the system of governance in the PRC is centralized and the accused is intrinsically involved in the planning and preparation of policies in the PRC.

As the court heard this week, the civilian people of Tibet have experienced widespread and systematic attacks including attempts to erase their cultural, linguistic and religious practices and identity, restrictions on the free expression of opinion and belief, on their movement, of torture and a large number of Tibetan children being forcibly moved to Chinese run boarding schools. The testimony and evidence presented to court highlighted the systematic and organised nature of these practices. The court also heard of evidence that shows the involvement of the accused in the planning of these policies.

The court heard of specific instances that require attention-

Firstly,

We heard from victims and expert testimony on the implementation of the **colonial boarding schools** and its impact on Tibetan children and their families, the psychological and emotional trauma and the long term impact on Tibetan identity. Previously, subjects taught in the Tibetan language saw a change of policy under the leadership of the accused with education presently being solely in the Chinese language.

The court heard evidence indicating to at least a million Tibetan children affected by this policy that further estrange young Tibetans from their heritage and is aimed at assimilating Tibetan people culturally, religiously and linguistically. Children of the Tibetan minority are forced to complete what can be considered ‘compulsory education’ curriculum in Mandarin Chinese.

This has resulted in Tibetan children losing their ability to communicate with their parents and grandparents in the Tibetan language, further contributing to the assimilation of the Tibetan identity.

Secondly,

We heard evidence that speaks to the targeting of Tibetan monasteries including-

- the destruction of several monasteries and violence targeting Tibetan monks and nuns
- restrictions placed on Tibetans access to religious sites and religious gatherings
- changing the practice of Tibetan Buddhism to Chinese Buddhism

- persecution of Tibetans for religious activities honoring the Dalai Lama or possessing his image.

Such practices can be viewed as a deliberate policy aimed at dismantling Tibetan religious and cultural identity.

Thirdly,

We heard evidence that speaks to multiple forms of restrictions on free expression of opinion and belief, on movement, assembly and association.

Further, evidence indicated to other serious violations including the use of torture that includes the denial of basic services to prisoners and reports of enforced disappearances with families unaware of the whereabouts of political prisoners.

The court also heard of state policies with questions raised as to whether ‘unity’ is to create uniformity and with it eradicate other cultures, religions and languages. In addition, the court heard of narratives such as ‘lasting stability’ ‘national security’ that seek to provide legitimacy to the policies of the PRC and the accused.

The court heard that the tenure of the accused has marked a period of increased institutionalization of repressive measures against Tibetans, with a clear focus on eroding Tibetan cultural identity. Despite the official narratives that include economic development, unity in the motherland, the renovation of cultural sites, the preservation of language and culture, and the eradication of extreme poverty, evidence before the court indicates to a concerted attempt to eradicating the Tibetan identity and culture and to integrate Tibetan identity into the dominant Chinese identity.

Moreover, the dire conditions in the Tibetan areas have witnessed several reported instances of self-immolation and as indicated to the court is indicative of the desperation and oppression faced by Tibetans. Considering the vast evidence before the court, we believe there are substantial grounds to infer **a widespread and systematic attack directed against the civilian population, with knowledge of such attack.**

Thus, the court confirms Count 2, 3 and 4 of the proposed indictment, which following the non-confirmation of proposed Court 1, will be renumbered Counts 1, 2, and 3.

Finally, the testimony of victims reflects the lived experiences of violence and immense suffering, with several speaking to ongoing forms of violence. The courage of those who shared their experiences despite the multiple challenges speaks to the resilience of victims who want to see an end to the violence and seek accountability. We commend them for their courage, resilience and determination.

We thank all those who shared their experiences, submitted evidence and supported the court in this confirmation hearing.

South Asia In Transition: Geopolitical Impacts Of China’s Expanding Role – OpEd

17 October 2024, [Eurasian Review](#), Mirza Abdul Aleem Baig

China’s expanding techno-economic and geopolitical influence is a well-established reality. Even Western nations, which typically have the advantage of stronger state and civil society institutions, are finding it difficult to counter China’s rising influence efforts. In more vulnerable regions, particularly South Asia, where China positions itself as a dominant power, countries are facing challenges due to Beijing’s increasing activism and influence operations. China’s economic investments and military involvement are steadily growing across South Asia, particularly in countries like Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and most recently, the Maldives.

Over the past decade, China’s growing influence in South Asia has not only been driven by its funding and execution of large-scale infrastructure projects, particularly under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), but also reflects its broader geopolitical strategy in the region, which increasingly challenges the influence of the United States and other Western powers. While much focus has been placed on the debt burdens these projects have generated and the economic crises that have followed, less attention has been given to how China engages with political leaders in these countries to advance its strategic interests, including its competition with the U.S. for regional dominance. China’s ability to swiftly implement infrastructure projects has helped it build strong ties with South Asian governments, often aligning itself with ruling elites and top-tier military generals to gain political leverage. However, these projects do not always align with the actual needs of these countries, leading to wasteful spending and unsustainable debt. For instance, in Sri Lanka, the Hambantota Port project, financed by Chinese loans, failed to generate adequate business, forcing Sri Lanka to lease the port to China on a 99-year agreement, which critics argue has geopolitical implications, potentially giving China a strategic foothold in the Indian Ocean – a region of significant interest to both India and the U.S. Similarly, the Maldives, once a nation firmly within India’s sphere of influence, has also seen an increase in Chinese investments and political outreach, illustrating China’s growing clout in a region traditionally seen as within India’s strategic backyard. Under President Abdulla Yameen, pursued several Chinese-funded infrastructure projects that have left

the country heavily indebted, raising concerns about China's ability to exert influence over key Indian Ocean nations.

Nepal, a landlocked nation sandwiched between China and India, has seen Beijing's influence increase in recent years. China's investment in Nepal's infrastructure, including roadways, hydropower, and telecommunications, comes with political implications, as Beijing seeks to counterbalance Indian influence in the region. Bangladesh, too, has been courted by China, which has made significant investments in the country's transportation and energy infrastructure, further entrenching its role as a regional economic powerhouse.

In Pakistan, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) was supposed to bring economic transformation, but the energy crisis persists due to deeper political and economic inefficiencies, which Chinese investments have not addressed. CPEC promises to modernize Pakistan's infrastructure and energy sectors, critics argue that the financial dependency created by Chinese loans could undermine Pakistan's long-term sovereignty. While China's investments have helped it gain influence, they often overlook long-term sustainability, leaving successor governments to manage the consequences of increased debt and underperforming projects, which also fuels public criticism.

Similarly, China's growing technological influence in South Asia through investments in telecommunications, digital infrastructure, and smart cities reflects a broader strategy to extend its reach into critical sectors like 5G, e-commerce, and cybersecurity, posing a direct challenge to U.S. technological and economic leadership. Chinese firms like Huawei and ZTE play pivotal roles in 5G expansion, while companies such as Alibaba and Tencent are making significant inroads into the region's e-commerce and fintech sectors.

In developing digital infrastructure, including fiber optic cables and data centers, China is laying the foundation for long-term influence in South Asia, while also exporting surveillance technologies, raising concerns about digital authoritarianism and increased state control. This expansion complicates U.S. efforts to promote democratic governance and open markets in the region, particularly as countries become increasingly dependent on Chinese technology and expertise. India's response to this growing influence has been one of caution, particularly in telecommunications, as it seeks to curb China's reach in sectors it views as critical to national security.

However, despite India's efforts and U.S. concerns, China's economic power and infrastructure investments in South Asia give it a significant strategic advantage. As a result, China's deepening presence in the region not only raises questions about the

sustainability of its development model but also has broader geopolitical implications, as it enhances China's soft power and undermines U.S. influence in a region that is increasingly becoming a key theater for global competition between the two superpowers.

Beijing's growing activism across South Asia is not without challenges. Critics argue that China's approach can foster local resentment, especially when it comes to concerns about debt-trap diplomacy, environmental degradation from infrastructure projects, or loss of sovereignty. Nevertheless, the increasing interdependence created by China's investments in South Asia leaves many nations in a precarious position, often caught between the economic benefits of Chinese partnership and the political costs of aligning too closely with Beijing.

China's rising influence across South Asia is emblematic of its broader global ambitions. The region's strategic location, combined with its developmental needs, makes it a key target for Beijing's broader geopolitical aspirations, positioning China as a major power player not only in South Asia but on the global stage. As the dynamics of the region continue to shift, the challenge for South Asian nations remains how to engage with China while safeguarding their autonomy and balancing their relationships with other global powers, particularly India and the West. How has China's policies, including "Wolf Warrior Diplomacy", weigh heavily on countries to take sides against the U.S. or India, and how might this affect South Asia in the future? This remains to be o

India's Arunachal Dam a defence against China's 'Mother of all Dams' plan in Tibet?

16 October 2024, [Tibetan Review](#)

China's plan to build the world's largest hydropower project—the 60,000 MW Motuo mega-dam—on the Yarlung Tsangpo River in Tibet, is prompting downstream India to take measures against its potential use as a hydrological weapon, given China's well-known record for doing so, said an opinion piece posted on the *eurasianimes.com* Oct 15.

New Delhi is stated to be worried that the dam will give Beijing the power to control the river flow, which provides drinking water to an estimated 1.8 billion people in countries including China, India, Bhutan, and Bangladesh.

The mega dam will add to the series of other dams China has built to tame the Yarlung Tsangpo, which is known as the Brahmaputra river in India. This "Mother of all Dams" will curtail the river's flow during the lean season and trigger artificial floods during the rainy season.

India's response includes a plan to build an 11,000 MW hydropower project on the Siang River in Arunachal's

Upper Siang district. Its design includes a “buffer storage” of over 9 billion cubic metres of water during peak monsoons. This would act as a reserve when water flow is reduced. It will also act as a buffer for downstream areas of Arunachal and Assam if China releases sudden water.

China has a history of using its dams to carry out transnational aggression. The piece noted that in 2021, China cut the water flow of the Mekong River by 50% for three weeks without any prior warning. The flow was cut ostensibly for power-line maintenance, but this affected the millions of people living along the waterways in the Southeast Asian countries of Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam.

Also, in 2019, China’s dams in the upper Mekong River basin retained a record amount of water, despite experiencing above-average rainfall in the region during the wet season. Consequently, countries downstream faced an unprecedented drought during this typically wet season.

Since that year, Thailand, Cambodia, and Vietnam have experienced the most severe and prolonged drought on record. The region’s economy and food security have been adversely impacted. Farmers have lost crops, fish populations have dwindled, and reservoir levels have dangerously decreased, the piece noted.

The Yarlung Tsangpo is one of the world’s largest transnational river systems. It originates in eastern Tibet’s Ngari region, home to the holy Mt Kailash and Lake Mansarovar, flows 2,900 kilometres across southern Tibet along the Himalayas, and enters India through the states of Assam and Arunachal Pradesh.

In 2017, the water of Siang, a tributary of the Brahmaputra, turned black and became unsuitable for drinking, damaging the ecology and disrupting local agricultural production. Indian officials publicly blamed China. China dismissed the accusations as highly exaggerated, the piece noted.

Building dams in upstream Tibet “enables China to use water as a geopolitical tool, potentially manipulating water levels for irrigation, power generation, or flood control, which has impacted India and Bangladesh,” Neeraj Singh Manhas, Special Advisor for South Parley Policy Initiative, Republic of Korea, has said.

“India’s geographic location, with much of its water originating from rivers flowing from China (Tibet), places it at a disadvantage. India, as a lower riparian state, is dependent on these upstream flows for its agriculture and water security, which makes it vulnerable to any upstream activities by China,” Manhas has added.

He sees India’s recent proposal to build its dam on the Siang as a shift in strategy “aiming to assert its water rights and reduce dependence on China’s actions.” This includes India’s National Hydroelectric Power Corporation building the Upper Siang hydropower

project, which would be the country’s biggest hydropower project, with a capacity of 10,000 megawatts.

While China has been taming the river to generate hydro-power over the past several years, the super dam proposed at the remote stretch of the river known as the Great Bend is the biggest of them all.

The dam’s site is at the eastern reaches of the Himalayas near the disputed border with the Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh. It is at a place where the river makes a dramatic U-turn. Here, the river elevation drops fiercely over 2,700 meters within a 50 km stretch before it changes course towards India.

China is said to claim that the project is being constructed to increase life quality in Tibet and manage water scarcity while meeting China’s goal of reaching a carbon emission peak before 2030 and carbon neutrality by 2060.

While that may be so, the dam construction is also seen as being driven by geo-political considerations. In 2016, China obstructed the flow of the Xiabuqu River, a Brahmaputra tributary located in Tibet near the Indian border. On the face of it, the obstruction was done to facilitate the operation of the Lalho hydropower project.

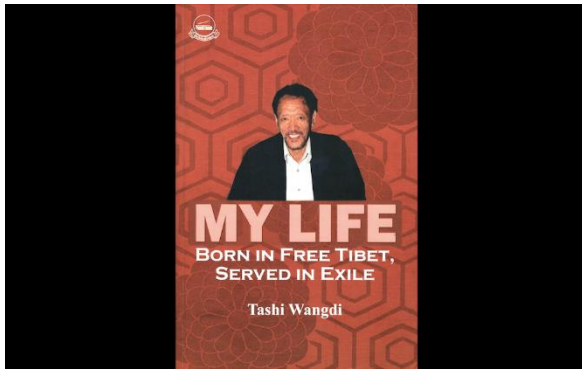
China’s “mother of all dams” is being planned at a time when India is contemplating a review of the Indus Waters Treaty with Pakistan following the cross-border Uri terrorist attack. “This trend signifies the potential ‘weaponization’ of transboundary water resources, posing a significant threat to regional stability in South Asia,” Manhas and Dr Rahul M Lad were stated to have contended in a recent research paper.

The opinion piece also notes that after the 73-day Doklam border standoff with India in 2017, China “abruptly” ceased to share hydrological data for the Brahmaputra River despite previous agreements. In contrast, Bangladesh continued to receive uninterrupted data from China. This behaviour by China reflects its intent to utilize water resources as a political tool against India within the South Asian context, the piece noted.

Book review: A document for the posterity

16 October 2024, [Phayul](#), Vijay Kranti

“My Life-Born in the free Tibet, Served in exile”, The autobiography of Tashi Wangdi, a seasoned Tibetan diplomat is an interesting ring side view of exiled Tibet’s early history.



The latest autobiographic book “My Life — Born in Free Tibet, Served in Exile” by a senior (retired) Tibetan diplomat Tashi Wangdi is yet another monumental addition to an ongoing series of Tibetan autobiographies. A common driving force behind this series is the advice of HH the Dalai Lama to all Tibetans, especially those with long public exposure as servants of the Tibetan government-in-exile or as leaders who have been active in various fields, to write down their experience, views and observations to document Tibet’s history in exile. This book by Tashi Wangdi becomes more important from the point of historic documentation of the Tibetan struggle because of his unique position as a translator of the letters and telegrams received by the Dalai Lama administration in exile during early days when none of his ‘*Kalons*’ (ministers) could understand English. This book is an authentic documentation of many events and developments because of Tashi Wangdi’s four decade long experience in the exile government. Starting from an Upper Division Clerk and gradually rising to the topmost ranks he served as a minister in the Dalai Lama’s administration. In the latter part of his career as a minister for seventeen years in almost every department of the government-in-exile he also served as the Representative of Dalai Lama in New Delhi and Brussels. His closeness to the Dalai Lama also provided him the unique opportunity of accompanying him and being privy to many historic events during his foreign visits between 1985 and 2011. This book shows that as a diplomat to the core of his personality Tashi Wangdi has the ability to look at situations and developments with deep commitment and necessary detachment too. For example, in his concluding remarks he enumerates three main factors which will have a determining impact of the ultimate success of the Tibetan movement. Among these factors he also underlines the importance of the “Goodwill and support of the Chinese people” along with two other factors namely Tibetan people’s unwavering determination and commitment and the international support for Tibetan cause. Tashi Wangdi has specifically mentioned the two reasons behind writing this monumental and massive

autobiography which is spread over 699 pages. One is the Dalai Lama’s advice to all senior retired civil servants as well as all other Tibetans to write down a full and honest account of their life story as exiles. His other reason is to share his life story with his own children because he could not spend enough quality time with them during their growing up years because of his own official engagements and frequent travels. But the third reason which he has not mentioned in the introduction chapter of this book is to let his own friends, like me, to understand how important role he and his peers played, with full commitment and devotion, in Tibet’s struggle for its legitimate rights as an occupied nation. This book has done good justice to all of these three reasons.

As a first-hand witness to many one-to-one interactions of Dalai Lama with many world leaders he writes, “He (Dalai Lama) is consistent, principled and transparent in the views and ideas he himself holds as important and shares with others. He is never one who will say something publicly and do the opposite himself, as one often witnesses in many public figures.”

The author gives an interesting but painful account of how the women in Tibetan society were treated less than equal, especially in activities related to some religious practices. He writes, “I could not understand why women were not allowed to touch certain religious objects meant for protection, why they were not allowed to enter some shrine rooms..... I remember my mother praying that she may be born as a man in her next life..... There were instances where my mother would stand outside a shrine or deity room when men folks went in to pray.”

This book is divided into 17 chapters, arranged in the chronological order as this autobiographic story moves ahead from Tashi Wangdi’s ‘Happy Childhood in Tibet’ to his retirement from his official work in 2001. Some other chapters like his ‘Journey into Exile’, ‘Delhi Bureau’ (as Dalai Lama’s Representative in India), ‘Brussels’ (as Dalai Lama’s Representative in the European Union), ‘Part of Entourage’ (travels with Dalai Lama) and ‘Dharamsala-Beijing’ (as a senior member of Dalai Lama’s team for negotiations with China) give lucid details of his personal life as a Tibetan refugee and his role in the ‘Central Tibetan Administration’ which functions as de-facto Tibet’s ‘Government-in-Exile’.

In chapter ‘My Education’ Tashi Wangdi has given interesting details of how the modern education process of Tibetan refugee children started with institutions like the ‘Tibetan-Homes-Foundation’ (THF) to finally emerge as the greatest strength of the Tibetan diaspora.

In chapter ‘Higher Education’ Tashi tells the story of how his college education at Durham in UK became possible, like most other Tibetan youths, due to liberal

grants and scholarships provided by donors and institutions who were kind to the Tibetan refugees. His experience of participation in demonstrations on issues like Northern Ireland, war in Vietnam, White apartheid rule in South Africa etc. give a good glimpse of how such international exposure of Tibetan students helped them in developing and refining their political skills for their own national struggle.

As expected, a major part of this book carries a detailed narration of Tashi Wangdi's years in the Tibetan establishment. Besides details of many major developments depicting the evolution of Tibetan issue on the international scene this book also gives a good glimpse of the nature and intensity of internal politics among the Tibetan exile community. On the one hand many anecdotes reflect on not only the fault lines of traditional regional groupings and newly emerging power groups within this microscopic community, but also successfully underline the extraordinary unity among the Tibetan diaspora which has emerged during the exile years as a result of people's deep faith in Dalai Lama and his visionary leadership. For example, the evolution of Tibetan Youth Congress (TYC) as the biggest and the most dynamic organization of the exile community has proved itself as a unifying force of the diaspora by going beyond the regional identities, sub-religious followings and socio-economic differences. His access to day to day developments in the higher circles of the Tibetan establishment and important documents as a Kalon for 17 years has also helped Tashi Wangdi to make this book rich from history point of view. Many of the photo copies of such documents are going to prove useful for future researchers and coming generations of Tibetans.

One of interesting and important subjects which emerged as an important development during Tashi's tenure as the Kalon of Religion and Culture Department is related to the ordination of Nuns which was initiated by Dalai Lama himself. Similarly, the controversy related to the incarnation of 17th Karma Pa has been dealt with in details in this book. Photo copies of some important letters related to this issue should be quite useful for those who intend to study this issue in details.

Besides many more important developments Tashi has also described the formation of a Tibetan lobbying group at Washington DC in 1988 which has emerged as one of the most effective lobby groups of Tibet in the form of 'International Campaign for Tibet' (ICT). He has described how a clear distinction between this public action group was kept insulated from the Representative Office of Tibet in New York. It is interesting to note that present day Tibet's three most reputed diplomats namely Gyari Lodi Gyaltshe, Tenzin Namgyal Tethong and Tashi Wangdi served the Tibetan cause in tandem and in continuity in the same era in

the USA which proved to be the most successful watershed era in the history of Tibet's national struggle. Tashi's detailed descriptions of HH Dalai Lama's visits to various countries and within India when he accompanied him are interesting and will prove useful to those who have interest in understanding present Dalai Lama's quality of bonding with new people and communities.

Another major attraction of this book is its chapter 'Dharamsala-Beijing' which deals with the history of contacts and the long dialogue process between Dharamsala and Beijing that started in 1979 with the contact between some Beijing functionaries and Gyalo Thondup, the elder brother of Dalai Lama, who operated from Hong Kong at that time. In addition to giving some details about this contact Tashi has also shared his experience and views about this process as a senior member of Dharamsala's 'Task Force for Negotiations' in its different Avatars.

In this chapter Tashi has quoted some interesting internal statements by two prominent Tibetan leaders, His Holiness Panchen Lama and Comrade Bapa Phuntsog Wangyal, who both stayed back in Tibet and collaborated with the occupying Chinese masters in their own respective ways. One interesting quote is from Panchen Lama's speech given to the members of the TAR Standing Committee who were attending the National People's Congress in Beijing on March 28th, 1987. He said, ***"In the State Planning Commission's report, there were many proposals for poverty alleviation in many areas. But the proposals did not say a word on the minority regions. Raising this point in the Standing Committee meetings I said, "There is nothing wrong in you becoming prosperous first. We (Tibetans) will wear threadbare garments and beg for food. But does that make you proud?"*** (p-607)

Tracing the history of dialogue between Dharamsala and Beijing Tashi has underlined the Chinese game of deception by pointing out how the Chinese government went against the assurance given by its own paramount leader Deng Xiaoping who had offered Dalai Lama to resolve the Tibetan issue through discussion on all issues except independence of Tibet. Listing all five points of the new policy document of Beijing government in November 1984 about Tibet he writes, ***"...the latest policy document had reduced the whole issue to His Holiness' return to Tibet and his future status."*** (p-601)

It is interesting to note that since then Beijing has formally restricted the entire dialogue process only to the return of Dalai Lama. In addition to this China also offered an attractive bait of good jobs and living conditions to Dalai Lama's associates with specific mention that these conditions "will be better than before". It is notable that while the Tibetan Parliament in Exile rejected this Chinese offer in its statement on February 5, 1985, the Chinese also outrightly rejected

the Tibetan memorandum and closed its doors for any further discussions in 2010.

Before concluding his book on the chapter titled 'Retirement,' Tashi Wangdi has given an interesting description of how Dalai Lama decided to give away his own political powers in chapter 'Kalon Tripa Election'. It was in 2011 that Dalai Lama finally concluded the process of converting the Tibetan system from its traditional theocratic one to a democratic one which he had started in 1960 soon after escaping from Tibet and taking asylum in India. It was under the new constitution, announced by Dalai Lama in 2011, that he transferred his temporal authority to the elected representatives and the statutory bodies of Tibet in 2011 while keeping his own role limited only to spiritual matters. The more interesting part of the first ever election for the new Kalon Tripa (Prime Minister) as a result of this constitutional change was that the winner would eventually take over the political and other temporal powers from Dalai Lama as the first ever 'Sikyong' (President) of Tibet.

Tashi Wangdi has given elaborate details of the election process starting with the results of the first phase of polling in which all ordinary voters nominate candidates of their choice. It is on the basis of this voting that the election commission announces the list of top three contestants for final voting. This exercise left Dr. Lobsang Sangay, Tenzin Namgyal Tethong and Tashi Wangdi in the final fray. Giving a detailed description of his own election strategy Tashi also politely exposes the well-planned and organized practice of character assassination of rival candidates in Tibetan elections. He has painfully described how some bad words and baseless allegations were used against him to tarnish his image and his poll prospects during the election campaign. Sadly one finds today that this tendency has gained further momentum and dimensions with increasing use of social media in Tibetan elections. The final result of the elections was on the obvious and expected lines in the form of victory of Dr. Lobsang Sangay who introduced the US Presidential election type publicity blitz campaigns and defeated the other two candidates with an impressive margin of votes.

As H.H. Dalai Lama has said in his foreword to this book, "This book shines a light on contemporary Tibetan history through the eyes of an individual who actively participated in its development."

Opinion: What China's leaders grasp about another Trump term

15 October 2024, [The Salt Lake Tribune](#), Rush Doshi

Trump remains well outside a bipartisan consensus on competing with China.

At the beginning of the Biden presidency, many of us serving in the National Security Council gathered to read the intelligence and reached a key conclusion: The 2020s would be what we called the "decisive decade" in U.S. competition with China.

Beijing seeks to displace the United States from its global leadership position and is a formidable challenger. It is America's first geopolitical rival to surpass 70 percent of U.S. G.D.P., exceed American industrial capacity and pull ahead in multiple technology sectors, such as electric vehicles, hypersonic weapons and nuclear energy technology. Absent corrective action, the United States risks falling behind China technologically, growing dependent on it economically and perhaps even suffering defeat by China's military in the Taiwan Strait or the South China Sea. How the next U.S. president navigates the remaining years of this decisive decade will have far-reaching consequences for America and the rest of the world.

The good news is that despite deep divisions in American politics, Democrats and Republicans now broadly agree on the need to outcompete China. They have enacted legislation intended to boost American technological leadership, revive domestic manufacturing, promote human rights around the world, strengthen American deterrence in the Taiwan Strait and bolster Asia-Pacific alliances.

That united front will be undermined if Donald Trump is elected again. Ironically, although he helped catalyze the current bipartisan approach as president by upending the long-term U.S. policy toward China that emphasized engagement over competition, he has never fully embraced the new consensus and now stands outside it. On China, he is often at odds with his former staff members, current advisers, the nationalist wing of his party and even his own vice-presidential pick — all of whom see the challenge posed by Beijing more clearly than he does. Left to his own unpredictable impulses, Mr. Trump could very well lose this decisive decade for America. Nobody grasps this better than China's leaders. They saw his term as an accelerant of what they believe to be American decline, and not without reason. Mr. Trump focused on U.S. commodity exports instead of long-term manufacturing strength. He alienated allies and partners, mishandled the pandemic response and repeatedly showed disregard for democratic norms. On China policy, he routinely put personal gain over America's interests and

undermined important steps his staff members took to compete with Beijing. As a result, Mr. Trump was widely mocked by Chinese citizens, who nicknamed him “Chuan Jianguo” (“Build-the-Nation Trump” — the “nation” being China). His administration led President Xi Jinping of China to declare that the world was undergoing “great changes unseen in a century” as America fell from pre-eminence.

There is no reason to believe that in a second term Mr. Trump would deviate from the approach that weakened America’s position during his presidency.

Take technology policy. When Mr. Trump was in office, his administration rightly levied export controls on Huawei and ZTE, Chinese telecommunications companies that the intelligence community had warned could be vectors for espionage and cyberattacks. But he put self-interest first. He reportedly promised Mr. Xi he would lift the controls (and eventually did so for ZTE, despite bipartisan opposition) in exchange for purchases of U.S. agriculture and energy commodities that he felt would help his re-election prospects.

Today Mr. Trump opposes overwhelmingly bipartisan legislation that would ban TikTok unless the app’s China-based owners sell it. The goal is to prevent Beijing from being able to shape U.S. public opinion by manipulating the news feeds of TikTok’s 170 million American users or from having access to sensitive user data. He previously supported this approach but appears to have reversed himself after meeting with a top donor who has a roughly \$30 billion stake in the app.

President Biden has taken important steps to deny China the advanced semiconductors it needs to take the lead in artificial intelligence and improve its military weapons, and he has moved to shore up America’s defenses against Beijing’s publicly documented campaign to compromise critical U.S. infrastructure, such as water, gas, telecommunications and transportation, in the run-up to a possible conflict. If, in a second term, Mr. Trump again elevates his personal interests above the country’s approach to technology competition, it would put these vital efforts at risk.

The story is similar in manufacturing. As a recent report by Senator Marco Rubio made clear, China already “leads in many of the industries that will determine geopolitical supremacy.” Members of both parties recognize that urgent action is needed to reindustrialize America as a new flood of Chinese exports threatens key U.S. industries.

Mr. Trump does not seem to share this view. As president, he squandered any leverage he gained from raising tariffs on China by accepting a bad trade deal that he hoped would help his re-election prospects. The deal allowed Beijing to keep its unfair practices

and sell Americans manufactured goods if China promised to buy American commodities. More bad deals like that in a second term could cost millions of U.S. jobs, displace America in high-tech industry and accelerate decline by turning the United States into a commodity supplier dependent on Chinese manufactured goods.

With democracy and human rights under pressure around the world, American leadership in defending those values is imperative. Yet Mr. Trump retains an affinity for authoritarian leaders like Mr. Xi and President Vladimir Putin of Russia that is far outside the bipartisan consensus. Mr. Trump once praised China’s response to the Tiananmen Square massacre and threatened to veto nearly unanimous legislation condemning China’s crackdown on Hong Kong by declaring, “We have to stand with Hong Kong, but I’m also standing with President Xi.” According to Mr. Trump’s former national security adviser John Bolton, Mr. Trump privately encouraged Mr. Xi to build the re-education prisons in which China interned an estimated one million ethnic Uyghurs. A second Trump term could further greenlight China’s repression and its drive to weaken democratic values and American leadership around the world.

Mr. Trump’s ideas on Taiwan are a blueprint for calamity. For decades, Washington has deterred China from invading Taiwan with a bipartisan policy of strategic ambiguity about whether the United States would defend the island. Mr. Trump threatens to weaken that deterrence. He said recently that Taiwan should pay the United States to defend the island, which is democratically ruled, while cavalierly casting doubt on America’s ability to do just that.

This is extremely dangerous. Telegraphing a lack of U.S. resolve could one day embolden China to seize the island, which could spark a conflict that devastates the global economy. And Beijing has already taken notice: It is increasingly well known in Western diplomatic and scholarly circles that Chinese officials and think tank experts are quietly asking whether Mr. Trump might acquiesce to Chinese military action against Taiwan if he is re-elected.

Democrats and Republicans alike believe that strengthening America’s global alliances is one of the best ways to counter China. But Mr. Trump has shown that he still does not value America’s international friendships. He is threatening once again to raise tariffs on allies, make them pay more for collective defense and renege on U.S. defense commitments. Without its allies, America would stand alone against Beijing.

China is America’s most formidable geopolitical rival in a century, and thanks to Mr. Trump’s term in office, leaders in Beijing are acutely aware of what he is about and how to manipulate him. They believe China is

rising and America is declining. Electing Mr. Trump next month risks proving them right.

China's government is about to spend big on stimulus – can it turn around the country's sluggish economy?

15 October 2024, [The Conversation](#)

China's relentless economic growth used to be the marvel of the world. Oh, what a memory.

The past couple of years have seen China contend with an economic slowdown amid colliding crises, many of which make it internationally unique. Consumer prices have been approaching deflationary territory, there's an oversupply of housing, and youth unemployment has soared.

Mounting pressure has forced the Chinese government to step in. Over the past month, Beijing has put forward a set of significant economic stimulus measures aimed at reviving China's faltering economy. According to a research note by Deutsche Bank, this stimulus could potentially become "the largest in history" in nominal terms. But there's still a lot we don't know. So what kinds of measures that are in this package so far, and has China been here before?

What's in the package?

On September 24, Pan Gongsheng, governor of China's central bank, unveiled the country's boldest intervention to boost its economy since the pandemic. The initiatives included reducing mortgage rates for existing homes and reducing the amount of cash commercial banks are required to hold in reserves. The latter is expected to inject about 1 trillion yuan (A\$210 billion) into the financial market by letting the banks lend out more.

On top of this, 800 billion yuan (A\$168 billion) was announced to strengthen China's capital market.

This comprised a new 500 billion yuan (A\$105 billion) monetary policy facility to help institutions more easily access funds to buy stocks, and a 300 billion yuan (A\$63 billion) re-lending facility to help speed up sales of unsold housing.

Further signs of economic revitalisation became evident at a Politburo meeting of China's top government officials, two days after this announcement.

Chinese President Xi Jinping stressed the urgency of economic revival. Xi even encouraged officials to "go bold in helping the economy" without having to fear the consequences.

That same day, seven government departments released a joint policy package to stabilise China's 500 billion yuan (A\$105 billion) dairy industry, which has been severely impacted by declining milk and beef prices since 2023.

A market rollercoaster

Initially, the market's response was overwhelmingly positive. Perhaps too positive. In the last week of September, stock markets in Shanghai, Shenzhen, and Hong Kong saw their biggest weekly rise in 16 years.

On October 8, following China's National Day holiday, turnover on the Shanghai and Shenzhen stock exchanges hit an unprecedented 3.43 trillion yuan (A\$718 billion). However, expectations for further stimulus measures were met with disappointment.

China's National Development and Reform Commission brought forward 100 billion yuan (A\$21 billion) in spending from the 2025 budget. That wasn't enough to sustain market optimism. On October 9, Chinese stocks saw their most severe drop in 27 years. This downturn only worsened a few days later, when China's Ministry of Finance hinted there was "ample room" to raise debts but did not specify any new stimulus measures.

Still thin on the details

The market remains deeply uncertain about the future direction of China's economic policies and what they might mean for the world. Hopes that more details might be released over the weekend were largely dashed.

Back in July, Chinese authorities asserted in their Third Plenary Session communique that China "must remain firmly committed" to achieving this year's economic growth target of 5%. Compared to the country's reform-era economic performance, that's a modest goal.

But facing a persistently sluggish economic outlook, Xi later seemed to subtly shift the tone, changing the language from "remain firmly committed" to "strive to fulfill" in September.

Over the past decades, China has frequently employed massive-scale stimulus measures to revive its economy during downturns. These policies have been able to significantly rejuvenate the economy, though occasionally with some worrying side effects.

In response to the 2008 global financial crisis, China's State Council released a 4 trillion yuan (A\$837 billion) stimulus package. This successfully helped China stand firm through the crisis and was credited as a key stabiliser of the global economy.

But it also accumulated trillions of yuan in debt through local government financing and accelerated the rise of "shadow banking" – unregulated financial activities.

China also spent big on stimulating its economy in 2015, following stock market turbulence, and then again in the wake of the pandemic.

What should we expect?

What should we expect this time? How balanced or sustainable will any ensuing growth be?

We are still waiting on many of the details about the size and scope of the package, but any big increase in

Chinese economic demand will likely have “spillover” effects.

As we’ve discussed, many of the measures announced to date will have their most immediate effect on borrowing, lending and liquidity in China’s stock markets.

That suggests we should watch for what’s called the “wealth effect” in economics. This is the theory that rising asset prices – such as for housing or shares – make people feel wealthier and therefore spend more. If China’s big stimulus spend causes sustained increases in asset values, it could give rise to economic optimism. Chinese consumers - and investors - may become less anxious about the future.

From Australia’s point of view, that could see increases in demand in areas where our economies are interlinked – iron ore, tourism, education and manufactured food exports.

More broadly, Chinese demand could contribute to growth in other global economies, with a self-reinforcing effect on the world as a whole.

Beware financialisation

On the other hand, China’s shift to depending more on volatile asset price rises in its capital markets to sustain growth could have destabilising effects. Where asset price increases benefit those at the “top end of town,” they can breed inequities and imbalances of their own. China’s “Black Monday” stock market crash in 2015 raised alarm in Beijing. Partly reflecting a wariness of excess financialisation, Xi cautioned at the time that “housing is for living in, not for speculation”.

So far, China is still navigating its path towards a more sustainable development model, striving to strike a balance between sustaining economic growth and stabilising its domestic markets and political landscape. As for the outcome, it remains a profound uncertainty for us all - perhaps China itself included.

The Politics of China’s Land Appropriation in Bhutan

15 October 2024, [The Diplomat](#), Robert Barnett

China has built 22 villages and settlements within Bhutan’s customary borders. And there is no sign that Bhutan can do anything about it – or that Beijing will face any costs.

In dealing with its neighbors, China “always strives to find fair and reasonable solutions through peaceful and friendly consultations,” a spokesman for the Chinese Embassy in the United States told the New York Times in August. Why, then, has China appropriated part of a neighbor’s territory?

That neighbor is Bhutan, a country with which China has said for decades it is keen to have formal diplomatic relations, hoping to balance or reduce Bhutan’s close relations with its southern neighbor, India. Bhutan, for its part, has what it calls “friendly

and cooperative relations with the People’s Republic of China” and has supported China consistently at the United Nations and elsewhere.

As China’s Foreign Minister Wang Yi has put it, in more poetic terms, “China and Bhutan are linked by mountains and rivers and enjoy profound traditional friendship.” And China signed a treaty with Bhutan in 1998 in which both parties proclaimed “mutual respect for each other’s sovereignty and territorial integrity” and agreed “not to resort to unilateral action to alter the status quo of the border.”

What has since happened is the opposite. Eight years ago, China began building villages within territory that has for decades if not centuries been within Bhutan. Now, as documented in a report out today, there are 22 such villages and settlements built by China within Bhutan’s customary borders. And there is no sign that Bhutan can do anything about it – or that China will face any costs for doing so.

As far as one can tell from satellite images, the Chinese villages and settlements in total contain some 2,200 homes for approximately 7,000 people. To construct these villages, China has annexed 2 percent of Bhutan’s territory.

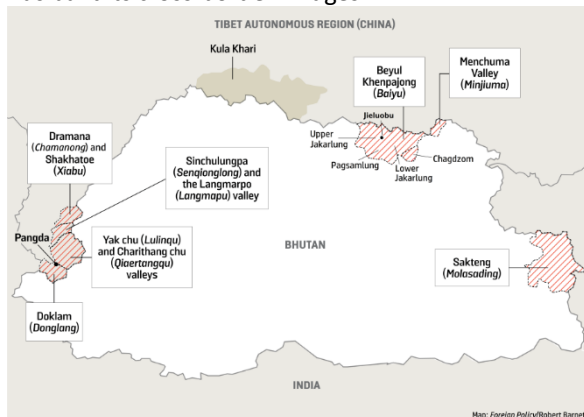
The villages are being built in two areas of Bhutan. Eight of the Chinese villages are in a western area of Bhutan that the historian Tsering Shakya said was ceded to Bhutan by the then ruler of Tibet, the 13th Dalai Lama in the early 20th century. China has built those eight villages for military reasons: it wants that western area of Bhutan because it includes an 89-square-kilometer area called Doklam, possession of which would give China major strategic advantage in its ongoing confrontations with India.

The 14 other Chinese villages and settlements are in areas of northeastern Bhutan known as the Beyul Khenpajong and Menchuma. These areas have always been understood to be in Bhutan. China produced a claim for these areas only in the 1980s and until at least the early 1990s they were shown on official Chinese maps as parts of Bhutan.

These northeastern areas of Bhutan have no compelling military or strategic value to China. Its reason for annexing them was more or less explicitly to place diplomatic pressure on Bhutan. In 1990, in what has become known as the “package deal,” Beijing offered to drop its claims in the northeast of Bhutan if Thimphu would yield a number of claimed territories in its west, including Doklam, to China. In other words, the Chinese villages in the northeast were built within Bhutan’s customary borders as a threat: if Bhutan didn’t agree to the package deal and yield the western areas, the threat implied, it would lose the northeastern areas too.

That threat appears to have been largely realized. Without any public comment, and unnoticed even within the country, let alone abroad, Bhutan has

already changed its maps so that Menchuma, one of the northeastern areas occupied by China since the 2000s, is no longer shown as part of Bhutan, though it clearly was some 30 years ago – even on China’s maps. And in March last year, two years after reports emerged of Chinese villages within Bhutan, Bhutan’s then-prime minister finally said that those reports were false. The statement does not, however, mean that those reports were false when they were published. Instead, it suggests that now Bhutan does not expect to be able to recover the areas where China has built its cross-border villages.



Map showing the principal areas of Bhutan currently claimed by China. China is building villages in the western sector of Bhutan (in Bji Gewog in Haa dzongkhag) and in the northeastern sector (in Beyul and Menchuma in Lhuentse dzongkhag). Bhutan ceded Kula Khari (Gasa dzongkhag) to China in the 1980s, and in 2020 China made a public claim to Sakteng in the eastern sector. Source: Foreign Policy/Robert Barnett 2021.

From Leverage to Punishment

China’s eight villages in Bhutan’s west are part of what China calls a “consolidation” or “fixing” tactic: they are a way of acquiring territory by creating “facts on the ground” that another party can hardly change without triggering a war. In this sense, they are like China’s actions in the South China Seas.

But the 14 villages and settlements in the northeast of Bhutan represent a completely different rationale: not the seizing of a strategic asset but what seemed to be a temporary occupation, a signal to Bhutan that it should yield to pressure. This was indicated by the fact that, in 2018, when China finished building its first cross-border village, which was in the northeast of Bhutan, it had only 16 residents.

By early 2023, when Bhutan announced that it was close to reaching a deal with China and that there were no Chinese villages on its soil, that pressure appeared to have paid off for China. Yet China’s building spree in Bhutan’s northeast continued. At the end of 2022, there were 14 villages and settlements, built over six years. But in the 18 months since early 2023 seven more have been built, and three existing villages have been majorly expanded and are currently being upgraded from villages to towns. This surge of

construction has added another 790 units of Chinese housing in the northeast of Bhutan, tripling the housing stock in that area, which until recently China had not apparently seen as of strategic significance.

These new villages and settlements are not required to increase China’s pressure on Bhutan – Thimphu seems close to yielding to most of China’s demands, since it has no other option. Rather, they seem to represent punishment of Bhutan because it cannot yield Doklam to China. Legally speaking, Bhutan cannot do so unless India agrees, because of a 2007 treaty between Bhutan and India obliging either side not to “allow the use of its territory for activities harmful to the national security and interest of the other.” So China’s continuing occupation of parts of Bhutan and the expansion of its cross-border villages is penalizing Bhutan for having failed to accept an element of the package deal that it has no power to enact.

If, as seems likely, Bhutan yields the non-Doklam western areas demanded by the Chinese government, it will get some rewards from China, in that Beijing will most likely drop its claims to those areas of Bhutan that it has claimed but not occupied. These areas are the Upper Langmarpo, Charithang, and Yak chu areas in the west and the Chagdrom area in the northeast, totaling about 430 sq km. China’s claims to those areas are viewed by some observers as “trade space” – token demands made only to be dropped later so as to give the impression of good will.

It is also likely that China will give back the Pagsamlung valley, an area of religious and historic significance for Bhutan which China has annexed by building roads and outposts and by stationing troops, but where it has not constructed villages. Returning the Pagsamlung valley to Bhutan would not, however, be a genuine concession either, because China does not include the Pagsamlung as part of China on its national-level maps (some local-level Chinese maps do include it as part of China), and has not done so for at least 25 years. So in the case of the Pagsamlung valley, China has occupied a piece of a neighbor’s territory that it does not even claim.

Conflict Without An Enemy

China’s land-grabs in Bhutan thus differ from Beijing’s actions in the South China Seas. Firstly, unlike the Spratly Islands and other maritime features in the critical waterway, most of China’s villages in Bhutan are not in areas of major strategic value, apart from Doklam. Their value was primarily as a form of pressure on the Bhutan government to yield the Doklam plateau.

Second, China’s actions in the South China Sea – claiming territory on dubious grounds and then building unilaterally on that territory – were hostile acts directed at competitors or antagonists. But China supposedly views Bhutan as a friend, and Bhutan

cannot, because of its size, resources, and geography, resort to any form of antagonistic response. China could have used multiple other options to place diplomatic pressure on Bhutan without seizing its territory and openly breaching an international agreement.

Bhutan has in any case, since at least the early 1990s, indicated its interest in opening formal relations with Beijing and settling the border disputes, apart from the Doklam issue, which depended on getting agreement from India. Bhutan's willingness was never the problem, and even the use by China of territorial annexation as an extreme form of pressure on Bhutan was always unlikely to get India to agree to Doklam being yielded to China.

A realist might see China's actions as what the political theorist Thomas Schelling called "coercive diplomacy," or, more particularly "compellence" – a muscular form of dominance-assertion. But Schelling's theory always assumes an adversary, leaving the coercing power with relatively few options. That is the opposite of the case here: Bhutan has not claimed anything that China held before its recent annexations, and could not compete with China even if it did.

In addition, coercive diplomacy involves a threat that is not fulfilled unless there is non-compliance (think Kennedy and the Cuban Missile Crisis). But in the case of Bhutan, the threat was carried out in advance, making it closer to Schelling's "forcible action" (which he also called "brute force"), with the unlikely promise of withdrawal if Bhutan were to concede to the demand – which China's strategists must have known that in all likelihood it could never do in full.

Beijing's actions are of course ultimately directed against India, with which China is locked into a long-running border conflict. But the only damage being done here is to Bhutan, not India. For its part, India has shown interest only in the Doklam issue – or more precisely in the southern ridge of Doklam, which gives oversight of India's bottleneck at Siliguri.

In June 2017 India sent 270 troops into Doklam to prevent Chinese soldiers taking that ridge, leading to a 73-day standoff between Indian and Chinese army units. But India has not commented publicly or responded to China's incursions or appropriation at other points along the Bhutan-China border, and not even to China's seizure of the majority of the Doklam plateau just to the north of the ridge, where China has built multiple roads, barracks and military facilities in what is clearly disputed territory.

So why would China risk its stated goal of establishing formal relations with a friendly neighbor, and its much-proclaimed commitment to a "peaceful rise," in order to punish India, a third party that, as far as is known, is involved only in one small sector of that border? And why would China continue building villages in the northeastern area of Bhutan – at mind-numbing

expense, given their remoteness, altitude, and climate, as a result of which every settler in those villages has to be paid large sums by the Chinese government to agree to live there – long after the utility of those villages as leverage has passed, literally, the point of no return?

Domestic factors can play a role in these situations – local Chinese power-holders in Tibet stand to gain significant funding from Beijing for their administrations by claiming that they face security threats from northern Bhutan. However, the only threat that Chinese media have cited as coming from Bhutan – since the Indian military has little presence in Bhutan other than at Doklam – is the possibility that exiled Tibetan supporters of the Dalai Lama might somehow try to cross into Tibet via Bhutan to foment an independence movement. But there have been almost no reports of illegal border crossings in the last ten years on any part of Tibet's 4,000 km-border (91 percent of which is with India or Nepal, not Bhutan), and even before then there were no reports of any trying to cross via Bhutan.

The use of annexation as a diplomatic tool matches with a recent shift by China from soft-power approaches to hard-power moves in its foreign relations, in particular with regard to Taiwan, the Philippines, and India. Some have presented realist explanations for these developments, arguing that China sees those states as posing threats of some kind to its security. Others have seen China's combination of a declared commitment to a soft-power approach with the reality of its hard-power politics as designed, intentionally or not, to create confusion for observers and reduce predictability. But such arguments have little purchase in the case of Bhutan, since it does not pose a threat to China. Instead, the Bhutan case demonstrates the widest instance so far of a gulf between China's rhetoric and practice in its policy towards its neighbors, especially the smaller ones.

A New Cost-free Norm?

But there is another factor that may be more significant than normative assumptions of rationality or threat-response: the lack of cost. The exercise by states of their coercive powers is presumably constrained by the costs of excessive actions. In the Bhutan case, there have been no costs, not even of the mildest kind.

The mainstream media, other than those in India, have mostly ignored the issue, apart from news pieces by the New York Times in 2020, Reuters in 2021, and the Wall Street Journal in 2024, three years after the first major reports of cross-border village-construction (besides a Washington Post op-ed I wrote in 2020). Criticisms of China are routine in Western media – the BBC and the Guardian, for example, recently covered extremely doubtful allegations of Chinese abuses in

Tibet based on such slender evidence as photographs of students wearing military-type fatigues or insignificant shifts in nighttime light emissions. But neither outlet has carried anything about China's annexation of territory within another country, seemingly a challenge to a founding principle of the United Nations.

As for governments, Bhutan and India have been largely silent on the issue, surely the wisest option for them in this situation. But it remains unclear why other governments or politicians have been quiet about China's annexation of parts of Bhutan. All the reports of village construction in disputed territory have long since been confirmed by satellite imagery, and the U.S. military has issued two reports judging China's village-building program in Bhutan to be potentially a case of occupation (one in October 2023, and another in much greater detail in March this year). Rabid anti-China rhetoric is never helpful, but near-total silence risks signaling acquiescence by the wider community to the use of territorial annexation as a tactic of choice with small neighbors.

The reason why China chose this hard-fisted tactic against Bhutan may thus be because it rightly calculated that the costs would all be Bhutan's. Given its commitment to long-term considerations, Bhutan has no effective option but to continue as if its powerful northern neighbor is a friend, to accept the Chinese deal as far as India will allow, and to open formal relations with Beijing. As then-Prime Minister Lotay Tshering said last year, "How can Bhutan not have any bilateral relations with China? The question is when, and in what manner."

China may not end up with control of the southern ridge at Doklam, but its cross-border actions elsewhere in Bhutan have already demonstrated the effectiveness of land appropriation as a cost-free means for a major power to extract concessions from a smaller neighbor.

China's 'Mother Of All Dams' Threatens More Tensions With India; Delhi Responds By Building Another Dam On Its Side

15 October 2024, [The Eurasian Times](#), Ritu Sharma

China is all set to weaponize water against India by building the world's largest hydropower project—the 60,000 MW Motuo mega-dam—on the Yarlung Tsangpo River, which is known in India as the mighty Brahmaputra River.

In the post-Galwan world, New Delhi is worried that the dam will give Beijing the power to control the river flow, which provides drinking water to an estimated 1.8 billion people in countries including China, India, Bhutan, and Bangladesh.

The mega dam is in addition to the series of dams that China has built to tame Tsangpo. China's 'Mother of all Dams' can curtail the river flow during the lean season and trigger artificial floods during the rainy season. A concerned India has proposed an 11,000 MW hydropower project on the Siang River in Arunachal's Upper Siang district.

The dam design includes a "buffer storage" of over 9 billion cubic meters of water during peak monsoons. This would act as a reserve when water flow is reduced or act as a buffer for downstream areas of Arunachal and Assam if China releases sudden water.

The proposed dam aims to strengthen India's water-sharing rights as a riparian state.

India's fears are not unfounded. In 2021, China cut the water flow of the Mekong River by 50 percent for three weeks without a prior warning. The flow was cut ostensibly for power-line maintenance, but this affected the millions of people living along the waterways in the Southeast Asian countries of Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam.

In 2019, China's dams in the upper Mekong River basin retained a record amount of water, setting a new record despite experiencing above-average rainfall in the region during the wet season. Consequently, countries downstream faced an unprecedented drought during this typically wet season.

Since 2019, Thailand, Cambodia, and Vietnam have experienced the most severe and prolonged drought on record. The region's economy and food security have been adversely impacted. Farmers have lost crops, fish populations have dwindled, and reservoir levels have dangerously decreased.

Now, the Yarlung Tsangpo is one of the world's largest transnational river systems. It originates in the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau in southwest China, flows 2,900 kilometers across southern Tibet via the Himalayas, and enters India, where it is called the Brahmaputra, through the Indian states of Assam and Arunachal Pradesh (which China claims as South Tibet).

Siang is a tributary of Brahmaputra. In 2017, the water of Siang turned black and became unsuitable for drinking, damaging the ecology and disrupting local agricultural production. Indian officials publicly blamed China. Nonetheless, China dismissed the accusations as highly exaggerated.

Experts believe that constructing dams on rivers such as the Brahmaputra will allow China to control the flow of water downstream.

"This enables China to use water as a geopolitical tool, potentially manipulating water levels for irrigation, power generation, or flood control, which has impacted India and Bangladesh," Neeraj Singh Manhas, Special Advisor for South Parley Policy Initiative, Republic of Korea told the EurAsian Times.

He opined: "For China, controlling the headwaters of major rivers provides an upper hand in negotiating

with downstream nations. India's geographic location, with much of its water originating from rivers flowing from China, places it at a disadvantage. India, as a lower riparian state, is dependent on these upstream flows for its agriculture and water security, which makes it vulnerable to any upstream activities by China."

Manhas sees India's recent proposal to build its dam on the Siang as a shift in strategy "aiming to assert its water rights and reduce dependence on China's actions." The National Hydroelectric Power Corporation will build the Upper Siang hydropower project.

The dam was first proposed in 2017 by the central government think tank Niti Ayog. It said it would be the country's biggest hydropower project, with a capacity of 10,000 megawatts.

The NHPC has selected three sites along the Siang River, Uggeng, Ditte Dimme, and Parong, to assess whether the dam is feasible in this area.

The pre-feasibility report assesses the probable cost of the dam and whether it can be constructed in that area. The survey also involves drilling a 200-meter-deep hole to test the strength of the rock surface. The dam is facing considerable opposition from the local population.

Water Wars In The Himalayas

The Yarlung Tsangpo runs almost 3,000 kilometers through the Tibetan Autonomous Region to the Indian states of Arunachal Pradesh and Assam and then out into the Bay of Bengal via Bangladesh. It is the highest major river on Earth, running at an average elevation of 4,000 meters.

In the last few years, China has been taming the river to generate hydro-power. But the super dam proposed at the remote stretch of the river known as the Great Bend is the biggest of them all.

The dam site is at the eastern reaches of the Himalayas near the disputed border with the Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh. It is at a place where the river makes a dramatic U-turn. Here, the river elevation drops fiercely over 2,700 meters within a 50 km stretch before it changes course towards India.

China claims that the project is being constructed to increase life quality in Tibet and manage water scarcity while meeting China's goal of reaching a carbon emission peak before 2030 and carbon neutrality by 2060.

But the dam construction is also driven by geo-political considerations. In 2016, China obstructed the flow of the Xiabuqu River, a Brahmaputra tributary located in Tibet near the Sino-Indian border. On the face of it, the obstruction was done to facilitate the operation of the Lalho hydropower project.

However, it coincided with the time when India was contemplating a review of the Indus Waters Treaty with Pakistan following the Uri attack. In a research

paper, Manhas and Dr. Rahul M. Lad contend that "this trend signifies the potential "weaponization" of transboundary water resources, posing a significant threat to regional stability in South Asia."

Bangladesh, where millions of people reside in the Brahmaputra basin, will also be adversely affected by the change in the river's course.

After the Doklam standoff with India, China "abruptly" ceased to share hydrological data for the Brahmaputra River despite previous agreements. In contrast, Bangladesh continued to receive uninterrupted data from China. This behavior by China reflects its intent to utilize water resources as a political tool against India within the South Asian context.

India has a China problem, not just a border problem

15 October 2024, [The Strategist](#), Rajeswari Pillai Rajagopalan

It's not just the border. India has a deeper problem with China, and it looks like it's part of the same problem that other countries have with China: the country has become much more aggressive.

Indian policymakers and commentators routinely assume that if New Delhi could only resolve the dispute over the line of the Himalayan border, other issues would fall into place. In fact, there's not much reason to believe that. Just look further afield to the Western Pacific or Ukraine.

For the past several years, New Delhi has said there can be no progress in other aspects of the relationship as long as China refuses to concede on the border problem. This was initially an effort at pushing the border problem to the centre, presumably in the hope that China would not want to risk the entire relationship over it. But China has not budged and does indeed seem willing to risk the relationship instead.

There has been some recent speculation that India and China are on their way to resolving their standoff at the border, where military confrontations have sometimes become violent. India's External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said last month that 75 percent of the disengagement problems had been resolved. The holding of a round of Sino-Indian border talks in August and a meeting between Indian National Security Advisor Ajit Doval and Chinese Foreign Affairs Minister Wang Yi also added to hope. But Jaishankar has since clarified that his reference was only to disengagement, not to issues of militarisation of the border or the larger state of relations.

Anyway, there may be a larger problem with India's strategy. The assumption behind it appears to be that the border dispute is the key issue in the relationship. But confrontations at the border may be

consequences of deeper problems rather than a cause of them.

India-China relations have become increasingly challenging over the past two decades, even before a severe border clash that raised tensions in 2020. China objected vociferously to the US-India nuclear deal. It gave way, but a few years later refused to allow India to join the Nuclear Suppliers Group, which governs transfers of civilian nuclear technology and material. Around the same time, China repeatedly stymied Indian efforts to designate Pakistan-based terrorists under the UN terror list. Similarly, China has refused to back India's efforts to promote UN Security Council reforms as well as India's quest for a seat on the Security Council.

A meeting of foreign ministers of the BRICS group failed to issue a joint statement (for the first time since its founding) because of the Security Council issue. It is not difficult to assume, given China's long-standing efforts to undermine UN Security Council reforms, that it had a hand in the latest failure. India's assumption appears to have been that each of these was a discrete policy disagreement rather than an indicator of a more fundamental issue—and that may be its big mistake.

China's behaviour with many of its neighbours has similarly changed. These changes have included increasingly aggressive behaviour in the South China Sea and East China Sea, particularly against Taiwan. It is also attempting to fish in troubled waters in both the Middle East and in the Ukraine war by extending diplomatic support to Iran to undermine American influence and appearing to provide material support to Russia.

Each of these instances of China's behaviour may seem explicable when viewed in isolation. China and its supporters would argue that its behaviour in the South China Sea is a response to aggressive actions by Vietnam and the Philippines, for example.

But we are seeing too many instances. There's a pattern, and India should recognise it.

If China's behaviour has fundamentally changed, and its behaviour towards India is only one aspect of that change, then what New Delhi faces is a much more serious problem than just the border. Indeed, it's clearly not even a Sino-Indian problem, but a China problem.

Part of this might reflect some historical patterns about the way rising powers behave, but one aspect of it may be more narrowly cultural: a reflection of China's sense of itself and its place in history. Either way, such a shift in China's position and worldview is not likely to be dealt with through negotiations narrowly focused on an apparently simple border dispute.

This is not to suggest that the border dispute is trivial. In 2020, for the first time in decades, blood was spilled

in a clash between Indian and Chinese troops. Tens of thousands of Indian and Chinese soldiers are eyeball to eyeball, with all the attendant risks of inadvertent escalation.

This is a matter of concern even without all the other layers of complications between the two countries. Nevertheless, those layers of complications do matter and suggest that more fundamental issues are at stake than just the border dispute. If China is now fundamentally difficult to deal with, resolving that problem will be harder than Indian policy seems to assume. And even if it were resolved, other disputes may not be.

EXPLAINED: Xinjiang's largest cotton producer turned 70; not everyone is celebrating

14 October 2024, [RFA](#), Gülchéhre

The XPCC is involved in everything from governance to commerce. Evidence points to its oppression of Uyghurs.

This month the Chinese Communist Party celebrated the 70th anniversary of the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps, or XPCC, a massive CCP-backed paramilitary group that functions as an armed force, corporate conglomerate and government administrative unit.

China's vice premier, He Lifeng, traveled to Urumqi, the capital of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, to join the festivities, which included a performance by dancers holding replicas of giant vegetables to symbolize the bounty XPCC has brought to the region through land reclamation projects. He and other CCP officials praised the corps for protecting China's western border and promoting social stability and called for the group to take an even more expansive role in Xinjiang's development.

That won't come as welcome news to XPCC's critics who assert that gains ascribed to the corps have come at the expense of Uyghurs and other ethnic Turkic communities indigenous to Xinjiang. They allege the XPCC's economic development has relied on land expropriation, forced labor and extrajudicial detentions that have drawn international condemnation.

"In the last five years in particular, the XPCC has played a critical role in suppressing Uyghur life, culture and identity," a highly critical 2022 report from researchers at Sheffield Hallam University in the United Kingdom said.

The conglomerate is under sanctions by the U.S. Treasury. Cotton imports from Xinjiang are banned in the United States in part because of allegations that Uyghurs detained under the mass internment campaign were forced to work in textile factories upon release.

What is the XPCC?

The XPCC, which is referred to as Bingtuan in China, dates to the early days of the People's Republic of China. It was founded in 1954 with decommissioned troops from the People's Liberation Army and initially focused on security in a relatively sparsely populated border area and on agriculture and construction projects.

In the decades since, the XPCC's footprint has grown considerably. It now has stakes in industries including media, mining, logistics, clothing, insurance, tourism and others. In 2023, the XPCC's output in goods and services were valued in excess of \$50 billion, more than 20% of Xinjiang's total GDP.

XPCC is among the world's largest producers of cotton, the importation of which has been banned in the United States. News reports have said entities tied to the corps account for about 30% of China's cotton production.

The U.S. and human rights groups have said the production is in part driven by forced labor. China denies the accusations and has said the work of the corps has led to a more prosperous region. News reports have noted a few relative benefits of working for the XPCC. This account in Foreign Policy magazine published on the occasion of XPCC's 60th birthday noted that laborers for the corps are paid more than other workers.

What is unique about the XPCC?

While the XPCC has grown into a major conglomerate, it is structured in a way similar to a military unit in that it is divided into 14 divisions that are subdivided into dozens of regiments.

Its leaders take military titles who exercise administrative control over areas in which they operate. That includes authority over its court and educational systems in Bingtuan territories.

Nearly 3.5 million people in Xinjiang live under XPCC's direct authority, making it a parallel government to the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, or XUAR. In 2021, the corps managed more than one-sixth of the region and a quarter of its arable land.

Why has the U.S. sanctioned the XPCC?

In July 2020, the U.S. Treasury Department sanctioned XPCC for its involvement in a mass internment campaign against Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslims in response to a supposed threat of terrorism.

The U.S. has labeled Chinese persecution of Uyghurs a genocide because it seeks to diminish native culture and traditions in the name of assimilation. More than 1 million people are thought to have been held in reeducation camps designed to promote assimilation with the dominant Chinese Han culture, which critics allege the XPCC has helped to promote in Xinjiang by facilitating migration.

Chen Quanguo, who as Communist Party secretary of the XUAR implemented that campaign, was also the

first political commissar of the XPCC, which gave him authority over the growing conglomerate.

"The XPCC has been used to detain Uyghurs in camps and prisons, to surveil Uyghurs ... they have contributed massive police forces," German researcher Adrian Zenz, who has documented the persecution of Muslims in Xinjiang, told RFA Uyghur. "And the XPCC is used to a large extent for forced labor as Uyghurs are being transferred to XPCC factories."

The Sheffield Hallam study reported that 70% of the land in one village was transferred from Uyghur farmers.

The celebrants who gathered for the 70th anniversary offered another take. Ma Xingrui, party secretary for the XUAR, credited the XPCC for playing a central role in ensuring a harmonious Xinjiang.

"We must adhere to the idea of one chessboard and one family between the corps and the locals from beginning to end," he said.

The Great Han Chauvinism: Why China doesn't have any place for minorities

14 October 2024, [FirstPost](#)v, Claude Arpi

The late Chinese leader, Wu Bangguo, may have believed that the Chinese system is superior, but minorities have no place in China today, except in the Party's propaganda

On October 8, Wu Bangguo, the former third in the Communist hierarchy and head of China's top legislature, died in Beijing at the age of 83.

An official obituary by *Xinhua* described Wu as an 'outstanding leader'.

The South China Morning Post observed: "Wu was best remembered for his strong opposition to the Western political system. At an NPC [National People's Congress] seminar in 2011, Wu identified five political arrangements that China cannot implement: a multiparty system, pluralistic ideologies, federalism, privatisation, and the separation of powers and bicameralism." "We will absolutely not copy models in the Western political system," he argued.

This raises the question of what the Chinese system is. Is it really superior, and perhaps more importantly, is it fully implemented?

We shall see that it is not.

Recently, *81.com*, the website of the People's Liberation Army (PLA), gave Xi Jinping's views on 'time'.

At a time the People's Republic of China (PRC) celebrates its 75th anniversary, the article noted: "These 75 years are destined to be a magnificent historical time in the vast 'time history' of Chinese civilisation."

The PLA website further tells us: “General Secretary Xi Jinping has profound thoughts and profound consciousness about time: thinking about the past, present, and future from a big time perspective, planning the governance of the country on a long time axis, grasping and using time with dialectics, and dedicating precious time to the motherland and the people.”

The author of the article adds, “I remind myself all the time to have such a sense of history... The central axis of Beijing is like a historical spine running through ancient and modern times. In the centre of Tiananmen Square, the Monument to the People’s Heroes stands tall, [since] September 30, 1949.”

Of course the events of June 1989 on the Square have been erased from the collective memory, and Beijing has also forgotten that it has not always been the ‘axis’ of the world. Further, facts show that the political system in the Middle Kingdom is far from perfect, especially in relation to China’s so-called minorities.

Unrest in Minorities’ Areas

According to Chen Wenqing, head of the Communist Party’s Central Political and Legal Affairs Commission (CPLAC), the Party’s top security body, who recently visited Tibet, “Maintaining stability and guarding against independence activities are the top priorities for security personnel in Tibetan areas... Security forces must resolutely crack down on separatist and destructive activities.”

He added that the Party must “resolutely manage religious affairs while resolutely protecting normal religious activities, so as to prevent risks, crack down on crimes, and maintain stability.”

During his tour, while visiting security units in Lhasa and Chamdo, Chen ‘ordered security personnel to carry out more propaganda and education campaigns to increase awareness of national identity among the people of all ethnic groups’.

It means that the Tibetans are first Chinese and eventually Tibetans.

That is not all. Around the same time, Zhang Jun, president of the Supreme People’s Court, while inspecting some courts in Tibet, stated that it was necessary to hand down “tough punishment to keep up the pressure on violent terrorism, ethnic separatism, and other serious criminal crimes”.

A month earlier, Ying Yong, head of the Supreme People’s Procuratorate, while in Lhasa, stressed the need for prosecutors to “harshly crack down on all kinds of separatist infiltration, sabotage activities, and crimes endangering national security in accordance with the law”.

What is so superior in this political system where the Tibetans need to be so harshly treated? Of course the Chinese propaganda claims otherwise.

Where is the genuine autonomy asked for by the Dalai Lama?

From September 22 to 28, Wang Junzheng, Party Secretary of the Tibetan Autonomous Region, visited Mongolia and South Korea to ‘comprehensively’ publicise: “Xi Jinping’s diplomatic thought, enhance and deepen cultural and economic exchanges, and jointly create a new situation of win-win cooperation.” Wang praised the People’s Republic of China’s great achievements during the past 75 years. Later, he went to Korea, where he said that Comrade Xi Jinping “attaches great importance to Tibet work and deeply cares about the people of all ethnic groups in Tibet”.

Will China Change?

Some observers believe that time should be given to China to change and progressively evolve into a decent democratic system. They refuse to see that the ‘time’ is also ticking against the minorities, and in any case, China does not want to change.

Some 40 years ago, I had asked the Dalai Lama how Tibet would regain its independence (or autonomy); at that time, he answered, “It does not depend on us Tibetans; changes will come from within China”. He repeatedly said that the people of China will bring about changes in their own country, which will give a chance to the people of Tibet to fulfil their aspirations. It still seems so far away.

In this context, three letters addressed twenty years ago to then president Hu Jintao by the veteran Tibetan communist leader Phuntsok Wangyal, who had led the Chinese troops into Lhasa in September 1951, should have triggered a larger debate in China. It did not.

Wangyal (known as Phunwang by the Tibetans) told Hu several interesting things: the Dalai Lama’s demise would only radicalise young Tibetan hardliners frustrated with his ‘middle way’ approach; he reminded the then Chinese President about his own objective to establish a harmonious society; and if Hu would strive for the return of hundreds of thousands of exiled Tibetans, he could turn ‘confrontation into harmony’.

The Tibetan Flag

Another historical incident involving Wangyal gives an indication of the direction in which the issue could have gone.

In the 1990s, during an interview with Phuntso Tashi Takla, the Dalai Lama’s brother-in-law who was in charge of the Tibetan leader’s security when the latter visited China in 1954–55, Takla said: “At that time [in 1954] because the Chinese occupation of Tibet was not complete, the Chinese extended full courtesy and cooperation to the Dalai Lama. On some occasions, Mao Zedong came himself to the Dalai Lama’s residence [in Beijing]. During one of the several discussions that the Dalai Lama and Mao Zedong had, they were talking on some subject when Mao [suddenly] said, “Don’t you have a flag of your own? If you have one, you can hoist it here [on the guest house]”.

Takla was surprised to hear Mao Zedong saying this. When I later read Phunwang's biography, I understood better the incalculable implications of the chairman's statement.

It is worth quoting Phunwang: "One day, Mao unexpectedly came to visit the Dalai Lama at his residence [guest house]... During their conversation, Mao suddenly said, "I heard that you have a national flag, do you? They do not want you to carry it, isn't that right?"

Phunwang further recalled: "Since Mao asked this with no warning that the topic was to be discussed, the Dalai Lama just replied, "We have an army flag". I thought that was a shrewd answer because it didn't say whether Tibet had a national flag. Mao perceived that the Dalai Lama was concerned by his question and immediately told him, "That is no problem. You may keep your national flag". Mao definitely said 'national' flag.

The chairman added that in the future the Communist Party could also let Xinjiang and Inner Mongolia have their own flags. He then asked the Dalai Lama if it would be fine for him to host the national flag of the People's Republic of China in addition to the Tibetan flag. Phunwang says that the young Lama nodded his head and said 'yes': "This was the most important thing that Mao told the Dalai Lama, and I was amazed to hear it," Phunwang later wrote.

The Great Han Chauvinism

Phunwang was not sure if Mao had discussed this with other leaders in the Politburo or if it was his own idea: "As I had always paid great attention to the Soviet Union's nationality model, I was excited because I took Mao's comment that Tibet could use its own flag to mean that China was contemplating adopting the Soviet Union's 'Republic' model, at least for these three large minority nationalities."

Phunwang realised that the innocuous remark of the Great Helmsman had far-reaching consequences for the future of China and particularly for the Tibetans. Unfortunately, Phunwang was arrested in April 1958; he spent the following 18 years in solitary confinement, during which his studies of Marxism led him to believe that the relationship between nationalities in a multiethnic state should be one of complete equality.

Till date, Tibet has only had Han Party secretaries; the Chinese leadership still does not trust the Tibetans and other minorities. Most of the problems faced by China today are due to the Great Han Chauvinism.

Wu Bangguo may have believed that the Chinese system is superior, but minorities have no place in China today, except in the Party's propaganda.

When will we see a Tibetan flag on the Potala in Lhasa?

A Japanese boy was killed in China. Was cyber-nationalism to blame?

14 October 2024, [BBC](#), Tessa Wong and Fan Wang

On a Tuesday morning in September, a 10-year-old boy was approaching the gates of a Japanese school in Shenzhen in southern China, when a stranger walked up and stabbed him.

He died of his injuries. The killing shocked Japan and China, and sparked a diplomatic furore.

The Japanese government said it believed what happened was motivated by xenophobia, with the country's foreign minister blaming the attack on "malicious and anti-Japanese" social media posts.

Online commentators have noted the killing happened on a politically sensitive date – 18 September, which is the anniversary of an incident that led to the Japanese occupation of Manchuria in China in the early 1930s.

For some, what happened is a sign of online nationalism – manifesting in recent years as rising anti-foreigner rhetoric – spilling over into the real world.

For years, posts related to events during World War Two have proliferated on the Chinese internet, with the Japanese invasion during the war remaining a sensitive topic for nationalists on both sides. In China, Japan's wartime atrocities have long been a sore point as Beijing maintains that Tokyo has never fully apologised.

The online posts are part of a wider phenomenon, which encompasses both xenophobia and attacks on Chinese nationals for being unpatriotic. One argument by analysts is that this digital nationalism has gone mostly unchecked by the Chinese government, with online patriotism fanning flames of anti-foreigner sentiment as well as accusations against Chinese figures.

Some are asking if this has gone too far. They have dubbed the online attacks calling Chinese figures unpatriotic a "Cultural Revolution 2.0", the latest in a series of drives ensuring ideological purity. They see echoes of the violent, state-sponsored campaign against so-called enemies of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) that traumatised the country in the 1960 and 1970s. Hundreds of thousands died in purges often led by youth militias known as the Red Guards. Families and neighbours turned on each other.

In a recent essay, author and university professor Zhang Sheng noted that "in the past people summoned the Red Guards, now people summon the 'little pinks'" – a popular nickname for the virtual army of online nationalists.

Anti-foreigner posts

While many on Chinese social media mourned the killing of the Japanese schoolboy, a few cyber-nationalists struck a very different tone.

"I have no opinion on how Japanese die if they don't apologise for history," read one popular comment on

Weibo, while another pointed out that the Japanese had killed many Chinese during World War Two “and haven’t apologised till this day. How could they be even close to being described as civilised?”

A Chinese official reportedly wrote messages in a private group chat saying it is “not a big deal to kill a Japanese child” and “it’s in our regulations to kill Japanese”. He has since been placed under investigation, according to local media outlet Phoenix News.

As Japanese officials demanded answers for the “despicable” crime, Beijing sought to play it down, heavily censoring discussion of the incident online and calling it an “accidental, individual case” and an “isolated incident”.

But this is the third high-profile attack on foreigners in recent months, all of which China has described as “isolated incidents”.

In June, a Japanese mother and her son were attacked at a bus stop outside a Japanese school, and a Chinese woman died while trying to shield them. This happened just weeks after four US university tutors were stabbed in a park in Jilin. While the motives for both attacks were also unclear, they spurred anxious discussion that they were linked to xenophobic rhetoric online.

Online campaigns

It is not just foreigners facing the ire of cyber-nationalists. In recent months, Chinese public figures and companies have also been castigated for being insufficiently patriotic.

Beverage giant Nongfu Spring is considered a Chinese business success story, with its mineral water bottles a ubiquitous sight across the country’s convenience stores and restaurant tables. But in March, nationalists accused the company of using Japanese elements in its product design. One of its logos was said to resemble a Shinto temple, while the iconic mineral water bottle’s red cap was deemed to be a reference to the Japanese flag.

It resulted in a brief but intense online campaign: some called for a boycott, while videos of people angrily stamping on Nongfu Spring bottles and chucking their drinks down the toilet were all over social media.

Similarly, the author and Nobel Literature Prize laureate Mo Yan was accused of “beautifying” Japanese soldiers and being unpatriotic in his works by a nationalist blogger, who controversially sued the writer for insulting China.

These moves have sparked deep concern. Hu Xijin, the former editor of state-run newspaper Global Times, warned that nationalistic attacks on creatives like Mo Yan could have a chilling effect.

And the outspoken liberal intellectual Yu Jianrong said the recent stabbings of foreigners were fuelled by

“dangerous populist tendencies, which deserve our utmost vigilance”.

Even state media has accused online nationalists of “making patriotism a business”. One commentary by CCP mouthpiece People’s Daily said those who “stir up public opinion and add fuel to the flames in order to... gain traffic and make personal gains, should be severely punished”.

But the ruling party has had a hand in stoking the fire, some say.

What feeds the fire?

“State-endorsed patriotism” and Beijing’s constant warnings about foreign influence has contributed to the “intense nationalism” we see today, says Rose Luqiu, an associate professor at Hong Kong Baptist University’s communication school. What has aggravated it, she says, is the legal risk of being deemed unpatriotic.

The Chinese government has now criminalised the “distortion and smearing [of] heroes and martyrs” – this was used in the lawsuit against the author Mo Yan. It has also passed a sweeping anti-espionage law and launched a campaign encouraging the public to report suspicious activity by foreigners.

To legitimise its rule, it has stepped up efforts to strengthen patriotism in schools, where from a young age Chinese children are taught to love not just their country but also the CCP.

Meanwhile, a global surge in Sinophobic sentiment during the Covid pandemic and growing suspicion of China in the West due to trade tensions has fed a sense among some Chinese that their country is being unfairly discriminated against by foreigners.

China’s slowing economy and a spreading social malaise have also played a role. “Many people in China are confronted with severe social and economic worries. Inflation, housing crises, youth unemployment, and evaporating pensions are all causing anxieties. Nationalism is a readily available and highly potent framework for venting those frustrations,” says Florian Schneider, an expert in online Chinese nationalism at Leiden University.

All these factors have resulted in nationalist bloggers becoming a prominent fixture of the Chinese internet in the last few years. Well-known influencers can amass millions of followers – and potentially earn income from the traffic – by pumping out patriotic content extolling the virtues of China and the CCP while denouncing their enemies.

While they often act in the name of revolutionary leftist fervour, their behaviour is actually more similar to the far right found in other countries who lead xenophobic and reactionary movements, Professor Schneider tells the BBC.

As “populists who are trying to make China great again”, they “harbour hopes of returning society to

some imagined former glory, and see all manner of elites and foreign powers as roadblocks to this goal”.

A risky balance

Sometimes authorities appear to listen to concerns.

In July, they quietly dropped a controversial amendment to a national security law after a public outcry. They acknowledged that a proposed ban on “hurting Chinese people’s feelings” could “infringe upon the legitimate rights and normal life of the public”.

Chinese social media platforms have tried to rein in online nationalists by periodically suspending their accounts.

Well-known nationalist influencers Sima Nan and Guyanmuchan have been censored without warning. So was the blogger who tried to sue Mo Yan, whose lawsuit was also rejected by the courts.

One vlogger, who shot to notoriety this year after he posted a video accusing a shopping mall of putting up decorations that resembled the Japanese flag, was similarly shut down. A scathing state media commentary denounced his video as “a malicious report that rides on the online traffic of patriotism”.

Still, authorities appear to have a loose grip on online nationalists.

While dissenters are swiftly shut down or in some cases arrested in the name of social stability, nationalist bloggers are allowed a freer rein, despite their sometimes inflammatory rhetoric. State media has even boosted these voices by republishing their content.

The BBC has asked the Chinese government for a response on why nationalist content does not appear to be censored on social media as much as other content deemed sensitive.

That could be down to the fact the state views online nationalism as a useful safety valve to “dissipate dissent in a way that does not undermine its authority”, particularly during its current economic troubles, where “society really needs an outlet to express frustration”, says Dr Luqiu.

By encouraging nationalists and then occasionally reining them in, the government “harnesses nationalism to its advantage, only intervening when it risks spilling over” into an uncontrollable situation.

It may seem risky, but Beijing has successfully crushed serious challenges to its authority in recent years, such as the pro-democracy movement in Hong Kong in 2019 and the White Paper protests in 2022 against harsh zero-Covid policies.

The government is thus confident it can manage the dangers, and it means nationalism is likely to stay despite the backlash, analysts say.

“Nationalism is a mixed blessing for China’s leaders, and at the moment we are witnessing the costs of that,” says Professor Schneider.

“But will the leadership rethink or even abandon its nationalism in favour of something less toxic? I wouldn’t hold my breath.”

Don’t play Big Brother, be nuanced with a long view Columnists

14 October 2024, [Deccan Chronicle](#), Pavan Varma

The Narendra Modi government has declared that it will pursue a “Neighborhood First” policy. How has it fared, is there any undisputed yardstick to judge its efficacy, and what are the constraints on even well-intentioned measures to make it succeed? To my mind, we need to avoid knee-jerk evaluations because South Asia must rank as one of the most troubled regions in the world. Any evaluation must be holistic, not piecemeal, nor restricted to any specific time phase or incident. In this broader perspective, there are certain unalterable coordinates which are constant, and have to be factored in.

India has a land border with seven countries — Bangladesh (4,096 km), China (3,485 km), Pakistan (3,310 km), Nepal (1,752 km), Myanmar (1,643 km), Bhutan (578 km), and Afghanistan — through Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (106 km). With Pakistan and China, the border is disputed and a source of perennial military friction. Resolution is not easy, because the demands from them are beyond acceptance. Pakistan claims all of Jammu and Kashmir, and China, apart from illegally occupying Aksai Chin, claims the whole of Arunachal Pradesh, which it calls “South Tibet”. China’s consistent policy with India is engagement with containment. In pursuit of this, it periodically flexes its military muscle on the border, most recently in Ladakh, where it appears to have forcibly occupied territory ahead of the recognised Line of Actual Control, even as trade with it balloons (with India facing a huge trade deficit), and high-level visits continue. Pakistan exports organised terror into J&K, and elsewhere. There are problems with other countries, too. From Bangladesh there is illegal immigration, with Myanmar smuggling of drugs and arms — clearly visible in the ongoing crisis in Manipur, and with Nepal counter-claims on border demarcation. Also Read - Dilip Cherian | EC’s mixed signals: Two poll-bound states, but contrasting decisions It does not help that many of our territorial neighbours are politically unstable. In Pakistan, where the military and the ISI are de facto rulers, the country is currently in the grip of violent civil unrest as, following an obviously rigged election that brought in the Shehbaz Sharif government, supporters of jailed Imran Khan are on the streets seeking his release. Bangladesh is in turmoil after the fall of the Sheikh Hasina government, with Islamic fundamentalism on the rise. In Nepal, Communist Party-led coalition

governments are constantly wobbly. And insurgency grappling Myanmar, ruled by a repressive military junta, has left us with the Rohingya refugees. India also has a very long coastline of over 7,000 km. We share maritime borders with Sri Lanka and Maldives, and from Andaman-Nicobar, with Thailand, Indonesia, and Myanmar. In Sri Lanka, a new government led by the left leaning Anura Dissanayake has recently won the election. In Maldives, the openly pro-China President, Mohamed Muizzu, is in the saddle. As a general stratagem, India must further strengthen its coastline defences. We should never forget that the Pakistani terrorists who wreaked havoc in Mumbai on November 26, 2008, literally walked into the financial capital unopposed. China's consistent meddling in the region creates additional problems. Pakistan is its staunch ally, and the possibility of India facing a two-front simultaneous war against both these implacably hostile countries can never be ruled out. In Nepal, Chinese influence has grown exponentially through the Communist parties, and economic incentives. China has emerged, too, as Sri Lanka's largest creditor, financing several large infrastructure projects, including the strategic Hambantota port. India, as the largest and most powerful country in the region, is indispensable to its neighbours. But often the old saying kicks in: "Why do you hate me? I have not helped you." Many neighbours are suspicious that India uses its overlapping historical, cultural and ethnic ties to interfere in their internal affairs. Sometimes our intervention is asked for, such as in the creation of Bangladesh (1971), the involvement of the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) in Sri Lanka (1987-90) to resolve the Tamil conflict, and the quelling of the coup against President Gayoom of Maldives (1988). But even so, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Nepal are sensitive to any Indian internal interference, and often anti-India sentiments are fuel for their internal politics. Often, our foreign policy also lacks nuance and finesse. An illustrative example of this is the blockade of the border with Nepal, during Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's government (1989), and again under PM Modi in 2015. In fact, I initiated a short duration discussion in the Rajya Sabha in 2015 on the adverse political and humanitarian consequences of this insensitive step, which gave a fillip to pro-China and anti-India sentiments. The priority must always be to build trust, and even while providing economic assistance, which we do, never perceive to be acting like a "big brother". Secondly, we have to be exceptionally vigilant to the unceasing machinations of China, upgrade our counter-intelligence, and reinforce our age-old ties with new and innovative ways of cooperation. A good example of this is our assistance in building Bhutan's 10,000 MW hydro-electric power capacity. We buy the power; Bhutan

gets the revenue; it is a long-term and institutionalised win-win situation for both countries, and a break to China's long-term interest in acquiring a strategic toe-hold in the kingdom. Thirdly, we must discreetly maintain avenues of communication with all sides of the political spectrum in these countries. In Bangladesh, we put all our eggs in Sheikh Hasina's pro-India but authoritarian rule, and must now face the consequences. Fourthly, we must continue to strengthen our military prowess to counter Pakistan and China. We have been woefully negligent in this regard for decades, but progress is being made now and the momentum needs to be accelerated. A militarily strong India is essential for its leadership in its backyard. Our neighbours cannot ignore us. Maldivian President Muizzu may have visited China first, but in his recent visit to India, he accepted an Indian bail-out, including a currency swap agreement, substantial financial assistance and the inauguration of a runway. The role of religion, too, is part of our neighbourhood cauldron. If India is seen to be insensitive to its Muslim minority, it provides grist to anti-India politics in the region. Similarly, the treatment of the Hindu minority in Pakistan and Bangladesh is a source of friction. India's diplomacy must show patience, maturity and a long-term vision. There are no short-cut solutions, and, therefore, no pat evaluations.

PRC Positive Messaging Frames Successful Colonization in Xinjiang

13 October 2024, [The Jamestown Foundation](#), Niva Yua

I have lost count of how many times foreign experts have asked me if Central Asians care about the abuses happening in Xinjiang. The Turkic territory, now part of the People's Republic of China (PRC), is known locally as East Turkestan. Once part of Central Asia, the language of its people shares the same heritage as those of the wider region, and its food, culture, and religion are similarly inseparable.

What divides Xinjiang from Central Asia is not just the mountainous border but a colonization project that has continued, and in some cases accelerated, even as the rest of the region has begun to move in the opposite direction, decolonizing 30 years after independence from the Soviet Union. This background makes a huge difference. Transitional Central Asian states have not popularized, or even formed, a consensus over the many tragedies from the period of Soviet colonization. Despite an awareness of the PRC's abuses on the other side of the border, these states have not made sense of them as colonial policies. Instead, they have been susceptible to the PRC's positive messaging programs and shaping of the

region's information environment (Jamestown Perspectives, September 4).

'Jongugu Sapar' Blends Soviet Nostalgia to Tout Ethnic Harmony

Jongugu Sapar (Джунгого сапар/"Travel to China"), a successful daily PRC propaganda show in the Kyrgyz Republic, is a good example of the PRC's positive messaging. The show has broadcast the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) economic and social activities in Xinjiang since the early 2000s. A nationally representative opinion survey completed by the Central Asia Barometer in the summer of 2022 found that 576 out of 1000 respondents reported knowledge of the show. Of those, nearly all had previously watched the show, and 70 percent found the content "favorable (нравится)." [1] In my informal conversations with Chinese-speaking Kyrgyz students, I was surprised to find that many had first learned about the PRC from the show and not from school textbooks.

We installed a small TV in our Bishkek office and watched the show each day for several months as part of a team activity. The presenter, an ethnic Kyrgyz woman from Xinjiang, speaks a Kyrgyz dialect mixed with a smattering of Mandarin Chinese words. My local colleagues sometimes found her diction incomprehensible. Still, they found her monotone delivery, stiff movements, and narrow range of facial expressions, as well as the overall presentation of the show, very nostalgic and reminiscent of Soviet-era broadcasts.

The show centers on themes of ethnic harmony, yet it depicts a clear divide between the Turkic population and the Han Chinese. Stories focused on Zhang Qian (張騫) and Ban Chao (班超), two Han Chinese diplomats celebrated for their significant contribution to Xinjiang, is the narrative the CCP uses to assert legitimate Han Chinese rule over the region. Not once were Turkic peoples' cultural and historical heroes mentioned. Similarly, we never saw Turkic people speaking their native language to one another. All conversations began in Mandarin, only to be dubbed into Kyrgyz seconds later. Sinicized names of villages and towns were used repeatedly. No Islamic names were depicted at any point. Instead, the show highlighted archaeological findings suggesting a Buddhist presence and framed excavated artifacts as representations of Han Chinese life.

The Turkic population interviewed in the show were consistently portrayed in low-skilled roles such as farmers and seamstresses. Han Chinese, meanwhile, appeared as business owners, managers, lead engineers, or industrial specialists. Every archaeologist interviewed was Han Chinese. Only in select fields, like wildlife and forest conservation, traditional medicine, artisanal crafts, and ethnic cuisine, were members of the Turkic population shown in senior positions. This

stark lack of elite Turkic representation reinforced an impression of Han superiority over the Turkic population.

Viewers See 'Resettlement Labor Programs' as Positive Economic Development

A striking departure from this subtle messaging were the stories about resettlement labor programs. The show featured unemployed women and those in rural areas who had enrolled in short-term vocational schools to learn skills such as sewing and gardening, eventually "graduating into employment" at factories and greenhouses in newly established settlements. In these settlements, an acute power dynamic was on display between the Han Chinese and the Turkic population. Senior roles such as teachers, library managers, metro administrators, hospital directors, and heads of elderly homes were all occupied by Han Chinese. One scene in particular left us uneasy: a group of Turkic women in striped pajamas, seated in a small room of bunkbeds, expressed gratitude to Han Chinese doctors for taking good care of them.

The resettlement labor programs described on the show bore an uncomfortable resemblance to the findings of Tomoya Obokata, the United Nation's Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of slavery, who concluded in a July 2022 report that forced labor among ethnic populations in Xinjiang has been occurring in sectors such as agriculture and manufacturing (UNHRC, July 19, 2022; see *China Brief*, February 14).

Viewers in the Kyrgyz Republic did not interpret what they saw this way. In follow-up in-depth interviews conducted between August 2022 and February 2023, we asked selected survey respondents who had seen the program for their thoughts on the show. Many framed what they saw positively, connecting it to their memories of the Soviet Union—a collectivist society they believed had been successful. A 66-year-old male government worker told us that the "hardworking people" depicted reminded him of those who "worked tirelessly" during the Soviet era. "We used to work like that," he continued. "We were brought up to be hardworking. China encourages people to work hard ... that's why China is economically developing."

The inability to perceive the CCP's actions in Xinjiang as colonialism is closely tied to a similar lack of recognition of the Soviet Union as a colonial power. This shared historical perspective is a key factor behind the success of the PRC's positive messaging about Xinjiang in the Kyrgyz Republic and across the region. The show not only reinforces an appealing image of Xinjiang but also strengthens local consensus around the success of China's economy.

This sentiment echoed even among those who did not grow up under the Soviet Union, however. Some of these people believed that the collectivist regime had been a success. A 23-year-old female government

worker told us, “Through this program, I learned that people in China are very hardworking.” She added that it seemed to her that the program was showing “the life of Kyrgyz people in the old days, perhaps under the USSR,” particularly in the people’s style of speech and the program’s overall content.

Conclusion

As long as the region remains in a transitional phase and is unable to decolonize fully, these sentiments are likely to be passed on to the next generation, who will continue to consume the PRC’s positive messaging. The irony is that the rhetoric of decolonization has long been part and parcel of the PRC’s overseas messaging. In Africa, for example, the PRC has deployed anti-colonial rhetoric for decades. In Central Asia, however, it remains silent on the issue. This suggests a normative hollowness and deep pragmatism to the PRC’s political communications. In each country, it aligns its positive messaging with specific foreign policy objectives, tailoring its content to resonate with the local population and regional context.

Building a Historical Narrative of Tibet

13 October 2024, [Tricycle](#), Mike Sheffield

Two of the minds behind *The Animated History of Tibet* talk with *Tricycle* about the show’s creation, pivotal figures, and what it means to tell the story from a distinctively Tibetan perspective.

For more than two hundred years, the Tibetan Empire was one of the greatest military, political, and cultural forces in all of Central Asia, maybe even the entire world, ruling over a vast territory that included parts of modern-day Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Burma, China, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan and making seemingly countless contributions to the spheres of philosophy and religion. “The things that they translated from Sanskrit to Tibetan and the lands they occupied are immense,” says Tenzin Choephel. Choephel is the lead cultural consultant on *The Animated History of Tibet*, an nine-part animated documentary miniseries that covers over thirteen hundred years of history, starting with the rise of the Tibetan Empire, its subsequent fragmentation, and the first spread of Buddhism to Tibet in the 7th century CE. Currently available to watch as part of *Tricycle’s* Film Club, the series is engaging, entertaining, and gorgeously animated in fastidious anime-inspired detail, created with the intention of being accessible to the average viewer as well as potentially serving as a resource for those studying Tibet, Tibetan Buddhism, and world history. Produced by the independent educational video production company and YouTube wormhole favorites Armchair Academics, the series—led by showrunner

and host Alexander K. Smith—aims to show a different side of the Tibetan Empire story, one told from a distinctively Tibetan perspective. I recently talked with Choephel and Smith about what went into the creation of the project, the tricky business of crafting accessible narratives around real-world history, and the goals and aspirations behind their grassroots-funded endeavor.

—Mike Sheffield, web editor

This interview was adapted for clarity and concision.

Mike Sheffield (MS): Can you tell me a little bit about the origins of this project?

Alexander K. Smith (AS): *The Animated History of Tibet* has been a brainchild of mine for ages. I remember pitching it to a friend as hypothetical, when I was a master’s student at Oxford fifteen years ago, but started taking it seriously in 2022. I lost my job at the height of Covid (I had been working as an assistant professor in Germany). So I then started working in educational documentary filmmaking, and I realized at some point that I actually had the resources to make it happen. We put together a crowdfunding campaign with no real expectations that it would work, and it took off. Then Tibet House US came in, in New York; they are our coproducers on the project. We’re in a second period of crowdfunding right now to finance the second half of the series.

MS: How did the team come to be?

AS: At Armchair Academics, I worked with a gaggle of freelance animators. Our core team is actually Mongolian, based in Ulaanbaatar. Saraa Amber is the lead animator on the project; she has been a hugely positive influence on the whole thing. In the early stages, for matte paintings, we worked with a very talented Tibetan studio artist named Tenzin Gyurme, who is based in New Delhi. Over time, Amber brought in some of her colleagues from Mongolia. And then there is Tenzin Choephel. He is the cultural and linguistic consultant. If this were a \$150 million Disney project, you would call him the head of our brain trust and he would be leading a team of fifty people making sure that every single detail works. But for our project, our brain trust is just him and me.

Tenzin Choephel (TC): Alex and I met for the first time in 2015. We both attended the International Seminar of Young Tibetologists conference in Leipzig, Germany. Then I think I ran into him a couple times in Oxford.

MS: Tenzin, I see you run your own online Tibetan language school called LopLao. How did you get involved in education?

TC: I’ve taught Tibetan in many different places. I left home when I was very young and eventually came to India when I was 13. There, I enrolled in a Buddhist monastery called Drepung Monastery, where I was mostly studying English, Buddhism, debate, and philosophy. Later, I came to Dharamsala, in the north of India, where I enrolled in Sera Jey Monastic

University, which is maybe the best Tibetan Studies university in India. I was there for four years, and then they asked me to teach there for a year, and I started teaching Tibetan—Tibetan history as well as Tibetan language—when I was 22. After that, I taught Tibetan at a nunnery called the International Buddhist Women’s Association. Then I came to Oxford in 2017, where I studied and taught, and later, in 2019, I taught at SOAS University before starting LopLao. I’ve also taught at various Buddhist centers, including the first and largest Tibetan Centre and Buddhist Monastery in the West called Kagyu Samye Ling.

MS: What does your Buddhist practice look like?

TC: I still do daily practices, my set of prayers. I study at the University of Edinburgh, and we have a Buddhist society where we do meditations twice a week, and I’m the president of that small society. I do practice Buddhism quite a lot, but I approach it in a way that is more philosophical than devoutly religious. I’m more interested in philosophy than just believing in something, but I also don’t disregard the whole belief system. In general, I would say I’m a Buddhist.

MS: What does it mean to be the linguistic or cultural consultant on a project like *The Animated History of Tibet*?

TC: My job is to correct the style of animation, making corrections in the style of dress or addressing cultural or historical points from a Tibetan perspective, as when the script doesn’t have the narratives that we generally agree upon in Tibetan history. It is mostly to push a more Tibetan-centered narrative of Tibetan history.

AS: He’s worked quite a bit with our Western animators to make sure that the details were on point, but there have been a few mistakes. One notable example, and this is my fault, is at one point, there’s a prayer wheel that’s spinning in the wrong direction. But that was because I actually did all of my doctoral fieldwork, and lived for a very long time, in Bonpo communities, where things tend to be done in the opposite direction. And it just felt right to me, but it’s something that doesn’t read right to Buddhists.

MS: That was one point I wanted to bring up, actually. This series is incredibly detailed, but because it is such a large undertaking, it covers a lot of ground in a short period of time and there are some aspects of the history that are missing, like the influence of Bon or indigenous religion on Tibetan Buddhism. How did you decide what to include over what to omit?

AS: There are two parts to my answer. I trained and worked as a historian, not a generalist—it was very laser-focused on a particular period in Tibetan history, on Bonpo issues, specifically. With that training, it’s very difficult to reframe the sort of academic scholarly history that we read, that we write, that we’re taught, and reformat that for something that is public-facing and serialized and aimed at a general audience.

Episodes have to stand on their own as well as be integrated into a larger narrative that spans centuries at a time. So we begin each episode always by laying out the major players, the major factions, what’s at stake, and then you have to build some type of denouement to build a satisfying narrative to keep people watching. History doesn’t work that way. Very often, there are not satisfying conclusions.

What you have to do is take that scholarly history and then run it through a narrative lens that is algorithmically friendly for something like YouTube. And that’s hard. It’s particularly hard for Tibet. In Roman history, this has been done a thousand times by a thousand different people, and there are many different road maps to follow. But we don’t really have that for Tibet, certainly not in television and film. We’re kind of reinventing the wheel. It’s easier for certain periods, and much more difficult for others.

I bulldoze some of the complexity, particularly with issues like Yungdrung Bon and the indigenous elements that conflicted with Buddhist culture. Leaving those out is something I did to my chagrin, but it was done for entirely economic purposes—just budgeting our time.

It’s really a shame to gloss over the indigenous elements in Tibetan Buddhism, because they’re one of the things that accounts for the fact that it’s so baroque and rich and so tangibly different from the traditions that surrounded it, and the way that they blended or sometimes didn’t blend and conflicted with forms of Indian Buddhism. But it’s something I would love to come back to.

Tibetan history is a living, open-ended history; it continues.

The easiest thing for us to do was to latch on to later Tibetan histories, focus on the great *chos rgyal*, or dharma kings, of Tibet and structure the history in that way. Now, we deal with a materialistic, economic, and political style of analysis. You lose a lot of things with that structure, and one of the major things you lose particularly with someone like Songtsen Gampo is the complexity of his early reign, the interclan alliances and conflicts, the early stirrings of religious conflict and anti-Buddhist sentiment. I tried to compensate for that in the third episode, where you have on figures like Langdarma, who sort of leads an anti-Buddhist faction in the aristocracy, and, according to Tibetan religious narratives, orchestrates this massive purge of Tibetan Buddhism or a withdrawal of patronage that led to a systemic collapse of monastic institutions.

MS: What kind of sources are you drawing from?

AS: As a historian, I draw from primary sources in my work, so we do draw quite a bit from primary sources. Our general lens tends to be materialist, to deemphasize the religious history and dig more deeply into the political, economic, and cultural history of Tibet. It’s a slightly different lens from what you see in

some of the Western and more religiously oriented histories of Tibet. As for secondary sources, there's a lack of very comprehensive general histories of Tibet. There are some really good ones, like Tsepon W. D. Shakabpa's *Tibet: A Political History*, Sam van Schaik's *Tibet: A History*, and Matthew T. Kapstein's *The Tibetans*, which has just a couple of chapters that concisely provide a balanced overview of Tibetan history. But to actually do our work, we have to draw from a patchwork of era-specific histories, because there are lacunae and gaps when you're dealing with Tibetan sources. For the imperial period, Christopher Beckwith has this fantastic, almost unreadable, multilingual history of the Tibetan Empire called *The Tibetan Empire in Central Asia*. We also use Ronald M. Davidson's *Tibetan Renaissance* for later periods. And that continues all the way up to the 19th and 20th centuries, when it becomes more difficult to find a single source to hang your narrative on because there are so many sectarian and political interests that overlap with the production of histories and texts, so you have to be more heterogeneous and more holistic in your approach to the literature. I'm not so interested in building Chinese state narratives, for example, into our history. So we take a roundup of perspectives on the events of 1949–1959 that come from Tibetan authors and Tibetan sources.

MS: As you mentioned, your series stops in 1959, but Tibetan history doesn't stop there.

AS: The history we have on offer technically ends in 1963, with the drafting of The Charter of the Tibetans in Exile. But the history of Tibet, the history of Tibetan Buddhism, didn't stop in '49 and it didn't stop in '59. We have an extended bit at the end that focuses on the major diaspora camps and how they grew and evolved over time, where they are, and the character of each of them—because they're all quite different—as well as the emergence of two Tibets. There is the Tibet that still persists, right inside the TAR [Tibet Autonomous Region]. That's where most Tibetans live, and they still carry their culture, their language, their religion. But that language, culture, and religion has also continued and also evolved in an almost parallel way in India.

Tibetan history is a living, open-ended history; it continues.

MS: Who is a pivotal figure from Tibetan history that you would like to shine a light on?

TC: People should read Tsongkhapa. I normally say Tsongkhapa is the Immanuel Kant of Tibet. He's so sharp, and his disposition on emptiness is extremely deep. It would be great if people could study Tsongkhapa just as people study Plato or Immanuel Kant or John Locke. He also wrote poems, which are beautiful.

Thupten Jinpa is the main translator of the Dalai Lama, and he's written a biography of Tsongkhapa that's

quite interesting. The way he presents Tsongkhapa is a very modern style of presenting Tsongkhapa. In the past, Tibetan monasteries presented Tsongkhapa as a celestial being, but Jinpa writes about him as very much a human being. And he is human; he lived from 1357 to 1419, perished at 62.

MS: What do you consider to be the main goal of the series?

AS: For me, let's say that there are two. In general, many Tibetan issues—whether it's Buddhism or Tibetan cultural and political issues—are not visible in online discourse on platforms like YouTube. I saw this as a way to simultaneously help increase the visibility of Tibet-related content on platforms like YouTube while also building a historically accurate resource that my former colleagues in Tibetan studies and other educators and students can use to learn about Tibet. My second goal as a documentary filmmaker is to tell stories of indigenous and marginalized peoples. So I would love to make more stories about Tibetan groups, also the history of Buddhism itself, right? There are very few sort of public-facing cultural histories of Buddhism. Why does Buddhism look so different across so many cultures? How has it evolved over time? How are the major branches of Buddhism different from one another, and why? The idea of tying these threads and discourses together to give you a historical and activist angle could become a great service to the Buddhist community. To bridge those two goals would be really personally valuable to me as a creator.

TC: Most people have this image of Tibet that is always very humble, very nice. They are not 100 percent wrong, obviously, but they are not 100 percent right. There are Tibetans who are warriors, Tibetans who are thieves, Tibetans who are bandits. There are Tibetans who dedicate their lives to Buddhist practices, and we can probably call them bodhisattvas. It all depends who they are.

When I first came to Oxford, I remember that some of my friends were surprised when I told them that the Tibetan Empire once invaded China for fifteen days. They wondered how that could be possible because China is now so big. But when you look at the history of the Tibetan empire, for, let's say, two hundred years, it was so glorious. Younger Tibetans should understand how big it was and how influential it was. You can still see the remnants of the Tibetan Empire today, in Ladakh, in Kashag, in Manali, in northern India, in southeast China. You can even find Tibetan descendants in Afghanistan, you can find Tibetan descendants in Pakistan; they even speak an altered form of Tibetan.

The second thing that I wanted to do is to provide some of the truths, or the understanding of Tibet to people who are interested or maybe haven't even heard of Tibet, or just heard about Tibet and know

nothing about it. Obviously, the Chinese narrative of Tibet is much stronger on the international platform because they have much bigger funding to promote and advance it. So this project is structured to go against that narrative. Truth is a relative thing, but we have bigger authority over Tibetan history than the Chinese.

Every country projects a sanitized version of history. This may also have some sanitization because, as you say, history is a lie, or we write history to talk about ourselves and it will be revised. We write history to understand ourselves.

Human rights take a new hit in Xi Jinping's Tibet

13 October 2024, [The Sunday Guardian](#), Vijay Kranti

200 students have been taken away from a Tibetan school and force-enrolled in a state-controlled residential school for their education and 'proper' upbringing.

Earlier this month, the parents of about 200 Tibetan children in the age group 15 to 18 years were in for a shock when they were forced by the Chinese authorities of Sichuan province to enroll and send their wards to the state-controlled residential school for their education and "proper" upbringing. These children belonged to the local Lhamo Kirti Monastery School, which was founded as a community initiative by the monastery in 1993 to part education in Tibetan language and Tibetan culture but was forcibly closed by the Chinese authorities in July this year. Soon after the closure, a batch of about 300 Tibetan children belonging to the 6-14 age group was taken away and admitted in a newly opened residential school despite strong resistance from their families.

The new school, run by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is among hundreds of similar residential schools that have been established across Tibet by the Chinese government to implement President Xi's diktat to ensure a "united" and "homogenous" society with "Chinese socialist characters". These schools are dreaded by Tibetan parents because Tibetan children are not only weaned away from their Tibetan environment but are made to grow up in a typical Han Chinese environment in which they can communicate only in the Chinese language and are brainwashed with the Communist ideology.

On February 6, 2023, a study by a group of UN experts had warned that around a million Tibetan children were being affected by Chinese government policies aimed at assimilating Tibetan people culturally, religiously, linguistically and ideologically through the residential school system. This Chinese move has already attracted strong opposition and condemnation in the parliaments of Germany, Canada and the European Parliament whereas the US

government has placed restrictions of all such Chinese officials and CCP leaders who are engaged in these Tibetan residential schools.

President Xi's campaign of brainwashing and "homogenizing" the entire Tibetan generation through CCP-run residential schools has grown out of his frustration that despite CCP's seven-decade long colonial rule over Tibet and total absence of exiled Dalai Lama's influence, the Tibetan resistance against Chinese rule has refused to die. The worst shock for Xi has been that since his taking over the reins of China as its "Paramount Leader", more than 157 Tibetan monks, nuns and ordinary youths have committed self-immolation demanding freedom for Tibet and return of Dalai Lama.

In early 2023, the Xi government's campaign of collecting blood samples of each Tibetan citizen and their DNA profiling raised a huge controversy and protests at international levels. The main concern of human rights organizations and experts was that China was building a scientific medical data bank of Tibetans to support its ongoing illegal trade in human organs. It was also feared that the Chinese army can use this data for forcible blood donations in the event of a war. America's Thermo Fisher Scientific Company had to face a massive opposition from international organizations for supplying its biomedical products and instruments to the Chinese government in this unethical campaign.

President Xi's frustration against his Tibetan colonial subjects has frequently found expression in many other aggressive acts like implementing stricter ban on keeping the present Dalai Lama's photos; disciplinary proceedings against all such Tibetan officials and CCP cadres who are found participating in community religious celebrations or family prayers; demolition of all such Buddhist statues in every town or village where the statue dominates the skyline or is visible from a distance; closing and demolishing all community run Tibetan schools; and wiping out all such Buddhist community establishments which have evolved without official plans.

For example, following the typical Taliban style of demolishing historic Buddhist statues at Bamian in Afghanistan, Xi's government demolished two massive statues of Buddha, one being 99 feet high, in the Kham region of original Tibet, now a part of the Sichuan province of China. Similarly, a massive Buddhist community, which was slowly developed by thousands of Tibetan and Han Chinese practitioners in Larung Gar in the Larung Valley of Sertar County in Sichuan, was completely pulled down and wiped out under the personal supervision of Wong Dongshen, a prominent CCP leader on the pretext of "environment protection". Interestingly Wong was also responsible for demolishing above mentioned Buddha statues.

Caught in India-China clashes, Ladakh's nomadic herders fear for future

12 October 2024, [Aljazeera](#), Priyanka Shankar

Constant military patrols near the Indo-China border in Ladakh have shrunk pastures and are extinguishing an ancient way of life.

The bubbling sound of water boiling on the stove and the aroma of spinach dal fill the air in Tashi Angmo's kitchen as she rolls dough to make a type of Tibetan bread.

"This is a dish which we call timok in Ladakh and tingmo across the border in Tibet," she says as she prepares the apparatus to steam the dough she has rolled into balls resembling dumplings. "It's a delicious meal after a hard day's work."

Angmo, 51, lives in Chushul, a village which sits at an altitude of 4,350 metres (14,270 feet) in India's Ladakh, one of the highest regions in the world, known for its pristine rivers and lakes, high valleys and mountains and clear skies. Chushul also lies about 8 kilometres (5 miles) from India's Line of Actual Control with China, the disputed, de facto border between the two countries.

"I was around 11 years old when I realised that my family and I lived very close to the Chinese border. Back then, we used to be a family of shepherds, and I often went near the border with my father, to take our sheep herding," Angmo says.

She now works as a labourer doing a variety of tasks from cleaning roads to helping with construction and cooking meals for other workers, for the Border Roads Organisation – the Indian Defence Ministry's initiative to maintain roads in the subcontinent's border areas. "We even used to trade apricots and barley which grew in our village with the Chinese shepherds. In return, we brought back chicken, some Chinese cookies and also teapots!" she exclaims and points to the teapots which she still keeps in her kitchen cabinet.

Even the Sino-India war in 1962 over border and territorial disputes between the neighbours, after New Delhi had given shelter to the Dalai Lama and other Tibetan refugees, did not undo that delicate balance. What did was a deadly clash in the summer of 2020. As the world was absorbed in its battle against the COVID-19 pandemic, Indian and Chinese soldiers fought with sticks, stones and their bare hands along the Line of Actual Control in Ladakh's Galwan valley. Each side claimed that the other's troops had crossed into their territory. The close combat fighting led to the death of 20 Indian soldiers and at least four Chinese soldiers. These were the first deaths along the border in decades.

Since then, both sides have stepped up border patrols and moved troops to the region, and their troops have occasionally engaged in standoffs.

In many Ladakhi villages bordering China, grazing and farming close to the frontier has now been restricted by the Indian military. Boating in the pristine Pangong Tso lake, parts of which are claimed by both New Delhi and Beijing, has also been restricted to only military boats.

"We can't go near the border any more or trade with Chinese people. Shepherds – most of whom are nomads – have also lost land close to the border since the Indian military oversees the area," she says.

The land has largely been swallowed by military buffer zones on both sides of the border, with rich pasture land for 2km in either direction now a no-go zone for the herders.

Young nomads and farmers moving away

Donning a pink scarf and a grey sweater, Kunjan Dolma, who is in her late 30s, belongs to the Changpa community – seminomadic Tibetan people who live in the Changtang plateau in eastern Ladakh. She lives in Chushul during the winter months and is nomadic throughout the rest of the year.

Dolma tells Al Jazeera that the land near the Chinese border is an important winter pasture for their animals. "But if we take our sheep and goats near the Chinese border, the military stops us and advises us to find grazing lands elsewhere. We have lost important pastures in recent years, but we have begun adjusting to the restrictions," she says as she milks her sheep in an open-air shed built with stones and surrounded by the low-lying mountains.

"In a way, the military restrictions also make sense. They protect us from the Chinese soldiers who I fear might take away our sheep in case we go very close to the border."

Dolma lives with her husband and teenage daughter and the family has about 200 sheep whose wool they sell to make pashmina shawls. It is an important source of income, she explains.

She spends days in the mountains to ensure their yaks and sheep have access to the best grazing lands during the warmer months of the year. The Changpa community retreats to the villages in the lower-lying hills of Ladakh during winter. She earns her living selling pashmina wool, and yak meat and milk.

But Dolma's daughter, like many young people from the nomadic families of the Changtang plateau, has begun turning to other professions to earn a living. Dolma added that military restrictions on grazing land have also increased the momentum of young nomads turning away from this traditional way of life.

Sipping on a cup of warm water before she heads to the mountains to make her cattle graze, Dolma reminisces about her younger days when border tensions did not exist in their lands.

"I've spent many joyful days in these mountains with my sheep and when there were no border restrictions, it was very easy for us to take our cattle across

pastures. We would also interact with nomads from China who were very friendly,” she says, adding that she wishes her daughter could experience that same nomadic lifestyle.

At the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC), an administrative body in the union territory’s capital of Leh, Konchok Stanzin, 37, is a councillor working with the village leaders in Chushul to ensure local governance runs smoothly.

Speaking to Al Jazeera at the LAHDC headquarters, Stanzin acknowledges the issues nomads in Ladakh have been enduring due to border tensions.

“Grazing land comes under the buffer zone which is currently no-man’s land. So, nomads face a challenging situation, trying to figure out where to take their yaks and sheep. Besides land, we also face difficulties in Pangong Tso where military border controls continue,” Stanzin explains. Tso is the Tibetan word for lake.

“[Young people] migrating out of their villages in search of work is a serious concern,” he noted. “This is also leading to the disappearance of nomadic traditions like herding which enable the production of pashmina. So we are trying to educate the youth to continue their traditions while also working on improving the economic situation in border villages.”

‘I still remember the Chinese cookies’

As he enjoys a cup of Ladakhi staple butter tea in his mother Tashi Angmo’s kitchen, Tsering Stoppais, 25, notes that generating jobs is the biggest challenge for the region.

“There once was an open trading route between India and China along this border. If that opens again, it will be a huge economic opportunity for many of us,” he says.

“My grandfather has crossed the border to trade with China and earned well. My mother used to also go near the border and trade with the Chinese. I still remember the Chinese cookies she would bring home.”

Angmo chimes in, saying the border clashes are all political.

“Social media also plays a role in spreading rumours about border tensions. In reality, it is not an active war zone and it is peaceful right now. It is a standoff between politicians and not people on either side of the border,” Angmo says.

On the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly meeting in New York in September, India’s Minister of External Affairs S Jaishankar addressed the situation in eastern Ladakh and said: “Right now, both sides have troops who are deployed forward.”

At an event organised by the Asia Society Policy Institute, a think tank in New York, he continued: “Some of the (border) patrolling issues need to be resolved,” highlighting that this aspect would solve the dispute.

Retired Senior Colonel Zhou Bo, who was in the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) of China and is now a senior fellow of the Centre for International Security and Strategy at Tsinghua University and a China Forum expert, told Al Jazeera that border patrols continue because “each side has its own perception about where the border lies”.

“So sometimes, for example, the Chinese patrolling troops patrol in areas which are considered by Indians as Indian territory. And likewise,” he says.

According to local media reports, China has denied Indian troops access to key patrolling points in eastern Ladakh, claiming these regions belong to Beijing. New Delhi says this has made it harder for the Indian army to carry out its regular border security activities in the region.

Senior Colonel Bo says that while the border issue is difficult to solve, both militaries have signed agreements in the past to maintain peace and talks are continuing to find a solution to solve the military and political discord.

‘Education can bring peace’

Counting the beads on her Buddhist mala and chanting a prayer, 71-year old Kunze Dolma, who lived through the 1962 Sino-India war in Chushul when she was about nine years old, says she thinks education is what can bring about peace.

“I just remember how scared I was during that war as a little girl. I thought the Chinese army would enter our school,” she tells Al Jazeera.

“I now work as a cook in the village school and hope the children are educated about maintaining peace along the border and how people on both sides of the border need to understand each other better,” she tells Al Jazeera.

Tsringandhu, 26, teaches at the government middle school in Chushul. “I teach children aged three to 10 years at this school. I teach them the Ladakhi Bhoti language which is an offshoot of the Tibetan language. I teach the students about the border in our village by telling them the history of this language and explain to them that Tibet is now a part of China and is across the border,” he told Al Jazeera.

“When we educate children, we just tell them that the land across the border is China and not an enemy country. I look at education as a way to bring peace. If a teacher educates children about places and cultures in the right manner, hostilities will not exist and peace will prevail,” he says.

China’s ‘New Great Wall’ Casts a Shadow on Nepal

12 October 2024, [The New York Times](#), Hannah Beech and Bhadra Sharma

The Chinese fence traces a furrow in the Himalayas, its barbed wire and concrete ramparts separating Tibet

from Nepal. Here, in one of the more isolated places on earth, China's security cameras keep watch alongside armed sentries in guard towers.

High on the Tibetan Plateau, the Chinese have carved a 600-foot-long message on a hillside: "Long live the Chinese Communist Party," inscribed in characters that can be read from orbit.

Just across the border, in Nepal's Humla District, residents contend that along several points of this distant frontier, China is encroaching on Nepali territory.

The Nepalis have other complaints, too. Chinese security forces are pressuring ethnic Tibetan Nepalis not to display images of the Dalai Lama, the exiled Tibetan spiritual leader, in Nepali villages near the border, they say. And with the recent proliferation of Chinese barriers and other defenses, a people have also been divided. The stream of thousands of Tibetans who once escaped Chinese government repression by fleeing to Nepal has almost entirely vanished.

Yet Nepal's leaders have refused to acknowledge China's imprints on their country. Ideologically and economically tied to China, successive Nepali governments have ignored a 2021 fact-finding report that detailed various border abuses in Humla.

"This is the new Great Wall of China," said Jeevan Bahadur Shahi, the former provincial chief minister of the area. "But they don't want us to see it."

China's fencing along the edge of Nepal's Humla District is just one segment of a fortification network thousands of miles long that Xi Jinping's government has built to reinforce remote reaches, control rebellious populations and, in some cases, push into territory that other nations consider their own.

The fortification building spree, accelerated during Covid and backed by dozens of new border settlements, is imposing Beijing's Panopticon security state on far-flung areas. It is also placing intense pressure on China's poorer, weaker neighbors.

China borders 14 other countries by land. Its vast frontier, on land and at sea, remained largely peaceful as China's economy grew to become the world's second-largest. But amid Mr. Xi's tenure, Beijing is redefining its territorial limits, leading to small skirmishes and outright conflict.

"Under Xi Jinping, China has doubled down on efforts to assert its territorial claims in disputed areas along its periphery," said Brian Hart, a fellow at the China Power Project of the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington.

Viewed individually, each action along China's borders — fortifying boundaries, contesting territory and pushing into disputed zones — might seem only incremental. But the aggregated result is startling.

Near its eastern maritime reaches, in what are internationally recognized as Philippine waters, China

has turned a coral reef into a military base. On its far western land border, China's People's Liberation Army has pushed into disputed mountain territory shared with South Asian neighbors.

Two dozen soldiers from India and China, both nuclear powers, died in high-altitude, hand-to-hand combat in 2020. Another border clash two years later injured more soldiers.

China's border buildup is a major reason that the U.S. Department of Defense, in its 2023 China Military Power Report, declared that China has "adopted more dangerous, coercive, and provocative actions in the Indo-Pacific region."

The shifting security landscape is drawing the attention of global powers and leading to new alliances. Small nations with ties to China, like Nepal, are vulnerable, even as they downplay or deny border disputes for fear of losing Beijing's economic favor.

"Weaker states like Nepal," Mr. Hart said, "face immense pressures because of the overwhelming power differential with China."

"If China does not face costs for encroaching on its weakest neighbors, Beijing will be further emboldened to threaten countries in the region," he added.

Nepal's foreign minister, Arzu Rana Deuba, said in an interview with The New York Times that she had not received complaints about problems on the border with Tibet and that the government's focus was more on the southern boundary with India, where more Nepalis live.

"We have not really thought much of looking at the northern border, at least I haven't," she said.

A Top Secret Report

The distance from Simikot, the capital of Humla District, to the frontier village of Hilsa is 30 miles. But the drive to the border with Tibet takes more than 10 bone-jarring hours through rough, rocky terrain. Humla is unconnected to Nepal's national road network. Cars and heavy machinery must be flown in. Himalayan passes in Humla reach nearly 16,400 feet. Deadly altitude sickness can set in fast. It was to this district, Nepal's poorest and least developed, that members of a fact-finding mission — composed of Nepali Home Ministry officials, government surveyors and police personnel — traveled three years ago.

Armed with a 1960s map from when Nepal and China formally agreed upon their boundary, they set out to discover whether the official cartography diverged from the reality on the ground. The mission members trekked to remote border pillars. They chatted with yak herders and Tibetan Buddhist monks.

Eventually, they produced their report to Nepal's cabinet. And then the report disappeared. The public was not allowed to see it. Even high-ranking officials and politicians were refused access, several people involved said.

The veil of secrecy extended to the historical map that the mission brought with it. Survey department employees said they have been cautioned that sharing it could be a security breach — a strange warning for a map accessible in American archives.

A copy of the report obtained by The Times shows that the government mission documented a series of small border infringements by China. Also coursing through the report are worries about China's grander geopolitical intentions and fears about upsetting Nepal's powerful neighbor.

A nation of 30 million people, Nepal is small, landlocked and underdeveloped. Its government is headed by a Communist, who this year replaced a former Maoist rebel as prime minister. In ideology and in economics, Nepal leans heavily toward China, even as it remains in the orbit of nearby India.

The report says that in several places in and around Hilsa, China constructed fortifications and other infrastructure, including closed-circuit TV cameras, that are either in Nepal or in a buffer zone between the two countries where building is prohibited by bilateral agreement. Chinese border personnel took over a Nepali irrigation canal fed by the Karnali River, the report said, although the Chinese retreated when the Nepali mission visited.

Chinese forces have illegally prevented ethnic Tibetans living in Nepali areas near the border from grazing their livestock and participating in religious activities, the report said. Such constraints bring extraterritorial menace to Mr. Xi's campaign of repression in Tibet.

The report advised that Nepal and China urgently needed to address various border disputes, but a bilateral mechanism for resolving border problems, which includes joint inspections, has been stalled since 2006.

N.P. Saud, Nepal's foreign minister until March, said in an interview with The Times that bilateral "border meetings are held frequently."

But one of Mr. Saud's deputies told The Times that no border inspections had occurred in more than 17 years. Asked about this, Mr. Saud amended his statement.

"I can share with you that the joint inspection team will work soon," he said. "I can't tell you the exact time until it is finalized."

Mr. Saud said that he did not know why the Humla report had not been made public.

"The border of a country," he said, "is not a matter of secrecy."

Mr. Saud said Nepal could not make any determination on the report's validity until the joint inspections restart.

"Until and unless we confirm the report," he said, "how we can raise the issue internationally with another country?"

Ms. Deuba, who replaced Mr. Saud as foreign minister, said she was not aware of the report or of Chinese fencing on the border.

The Chinese Embassy in Kathmandu declined to comment.

The Chinese government says that it is a force for peace in the region. In an article in the party-run People's Daily, Pan Yue, the head of the National Ethnic Affairs Commission, wrote last year that China "never sought to conquer or expand territorially, never colonized neighboring countries."

History collides with such national mythmaking. In 1979, Chinese forces briefly invaded Vietnam, which China had once controlled for a millennium. Since the People's Republic of China was founded in 1949, China and India have fought two border wars.

Mr. Shahi, the former provincial chief minister from Humla, said that his efforts to publicize Chinese border intrusions have been actively discouraged.

"The Chinese, they say to our government, and then the government says to me, 'If you talk about this border issue, then they will stop trade, they will stop everything,'" he said. "Who the hell can say this to me about our land?"

A Holy Land, Divided

The border fence separating Hilsa from Chinese-controlled Tibet cleaves not only nations but centuries. On the Chinese side, modern buildings feature glass atriums, armored vehicles glide along paved roads and floodlights blaze in the night sky. Nepal, by contrast, seems stuck in a bygone era. Ramshackle shelters hunch in the cold. There is not an inch of asphalt or any reliable electricity.

The Chinese side used to be nearly as remote, the seclusion broken only by a flow of pilgrims to Mount Kailash, which is holy to four faiths. But as part of a push into lands populated by ethnic minorities, the Chinese government has seeded Tibet and the neighboring Xinjiang region with new infrastructure.

Migrants from China's Han ethnic majority have poured in, including to the Tibetan town of Purang near the border with Hilsa. A new high-altitude airport in Purang, a feat of engineering, serves both civilian and military purposes, part of a transportation network that gives the People's Liberation Army easy access to border areas. Just 20 miles away is the junction of China, Nepal and India.

Beijing considers a large swath of Indian-controlled territory along the Tibet-India boundary to be its own, calling it "South Tibet." On the border with tiny Bhutan, China claims more disputed land and has built settlements there.

The Chinese focus on Tibet reflects more than geopolitical ambitions. Mr. Xi's government has overseen a brutal effort to pacify ethnic minorities. High-tech surveillance of Tibetans, and the fortification of the border, has all but severed their

escape route into Nepal, where ethnic Tibetans also live.

Chinese police and border guards, Hilsa residents say, regularly cross over to Nepal without going through normal immigration procedures. They intimidate ethnic Tibetan Nepalis and have captured some of the few Tibetans who succeeded in fleeing to Nepal, said Lhamu Lama, a Humla District village administrator.

An officer with the Nepali paramilitary police in Hilsa said that last year his commander asked the Chinese to retreat from an area that the 1960s official map indicated was not Chinese land. The Chinese never responded, said the officer, who did not want his name used because he was not authorized to speak to the news media.

“China is big and powerful so it can do what it wants,” said Pema Wangmu Lama, who was born in Tibet but now lives in Nepal. “Even if Hilsa is swallowed up one day, who would know or care what’s happening here?”

From G2 to Cold War 2.0: The Changing US Attitude Toward China

12 October 2024, [The Diplomat](#), Hongda Fan

A decade ago, Washington saw China as a potential co-leader in global governance. Now, the U.S. consensus is that China is a rival, not a partner.

On September 18, U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Kurt Campbell bluntly stated at a House Foreign Affairs Committee hearing that “the Cold War pales in comparison to the multifaceted challenges that China presents.” In fact, the view that the U.S. and China are already in a new Cold War has been widely discussed in the United States. The two countries are undoubtedly in a state of intense confrontation, which is a marked change from the late 2000s and early 2010s.

In 2007, Niall Ferguson and Moritz Schularick co-authored an article titled “‘Chimerica’ and the Global Asset Market Boom” in *International Finance*. They argued that China and the United States shared a symbiotic relationship: one saved while the other consumed, one exported while the other imported, one provided products while the other provided services, one accumulated foreign exchange reserves while the other printed dollars.

In 2008, Fred Bergsten published “A Partnership of Equals: How Washington Should Respond to China’s Economic Challenge” in *Foreign Affairs*. He argued that the United States should encourage China to become a responsible pillar in the global economic system and seek to establish a genuine partnership with Beijing to jointly lead the global economic order.

From then on, the idea of a Group of Two (G-2) began to spread.

The 2007-2008 financial crisis, which originated in the United States, swept across the globe. However, due to the relative independence of China’s market, coupled with its sustained high economic growth and substantial foreign exchange reserves, China appeared more stable in the face of the crisis. China’s highly successful hosting of the 2008 Beijing Olympics, which impressed the world, also marked a peak in the international prestige of the People’s Republic of China. This was the global context in which the concepts of Chimerica, the G-2, and China-U.S. co-governance emerged. At that time, the world was in need of rescue, and China was seen as one of the most capable rescuers.

Whether it was called Chimerica or the G-2, both concepts centered on the United States collaborating with China in addressing global challenges. At that time, even within the world’s leading power, the U.S., many recognized China’s significant international standing and believed that close cooperation with China was essential. President Barack Obama (in office from 2009 to 2017) and his secretary of state, Hillary Clinton, repeatedly emphasized the importance of maintaining strong cooperation between the United States and China.

Although China also sought greater and better cooperation with the U.S., Beijing did not endorse terms like Chimerica or the G-2 and was even critical of them. China believed these concepts promoted the idea of China-U.S. co-governance of the world, which could easily fuel the “China threat” narrative.

When receiving visiting President Obama in November 2009, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao made it clear that he did not agree with the G-2. The Chinese premier stated that the idea of China-U.S. co-governance was flawed and did not align with China’s peaceful diplomatic principles.

In 2010, China’s GDP surpassed Japan’s, making it the world’s second-largest economy after the United States. Since Xi Jinping became China’s top leader in 2012, Beijing has become increasingly confident in diplomacy, which is often seen by some countries such as the United States as reflecting China’s growing ambitions. Additionally, more attention has been paid to the significant differences in ideology and political systems, along with some actions by China that were seen as not in line with WTO rules. All these factors together have led to China being increasingly viewed as a threat by the United States.

Actually, while the Obama administration expressed a desire to cooperate with China, it was also strengthening efforts to contain China, especially in Obama’s second term. The “U.S. Rebalance to Asia” strategy illustrated this point. This trend would intensify over time.

The National Security Strategy released by the Trump administration in 2017 clearly defined China and Russia as the United States' main rivals and strategic adversaries. This administration "awakened" Washington officials to the urgency of addressing the threat posed by China. During the Trump administration, the United States engaged in a fierce trade war with China, leading to a strained China-U.S. relationship.

The Biden administration largely inherited its predecessor's hardline policies toward China, further clarifying its perception of a "China threat." Over time, the U.S. government has come to view the fundamental nature of China-U.S. relations as competitive.

The U.S. government's attitude toward China naturally influences U.S. public opinion. The Pew Research Center surveyed American adults in 2007, 2014, and 2019, asking which country is the greatest threat to the United States. China ranked third (2007), second (2014), and tied for first with Russia (2019), showing Americans' threat perception of China increased over time. The same survey conducted by the Pew Research Center in 2023 found that as many as 50 percent of respondents considered China to be the top threat to the United States, while only 17 percent viewed Russia as the top threat.

At the same time, the U.S. legislative branch continues to propose bills targeting China. For example, in mid-September 2024, the U.S. House of Representatives voted on more than 20 bills related to China, showcasing an effort by Congress to curb China's influence. China is being regarded as the leader of an anti-US axis formed together with Russia, Iran, North Korea, Venezuela, and even Cuba.

The United States has developed not only a bipartisan but also a public consensus of negative perceptions towards China. Washington firmly views China as an undisputed rival.

The evolution from G-2 to the current rivalry was not quite as simple as described above, of course. Almost immediately after the idea of Chimerica/the G-2 emerged, it faced significant criticism and opposition, both in the United States and in China. Even Ferguson and Schularick, the creators of the term "Chimerica," collaborated again in 2009 to publish an article titled "The End of Chimerica."

On the other hand, there has been an undeniable change in recent years. Although Beijing has repeatedly stated that China and the United States are partners rather than rivals, this claim – which was not controversial even 10 years ago – has been explicitly rejected by the U.S. government. Meanwhile, U.S. academia has a growing lack of understanding of China and an increasingly negative attitude toward China.

Today, when cooperation is advocated, it faces strong pushback in the United States. The impact is clear in mounting tensions with China.

Dashain: Nepal turns to India for meat, China for toothpicks

11 October 2024, [Khabarhub](#)

As the country prepares for Dashain, the biggest festival in Nepal, locals are immersed in celebration and culinary traditions, which prominently feature fish and meat.

Despite advancements in agriculture and animal husbandry, Nepal continues to import significant quantities of fish and meat from abroad.

Over the past five years, Nepal has imported meat worth over 13 billion rupees.

In the financial year 2019/20 alone, fish and meat imports amounted to approximately 2.77 billion rupees.

The following year, 2020/21, saw an increase with imports reaching 3.34 billion rupees.

In the fiscal year 2021/22, the figure was slightly lower at 3.13 billion rupees.

The most recent data for 2022/23 indicates a decrease, with imports totaling around 1.08 billion rupees.

However, during the previous fiscal year (2023/24), fish and meat worth approximately 2.23 billion rupees were imported, reflecting the seasonal demand during the festival.

In terms of livestock, Nepal imported goats valued at around one crore rupees during this period, with nearly 996,300 goats sourced entirely from India.

Toothpicks worth two crores imported annually

In addition to meat, Nepal also imports various small items, including toothpicks.

Despite local production capabilities, bamboo in Nepal has deteriorated due to weather conditions.

In July and August of this year alone, 6.63 million toothpicks were imported, totaling 18,912 kg.

Over the past five years, imports of toothpicks have reached a cumulative value of 94,441 rupees.

Last fiscal year, dental floss worth 27.93 million rupees was also imported. In 2079/80, a total of 1.13 crore toothpicks were brought in.

While Nepal has rich agricultural and culinary traditions, the reliance on imports for meat and small items like toothpicks highlights ongoing challenges in local production and supply.

CCP Insists on Falsifying the History of “Humanistic Buddhism”

11 October 2024, [Bitter Winter](#), Zhu Yaozu

A forum was held in Shanghai, a city that was really the cradle of the Buddhist current—which was, however, never Marxist, and later developed mostly in Taiwan.



Group photograph of the participants in the Shanghai forum. From Weibo.

On September 21 and 22, 2024, the Jade Buddha Temple in Shanghai hosted a national forum on “the theory and practice of humanistic Buddhism.” Bureaucrats from the United Front Work Department and the government-controlled China Buddhist Association spoke at the event.

Venerable Changzang, speaking also on behalf of the absent Master Yanjue, the President of the government-controlled China Buddhist Association of which Changzang is Vice President, hailed Shanghai as “the birthplace of humanistic Buddhism.” He also explained that “humanistic Buddhism” and “Sinicized Buddhism” are one and the same.

“Humanistic Buddhism,” he said, always meant a Buddhism adapted to the most progressive ideologies of the time. Today the most advanced ideology is the CCP’s Marxism with Chinese characteristics as presented by Xi Jinping. It is to Xi Jinping Thought that a Buddhism that is both Sinicized and humanist should adapt, Changzang said.

That Shanghai is the birthplace of humanistic Buddhism is not false as it is there that Master Taixu, one and perhaps “the” key figure in the development of the current, taught in the last period of his life. Taixu died at the Jade Buddha Temple in 1947.

As one participant to the forum told “Bitter Winter,” mentioning the important role of Taixu was the only true statement in Changzang’s speech and indeed in the whole forum. All the rest was false.

Taixu did not want to adapt Buddhism to modern anti-religious ideologies. What he proposed was a Buddhism that was less focused on ritual and more on helping suffering human beings, including through active social and charitable work. This was the real humanistic Buddhism, and it was impossible to

practice it under the iron-clad dictatorship of the Chinese Communist Party.

In fact, those loyal to Taixu’s teachings largely went to Taiwan, where worthy “humanistic” institutions such as Tzu Chi, Fo Guang Shan, and the Dharma Drum Mountain were developed. Some of these institutions may maintain certain “political” relationships with present-day China for their own purposes but certainly their ideas and actions are not inspired by Marxism or Xi Jinping socialism. As “Bitter Winter” has already denounced, the CCP is simply trying to hijack the prestigious label “humanistic Buddhism,” make it a synonym of “Sinicized Buddhism,” empty the name of its original content, and replace it with Xi Jinping’s brand of Marxism. It is, basically, a fraud, perpetrated with the complicity of the China Buddhist Association.

From Deng to Xi, China’s Foreign Policy Identity Has Been Consistent

10 October 2024, [SFS](#), Niall Duggan

Despite claims that Xi Jinping’s leadership has adopted a more aggressive foreign policy driven by nationalism, the effect of national identity on Chinese foreign policy has been consistent in the post-Mao era. Instead, China’s perception of its capacity to act internationally is driving a more proactive foreign policy. Therefore, Western states’ China policy should focus on forcing China to question its capacity to act in international affairs by maintaining leadership in areas such as climate change and the war in Ukraine.

Is Nationalism in Chinese Foreign Policy New?

Many US policymakers consider the People’s Republic of China to be the United States’ key strategic rival. As the United States has refocused its attention on China in the past decade, it has found that China has become more aggressive and nationalistic under Xi Jinping’s leadership. To US leadership, China’s coercive “wolf warrior diplomacy” of the late 2010s exemplifies this new attitude. These US policymakers view recent assertive Chinese foreign policy as a departure from earlier post-Mao administrations, which they perceived as pragmatic. Prior Chinese administrations focused on economic engagement rather than ideological objectives and were therefore less threatening. However, contrary to popular belief, the effect of national identity on Chinese foreign policy is consistent and has changed little since the Mao era.

Background

Modern Chinese nationalism is rooted in Han intellectual and popular movements that emerged during the demise of the Qing dynasty in 1911. These movements created a Chinese state identity rather than the flexible identity that subjects of the Chinese empire held. After the establishment of the People’s Republic in 1949, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP)

created socialist patriotism, a form of Chinese nationalism interconnected with a socialist, anti-imperialist nationalism and rooted in China's experience under Western imperialism during the Century of Humiliation (1839–1949). Then, during the reform era of the 1980s, the CCP adopted positive nationalism, which reduced the anti-Western, anti-imperialist nature of socialist patriotism. For instance, China rejoined the Summer Olympics in 1984 and promoted its success in the games as a Chinese success rather than a victory over Western capitalism. During this era, China sought to rejoin the family of nations.

However, the country soon reverted to socialist patriotism due to international isolation resulting from the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre and the CCP's resultant fears of regime change. This fear led the CCP to introduce patriotic education campaigns in 1994. These campaigns focused on three periods of Chinese history – “five thousand years of splendid Chinese history”, “the humiliation of more than a century,” and “the People's Republic opens up for progress” – and became the collective narrative of Chinese history and current affairs. Despite possessing a vast, diverse population and a widely contested national identity, these campaigns promoted the national narrative that China is an ancient civilization that has continually resisted Western imperialism and is reclaiming its great power status. China is still far from a totalitarian state – the anti-lockdown street protest of 2022 is a clear example of the fact that the Chinese people are willing and able to push back against their government – but China's campaigns of the 1990s effectively created one official Chinese historical narrative that reinforces loyalty to the CCP.

Nationalism in Foreign Policy

China articulates its nationalist identity through its foreign policy behavior in areas such as international law and global climate governance. Chinese white papers on Africa policy in 2006 and 2015 framed a narrative of shared victimhood at the hands of Western imperialism, colonization, and unequal treaties. China's identity as a developing state motivates its foreign policy focus on the Global South and has driven real policy action outside China's normal policy of non-interference in sovereign states' internal affairs. For instance, China supported international military intervention during the 2011 Libya crisis, backing a UN resolution that referred Libya to the International Criminal Court on counts of violations of human rights and potential crimes against humanity. China justified its decision by supporting the views of fellow developing states in Africa and the Arab world. Li Baodong, China's Permanent Representative to the United Nations from 2010 to 2013, stated that China considered “the concerns and views of the Arab and African countries when voting in

favor of resolution 1970,” framing China as a sympathizer of countries in the Global South.

China also presents itself as a leader in climate change governance among developing nations. In COP climate summits, for instance, China portrays itself as a significant, responsible stakeholder. It champions the interests of the Global South by supporting positions such as the Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities (CBDR–RC), a principle that acknowledges the unequal distribution of climate action responsibility among countries due to their differing emissions profiles and economic capacities. This underscores China's commitment to shaping its identity as a leading power on the international stage, where China sets rules that support the position of the Global South rather than accepting those created by the West.

China's socialist patriotic identity also drives more aggressive foreign policy in territorial disputes and the international economy. China has been assertive in defending its territorial claims, including its “Nine-Dash Line,” which encompasses a significant portion of the South China Sea. Tensions have been rising between China and several states, including Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei, and Taiwan, over areas such as the Spratly Islands, Paracel Islands, and Scarborough Shoal. Since China has played a historically dominant role in the South China Sea, it is attempting to achieve a hegemonic role in the region that aligns with its nationalist identity of returning to great power status.

China's geopolitical nationalistic stance extends beyond its regional neighbors. Epitomized by the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), China's ambitions manifest in creating Chinese-centric forums for economic cooperation and hubs for financing and logistics across the Global South, including Central Asia, Latin America, and Sub-Saharan Africa. Rooted in the historical narrative of China's “five thousand years of splendid history,” the BRI serves as a contemporary testament to China's enduring position as a critical economic and civilizational center.

From Deng to Xi, China's Foreign Policy Identity Has Been Consistent: The West Must Change Its Perspective

Many policymakers and media commenters have linked China's assertive foreign policy to Xi Jinping's policy of rejuvenating the Chinese nation. However, Chinese foreign policy has been consistent since the early 1990s. During this period, China sought to expand its power in the South China Sea steadily. In the late 1990s, China strived to establish amicable relations with Global South countries and moved toward leadership in global governance. Even the concept of a multipolar world order, evident in deepening Sino-Russian relations and highlighted as a policy change under Xi's leadership, is rooted in the

Chinese foreign policy discourse of the mid-1990s, which debated the extent of China's development as a great power.

Instead, the key change since the 1990s has been China's rapid economic growth. While growth has not fundamentally changed China's identity and institutions, it has strengthened Xi's ability to achieve the foreign policy objectives of Chinese nationalism. The West expected China's identity to shift toward liberal, market-led democracy as it integrated with the global economy. This expectation was based on two factors. First, observers reasoned that China's need for a fully market-led economy to sustain rapid development would require political reforms, including creating an independent judiciary and developing a multiparty political system. Moreover, China's growing dependence on the international market would force it to support the Western economic order.

However, Western policymakers' anticipated shift in China's identity in the 1990s and 2000s did not occur. As the Chinese economy grew, the one-party system expanded to co-opt the newly wealthy and educated elites instead of transitioning to liberal democracy. And while China's economy improved, China's foreign policy, identity, and geopolitical ambitions did not change. Thus, China's increased economic and military capacity supports its emergence as a global power that challenges the model of a unipolar world order dominated by the West.

Despite the development of Xi Jinping thought, the Xi administration has remained consistent with its predecessors in crucial areas of foreign and security policy, including China's attitude toward Taiwan, which is the last remaining wound from the Century of Humiliation for many Chinese policymakers. This suggests that US policymakers should not expect changes in Chinese leadership to generate seismic shifts in Chinese foreign policy. China's identity as both a victim of Western imperialism *and* a reemerging great power will remain the foundation for decision-making, even with positive or negative pressure from the West.

Given the relative stasis of Chinese foreign policy goals, China's newfound capability to advance its critical interests under Xi's leadership is the key difference from previous administrations. If China's identity remains consistent, understanding China's perspective on its capacity to achieve foreign policy goals is vital for Western states, as is the ability to shape China's perception of its own capabilities.

Therefore, Western states' China policy should focus on forcing China to question its capacity to act in international affairs. If Russia, for instance, were to lose the war in Ukraine, China might then question its capacity to defeat Taiwan in armed conflict. Moreover, if the United States were to lead on critical global

issues such as climate change, China may question its capacity to lead in these areas. Chinese policymakers would view the cost of counteracting a fully engaged United States as beyond China's current ability. While US leadership could use direct economic and military competition with China to change Beijing's policies, this would feed into the Chinese identity as a victim of Western aggression. Compared to policies aimed at "countering China," engaged US leadership on global issues is a far more effective strategy that would force China to exercise restraint without reinforcing China's identity as a victim of the West.

Critical Translation Readings On Monyul In The History Of India's Tawang Monastery – Book Review

10 October 2024, [Eurasia Review](#), Dr. Adfer Shah



The Tawang Monastery in Arunachal Pradesh, India. Photo Credit: Vikramjit Kakati, Wikipedia Commons

The Clear Mirror: Reflection of Monyul in the History of Tawang Monastery takes a look at the history, culture and social geography of the Monyul, thereby giving readers an ethnographic account and lived reality of Tawang monastery and the People of Mon.

The book was originally written in Tibetan by Gyalsey Trulku, who served as the Abbott of Tawang Monastery for almost two decades from 1978 to 1997. This dense work is the result of his long experience in Monyul and his thorough analysis of various scattered documentary sources and the local oral narratives. The original book's title in Tibetan is 'Rtawangdgonpa'i lo rgyus, mon yulgsalba'i me long' and it was first published by the author's disciple Chaak Jampa Gyatso of Tawang in 1991.

Thereafter it was revised and enlarged, and the second edition was published by the Amye Machen Institute, Dharamsala in 2009. This work comprises of thirty-two (32) small chapters and has been translated in an engaging and lucid style by Yeshe Dhondup, who is currently the managing editor of the Tibet Journal and has translated many other works both in Tibetan and English so far. His other translation works include Biography of Gendun Choephel; Tale of Golden Corpse, which is a Tibetan version of Vikram Vetal, Sino-Tibetan Negotiation: the Negotiation that Never Was; and Political and Military History of Tibet. Yeshe

Dhondup's contribution as a translator of this work is huge because the Tibetan version can only be read by a limited section of readers and to make it available to a larger readership, its English translation was much needed and has come out finally if not timely.

However, the task was arduous because the main problem with translating from Tibetan to English was the vast cultural and linguistic differences between the two languages. Also many Buddhist concepts and teachings have no direct equivalent in English that makes it challenging to convey their full meaning and significance. Overall, translating important Buddhist literature into Indian languages requires a careful and nuanced approach that takes into account the unique linguistic and cultural differences between Tibetan and the target language. Though with proper care and attention, it is possible to create translations that accurately convey the profound wisdom and teachings of Buddhism to a wider audience and for that it is essential to have a deeper understanding of Buddhist philosophy and culture to ensure that the translation accurately conveys the intended meaning.

Also to translate important Buddhist literature into Indian languages, it is essential to work with skilled translators who are fluent in both Tibetan and the target language, the criteria that Yeshe Dhondup fulfils adequately though he acknowledges that the death of the author of this work Gyalsey Trulku in 2009 and unavailability of any Tibetan who is good in Mon and Tawang history and culture made his translation work difficult. Still, he has been able to carve out such a dense work of translation and has come up with an easily readable and coherent version in English.

While reading the English version one gets to understand the very essence of Tawang Monastery and its social, political and historical importance along with its strategic location due to which it has long been the focus of tensions between India and China. It is argued that the conflict began in 1950 when China and India signed an agreement demarcating the border between the two countries. However, the agreement was never ratified by China and the two countries have been in dispute over the border since then. In 1962, the conflict escalated into a full scale war between the two countries, with China launching a massive offensive against India the then. Instead of improving the worsening Sino-Indian relations and foresee diplomatic implications, China still is very interested in Tawang and is trying all its evil designs to have its hegemony over Tawang region and the monastery, given its strategic location that is rich in mineral and natural resources besides historical claims that Tawang is part of the south Tibet.

In addition to this the religious consciousness also serves as a motivation that Tawang is home to the 17th-century Tawang Monastery one of the largest Buddhist monasteries in India and considered a holy

site for Tibetan Buddhism. Since China sees the monastery as an important tool to increase its influence in the region and to promote its own brand of Tibetan Buddhism. China also has not been able to provoke or influence India against the Tibetans residing in India for decades now. Today India has become the home to the largest Tibetan population outside Tibet, with an estimated 100 thousand Tibetans living in India.

While India does not recognize Tibetan refugees as refugees under its legal framework it has however provided them with temporary residence permits and freedom of movement within the country. The Indian government has also established a settlement program for Tibetan refugees, which provides them with basic amenities and services such as healthcare and education. Even the Tibetan Government-in-Exile runs from Dharamsala, India where H.H. the Dalai Lama resides since his arrival to India decades ago.

By going through the book one gets to know that the Buddhist monasteries in India are centers of spiritual and cultural learning, where monks and nuns live a life of simplicity and devotion to the teachings of Buddha. They are often located in remote areas, away from the distractions of modern life, and provide a space for meditation, study, and contemplation. It must also be noted that Buddhist monasteries in India continue to play a vital role in preserving the rich heritage of Buddhism and promoting its values in contemporary society.

Gyalsey has employed a cultural lens to study the Monyul and the Tawang Monastery. This Monastery is one of the largest and most famous Buddhist monasteries in India, located in the state of Arunachal Pradesh. It is known for its unique architecture, as well as its rich history and cultural significance. The monastery is also home to a large collection of ancient scriptures, valuable artifacts, and religious relics. Tawang Monastery is considered a sacred site by Buddhists and attracts thousands of pilgrims every year. According to history, the origin of people of Mon were Tibetans who migrated to the place in the 9th century in different waves of migrations. Back then Tawang was known as Monyul –the land of Mon which means lower land in the Tibetan lexicon as Tibet they then referred to the entire southern landmass as Monyul or Lho Mon.

Also, the Monpas are a tribe that migrated from southern and central Tibet and settled in Monyul. Historically it is believed that Tawang was a part of Tibet. It saw the seeding of Buddhism when it was brought to Tibet during the 8th century by the Buddhist scholar Padmasambhava. It is also believed that the Tawang monastery was built by a 5th Dalai Lama's disciple named Marak Lama Gyatso earlier known as Geluk Monastery. 'Ta' means horse and 'Wang' means green pasture in Monpa Language and

it became the centre for the spiritual and powerhouse of the Mon people and was directly governed by Lhasa. Also since the establishment of the Tawang monastery, Monyul was completely incorporated into Tibetan administration in terms of politics, culture, language, taxation and law.

It was the Simla convention in 1914 that changed the map of Monyul this convention changed the boundary between Tibet and the eastern Himalayan region of British India. In 1951 India took full control of Tawang and the Tawang region was incorporated into the Northeast Frontier Agency (NEFA). After communist China forcibly annexed Tibet in 1950, China started claiming Tawang as a part of south Tibet. Monpa is the most progressive tribe of Arunachal Pradesh today and is the only nomadic tribe of northeast India which migrated from south-east Tibet.

Given the socio-historical and political backdrop, the roots of this ethnography on the Tawang area and Tawang monastery and the community lie somewhere in anthropology. The author traces the lineage and historical accounts of the Mon people in today's Arunachal Pradesh. The account becomes sociological when he gives a picture of the social and cultural aspects of the monastery and the landscape. Though the earlier works on Tawang discuss the issues at length like some recent quality research on Tawang and Tawang Monastery besides Yeshe Dhondup's translation work that has been published are: Sharma, Renuka. *Tawang: The Birthplace of the 6th Dalai Lama* was published by Indus Publishing Company in 2017.

Some others like Khamtse, Samten G. *Tawang: The Sacred City* by Indus Publishing Company in 2015. Another work is Dawa, Tashi's 'The Tawang Tiger: Tale of a Lost Land' by Indus Publishing Company in 2015. Another prominent work is Pema Dhondup's 'The Monastery, the Fort and the Land of the Dawn Lit Mountains: A History of Tawang' by Indus Publishing Company in 2016. An important work by Bhutia, Tsetan Namgyal's, 'Tawang: A Journey to a Hidden Land' by Indus Publishing Company in 2014.

Also books have been written recently on Tawang, Monpas and Tibetan Buddhism which cover a range of socio-historical and political issues. Besides the author's and translator's preface, the subsequent chapters written in a very coherent style describe the sociology of the Monpa people and the arrival of people from Tibet and their descendants in Mon, description of Prince Tsangma and his lineage and arrival in Mon, about his sons, spread of Buddhism in India and Tibet and spread of Buddhism in Mon.

In Chapter 9, there is a fine description of the Kagyue (Kagyü) tradition. It is one of the four main lineages of Tibetan Buddhism founded by an Indian Buddhist in the 11th century and is based on the teachings of the Indian Buddhist philosopher Nagarjuna. This tradition emphasizes the importance of meditation and the

transmission of the Buddha's teachings from teacher to student through an oral lineage.

Chapter 10 discusses the spread of the Geluk tradition in Mon. It is a branch of Theravada Buddhism that originated in Burma (Myanmar) and is practiced mainly in Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, and Sri Lanka. It emphasizes the attainment of inner peace, happiness, and enlightenment through meditation, good deeds, and mindful living. The term "geluk" means "happiness" or "bliss" in Pali, the language of the Buddha. Similarly, chapter 11 narrates the founding of Namgyal Lhatse monastery and its administrative and religious traditions are discussed in chapter 13.

Other chapters include discussions about the Tawang monastery and its renovation, visits of Indian Prime Ministers and H.H. Dalai Lama to Tawang, the history of Ogyanling and other monasteries, etc. Mon people have played an important role in the history of Tawang, as they were one of the first groups to settle in the region. Monyul, which translates to "Land of Mon," is a term used to describe the Tawang district. They have their own language, which is a Tibeto-Burman language, and their own customs and traditions. The importance of Monyul in the history of Tawang can be seen through the various historical sites and monuments that are found in the region.

For example, the Tawang Monastery, which is one of the largest monasteries in India, was founded by a Monpa monk named Mera Lama Lodre Gyatso in the 17th century. Monpas are an ethnic groups found in the Himalayan regions of Nepal and India. They are also known as the Lopas and are a sub-group of the Sherpa people. They are mostly located in the Khumbu region of Nepal, which includes the famous Mount Everest. The Monpa people, on the other hand, are primarily located in the region of Mon, which is in the northeastern part of India's state of Sikkim. They speak the Monpa language, which belongs to the Tibeto-Burman language family. The Mon people are an ethnic group that inhabits the region of Tawang in India's state of Arunachal Pradesh, India.

Tawang Monastery, also known as the Galden Sumdo Monastery, is a Buddhist monastery in Tawang. It is considered one of the largest monasteries in India and is known for its architecture and historical significance. The Monastery was founded by Mera Lama in the 17th century. It is famous for being the birthplace of the sixth Dalai Lama, who was born here in 1683. The monastery is also known for its rich collection of ancient Buddhist scriptures and artwork. Academically, Tawang Monastery has been studied by scholars of Buddhist studies, art history, and anthropology. Several academic papers and books have been written on the monastery and its significance in the history and culture of India.

The Mon people, who are the native inhabitants of the region, have a unique history and culture that has

been influenced by their interactions with the neighboring Tibetan and Bhutanese cultures. However, there is still a significant research gap in understanding the history and culture of the Mon people and their relationship with the Tawang Monastery. Since the work is based on the author's use of sources like rare documentary resources and oral narratives that makes it ethnography. The author's interest in the Tibetan culture and religious tradition, cultural understanding and most of all meaning-making given his effort of looking at the Monyul from an insider's perspective makes things more lucid for Tibetan readers and scholars. However, the ethnographer, in this case, is not a researcher but a Buddhist monk and had been living among the inhabitants and not with the purpose of understanding the culture that these people shared but as the head of the monastery thereby understanding the community and portraying a larger picture of the monastery as a socio-religious organization.

This work is important because writing on monasteries or exploring the lived realities, understanding administration, politics, social interventions, educational and other contributions is equally important as it helps to preserve and promote the cultural and historical significance of these religious institutions. This work reflects that Monasteries are not only important religious centers but also serve as repositories of knowledge and art. Therefore such works help researchers in documenting and studying these monasteries to gain insights into the cultural practices and beliefs of the people who built them, as well as their contributions to the broader society. Additionally, writing about monasteries can help to raise awareness about their importance and attract more visitors, which can have economic benefits for the surrounding communities that exactly is happening in Tawang now since it is witnessing a huge tourist footprint now.

One of the key research points that need to be addressed is the historical and cultural links between the Mon people and the Tawang Monastery. While there has been some research on the history of the monastery, there is limited information on the role of the Mon people in its foundation and development. Additionally, there is a need to understand the impact of the Mon people's culture and religion on the development of the monastery's architecture and art. Another important research point is the study of the Mon people's traditional religion and beliefs. There is still a lack of understanding of their traditional religion and how it has evolved over time. This research gap can only be filled by conducting fieldwork and ethnographic research with the Mon people to understand their traditional religion and beliefs. Furthermore, the Mon people have also played a

crucial role in the defense of Tawang during various conflicts throughout history. During the Sino-Indian War in 1962, the Mon people were instrumental in helping Indian forces defend Tawang from Chinese troops. The central argument of the book is that the Mon people and their cultural traditions have played a vital role in shaping the history and identity of Tawang. Their contributions to the region's religious, cultural, and military history make them an essential part of the social fabric of Tawang and its surrounding communities. The book is an important addition to the present body of Tibetan literature because it brings to focus some crucial aspects of Tawang Monastery and the life world of Monyul. There is a need to study the impact of globalization and modernization on the Mon people and their culture. The Mon people have been isolated from the rest of the world for a long time, and their culture is now facing the challenges of globalization and modernization. There is a need to understand how these changes are affecting the Mon people's culture and way of life and what measures can be taken to preserve their unique culture and identity.

There is a significant research gap in understanding the history and culture of the Mon people and their relationship with the Tawang Monastery. To bridge this gap, researchers need to conduct fieldwork and ethnographic research with the Mon people, study the impact of globalization and modernization on the Mon people's culture, and investigate the historical and cultural links between the Mon people and the Tawang Monastery. Last Word Yeshi Dhoundup's English translation of Gasley Trulku's book on Tawang Monastery is a detailed account of the history, architecture, and religious practices of the monastery. The book provides a comprehensive overview of the monastery's origins, its evolution over the centuries, and its significance in the Tibetan Buddhist world. The book provides a detailed account of the history of Tawang Monastery, including its founding by Merak Lama Lodre Gyatso in the 17th century. The book describes the architectural features of the monastery, including its various temples, chapels, and other structures. The book provides insight into the religious practices of the monastery, including its daily rituals, festivals, and other ceremonies.

The book is written in a clear and accessible style, making it accessible to readers of all backgrounds. However, it is equally important to understand what the book misses despite covering a range of perspectives. The book does not provide a thorough examination of the political and social context of Tawang Monastery. While it provides some background on the region's history and its relationship with Tibet, it does not delve deeply into the political and social factors that have shaped the monastery over the centuries. The book does not provide a

comprehensive account of the monastery's religious teachings and practices. It does provide some insight into the daily rituals and festivals of the monastery, but it does not delve deeply into the philosophical and spiritual teachings of Tibetan Buddhism. The book does not provide a detailed account of the lives of the monks and nuns who live in the monastery. Some information on their daily routines and activities is given, but their personal experiences and perspectives are not explored deeply.

The book doesn't reflect a comprehensive account of the impact of modernization and globalization on Tawang Monastery. It lists some changes that have occurred over the centuries, it struggles to explore the ways in which these changes have affected the monastery and its inhabitants. At last, this book isn't able to give a comprehensive account of the relationship between Tawang Monastery and other Tibetan Buddhist institutions. It sheds some information on the monastery's connections to other institutions; however, it does not explore the ways in which these relationships have shaped the monastery's history and culture.

Opinion: The Erasure of Tibet- A Dangerous Change at the Guimet Museum

10 October 2024, [Phayul](#), Tenam



A Tibetan girl at a protest rally in Paris, France (Photo/Threads/dremong)

I still remember my first visit to the Guimet Museum, a moment of profound importance for me as a Tibetan in exile. Upon entering the museum, I felt a deep connection with the sacred objects on display, artifacts that represented my culture and heritage – our civilization. I saw thangkas commissioned by the Great Fifth Dalai Lama. I saw statues carved by Nepalese artists for Tibetan monasteries in the 17th and 18th centuries. I wanted to remove my shoes in this sacred space before continuing my visit.

For me, the Guimet Museum represented a sacred space for Tibetans living in exile – a place where we could connect to our culture in the face of a relentless 70-year campaign aimed at destroying it in Tibet by the Chinese government. The museum offered a

sanctuary where Tibetan identity could be preserved and celebrated, free from the repressive narratives imposed by the PRC.

So recently, when the Guimet Museum in Paris made the decision to replace the term "Tibet" with "Himalayan World" and to designate "Art of Tibet" with the vague terminology "Tibetan Art," it was a shock for Tibetans in France and worldwide. This change is not only scientifically and historically inaccurate, but it also risks supporting the Chinese colonial narrative about Tibet. As a museum with the largest collection of Asian arts outside Asia, its actions carry significant weight, leading to the erasure of Tibetan culture and identity for future generations.

Historical Context and Cultural Importance

Tibet is not simply a place on a map; it is a civilization that flourished for centuries, rich with a unique heritage that predates the establishment of the People's Republic of China (PRC). Tibetan arts, traditions, and religious practices have flourished for centuries, rooted in a unique cultural context that deserves to be recognized and preserved. By diluting this identity and opting for "Himalayan World," the Guimet Museum obscures the rich tapestry of Tibetan history and contributes to a Chinese narrative that has long sought to erase it.

The act of renaming places is not a trivial matter; it is deeply tied to power dynamics and colonial histories. European colonialism sought to inscribe order and meaning on non-European landscapes through the process of naming places. Naming or renaming was fundamental to extending imperial control over physical and human environments. The use of the colonial power's language, alphabet, and cultural idiom was important to express and cement the imperial authority of the former colonial power, and China perpetuates this in its colonies like Tibet and East Turkestan.

The act of renaming is an assertion of authority, stripping away the indigenous connection to land and culture. This is particularly relevant in the context of Tibet, where such renaming efforts are part of a broader strategy to erase Tibetan identity and history. This erasure of Tibet is also an erasure and dilution of our world's rich heritage that goes beyond Tibet.

Moreover, the term "Tibet" also evokes powerful associations with the "Free Tibet" movement, which has galvanized international attention on the Tibetan struggle for freedom. The recognition of Tibet as a distinct entity serves as a reminder of the ongoing colonial domination, human rights violations, and cultural destruction perpetrated by the PRC. In attempting to erase the term "Tibet," the Chinese government seeks to suppress this narrative, diverting attention from the broader Tibetan experience beyond what it designates as the "Tibet Autonomous Region," which encompasses only central Tibet but not

the two other traditional provinces of Amdo and Kham.

This invisibilization of Tibet in an important cultural institution like the Guimet Museum is deeply alarming. As future generations engage with these arts, they risk absorbing a distorted understanding of Tibetan culture – one that does not recognize its uniqueness and historical significance. This affects not only Tibetans but also deprives global audiences of a more complete appreciation of the diverse cultures that make up our world.

By adopting terminology that diminishes Tibet's identity, the Guimet Museum perpetuates the erasure of Tibetan culture, facilitating an environment in which colonial narratives thrive. This decision could influence other institutions and researchers, leading to a broader normalization of a distorted view of Tibetan identity that ignores its complexities and historical roots.

I believe that the ability to name one's own culture and heritage is integral to self-determination. The Tibetan people have the right to define their identity, history, and culture, free from external manipulation or erasure. The Guimet Museum's decision to strip Tibet of its name is not simply an institutional choice; it is a denial of this fundamental right.

To defend this incomprehensible change, the Guimet Museum justifies its decision by claiming to want to make the collections "more readable and understandable to non-specialists." However, simplifying our history does not do justice to its richness. Public education and awareness must come through authentic presentation, respecting the complexity of our cultures rather than diluting them. The beauty of human history and Humanity lies in its complexity and diversity. The museum must present History as it is and not rewrite it!

In light of these concerns, it is imperative for the Tibetan world, the field of Tibetan studies, and anti-colonial movements to unite and pressure the Guimet Museum to restore "Tibet" to its rightful place in its exhibitions and communications. We must advocate for the recognition of Tibet as a distinct cultural and historical entity, ensuring that future generations do not inherit a diluted understanding of its rich heritage. This is not simply a matter of terminology; it is a matter of justice for a culture that has endured more than seven decades of oppression. The Guimet Museum has the opportunity to stand against colonial narratives and affirm its commitment to authentic representation. By restoring "Tibet" in its exhibitions, it can honor the resilience of the Tibetan people and safeguard their identity for generations to come.

The decision to replace "Tibet" with "Himalayan World" is a dangerous and insidious move that perpetuates historical injustices. It is our collective responsibility to challenge this narrative and ensure

that the voices of the Tibetan people are heard, recognized, and celebrated. Together, we can help preserve Tibet's rich heritage and stand in solidarity against cultural erasure.

The struggle to restore the name "Tibet" goes beyond a simple matter of terminology. It is a question of justice, honor, and respect for a people, their history, civilization, and right to self-determination. As a global community, we have the responsibility to oppose cultural erasure and celebrate the richness of diversity that enriches our humanity.

Sign this petition launched by Students for a Free Tibet here: <https://www.change.org/p/pr%C3%A9servons-l-identit%C3%A9-culturelle-tib%C3%A9taine-dans-nos-mus%C3%A9es>

China still challenges India in the Himalayas as BRICS summit approaches

10 October 2024, [The Hill](#), Brahma Chellaney



Indian army vehicles move in a convoy in the cold desert region of Ladakh, India, Sept. 18, 2022.

With the Oct. 22 BRICS summit meeting approaching, China and India have stepped up discussions about defusing their tense military standoff along the long Himalayan frontier. But although the 10-nation summit in the Russian city of Kazan is catalyzing efforts to resolve the confrontation — which has sparked rival force buildups and intermittent clashes — it is far from certain that any deal will be reached.

The standoff between the two Asian giants is not grabbing international headlines, thanks in part to the wars raging in Ukraine and the Middle East. But the threat of the confrontation escalating to a border war of the kind fought in 1962 cannot be discounted. Both sides have significantly ramped up border deployments of troops and weapons, with India acknowledging the situation is "very tense and dangerous."

The Sino-Indian faceoff, as well as the Russian invasion of Ukraine, are detracting from the international appeal of BRICS, the world's first major non-Western initiative. Founded 15 years ago by Brazil, Russia, India and China as BRIC, the group, with the addition of South Africa in 2011, became BRICS. And with this year's entry of five additional countries, it has become

BRICS-plus, accounting for nearly half the world's population and 40 percent of global trade.

As many as 40 more countries have lined up to join BRICS, which seeks to shape a multipolar global order in place of the fading era of Western dominance. An easing of military tensions between nuclear-armed titans China and India could help build consensus to further enlarge BRICS.

The Sino-Indian border faceoff was triggered by China's stealth encroachments on some Indian borderlands in April 2020. India failed to foresee the Chinese aggression largely because Prime Minister Narendra Modi had focused on appeasing Beijing in a bid to chip away at the China-Pakistan strategic axis. Between 2014 and 2019, Modi met with Chinese President Xi Jinping 18 times, building a close personal rapport. The Xi-ordered encroachments were thus widely seen in India as a stab in the back.

Xi seriously miscalculated that China would be able to present the land grabs to India as a *fait accompli*, like the Chinese "salami-slicing" expansionism elsewhere in Asia. In contrast to Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, China prefers incremental expansionism, enabled by stealth and deception.

India's robust military response to China's encroachments, including more than matching Chinese force deployments, took Beijing by surprise, helping to spotlight not just the Sino-Indian territorial disputes but also India's challenge to Chinese power and capability. No other nation, not even the U.S., has locked horns with the Chinese military in this century the way India has since 2020.

Xi, by transforming the Sino-Indian frontier into a "hot" border patrolled by tens of thousands of rival troops, has crimped the further pursuit of his own "salami-slicing" strategy on the Himalayan massif. China will find it more challenging from now on to nibble away at Indian territories.

With the U.S.-China rivalry deepening, the last thing Xi should be doing is turning India into an enduring enemy. Yet as the world's fastest-growing major economy, India is moving closer to America, with Modi's foreign policy showing a distinct pro-Western tilt.

With an eye on China, India has ramped up its military buildup and modernization. A stronger India aligned with Western powers and Japan is likely to stymie China's plan to gain strategic preeminence in Asia.

A war with India could expose China's weaknesses. Whereas the Chinese military relies largely on conscripts, India, with an all-volunteer force, has the world's most-experienced troops in mountain warfare. The Chinese military, though, has a technological edge over Indian forces.

Against this backdrop, China's recent charm offensive in India, including initiating renewed efforts to defuse the military standoff, suggests that Xi wants to salvage

Beijing's relationship with New Delhi — but without losing face at home.

For four-and-a-half years, tens of thousands of Chinese troops have remained deployed along the inhospitable Himalayan frontier, which has some of the harshest terrain on Earth. Oxygen levels are so low that soldiers take weeks to acclimatize before being deployed on the front lines. If Xi were to reach a deal with India centered on a pullback of rival forces, it would raise questions in China about why he ever launched this provocation in the first place.

This may well explain why, in the bilateral negotiations up to now, the Chinese side has sought a deal largely on its own terms, dimming the prospect of reaching an agreement by the time Xi and Modi could meet on the sidelines of the BRICS summit.

But even if Xi climbed down to some extent, leading to a deal to implement a sequential process of disengagement, de-escalation and removal of rival forces, the new warfare-related infrastructure China has built along the India frontier will remain in place. India thus would not be able to lower its guard.

China has bored tunnels and shafts into mountainsides to set up an elaborate underground military infrastructure, as if preparing for war. In addition, it has planted settlers in new militarized border villages, the equivalent of the artificial islands it created in the South China Sea to serve as forward military bases.

China and India, which represent more than one-third of the global population, became neighbors only after the Chinese Communist Party annexed Tibet in 1951. Today, China and India need to find ways to peacefully coexist. Yet, despite the latest efforts to mend fences, their strategic rivalry seems likely to endure.

China's Dark Shadow Over Nepal's Tibetan Refugee Community

09 October 2024, [Bitter Winter](#), Tsering Passang

Beijing's economic and political ties with Nepal make life increasingly hard for the 10,000 Tibetans who escaped there.

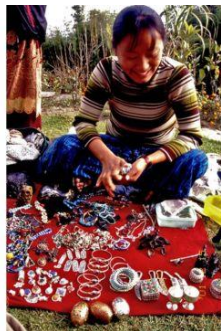
China's increasing influence in Nepal is no longer just a geopolitical concern—it is a pressing human rights issue that is affecting the lives of the Tibetan refugee community there. This past summer, I spent a month in Nepal and visited Tibetan refugee camps, where I witnessed firsthand the deepening challenges these exiled Tibetans face as Beijing's grip on the country tightens. What I saw was not just a tale of economic progress, but one of growing repression—disturbingly reminiscent of the conditions Tibetans fled from their homeland over 65 years ago.

One of the most glaring signs of foreign aid in Nepal is the transformation of its infrastructure. Chinese-funded projects, from the arrival of electric buses to the construction of regional airports in Lumbini and Pokhara, are reshaping the country's landscape and its people's attitudes to China. While these projects may bring short-term economic benefits, they come at a heavy price: the erosion of Nepal's sovereignty.

For decades, Nepal has balanced its delicate relationships between India and China. But as Chinese-backed initiatives increase, there is rising concern about Nepal's long-term independence. Despite the construction of new regional international airports, foreign airlines remain hesitant to use these facilities, largely due to India's reservations about China's growing role in Nepal's internal affairs. With Nepal becoming increasingly reliant on Chinese investments, the country's foreign policy risks shifting in favour of Beijing—a shift that could have far-reaching consequences for Nepal's autonomy.

This geopolitical shift has even more serious implications for the dwindling 10,000 Tibetan refugees living in exile in Nepal. Having escaped their homeland after China's occupation of Tibet, where cultural suppression and persecution still prevail, many now find themselves facing similar restrictions in what was supposed to be a safe haven.

Expressions of Tibetan identity—whether through wearing a “Free Tibet” t-shirt, raising the Tibetan flag, or participating in traditional cultural practices—are being met with growing hostility. During my visit, I learned that local authorities, likely acting under pressure from Chinese interests, have begun restricting Tibetan cultural practices. Events like Gorshey (Tibetan circle dances), once public celebrations of Tibetan heritage, are now forced underground in the Kathmandu Valley. The chilling effect on these cultural activities is a painful echo of the repression that many Tibetans thought they had left behind.



A Tibetan refugee selling traditional handicraft in Nepal. Credits.

Even the deeply symbolic tradition of Lhakar (White Wednesday) is now under threat. A movement that grew out of the 2008 protests in Tibet, Lhakar is a weekly expression of Tibetan pride and identity. Every Wednesday, Tibetans speak their language, wear

traditional clothing, and support Tibetan-owned businesses as an act of peaceful cultural resistance. But even these small acts of pride are being curtailed. As China's influence in Nepal grows, Tibetans are finding it increasingly difficult to gather, celebrate, and maintain their traditions.

What is particularly troubling is the erosion of the very freedoms Tibetan refugees believed they would find in exile. The rights they sought—freedom of expression, freedom from fear, and the ability to preserve their identity—are being undermined. The parallels between the repression they fled in Tibet and the mounting pressure they face in Nepal are becoming too striking to ignore.

This growing threat to the rights of Tibetan refugees must be a matter of global concern. The international community cannot afford to stay silent. China's expanding influence in Nepal has implications that go beyond mere infrastructure deals—it strikes at the heart of human rights and cultural survival. Tibetan refugees in Nepal have a fundamental right to express their cultural identity, free from persecution or interference.

The time for action is now. Media outlets, human rights organisations, and governments around the world must shine a light on this pressing issue. As China continues to reshape Nepal's political and social landscape, the global community has a responsibility to ensure that Tibetans in exile can live free from oppression and preserve their rich cultural heritage. Their struggle is not just about one displaced community—it is about defending the universal values of freedom, dignity, and the right to exist as a people. The fight for Tibetan freedom is far from over. As the founder and chair of the Global Alliance for Tibet & Persecuted Minorities, I call on the international community to stand up for the Tibetan refugees in Nepal and recognise the growing threat posed by China's influence. Tibetans' cultural identity and their right to live free from oppression are worth defending—because their fight is a fight for the fundamental human rights we all cherish.

Book Review: The Phallus by Bhuchung D. Sonam

07 October 2024, [Phayul](#), Tsering Namgyal Khortsa

Bhuchung D. Sonam is one of the most prolific poets, writers, and translators in the Tibetan diaspora. He has published nearly half a dozen books and edited two acclaimed anthologies of Tibetan writing: *Muses in Exile: The Anthology of Tibetan Poetry*, which appeared twenty years ago, and more recently, *Under the Blue Skies: A Tibetan Reader*.

He is also the publisher of the Dharamshala-based Blackneck Books, an imprint of TibetWrites, which has

become an important platform for Tibetan writers, both young and old.

His nearly two-decade-long effort in promoting Tibetan writing was featured in *The New York Times* and earned him the prestigious Ostana Prize youth award for his translation work.

Sonam has now released his first collection of short stories, *The Phallus*, which consists of six short stories about Tibet and Tibetan life in both India and Tibet. The book can be read in just one sitting.

Like much of Tibetan fiction, or most fiction in general, the book is grounded in real stories and facts, particularly the history of China's occupation of Tibet and the Tibetan exile in India. Bhuchung-la's book, narrated in both first and third person, is largely autobiographical and based on true events.

In the title story, *The Phallus*, Sonam provides an account of his grandfather's time in a Chinese labor camp in 1960, where, due to hunger, they were forced to eat worms out of their feces and later the carcass of a donkey when they found one.

"For a few days, fifty prisoners enjoyed the donkey, which not only kept them warm but also rejuvenated their emaciated bodies. However, they could not bite off its penis. They boiled it several times, but it remained rubbery and tough."

The grandfather, a lama in a monastery, would later denounce the teachings of Buddha and praise the Party during his confession in order to be released.

The second story, *Way of a Woman*, recounts how a husband in Tibet decides to go on a journey against all advice and meets with an accident, drowning in a river along with his horse. The horse returns home without its rider. The widow shows no visible remorse, leading to various rumors in the village, but eventually sells all her horses and belongings and decides to become a nun. The husband, however, continues to appear in her dreams asking for his horses. In response, she says: "The dead have no rights."

The third story, *The Connection*, is a remarkable piece of detective fiction. The author, while applying for his Indian Identity Certificate (IC)—a long and laborious process for Tibetans—is summoned by the police. He is questioned in connection with an old Indian Muslim friend from his college days, and based on his answers, they attempt to track the friend down. Later, the author reads in a newspaper that his friend was likely among those arrested as one of the masterminds behind the hijacking of an Indian Airlines plane from Nepal. "Five months later, my IC arrived. They had printed my name wrong."

In *Under the Shadow*, Sonam takes readers on a journey to a Tibetan school in Manali where the principal, who has a penchant for religion, begins to chop down an old tree in the school courtyard to make way for a new Buddhist stupa. The author realizes that the tree was, in fact, planted by his grandfather, who

may have once worked at the school. The author reflects on the life of trees and whether trees have souls. The story also touches on an aspect of Tibetan history in India that has rarely been discussed: the construction of roads by Tibetan refugees in the Himalayas during the 1960s and 1970s.

In *News from Afar*, the final story, a Tibetan refugee schoolboy recalls his life behind the Himalayas in Tibet as he retreats into the wilderness to read yet another letter informing him of a death in the family. "News of one death and then others, over the years, had hardened him somewhat," Sonam writes. The story is filled with heartbreaking nostalgia. "Of all the things he missed about home, his grandmother's stories and her homemade dried cheese topped the list. Elderly women he encountered often reminded him of his grandma, stirring memories of long evenings spent listening to her tales."

When he hears of his father's death from his uncle, tears roll down his cheek. "It was neither the intensity of sadness, nor the sharpness of his uncle's narration, that prompted his eyes to flood. The tears were for his father's youthfulness — a forty-two-year-old man, the head of a family, a good farmer."

The book is full of anguish, dislocation, heartbreak, sadness, sacrifice, and above all, nostalgia for a time gone by. Most importantly, it expresses the lack of a home to call one's own and the urge to use art and writing as a form of redemption.

Despite the somber themes, there is a lot of humor, especially dark humor, in the book, particularly in the title story. There is also a certain ingenuity and practicality in Bhuchung-la's art that is refreshing. I especially liked the book's format, which is perfectly suited for the Instagram age and can be savored in one or two sittings. Even after reading the book twice, I came away satisfied with the different facets of life in exile and Tibet that Bhuchung-la conjures in this slim but powerful volume.

What sets him apart as an author is his lack of authorial anxiety—he simply ends the story where it naturally ends and doesn't feel the need to keep going if the narrative has concluded. His detailed and careful prose—his background as a poet shows—beautifully describes both nature and human expression. The book, which masterfully blends historical realities with personal narratives, evoking the hardships, nostalgia, and resilience of Tibetans, is a delight to read and is yet another important addition to the growing corpus of Tibetan writing in English.

China's Sentinel State

07 October 2024, [China India Project](#), Dalia Parete

Hype around China's "digital panopticon" is huge. But according to Minxin Pei, an expert in Chinese governance and mass surveillance, cutting-edge tech is just one part of the Party-state's toolkit, which also leans heavily on manpower and pervasive self-censorship — what he calls China's "sentinel state."

China Media Project researcher Dalia Parete spoke with Pei about the titular idea behind his latest book, *The Sentinel State: Surveillance and the Survival of Dictatorship in China*. Pei tells us about what makes the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) brand of mass surveillance unique, considering how it anticipates rather than simply reacts to dissent and how it combines the latest technology with grassroots mobilization and internalized censorship, involving citizens in the very machinery controlling them. It's a system as old as the PRC itself, but one that has changed dramatically in the past few years and which will only continue to evolve.

Dalia Parete: What is the "sentinel state," and how does it differ from the more familiar concept of the surveillance state?

Minxin Pei: In my book, I introduce the concept of distributed surveillance, highlighting how China conducts its surveillance distinctly. While all dictatorships employ repression, the most sophisticated ones, like China, lean heavily on preventive rather than reactive measures — essentially ex-ante repression versus ex-post repression. The real challenge lies in designing an effective system for this preventive repression. Should all surveillance responsibilities be concentrated within a single agency or distributed across multiple entities? Each approach has its trade-offs. For instance, if you go the route of a centralized agency like the Stasi [East German secret police], you invest heavily in a large bureaucracy that could ultimately threaten the ruling party itself.

On the other hand, China's strategy involves decentralizing tasks horizontally across various security agencies, and vertically by incorporating civilian involvement. These civilians, while formally part of the security apparatus, take on key surveillance functions. This creates a unique system where surveillance is distributed and multifaceted, allowing the government to maintain control without the vulnerabilities that come with a single, centralized authority.

While all dictatorships employ repression, the most sophisticated ones, like China, lean heavily on preventive rather than reactive measures.

DP: Which is more important for this sentinel state — the technologies of repression or the human resources of state control?

MP: There's often too much focus on technology itself. While it can be a useful tool, it is used by people. And let's not forget that technology has lots of blind spots. It can accomplish many tasks, but if people implement countermeasures, technology becomes ineffective. For example, if someone wears a mask or a hood, facial recognition systems struggle to identify them. Similarly, if you hide your phone in a Faraday bag, the government loses track of your movements. There are lots of limitations to technology. This is why I believe the most effective approach combines human intelligence and technological resources. China has both advanced technology and a highly organized structure.

DP: What did the Covid-19 pandemic reveal about China's surveillance capabilities?

MP: During the pandemic, China's approach to enforcing lockdowns was truly remarkable, particularly in how it used cell phone monitoring. The most crucial part was the actual collaboration projects with private companies like Alibaba and Tencent, as they developed health tracking systems.

Another significant aspect was the use of so-called "grid management" (网格化管理), which is much more labor-intensive and human-focused than technology-driven. This approach proved to be quite effective during the pandemic. China implemented a system where communities are divided into several grids, typically comprising around 1,000 people or 300 families. Each grid is closely watched by an individual who not only monitors these families but also provides various community services.

To effectively lock down a community, you need active participants. So, those two elements — phone monitoring and grid management — played vital roles. Interestingly, traditional tools like facial recognition and video surveillance were not very useful during the lockdown since people were confined indoors.

DP: Would you say the pandemic was a trial run for China's technological capabilities?

MP: Because of the uniqueness of the pandemic, it was a limited test. There was a lot of self-enforcement because people also did not want to get sick. So, during the pandemic, the government didn't need to resort to heavy-handed coercion. About half of the population probably complied with regulations simply out of self-interest and a desire to stay safe.

DP: What role does the Chinese media, including state-run outlets, play? Are they part of the sentinel state?

MP: In this case, official Chinese media don't play a significant role. Their primary function is to disseminate government-sanctioned messaging. I think that social media is the main target for surveillance because the government has a very sophisticated and effective way of monitoring what's happening on social media. If a particular topic starts

trending, they swiftly intervene to suppress it. There is a very good system in place in that sense.

In my book, I don't focus on the output side of this — essentially, how the government employs censorship. One lesser-known aspect of China's internet surveillance is how they monitor who is accessing the internet. They've created effective technology to ensure that anyone using the internet has their identity recorded by the authorities. This way, they maintain tight control over online activity.

DP: What lies behind the Chinese state's paranoia and need for control?

MP: This system was developed in the aftermath of Tiananmen Square. This taught the Chinese Communist Party a very important lesson: they needed to be aware of what was happening in society. Like other dictatorships, the Chinese Communist Party is very fearful of dissenting voices, especially activists, because they need to deter the population from engaging in protests, in anti-regime activities. Most of the time, these activities can be led by a small number of activists. Because they set an example, they show the rest of the population that they are not afraid. To make sure this does not happen, the government relies heavily on surveillance. If somebody dares to challenge the Party's authority openly, that person will be discovered and punished.

In my book, I discuss what I call "key individuals." These are people who are subject to close monitoring by human assets and technological means. There are even "internet key individuals" whose online activities are closely tracked. Some of these individuals are restricted from accessing certain websites or services to further limit their influence.

DP: What do you make of China's plans to introduce a national cyberspace ID scheme?

MP: From the Party's perspective, the more control they can exert, the better. That's their mindset. However, we also have to consider the law of diminishing returns. In this context, the additional benefits the Communist Party might gain from implementing a cyber ID are likely quite limited. Given how effectively they control the internet, I'd estimate they oversee about 95 to 97 percent of online activity. To capture that remaining two to three percent would require a substantial investment of resources, leading to high marginal costs that probably don't yield significant benefits. You have to hire people to monitor. You have to actually harass people if you catch them. Then what if they keep posting? It will probably cost them a lot of manpower.

This feels excessive, especially considering that the party can quickly identify who is online. When you use home internet from state-owned providers, your IP address is already known. The same applies to your phone. Even in public places like cafes they have

surveillance systems to track IP addresses. So why introduce a cyber ID? It seems largely unnecessary. Additionally, many people in China are already quite cautious about their online behavior, leading to considerable self-censorship.

DP: So why do you think these plans are being rolled out right now?

MP: Xi Jinping has been emphasizing a comprehensive approach to security. National security is not just about defense against external enemies but also maintaining social stability and cybersecurity. So, under that guideline, Chinese censorship agencies and domestic security agencies will ask, "How can we carry out the top leadership's instruction?" So, they propose all kinds of measures, such as cyber IDs. From a bureaucratic perspective, this is a clear response to new directions from the central authority, prompting the bureaucracy to take action. When we look at the current circumstances, like the slowing economy, there's probably more social unrest. There will be a lot more public dissatisfaction. The government aims to suppress expressions of this dissatisfaction and potential social unrest.

By introducing something like a cyber ID, the Party hopes to enhance self-censorship, as people will be afraid to express their dissatisfaction online. However, this approach might backfire. If individuals feel they can't voice their frustrations online without repercussions, they may resort to more destructive means of expression. That's why I believe this strategy may not be beneficial. Over time, this will also depend largely on the economy, as the Chinese security apparatus is primarily funded by local governments. If these local governments do not have the resources, both the human and technological components could suffer. They won't be able to recruit more informants or maintain and upgrade their technology, which, as we know, can be quite costly.

By introducing something like a cyber ID, the Party hopes to enhance self-censorship, as people will be afraid to express their dissatisfaction online.

DP: Finally, what are the scenarios in which the sentinel state might break down?

MP: If the economy breaks down, it will be the first sign of trouble. You'll likely see a degradation of the security system and a rise in public discontent. Another concern is the potential for corruption within the system itself. Those in charge of security wield significant power and have access to resources. Instead of using funds for informants or upgrading the system, they might enrich themselves, leading to better facilities and higher salaries rather than enhancing security.

Additionally, there's the issue of overreach. The demand for security can seem insatiable, like a beast that can never be fully satisfied. This could result in unnecessary spending on resources — like an

excessive number of surveillance cameras using the latest technology — when it may not even be needed.

China's Tryst With Religion

07 October 2024, [StratNews Global](#), Resham and Anukriti

Religion In China

China's religious landscape is a complicated collage peppered with distrust, deceit, dubious intents and discouraging party politics. With the government officially recognising five religions—Buddhism, Taoism, Islam, Protestantism and Catholicism—and regulating them with an iron hand, much remains to be seen on how Chinese society grapples with faith or manages spiritual vacuums. Authorities tightly monitor registered and unregistered religious groups. In 2021, the U.S. Government estimated that Buddhists comprise 18.2% of the country's population, Christians 5.1%, Muslims 1.8%, followers of folk religion 21.9% and atheists 52.2% with Hindus, Jews and Taoists comprising less than 1%. In a more accurate estimate, based on publications of the Council on Foreign Relations (May 15, 2024). The percentage of the population having religious affiliations in China is given below.

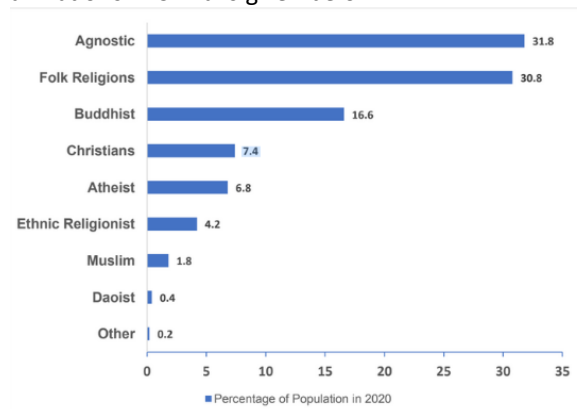


Figure-1: Sourced from World Religious Database

Members of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) are officially banned from practising religion. While there is some leniency to folk practices; Christianity and Islam are considered foreign religions. The diktat to all religious institutions that they must uphold the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party, promote Xi Jinping thought and Sinicisation of religion, only affirms the acute political control desired by CCP over religion. There is a large and consolidated State effort to ensure religious groups are more aligned to Chinese culture, morality and diktats of the CCP.

Notwithstanding the clampdown measures, practising religion in China has been on the rise. China started with banning religious activities during the Cultural Revolution (1966-76), acknowledging people's demand for religion (1980s), to revival of religious institutions and groups (1990s). While the

Constitution does permit following of five accepted religions of Buddhism, Taoism, Islam, Protestantism and Catholicism; these are under strict State control. Apart from registration of religious organisations with State sanctioned patriotic religious associations, supervision by the United Front Work (a branch of the Communist Party) ensures due monitoring and regulation.

The Hammering Of Buddhism

Tibet has been long apportioned the unfortunate fate of being a strategic state in a dangerous neighbourhood at a momentous time in Asian history. The invasion of Tibet (termed "liberation of Tibet" by the Chinese) has profoundly and consistently impacted India-China relations, especially their boundary dispute, which is intrinsically linked to the Sino-Tibetan conflict. Moreover, the institution of the Dalai Lama continues to be the centrepiece of such India-Tibet-China geopolitical complexity. His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, Yeshe Tenzin Gyatso, is one of the most revered spiritual leaders of modern times. His Holiness is the present reincarnation of the previous 13 Dalai lamas of Tibet, who are in turn are considered to be manifestations of Avalokiteshvara, or Chenrezig, the Bodhisattva of Compassion, holder of the White Lotus. He is believed to be the 74th in a lineage that is traced back to a Brahmin boy who lived in the time of Buddha Shakyamuni. Born on 05 July 1935, in a small village of Taktser, located in the province of Amdo, he was named Lhamo Thondup, which literally meant 'Wish Fulfilling Goddess', his journey as the 14th Dalai Lama, started in 1939-40 where he forfeited his name and assumed the name of Yeshe Tenzin Gyatso. His education comprised teachings from the Nalanda traditions, with five major and five minor subjects including logic, fine arts, Sanskrit, Medicine and Buddhist philosophy which encompassed Prajnaparamita (the perfection of wisdom), Madhyamika (the philosophy of middle way), Vinaya (the canon of monastic discipline), Abidharma (metaphysics) and Pramana (logic and epistemology). 1950 saw raids and cross-border incursions by the Chinese into Tibet, threatening the region and robbing the Tibetans of the peace they practiced. In October 1950, reports of PLA crossing the Dri Chu River East of Chamdo with 80,000 soldiers deeply disturbed and threatened Tibet. In a bid to assign political authority over Tibet, His Holiness was officially enthroned the temporal leader of Tibet over six million people at the Norbulingka Palace on November 17, 1950 at the age of 15. With no assistance coming from the U.S. and the UK, the process of dialogue was initiated through the Governor of Kham to prevent the invasion of Tibet. Eventually through coercion, the Chinese unilaterally announced that a 17 Point 'Agreement on Peaceful Liberation of Tibet' had been accepted on May 23, 1951, between Government of PRC and Local

Government of Tibet, even to the extent of forging the Tibetan seal. From July 1954 to March 1957, His Holiness visited China and met Mao Zedong and Chou Enlai, Zhu Teh and Deng Xiaoping. Due to growing threats, increasing brutality against the Tibetans, repression of religion, and in a bid to have sustained existence of faith, on March 17, 1959, with the consultations of the Nechung Oracle, His Holiness travelled to India and crossed the Indian borders on March 31, 1959, and reached Bomdilla in Arunachal Pradesh.

At almost 90, His Holiness is the highest spiritual leader and head of Tibetan Buddhism. His succession has been fiercely debated as CPC has put enormous efforts to have complete influence over Buddhism through control over the legacy of Dalai Lama and institution of a CPC-nominated head. The question over the Dalai Lama's reincarnation reflects the larger ideological and political debates about the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) versus the Communist Party of China (CPC), religious freedom versus materialism, the sovereignty of Tibet versus China's occupation of it, and history itself. New Delhi has over the prolonged political refuge of the Dalai Lama, maintained an ambiguous Tibet policy, primarily with an intent to not infuriate China. There is a case to merit, to refute Chinese claims of legitimacy over the succession of His Holiness and bringing to fore the impact of such a miscalculation which can further Buddhism into an unending abyss of misrepresentation.

Xi Jinping has legislated three core demands to the Dalai Lama: accepting Tibet as an inseparable part of China; abandoning Tibet Independence; stopping activities to split the Motherland; and has advised the Dalai Lama to 'discard any illusion, face reality squarely, correct mistakes, and choose an objective rational path'. China fears that since the 6th Dalai Lama was born in Tawang in 1683, the 14th Dalai Lama, may plan to recognise a successor in Tawang, which makes His Holiness visits to the area highly sensitive and anxious for China. The situation has now often been referred to as the diplomatic grey zone. With limited signs of positive moderation by China over Tibet, rapid Sinicisation of religion, changing demographic overtones, China is set to nominate the successor of the 14th Dalai Lama, while India should prepare for the eventuality of actual successor of 14th Dalai Lama being nominated from India.

Compounded with this is also the striking case of the missing Panchen Lama. Being one of the most important leaders of Tibetan Buddhism, his detention since 1995 is one more significant religiously oppressive step adopted by the CPC. Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, the 11th Panchen Lama, was born in Chinese occupied Tibet on April 25, 1989. At the age of 6, he was recognised by the Dalai Lama as the reincarnation

of the previous Panchen Lama. But three days after this recognition, Chinese authorities kidnapped the child and his parents. The Panchen Lama has not been seen since.

The Persecution Of Muslims

The Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, located in China's northwest is the only region in China with a majority Muslim population. The Uyghurs, Kazakhs, Kyrgyz and other communities in this region are ethnically Turkic. As per the 2010 census, Uyghurs made up 46% and Kazakhs 7% of the Xinjiang population. The stories appearing on millions being detained in detention camps, subjected to indoctrination in political education camps, pre-trial detention centres and prisons have all received due coverage in the media. Mass surveillance, arbitrary arrests, forced sterilisations, enforced disappearances and religious erasure are common practices instituted by the State that continue unabated. The Chinese Government calls these detention centres as 'vocational education and training centres'. International media organisations and researchers call these re-education camps, internment camps and detention camps. The detainees are targeted for various reasons, including contact with other Islamic nations, visiting mosques, having more than three children, sending texts and Quranic verses or being extremists.

The entire process of persecuting the Muslims is multi-faceted and systemic. The overarching reasons show that Chinese believe that ethnic minority population threatens social stability and national identity, with violations of birth limits. Xinjiang has been claimed by China since the CCP took power in 1949. Chinese Party officials view the Islamic community as extremist and separatist with threat to China's territorial integrity, government and population. The CCP has since instituted measures to shape all religions to adhere to the Han-Chinese customs, which relate to the atheist party beliefs including passage of an anti-extremism law that prohibits growing long beards and wearing veils in public. The parents are also prohibited from naming their children Mohammed and Medina. The reasons for such absurdities in managing religion stem also from the need to ensure the safety of the ambitious BRI that passes through this region.

Xinjiang is also the region with the largest coal and natural gas reserves in China. Hence, resource extractions without separatist overtones are desirable to ensure there is no unrest. Since 2017, it has also been assessed that Xinjiang's birth rate has declined by 84%. China, however, denies any religious, humanitarian or human rights violations.

The Last Word

There is a much larger need for the world to see religious colonisation being orchestrated by the Chinese in a bid to safeguard the interests of the Party.

This legacy of Xi Jinping, will leave a distorted interpretation of religion, selfishly directed by the CPC, whose members are prohibited to practise any form of religion. There is a need for a united call for adherence norms as far as religion is governed, with the international community pitching in ensuring social rights. India's policy on Tibet and the fateful succession of 14th Dalai Lama needs serious review to contextualize the fate of India-China relations.

IAF downs Chinese spy balloon: What is China up to and what is India doing?

07 October 2024, [Business Standard](#), Bhaswar Kumar

An IAF Rafale jet recently shot down a Chinese balloon using a missile at an altitude of nearly 55,000 feet on the eastern front near China

The Indian Air Force (IAF) has reportedly alerted the government about the presence of Chinese spy balloons in Indian skies.

One such balloon, hovering at an altitude of nearly 55,000 feet, was recently shot down by an IAF combat aircraft on the eastern front near China, The Tribune reported on Monday.

An IAF Rafale aircraft, based out of Hasimara in northern West Bengal, was reportedly deployed to destroy the spy balloon, which was carrying a payload. The Rafale jet used one of its missiles to accomplish the task.

What is India doing to deal with Chinese spy balloons?

According to the report, a standard operating procedure is now being formulated to address similar threats in the future.

While another Chinese balloon was also spotted over the Andaman and Nicobar Islands in the Bay of Bengal, it was not shot down by Indian forces.

The Tribune report added that the IAF has also held discussions with its counterparts in the United States (US) regarding the issue.

What are these Chinese spy balloons doing?

In 2023, the US also encountered similar spy balloons launched by China. The US military even shot one down in February that year.

A report from the US Department of Defense (DOD), titled 'Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China 2023', had also highlighted this threat. "Military and commercial entities in China have been researching and developing high-altitude systems, including high-altitude balloons, since at least the mid-2000s," the report said.

The US authorities also believe that these balloons are steerable.

Meanwhile, Chinese military publications have also discussed the use of high-altitude systems for tracking and targeting.

The US DOD report had also said, "The high-altitude balloon shot down on February 4, 2023 (in the US), was developed as part of this broader military-linked aerial surveillance programme."

In February of 2023, a US military fighter jet shot down a suspected Chinese spy balloon off the coast of South Carolina, a week after it entered US airspace.

The balloon's takedown was reportedly ordered by US President Joe Biden himself.

While several US fighter and refuelling aircraft were involved in the operation, the balloon was taken down by a F-22 fighter jet using a single missile, much like in the case of the IAF Rafale that took down a similar threat recently.

China had condemned the shooting down of the balloon, asserting that the airship was for meteorological and scientific purposes and had "unintentionally" entered US airspace. However, these claims by Beijing were rejected by US officials.

The incident led to escalating tensions between the US and China, including a sharp exchange just days later involving US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and China's top diplomat, Wang Yi, at a security conference in Munich.

Blinken reportedly stated that the US would not "stand for any violation of our sovereignty" and warned that "this irresponsible act must never again occur". Meanwhile, Wang dismissed the episode as a "political farce manufactured by the US".

While China continued to deny launching a spy balloon to snoop on the US, the latter claimed that Chinese military balloons had crossed the airspace of more than 40 countries across five continents.

Shortly after the US takedown, Japan also announced that after re-analysing past cases of unidentified flying objects, it "strongly" suspected that China had flown at least three spy balloons over its territory since 2019. According to a *Financial Times* article from that period, unnamed Taiwanese officials also said that the island, which is claimed by China, had been surveilled by dozens of Chinese military balloons.

'Monks, Business and Rebellion: Nepal's Bhot-China Relationship and India' book review: Nepal's geographic location is both strength and a weakness

06 October 2024, [The Annapurna Express](#), Randhir Chaudhary

Kitab Publication published two books written by Sudheer Sharma on Sept 15. First, "Monks, Business and Rebellion: Nepal's Bhot-China Relationship and India". Second, "The Storm across the Himalayas: The Changing Nepal-China Relationship after the

Republic.” After reading both the books here I have attempted to provide a review of the first one. Sharma, a well-known figure in Nepali media, appears to have done deep research for this 376-page book. This book is organized in seven sections including an epilogue.

Nepal-Tibet relations and Chinese domination

The book begins by chronicling Nepal-Tibet trade relations dating back to the 7th century, noting Nepal’s diplomatic presence in Tibet for over 374 years. Despite ups and downs, the relationship took a pivotal turn in 1856 with the signing of the 10-point ‘Thapathali Treaty’ after Nepal’s invasion of Tibet. This treaty made Tibet a protectorate of Nepal, which raised concerns for China. A tripartite agreement followed, recognizing both Nepal and Tibet as under the Chinese emperor’s authority.

As China increased its military presence in Tibet by 1968, tensions escalated for Nepal. Historical records in the book reveal that China viewed Nepal as a potential part of its sphere of influence, even offering Nepal a place in its union of five ethnic groups (Han, Manchu, Mongol, Tibetan, and Muslim). Sun Yat-sen, the father of the Republic of China, even listed Nepal among China’s ‘lost territories.’ These accounts challenge the popular belief that Nepal was spared from Chinese domination, a sentiment that has lingered in Nepal’s historical narrative.

To counter the Chinese threat, Nepal sought British recognition as an independent nation, formalized in a 1923 treaty. Until the 1950s, Tibet was Nepal’s immediate northern neighbor, with whom it shared deep cultural, economic, and strategic ties. It wasn’t until China annexed Tibet that Nepal found itself facing a new geopolitical reality. While many fear the ‘Sikkimization’ of Nepal following India’s annexation of Sikkim, Sharma’s book argues that China’s annexation of Tibet and its desire to dominate Nepal receive less attention. Through historical evidence, the book sheds light on China’s expansionist approach toward Nepal. Sharma also explores the influence of Chinese leader Mao Zedong in Nepal during the 1950s. Maoist ideology started spreading in Nepal, and by 2004, Gangalal founded the ‘Lal Communist Party,’ influenced by Mao’s ideas. Though short-lived, this marked the beginning of communist interest in China within Nepal. By the late 1950s, China became a political shrine for Nepali communist leaders, who were drawn to its propaganda and the spread of the Chinese language, which carried political undertones. The book’s fifth chapter, ‘Circus,’ examines how China used language education as a tool to indoctrinate Nepalis, with the first lessons being “Long live Chairman Mao” and “Down with American imperialism.”

Mahendra’s elusive nationalism

The chapter ‘Mao and Mahendra’ focuses on Nepal-India relations, particularly the controversial 1950

Friendship Treaty. Sharma portrays King Mahendra as having two distinct personas: one as the architect of modern Nepali diplomacy and the other as a ruler who curtailed democracy to consolidate power. His nationalist stance is scrutinized, particularly in relation to India. While Mahendra is credited with removing most of the Indian military camps in Nepal, Sharma questions his motives, suggesting that Mahendra used nationalism to preserve the monarchy rather than genuinely serve Nepal’s interests.

Contrasting Mahendra’s nationalism with the actions of Prime Minister BP Koirala, the book highlights Koirala’s balanced foreign policy approach. For example, when Nehru tried to engage Koirala in a united front against China, Koirala resisted, choosing instead to maintain equilibrium between India and China. The book also revisits Mahendra’s controversial decision to cede part of Mount Everest to China, undermining his nationalist image.

Preserving the monarchy

Sharma argues that Mahendra strengthened ties with China not out of ideological alignment but as a strategy to counterbalance India’s influence. The book also shows how Mahendra cultivated relations with the United States to further his geopolitical goals. During his 1960 visit to the US, just months before imposing the Panchayat system, Mahendra received a warm welcome at the White House and secured substantial financial support. Shortly after, he overthrew the democratically elected government, signaling a shift towards authoritarianism.

The sixth chapter, ‘Rajtantra ko Samyawadi Saino,’ discusses how successive Nepali monarchs, including Mahendra, Birendra, and Gyanendra, maintained strong ties with China. Sharma’s analysis suggests that the monarchy strategically used these relationships to preserve its power. Interestingly, despite its title focusing on Nepal’s relations with Tibet, China, and India, the book’s chapter on US involvement, particularly during the Mustang rebellion, leads the reader to feel that “America” should have also been featured in the title.

Why US-Taiwan aid package is a signal to China ahead of election

06 October 2024, [The New Indian Express](#), Deutsche Welle

The US recently earmarked one of its largest-ever defense packages for Taiwan. Although helping defend Taiwan enjoys bipartisan support, there are concerns over unexpected changes under a potential Trump administration

US President Joe Biden recently approved one of Washington’s largest-ever military aid packages

for Taiwan, comprising \$567 million (€517 million) worth of defense aid.

The aid will be provided via the “Presidential Drawdown Authority” (PDA), which allows for the “speedy delivery of defense articles” from US Department of Defense (DoD) stocks “to respond to foreign crises.” The US is already using this process to send military aid to Ukraine.

China considers Taiwan to be its territory, which President Xi Jinping has vowed will **one day be “reunited” with the mainland**, by using force if necessary. Beijing has been increasing pressure on the self-ruled island, for example, by demonstrating force with regular military exercises in the Taiwan Strait.

Although it doesn’t maintain official diplomatic relations with Taipei, the US is Taiwan’s largest security benefactor. China considers any military support of Taiwan to be a provocation. The White House has said its goal in supporting Taiwan’s self-defense is to “continue to maintain peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait.”

Taiwan and the new US president

With the US presidential election coming up in November, Chinese pressure on Taiwan is set to be a challenge for the incoming president, whether it be Democrat Kamala Harris, or Republican Donald Trump.

Joseph Bosco, a former Pentagon official on China policy, told *DW* that “we don’t know exactly how [a new] administration will treat Taiwan.”

He added the Biden administration was therefore “trying to accelerate the transfer of resources as much as possible during this period.”

Bosco, who served as country desk officer for China in the office of the US Secretary of Defense from 2005 to 2006, said the current administration is confident of continuity on China policy from Harris, but “it is not at all clear” what a second Trump administration would do.

Which way would Trump go on Taiwan?

Trump’s first administration was hawkish on China, launching a trade war in an attempt to isolate China’s economy. Trump also bolstered US security assistance to Taiwan, with \$18 billion worth of arms sales notified to Congress during his administration.

However, Trump’s “transactional” approach to foreign policy is an ongoing concern for US allies in Asia and elsewhere.

Bosco said that the Republican presidential candidate has been “very unsympathetic” in his statements about Taiwan and has become unpredictable about his future Taiwan policy.

“There’s no telling which way he could go,” he said, adding that he thinks Biden is “hedging his bets” in approving the defense aid drawdown ahead of the election.

During his 2024 campaign, Trump claimed that Taiwan had taken America’s chip business, and told *Bloomberg* in July that Taiwan should “pay the US for defense.”

Harris could diverge from Biden on Taiwan

If Harris wins the November election, her administration could adopt a different tone on Taiwan than Biden, who told a TV interview in 2022 that US forces would defend Taiwan if there was an “unprecedented attack.” The White House later walked back the remarks.

Bonnie Glaser, managing director of the German Marshall Fund’s Indo-Pacific program, wrote in a recent analysis that “Harris might not echo Biden’s persistent stance that he will send US forces to defend Taiwan if China invades the island.”

“She may opt instead to return to a more traditional policy of strategic ambiguity,” Glaser wrote.

Bosco said that Harris would “pretty much follow the Biden policies” in the beginning. However, he added that if China starts “ramping up the pressure on Taiwan and makes some overt moves toward Taiwan ... then we’ll see how committed she is to Taiwan’s security.”

Delays in US defense aid deliveries

Under the US’ “one-China” policy in place since 1979, the US “reserves the right” to provide Taiwan with defensive weapons.

Under the policy, the US “acknowledges” but does not officially recognize Beijing’s position that Taiwan is part of China, while recognizing the People’s Republic of China (PRC) as the sole legal government of China.

China bristles at any support of Taiwan. China’s Foreign Ministry responded to the latest US aid package by accusing the US of “emboldening” Taipei to provoke Beijing and threaten the status quo.

In July 2023, Biden approved a PDA to Taiwan for the first time, signing off on a \$345 million package.

However, delivery problems from the 2023 drawdown were outlined in a September 2024 report by the DoD’s inspector general.

The report found a large percentage of equipment sustained water damage while waiting months at a military base for shipment.

It said the DoD “did not effectively or efficiently implement accountability and quality controls” and “provided unserviceable and poorly packaged equipment and munitions to Taiwan.”

Taiwan has also reported delays in the delivery of equipment ordered years ago, including Stinger portable anti-aircraft missiles and new F-16V fighter jets.

According to the CATO institute, a US think tank, the topline figure for the backlog of US arms sales to Taiwan remains at \$20.5 billion.

Taiwan a challenge for any administration

Besides technical issues, former Pentagon official Bosco said political shifts can also affect US support for Taiwan.

“At some point, other factors enter into the picture: the economy, inflation,” Bosco said. “The American public will decide that it’s had enough of spending US resources in these various international conflicts.”

“A lot of it will depend on the leadership that is shown by the new president in terms of convincing the American public that we need to be involved in these crises ... It’ll be a tough challenge for any new administration,” he added.

Glaser from the German Marshall Fund told DW that the latest PDA approval “sent a strong signal to Beijing” that the US is resolved to help Taiwan bolster its defense capabilities.

However, she downplayed the importance of its approval ahead of the election.

“There is strong bipartisan support in the US for Taiwan and regardless of the outcome of the US election, arms transfers to Taiwan will continue,” Glaser said. “I don’t see any special significance in the timing of this.”

Why China is investigating US companies Calvin Klein and Tommy Hilfiger

06 October 2024, [The Indian Express](#), Ritika Singh

The move marks the first investigation from China into foreign companies boycotting cotton from Xinjiang. Here's what to know.

China launched an investigation last week into the US company PVH, the parent company of apparel brands Calvin Klein and Tommy Hilfiger, over its boycott of cotton from China’s Xinjiang region.

Several Western brands have stopped sourcing raw materials from Xinjiang in recent years, over the alleged use of forced labour in cotton cultivation. Reports have claimed that members of the minority Muslim Uighur community are made to work there as part of the larger discriminatory policies targeted at them by the Chinese state.

The move marks the first investigation into the matter by China, who has now gone beyond simply **denying allegations of human rights abuses**, and acted against companies for not using Xinjiang’s cotton. The decision also comes amid the US and China increasingly targeting sectors of the other’s economy over trade, security and strategic concerns. Here’s what to know.

What is the investigation about?

In late September, the head of the Bureau of Safety and Control of China’s Ministry of Commerce said relevant agencies had reported PVH to the Unreliable Entity List (UEL) working mechanism.

China’s Commerce Ministry established the UEL four years ago, allowing it to respond to unfavourable

actions taken by enterprises or individuals from a foreign country. Under its provisions, if a foreign entity endangers China’s “national sovereignty, security or development interests”, suspends normal transactions with a Chinese enterprise or individual, or applies “discriminatory measures” against them and causes “serious damage to their legitimate rights and interests”, they can come under the UEL list. Being on the list allows the Chinese government to restrict or prohibit the foreign entity from engaging in China-related import or export activities, investing in China, entering China, restricting their work permit, or imposing a fine.

So far, a few American defence companies are on the list, although they were already barred from dealing with China by the US government.

What are China’s complaints against PVH?

The head of the Bureau of Safety and Control said PVH was “suspected of violating normal market transaction principles and boycotting Xinjiang cotton and other products for no reason without any factual basis, seriously damaging the legitimate rights and interests of relevant Chinese companies, endangering China’s sovereignty, security and development interests.”

PVH has banned the sourcing of raw materials from Xinjiang. It said in an earlier statement that the company follows the US government’s policy regarding Xinjiang.

Under the Biden administration, the US banned the import of cotton and tomatoes from Xinjiang in 2021 under the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act, citing forced labour and human rights abuses. A report from *The New York Times* noted then, “The area is a major source of cotton, coal, chemicals, sugar, tomatoes and polysilicon, a component in solar panels, that are then fed into factories around China and the world.”

Western brands such as H&M, Adidas, Nike and others made statements condemning the possible usage of forced labour at the time and faced an **immediate backlash on Chinese social media websites**. Pro-government accounts further demanded boycotts and evoked nationalist sentiments, leading to temporary removals of the brands’ products from Chinese e-commerce sites.

What could have prompted the investigation now?

Why China has specifically acted against PVH, and why now, is unclear.

On being asked if China’s attitude towards foreign investment has changed, the head of the Bureau said, “The Chinese government will unswervingly promote high-level opening up to the outside world”, adding, “China has always dealt with the unreliable entity list issue prudently, targeting only a very small number of foreign entities that disrupt market rules and violate Chinese laws. Foreign entities that are honest and law-abiding have nothing to worry about.”

But foreign companies have been wary of the business climate in China for a few months now. In 2023, **China's amended security law was flagged** by US authorities for making foreign entities' business operations difficult, with vague grounds for companies being inspected over espionage suspicions.

Citing security concerns, the US also said in 2023 that it planned to **"de-risk" its economy** from China or reduce its dependence on it for specific materials like semiconductors, which are critical to manufacture almost all electronic devices.

The two global economic giants' rivalry has given way to major disagreements in multiple areas. Under Xi Jinping as president, China has further taken assertive stances on issues such as the treatment of Uighurs, making global cooperation difficult. Even as the Chinese economy sees a period of slump, a doubling down against US companies is being witnessed.

Former US President Donald Trump also frequently criticised China over trade practices during his term, and later imposed tariffs on its products, which added to the lack of trust in their bilateral ties. Biden has largely continued the stance of being tough on China. Critical resources and products have been restricted since, such as **China curbing the exports of germanium and gallium**, metals used in manufacturing critical semiconductors. This year, the US imposed tariffs on importing semiconductors from China.

Are China's lauded anti-poverty triumphs at risk of vanishing?

05 October 2024, [SCMP](#), Yuanyue Dang

In the country's vast rural regions, officials armed with poverty relapse dossiers are struggling to track and help the vulnerable avoid destitution

In Zhongwei, a city in northwest China's Ningxia Hui autonomous region, fighting poverty seems to be a never-ending battle.

While the country as a whole has made tremendous gains in living standards, in July, the city's Shapotou district announced that 28 more individuals had been added to a poverty relapse watch list.

The officials who update the list maintain dossiers on families that are in dire financial straits and aim to stop them falling below the poverty line, while also ensuring that they do not become too reliant on government handouts.

The district did not say how many people in total are on the list but its updates are part of the administration's attempts to avoid a return to widespread poverty as the economy struggles to regain momentum.

The goal is a national priority.

According to state news agency Xinhua, China has spent nearly 1.6 trillion yuan (US\$306 billion) to alleviate poverty since Chinese President Xi Jinping took power in 2012.

In 2021, Xi declared that absolute poverty had been eradicated in the country. The next milestone, he said, was to attain common prosperity and a decent standard of living for all by 2050.

Those ambitions rest on preventing a large-scale re-emergence of poverty.

Analysts say that achieving the goals would be crucial not just for building a more equitable society, but also in maintaining social stability and hence strengthening China's hand in its economic competition with the United States.

"The anti-poverty movement has been defined as one of Xi's great achievements, so it will be a big issue if absolute poverty comes back," said Alfred Wu, an associate professor at the National University of Singapore's Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy.

"As a developing country, poverty is an inevitable problem for China." However, China's model of fighting poverty through massive investment "is not sustainable", Wu said.

Maintaining people's livelihoods has been an ongoing concern for Chinese leaders. The issue was underscored in the "No 1 Central Document"—the leadership's first policy directive issued at the beginning of each year since 2021.

Alarms were raised in 2022 during the Covid-19 pandemic when large numbers of rural residents who were migrant workers had lost their jobs – and their only source of income – during the lockdowns.

They were raised again in January, when the Central Rural Work Leading Group, the top decision-making body for China's agricultural and rural affairs, said that preventing a massive return to poverty was "both an economic and political task".

So much so that when Chinese Premier Li Qiang inspected the southern province of Guizhou in April, he warned cadres that they would be held responsible if people slipped back into poverty.

"We must firmly adhere to the bottom line of not allowing large-scale relapses into poverty by enforcing and consolidating the responsibilities of all parties, maintaining the intensity of support efforts, and ensuring that all policies are well coordinated and implemented," Li said.

The vigilance against poverty relapses featured prominently in July when the Communist Party's Central Committee met to map out the country's economic and national development plans for the next decade.

In a communique issued after the meeting, the leadership called for regular surveillance of low-income individuals and nationwide monitoring of rural

populations, where the problem of poverty was more prevalent.

It is not clear exactly how many people in rural China are struggling since the government has not released statistics.

However, last October, the Ministry of Civil Affairs said that the construction of a “low-income population dynamic monitoring platform” had been “basically completed”, covering more than 66 million low-income people, more than 3 million of whom were considered at risk of falling back into poverty.

According to a 2021 national census, nearly 510 million people lived in China’s rural regions, accounting for 36 per cent of the country’s population. Beijing has previously asserted that preventing large-scale poverty relapses and ensuring food security were “two bottom lines” in its rural and agricultural work.

Those “two bottom lines” had become more urgent since “the spread of Covid-19 and uncertainty facing the world economy and trade”, Min Shi, a professor of rural economics at Huazhong Agricultural University in Wuhan, and Wang Xiaobing, a researcher at Peking University’s Institute of Modern Agriculture, jointly wrote in an article published in the official *Guangming Daily* in March 2022.

Poverty lines in China vary from one province to another. In Ningxia, one of China’s less affluent regions, individuals who earn less than 9,000 yuan a year are considered to be living below the poverty line and are eligible for government help. This compares with 8,050 yuan in southwestern Yunnan province, and 7,800 yuan in the eastern province of Jiangxi.

According to poverty alleviation manuals issued by local governments, individuals are monitored if they have risen above the poverty line but have unstable incomes, or if they hover above the poverty line but have experienced unexpected events such as natural disasters or sudden illness.

Last summer, the northeastern provinces of Heilongjiang, Jilin and Liaoning – one of China’s major grain-producing regions – were hit by floods, which dealt a blow to rice production. In July 2021, in the central province of Henan, almost 15 million people, most of them rural residents, were affected by flooding that destroyed 35,000 houses.

According to the manuals, once a family has been placed under monitoring, local officials must help them through “appropriate means”. In Zhongwei, for example, able individuals should be hired for public work such as street sweeping.

Lower-level cadres are under immense pressure to keep poverty under control. People whose names are added to the dossiers are considered risks to the anti-poverty drive and are therefore subject to monitoring. A town official from a province in central China, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said that documenting all vulnerable individuals had been a

priority task for the second half of the year, and he expected the provincial government would soon send inspectors to the town to check on their performance. It’s really exhausting, and our superiors don’t even treat us like human beings

Village cadre

Inspections are already under way in some places. Many grass-roots cadres have vented their frustrations and worries on social media platform Xiaohongshu, describing the pressures they have faced to complete headcounts by the end of the month.

“Has your poverty relapse prevention app crashed too?” read one widely shared post, which described the anxiety felt by a cadre who must use the mobile app to collect information about the families surveyed. “It’s really exhausting, and our superiors don’t even treat us like human beings,” complained another, who said they must go door-to-door to check on the villagers’ incomes.

While China has been praised for lifting tens of millions out of absolute poverty over recent decades, it has also faced criticism that its achievements may have been overstated by some local cadres who exaggerated their results.

Other criticisms have included fabricating the poverty relapse dossiers, and an over-reliance on government subsidies that could leave recipients more vulnerable once the handouts have ended.

Wang Sangui, dean of the China Anti-Poverty Research Institute at Renmin University in Beijing, warned in an interview with China News Service in December 2022 that some of the groups declared by the government to have been lifted out of poverty “relied on wages as their main sources of income” but the Covid-19 pandemic had “seriously affected their employment”. Wang also highlighted the impacts of natural disasters on the rural population, and the fact that many farmers struggled to make ends meet by selling their crops.

He Xuefeng, who researches China’s rural governance as dean of the school of sociology at Wuhan University, cautioned in an article published on WeChat earlier this year that some of the government’s efforts may be misguided.

He, who conducted field research in seven villages late last year, said some poverty-stricken households had become reliant on government subsidies as family members were unable to work due to illness or disabilities, but the aid had not helped them to make necessary fundamental changes to improve their livelihoods.

Zheng Linyi, a researcher with the China Academy for Rural Development at Zhejiang University, said Beijing should prevent relapses by first “preventing the economy from sliding and providing job opportunities for farmers”.

“In recent years, natural disasters such as droughts, floods and earthquakes have happened frequently. The government should help farmers affected by disasters to resume production and livelihoods,” Zheng said.

“The growth of farmers’ agricultural income is slow, and it is necessary to improve the agricultural subsidy system,” Zheng added, referring to subsidies provided by the government through grain sales and farm machinery purchases.

Jaishankar's Hard Sell In Colombo

05 October 2024, MenaFN

The Indian External Affairs [Minister](#) S. Jaishankar's parleys with Sri Lanka's new left-nationalist leaders on October 4 were cordial. But India-Lanka relations will still be troubled by the looming Sino-Indian conflict.

Jaishankar had a single-point agenda in Colombo – to convince a sceptical Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake about India's capabilities and what it can do for Sri Lanka's economic growth and prosperity without asking it to compromise its sovereignty. It was a difficult task given the latent and long standing distrust in the relationship.

The visit took place in the immediate aftermath of the September 21 Sri Lankan Presidential election in which the radical leftist and pro-China underdog, Anura Kumara Dissanayake of the National Peoples' Power (NPP), beat stalwarts like incumbent President Ranil Wickremesinghe and Sajith Premadasa, leader of the large Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB) party.

Unlike Wickremesinghe and Premadasa, who had no ideological angularities either in their domestic or foreign policy, Dissanayake's has been dyed in the wool ideological politics. He has been a longstanding campaigner against “Indian domination”.

The NPP, a 21-party alliance, is avowedly moderate. But its core is the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) which has had a strong and anti-Indian strand since its founding in 1965. Dissanayake is the current JVP Supremo.

Articulating the NPP's policies ahead of the Presidential election, its spokesman (and the present Foreign Minister) Vijitha Herath told Ceylon Today that a JVP delegation had told Jaishankar early this year that under an NPP government, foreign-funded or foreign executed projects would have to go through a transparent and public tendering process.

Herath was decrying past projects that were farmed out to foreign parties with nothing more than a cabinet decision under the category of “Strategic Projects”. Herath said such handing out of projects was a source of huge corruption.

In the case of India, the West Container Terminal project at the Colombo port was given to Adani Ports

and two wind power projects in North Sri Lanka were given to the Adanis and another Indian company, under pressure from New Delhi.

Herath assured that the existing projects would be allowed to proceed as they were a done deal, but future projects would have to go through a transparent tendering process. Indications are that the same stringent conditions will apply to all foreign-funded projects including China-funded ones. Deviation from his much trumpeted rectitude will be difficult for Dissanayake.

Seeing the writing on the wall, Jaishankar went beyond hard selling India's economic capabilities but also displayed humility in doing so. This was evident in his message on the social media platform X from Colombo. He said that he took “guidance” from President Dissanayake on India-Lanka relations. “Appreciate his warm sentiments and guidance for the IN LK relations,” Jaishankar messaged after talks with the President.

Jaishankar assuaged Sri Lankans' anxieties about Indian domination in security matters. The official Indian readout said that Jaishankar and Dissanayake “recognised the importance of a continuous dialogue on security and defence to promote trust, transparency and mutual sensitivity.”

Sino-Indian Conflict

India-Sri Lanka relations are not confined to the two countries. There is an elephant in the room and that is China's presence, whether real or imaginary. India objects to Chinese projects and visits of Chinese oceanographic research vessels on grounds of security.

India sees the Chinese- built and operated Hambantota port and the setting up of a power plant in North Sri Lanka by Chinese companies as a security threat. It saw the setting up a radar station in Ruhunu University on the southern coast also as a threat.

With the economic giant China in mind, Jaishankar gave a tutorial to Dissanayake on India's capabilities and what India can do for Sri Lanka's development in the field of energy production and transmission, fuel and LNG supply, connectivity, digital public infrastructure, health and dairy development.

On Sri Lanka's debt restructuring efforts, Jaishankar recalled that India had been supportive of Sri Lanka's economic stability and recovery from the very start. India was the first country to give financing assurances, which enabled the IMF to finalize the Extended Fund Facility.

Jaishankar confirmed India's support in the Official Creditors' Committee for Sri Lanka's agreement with International Sovereign Bond holders. India is also willing to expedite the conclusion of its bilateral MoU with Sri Lanka, Jaishankar added.

In his discussions with Foreign Minister Vijitha Herath, Jaishankar said that India has offered to modernize the Kankesanthurai port in north Sri Lanka through a grant of USD 61.5 million. Payments for seven completed Line of Credit projects to the tune of USD 20 million could be converted into a grant, Jaishankar added. Further, India had decided to gift 22 diesel locomotives to the Sri Lankan Railways.

In response, Dissanayake said that India's economic support is critical for Sri Lanka to realize its vision of a prosperous country meeting the aspirations of its people. He referred to the potential for exporting renewable energy to India as it would help reduce production costs in Sri Lanka. The President also noted the contribution of Indian tourists to the Sri Lanka's economy and said that this has the potential to grow further.

Dissanayake took care to assure Jaishankar that Sri Lankan territory will never be allowed to be used in a manner inimical to India's security interests.

While both India and Sri Lanka appear keen on building a smooth relationship, India's quest for security against China could clash with Sri Lanka's aspiration to assert its sovereignty and independence. The clash between these two agendas had soured India-Sri Lanka ties every now and then.

India is very keen on re-starting discussions on the Economic and Technology Co-operation Agreement (ETCA). But as in the case of land connectivity, ETCA has been scary for Sri Lankans who fear Indian domination. In the Sri Lankan mind, land connectivity or very close economic cooperation, would be a recipe for Sri Lanka's subjugation.

In fact, the projects mentioned by Jaishankar in his discussion with AKD have been on the anvil for a long time but have not seen the light of day. Sri Lankans tend to agree to Indian proposals and even ink agreements, but drag their feet in implementing them. In the months and years to come, a resurgent India will try to stem the encroachment of China in its neighbourhood. And China will try to test India's strength in the region. Sri Lanka like other South Asian neighbours will draft China to help it resist New Delhi.

Indian and Chinese Presence

Both India and China are deeply involved in Sri Lanka. The Sri Lankan armed forces have been operating a range of Indian defence equipment like L-70 guns, Indra Radar, Offshore Patrol Vessels and Army training simulators.

India had given offshore petrol vessels, and more recently, a Floating Dock. A Maritime Rescue Coordinating Centre, backed by a US\$ 6 million grant from India, has been set up in Colombo. It includes seven remote stations along the island's eastern seaboard, including one close to the Chinese-run Hambantota port.

India is a major trainer of Sri Lankan armed forces personnel. India-trained officers are the single largest group in the Sri Lankan armed forces. India regularly holds military exercises with Sri Lanka, like Mitra Shakthi with the army, and SLINEX with the navy. Indian naval vessels keep visiting Colombo and other ports very regularly (even to celebrate Yoga Day!). There have been visits by aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya and submarines as part of New Delhi's power projection.

China's Presence in Sri Lanka

China's economic activity has been on the back foot in Sri Lanka since COVID- 9 and the Sri Lankan economic crisis in 2020. But China had already invested in major infrastructural projects in Sri Lanka earlier, like the Hambantota Port, Katunayake-Colombo Expressway, Norochcholai Coal Power Project, among many others since 2010.

During last year's financial crisis in Sri Lanka, China's response was tepid compared to India's because Sri Lanka owned it US\$ 7.4 billion. But later, China agreed to restructure Sri Lanka's debt. It said that Sri Lanka will not have to immediately repay the principal and interest due for the years 2022 and 2023.

During Sri Lanka's war against Tamil separatists, China had sold a lot of arms to Sri Lanka. According to the Stockholm Peace Research Institute, China traded military equipment worth US\$ 749 million since 1959. China's arms trade with Sri Lanka between 2000 and 2008 was US\$ 271 million.

After the war, some submarines and a few naval research vessels visited Sri Lanka, raising a storm in India. All in all, China's military's influence in Sri Lanka is nothing in comparison to India's.

Why do so many Chinese officials fall for fake promises of political charlatans?

04 October 2024, [SCMP](#), Sylvie Zhuang

Party insiders who should know better are being targeted by tricksters claiming connections and influence, despite crackdowns

All Su Hongbo had to do was brag about his Beijing connections and package himself as someone who could make things happen. The charade ended in 2020, when he was revealed as a conman and later convicted on corruption charges.

To the party's corruption fighters, Su was as a typical "political charlatan" – an impostor who fakes ties with high-level officials for gain – and was accused of "seriously polluting and damaging the political ecology".

Since then, the term "political charlatan" has turned up in numerous transcripts of investigations into officials who, despite their knowledge of the internal workings of the party system, were fooled by

businesspeople who took advantage of their ambitions.

The scale of the problem meant that when the party's all-important third plenary session vowed in July to continue President Xi Jinping's signature anti-corruption campaign, political charlatans were named as a target.

It echoed Xi's message at the past two annual plenary meetings of the Central Commission of Discipline Inspection (CCDI), the party's anti-corruption watchdog, when he called on cadres to "persistently purify the political environment".

At this year's meeting in January, Xi said there was a need "to crack down on various political charlatans and strictly prevent the principles of commercial exchange from infiltrating the party".

Meanwhile, last year's amendments to the party's regulations also specified that befriending political charlatans or being exploited by them could lead to expulsion in the most severe cases.

But why are people inside China's party state system fooled so frequently by outsiders bragging about their political influence, and how do political charlatans manage to persuade officials that their claims are genuine?

According to an enforcement and disciplinary official who spoke under condition of anonymity, some corrupt officials turn to the fraudsters in the hope they will help to cover up their behaviour.

"They naively believe these individuals can use their connections to intervene, plead, or cover up their case," the official said, adding that these mindsets were exploited by the charlatans to carry out fraud.

"Also, because these officials know they are guilty of corruption, they are too afraid to report the charlatans, even after they realise they have been deceived."

Some disgraced officials that have been accused of trying to advance their careers by courting political charlatans have been at the ministerial level, such as former justice minister Fu Zhenghua who was jailed for life in 2022 for corruption.

Despite being the second most powerful man in China's police force, Fu was manipulated for 20 years by a political charlatan, according to a 2021 report by state broadcaster CCTV.

"Anyone with a normal thought process and logical reasoning" would not have believed that a man with only a technical school education could be an expert and high-level adviser to the leadership as he claimed, CCTV reported.

"However, Fu Zhenghua fell for it."

According to the report, Fu received nothing from the relationship while the charlatan gained land development projects contracts and jobs for his relatives.

In the past two months, the CCDI has made a number of announcements about allegedly corrupt officials accused of associating with political charlatans.

They include Wang Yilin, former party secretary at China National Petroleum Corporation, and Wang Yong, who was a member of the party's leadership group in the Tibet autonomous region.

Both were placed under investigation and accused in July of having "long associated with political fraudsters".

With most officials drawn from society's well-educated elites, the phenomenon seems "counterintuitive", according to a Beijing-based political scientist, who asked not to be named because of the issue's sensitivity.

But, he said, "it isn't that surprising" that they could still be deceived, because the party's centralised decision-making systems allowed little personal control over career progression.

"The party has a saying, that cadres cannot design their own career development. This means that the career path of a cadre, such as promotions or transfers, is not something they can control – it is determined by higher-ups."

The idea that officials should have no say over their careers is not new. In 2018, Xi reinforced the message to personnel chiefs from around the country at the national organisational work conference.

"Personal effort isn't about self-design or aiming for a certain position, but rather about enhancing political experience and practical skills to become someone loyal to the party and useful to the country," Xi told them.

Deng Yuwen, former deputy editor of Study Times, the Central Party School's official newspaper, said people turned to fraudsters because the system itself was designed to be accountable upwards rather than downwards.

"The legitimacy of officials' powers does not come from recognition by the public, or their achievements. It comes from the higher-ups, from the recognition of these higher-level officials. So officials would be seeking connections with the higher-ups."

A CCDI report published in May last year said the deceivers usually described themselves as people who could be trusted to intervene in governmental personnel arrangements.

The CCDI also found that the activities of the political charlatans reached their peak during leadership transitions and personnel changes.

According to the political scientist, as individuals ascend to higher levels, there are fewer people to confide in and the rules on how things work become less clear. Career progression is also unpredictable and becomes increasingly complex and uncertain.

"One has no control over his own career development or even personal safety, which he cannot grasp at all,

and the lack of any information, [as well as] the absence of people around to discuss or verify content," he said.

Higher-level political operations had become "increasingly mysterious", he said. "As it is highly opaque and [with] no other channels to communicate or verify information, these fraudulent individuals have more room to manoeuvre."

There is also the risk of falling out of favour and standing too close to the wrong camp before transitions of power, which may cost an official their personal safety and freedom, according to the political scientist.

The past two years have seen several dramatic incidents, including the dismissals of two senior ministers, Qin Gang and Li Shangfu, both the shortest serving officials in their respective positions.

Former foreign minister Qin was last seen in June 2023, before he was abruptly removed from his post and all other positions. Beijing has never officially explained his removal, saying only that he had resigned.

Li, who was defence minister, was also abruptly removed from his post last October without explanation, a year before the party finally announced he had been placed under investigation.

Claus Soong, an analyst at Berlin-based think tank the Mercator Institute for China Studies, said the opaque nature of the party system was inside out. "Within the system, everything is opaque, so the left hand doesn't know what the right hand is doing.

"And people inside the system often lack the information and ability to discern fraudulent activities, which are typically disguised with prospects for career promotion to hook up comrades."

A Beijing-based official, speaking on condition of anonymity, also said the information imbalance went both ways, with those in higher positions not always knowing the full picture needed to make informed decisions or gain clarity.

Selections and promotions were mostly decided by superiors but "they often cannot fully understand the abilities and performances of all their subordinates", leading to an information asymmetry.

This provided an opportunity for fraudsters claiming to have strong connections with high-ranking leaders and the ability to influence their decisions, which "can be very tempting for officials who are eager to advance in their careers", the official said.

Another official based in southern China, who also requested anonymity, said some high-ranking officials were particularly vulnerable. They had little contact with the grass roots, which meant they were easily tricked.

According to the southern official, there are people who specialise in targeting these individuals by

pretending to have connections in Beijing and then asking for money to pay bribes.

How India-China border tensions affect Ladakh nomads

04 October 2024, [DW](#), Priyanka Shankar

Nomads in Ladakh are facing restricted access to grazing lands. As their traditional way of life hangs in the balance, what solutions exist to safeguard their rights?

One evening in mid-September, as the sun began to set, the grunts of Kunzes Dolma's yaks filled the sandy streets of Chushul, a Himalayan village in Ladakh, **India**, near the border with **China**.

The 68-year-old whistled to guide the animals toward her brick hut. Dolma is a herder from the Changpa community, a seminomadic group that lives in eastern Ladakh's Changthang Valley. Her family owns over 300 sheep and 50 yaks.

"The nomadic lifestyle is harsh, but I enjoy taking my cattle to graze in the mountains," said Dolma, who sells sheep wool and yak milk at the local market.

Dolma told DW that life has become difficult for her family because the Indian military has restricted grazing near the India-China border due to a **territorial dispute**.

"The pasture in that region is very good. Now, we cannot use the land to graze our cattle," Dolma said, with her 37-year-old daughter, Tsering Lamo, echoing her concerns.

"These days with restrictions triggered due to military tensions, it is no longer pleasurable to be a nomad," Lamo said, adding it is a harsh lifestyle, suggesting that, "it is better for younger people to take up other jobs."

What is the border dispute all about?

Chushul is about 8 kilometers (5 miles) from the de facto border between India and China, known as the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

The high-altitude village was impacted by the 1962 Sino-Indian war, triggered by differences over the ownership of the regions of Aksai Chin and Arunachal Pradesh.

The conflict lasted for over a month and ended with Beijing declaring a cease-fire and claiming sovereignty over Aksai Chin.

While India and China have fought only one major war since the 1960s, there are occasional clashes along the LAC — which India claims is 3,488 kilometers (2,167 miles) long and China says is shorter.

In May 2020, a **skirmish in the Galwan River valley** resulted in the deaths of at least 20 Indian soldiers, with China later confirming four of its troops had been killed.

Since then, both nations have ramped up patrols along the LAC and on Pangong Tso lake, a pristine but disputed area claimed by both sides.

Rigzhin Dorjay, a farmer who has lived in Chushul all his life, said the 2020 clashes reminded his family of the 1962 war.

"I was not born when the war in the 1960s took place but my parents often told me about how afraid they were," the 55-year-old told DW.

"They said the Indian military had helped them feel secure. So when the 2020 clashes took place, I trekked up to the mountains to give the Indian military officers securing our border food and rations."

Zhou Bo, a retired senior colonel in China's military, explained that tensions persist because the India-China border has never been "clearly demarcated."

"The military tensions have spilled over into political tensions since nobody actually knows who is controlling what," he told DW.

"India says that unless this border issue is solved, relations won't improve. So China is just waiting," Bo said, adding that there are other issues at play like market forces, which also influence relations.

"Bilateral trade is on the rise between both the countries. India is aware [of] this, making solving tensions with Beijing important," said Bo.

Solutions to secure land rights

Farmer Dorjay acknowledged the complexity of border tensions, but emphasized the need to find solutions for farmers and nomads who are losing their land.

"I mainly cultivate crops like barley and peas and this year the harvest was good," he said, adding that he can no longer use land near the border.

"Also, due to climate change and global warming we have water scarcity in the region which has made it challenging."

Chetan Doye, who also works as a farmer in Chushul, said that due to military tensions there has been no development in their border village.

"The government has constantly promised us that we would be given funds to develop facilities in the village like installing electricity and funds to cultivate our lands," the 76-year-old told DW. "But the money does not seem to be reaching us."

Ladakh's nomads push for rights and recognition

Ashish Kothari, co-founder of the Indian environmental group Kalpavriksh, told DW that recognizing the land and resource rights of nomads and farmers in the Changthang region under the Indian Forest Rights Act could offer support. The legislation protects the livelihoods of traditional forest dwellers and tribal communities across the country.

Ladakh is a union territory, which means it is directly governed by the Indian central government. Including Ladakh in the Sixth Schedule of India's constitution, which allows **Indigenous tribal people to make their**

own laws and policies, would ensure that the interests of nomads and farmers are protected.

Demands for "Sixth Schedule" status have gained momentum in Ladakh recently, with local environmentalist Sonam Wangchuk holding rallies in favor of the move.

But Konchok Stanzin, the councillor of Chushul at the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council in Leh, said that autonomy for Ladakh would not necessarily solve issues of land and development.

He admitted that nomads and farmers in the villages bordering China have lost land in the buffer zone between India and China. But he highlighted that due to the ongoing military tensions, security of the country and people is of primary importance.

"We are aware that loss of land as pastures and for cultivation is important. So we have submitted border village development scheme proposals to the central government to ensure they sanction packages that will assist people in eastern Ladakh, especially during the winter months," Stanzin told DW.

Watching her sheep and yak amid the cold desert hues of her village, Dolma said there are times when she listens to the news about Indo-China relations and worries about the future of their land.

"I am getting older and we do face many difficulties as we traverse across the land as nomads. While there is peace between India and China right now, it is possible that a war could also take place since it is a complex issue at the border," she said.

"But when I'm in the mountains with my cattle and high valleys and mountains and pristine rivers surround me, I am at peace. Nature heals."

Sino-Indian relations coming full circle

04 October 2024, [New Age](#). Ruksana Kibria

BEGINNING in 1950, Sino-Indian camaraderie reached its buoyant apogee with the Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru's inaugural visit to Beijing in October 1954, the leitmotif of which was the spirit of Hindi-Chini bhai bhai (India and China are brothers). Since then, it has been marked by a gradual trajectory of decline, due to a host of controversial reasons. The course of Sino-Indian relations has been convoluted, contentious and indecipherable, hence making it difficult to tell where facts end and myths begin.

Subsequent to the 1962 Himalayan debacle, the epistemic predicament has been further compounded by the media-generated refrain of rivalry between China and India, rendering it almost axiomatic that the two Asian neighbours are to always remain at odds with each other. This discursive construction of unmitigated tension has been buttressed by statements of policymakers, strategic experts and scholars, Indian rather than Chinese, though — while

India is deemed to have a 'China problem,' China doesn't have a corresponding 'India problem.' According to the security analyst, Harsh V Pant, 'It is the structure of global politics that by definition makes Sino-Indian competition inevitable.' Also taking a structuralist approach, Ashley J Tellis, senior fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, contends that as emerging Asian powers, China and India will continue to vie for power and influence in South Asia and elsewhere. In the view of Shashi Tharoor, the prolific Indian scholar-diplomat-politician, Beijing is 'a formidable adversary' of New Delhi. Some Indian analysts are even apprehensive that China poses 'an existential threat' to New Delhi's strategic interests in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal, as well as inside India. The eminent American Sinologist, John Garver, argues that 'India and China share a fundamentally antagonistic and competitive relationship in which conflict is inherent.'

That being said, it should now be interesting to delve into the matter and determine the validity of these above-mentioned observations and to what extent China is actually an 'existential threat' for India. An attempt will be made to broadly assess the state of Sino-Indian relations through the connectivity, economic, governance and strategic prism, the four themes underpinning them.

Connectivity

ACCORDING to Smruti Pattanaik, Research Fellow at the Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, 'India and particularly the West view BRI [Belt and Road Initiative] as a geo-economic manoeuvre by China to assert control over the world's economic arteries from a geopolitical standpoint.' As far as infrastructure and connectivity are concerned, the Chinese-sponsored BRI, Indo-Japanese Asia-Africa Growth Corridor, and the US-led Indo-Pacific Strategy, (including its private sector, market-based derivative, the Blue Dot Network infrastructure project, launched in response to the Chinese variant), are essentially complementary, not conflicting: if BRI is seeking to influence the global economic highways, so is IPS, but unlike the Cold War, the goals of the two projects are not zero-sum. Rather, they are manifestations of what one scholar has characterised as 'messy alternative pluralisms' and, as such, deserve to be treated not in black-and-white but in a nuanced manner. Likewise, the International North South Transportation Corridor (INSTC), a 7,200-km-long multi-modal connectivity initiative launched by India, Iran and Russia in 2000, seeks to connect Eurasia along a north-south axis; BRI, too, aims to do the above-mentioned, but in the east-west direction. Mutually reinforcing each other, according to one Indian diplomat, 'North-South Corridor and BRI are not incompatible.' It may be mentioned that both China and India are involved in infrastructure development in Iran, often in the same

project, like the Chabahar Port, a prospective trans-regional economic hub. Analogously, they are also to invest, without any 'collision,' in the Mongla port improvement project in Bangladesh for the trans-shipment of (Chinese?) goods to India's landlocked northeast.

Given the benefits that BRI would potentially bring and the prospects of China and India ultimately achieving a community of common destiny, it is not inconceivable that, in order to boost economic productivity, in the not-so-distant future, even India itself may participate in the Chinese initiative. Connectivity and globalisation being intertwined, greater linkage will enable both China and India to further explore Asian markets through trade and investment. Their active collaboration in Central Asia and the Persian Gulf to extract resources through the market mechanism, foregoing competition for exclusive access, is telling. Besides, an integrated transport network to connect the four countries under the Bangladesh, China, India, Myanmar (BCIM) Economic Corridor sub-regional initiative can only be achieved with the two Asian powers working together. Infrastructure development, like highways, railroads and energy pipelines, by both along the Sino-Indian Line of Actual Control (LAC), ostensibly for military purposes, can also, under amicable circumstances, foster regional connectivity, thus joint development and trade relations between them. Similarly, the planned BRI trans-Himalayan 75-kilometre railway route across the China-Nepal border may also invigorate Sino-Indian trade in the future.

Economic

CHINA and India are being extolled for presumably redeeming their glorious pre-19th century/pre-colonial heritage through their re-emergence on the world stage. Reality, however, is far more complex than this simple narrative suggests. The template of Western state and multinational corporation-led achievement of China's historical 'modernisation' project is being applied in 21st century India, too. After all, BRICS, the acronym of the four emerging countries who are to play a key role in reshaping the global economy — Brazil, Russia, India and China (South Africa having been added subsequently), was coined by the investment bank Goldman Sachs as a marketing tool. Globalisation, having undermined the concept of a truly national and independent economy, valorises the optimisation of primarily production and, secondarily, consumption. As its beneficiaries, the multinational corporations are exploring the market opportunity the two Asian votaries of globalisation (with one-third of the world population, vast cheap labour, and one-fourth global consumer spending, whose combined GDP by the turn of the next century is expected to be about 43 per cent of the global), embody. Concomitantly, the corporate quest for

diversification and a relatively secure but lucrative location for their operations, the 'China+1 strategy,' is coming to fruition. With more than 1.4 billion potential consumers and \$3.5 trillion GDP, India is poised to be the prospective '+1' option, as well as the next development powerhouse.

China's huge consumption market too has not escaped Indian policymakers' attention, especially when it has replaced the US as India's largest trading partner. When asked by an interviewer about the possibility of 'very soon' Bollywood producing films more responsive to Chinese rather than local sensibilities, the Indian minister of external affairs, Dr Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, responded unequivocally, 'If [we] can make money on it, why not?' Emerging separately but parallelly, they are practically 'two peas in a pod,' with India being a new China in the making: manufacturing is being outsourced to China and services to India, in which it has an advantage (though in the recent years, manufacturing is increasingly occurring there, too). The remarkable complementarity between their developmental evolution having hardly left any room for competitiveness and the economic relations between them operating synergistically, the two countries are considered to be the most yin and yang in the world, with China regarding India as a partner (albeit junior) rather than an adversary. Jairam Ramesh, a Congress leader, has even employed the portmanteau word 'Chindia' to denote the virtual symbiosis of China and India, having 'separate beds but same dream.' It should be noted that, flying under the radar and without any official acknowledgement, it's difficult to gauge the magnitude of their bilateral trade volume and other economic transactions, which are far more robust than is reported.

Governance

DESPITE enduring belief in binary ideologies, treading the same path, Chinese and Indian political systems are beginning to appear comparable, what with New Delhi's authoritarian but pro-business 'billionaire raj' government, a la China, which may be an incipient reflection of what is quipped to be India's 'dictator envy for China.' Since the 2014 election of prime minister Narendra Modi, the Chinese president Xi Jinping has been optimistic about rekindling the dormant Hindi-Chini bhai bhai ethos. Furthermore, renegotiating the post-1947 Nehruvian consensus under the current political dispensation, the tenor of Indian democracy is attuning itself to the Chinese concept of democratic system. One can thus be forgiven for wondering whether the likelihood of Chinese values, norms and preferences subtly permeating the Indian body politic is farfetched. As an 'autocratising' country, the V-Democracy Institute regards 'India [to be] on the verge of losing its status as a democracy,' while a 2020 Freedom House report

states that 'the Indian government's alarming departures from democratic norms under [...] Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party could blur the values-based distinction between Beijing and New Delhi.' In that case, India's claim to be a democratic alternative to China becomes debatable. Globally too, China and India are working in tandem, both enjoying a shared vision for the 21st century, and are integral to a multipolar and multi-aligned global system, having compatible approaches to Myanmar, the Rohingya issue, trade negotiations at the World Trade Organisation, the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, and climate change. Besides, both of them are benefiting from the Ukraine War alike. Their armies have also held joint military exercises, while the Indian Navy and the PLA Navy have been coordinating their counter-piracy missions in the Gulf of Aden since 2008. Mutual interests in jointly monitoring the maritime global commons, charting their future cooperation in the ocean economy, and underwriting regional stability for sustained economic growth, as well as facilitating regional integration through finding an institutional expression in the Indian Ocean Region, could further elevate their partnership.

Not opposed to China's interest in expanding BRICS membership, India's active role in the group's Development Fund and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank is also advancing its collaboration with China, with both sharing a common approach towards international trade in agricultural goods and intellectual property rights. Given New Delhi's aspiration to play a leadership role in global governance, there's also a high probability of it participating in the Beijing-led Global Development Initiative, Global Security Initiative and Global Cultural Initiative, which would have profound implications for the deeply troubled liberal international order.

Strategic

ASTONISHINGLY, despite the long-term perceived threat to India and the emergence of a panoply of research centres, think tanks and academic programmes dedicated to studying the People's Republic, New Delhi has not produced a coherent China policy. Bombastic Chinese rhetoric aside, Beijing too has failed to demonstrate its naval prowess and launch its much-heralded Indian Ocean fleet, which is not commensurate with its presumed image as a great power. Curiously enough, despite both China and India resolutely professing to have divergent strategic cultures, research indicates there to be hardly any distinction between the two. In the realm of maritime security, regardless of bellicose posturing, neither of them is actually pursuing a containment policy. The Indo-Pacific expanse being vast enough to accommodate both, rather than forming an anti-Chinese coalition, these factors may prompt New Delhi to come to a tacit agreement with Beijing to share the

pivotal maritime space between them, with India having an unchallenged pre-eminence in South Asia/Indian Ocean Region, and China in East Asia and Western Pacific. In fact, such a scenario is already looming on the horizon.

Portraying China as the 'greatest shared strategic challenge,' New Delhi has succeeded in cementing its security links with the Indian Ocean Region littoral countries through the Colombo Security Conclave (CSC), the minilateral arrangement, composed of India, Sri Lanka, Maldives and Mauritius, Bangladesh being the most recent member. The CSC is expected to play a crucial role in consolidating India's regional primacy, which is further leveraged through the US call for a 'new maritime statecraft' and endorsement of India's centrality as the regional security provider in South Asia. By bringing the IOR countries within its orbit, the threat perception of the member-states cannot but resonate with that of New Delhi, nor can they circumvent strategic dependence on it. 'China is balancing against India's regional hegemony by increasing its influence through [the] small states' — such media trope, stoking anti-China animus and exaggerating the China threat perception is untenable, since India stands to gain from such dire projections. Considering that India is evidently having its metaphorical strategic cake and eating it too, the key question, whether Chinese engagement in these smaller South Asian countries is necessarily antithetical to India's interests, can only be answered in the negative. The perception of China's naval aggrandisement in this strategic hub validating New Delhi's role in maritime governance, its leadership of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), the potential regional Indian strategic framework, has been instrumental in institutionalising security-related matters, including bringing the IOR/ Bay littoral largely under the Indian coastal radar surveillance network. Similarly, the anodyne Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR), the operational articulation of India's Act East Policy (2014), foregrounds the strategic dimension, thus enabling India to project power in the IOR maritime domain.

In view of China's modest global military footprint, it has been dubbed a 'minnow' in comparison to other big powers. However, in Indian narratives, Chinese capabilities have been magnified, hence perpetuating the perception of tension and the optics of conflict in the high Himalayas, which serve to further accentuate the putatively intractable nature of the dispute. According to the late Indian journalist Kuldeep Nayar, there have been 'manufactured tales of trouble on the disputed border' to create mischief. It's indeed perplexing why the remote but otherwise negotiable 'intangible value' Sino-Indian border issues have been

allowed to remain ambiguous and left unresolved despite prolonged efforts.

By the same token, the reported skirmishes on the undemarcated LAC, as well as perceived Chinese assertiveness in the Indian Ocean Region (where Beijing does not have any vital strategic interest), have provided the impetus for India's strategic engagement with the West. The conclusion, within a two-decade span, of four long-pending foundational defence agreements with the United States has ushered in unprecedented bilateral security collaboration, thereby allowing Indian policy entrepreneurs to radically transform New Delhi's diplomatic orientation. By steering it away from its more than a half-century foreign policy moorings, India's much-vaunted tradition of non-alignment has been all but jettisoned in favour of a decidedly pro-Western tilt, though under the fig-leaf of a vague concept called strategic autonomy. How China could be blindsided by the consequences of its confrontational but counterproductive stance detrimental to its interests is incomprehensible. That Beijing, a would-be superpower, 'lacks a consistent and coordinated foreign policy' is acknowledged by the Chinese leadership, though.

Despite Garver's misgivings about the notion of an US-China-India 'ever-shifting, flexible, three-cornered minuet,' such an outcome is not implausible, with the three countries constantly moving through the revolving strategic door. Neither is it beyond the realm of the possible to see American, Chinese and Indian interests coinciding (if they haven't already), thus adding another layer of complexity to animate the regional geopolitical landscape. Notwithstanding their current power imbalance, cooperation between China and India is likely to shape the future world order, and with the probable inclusion of the US, even result in a trilateral security partnership to approach regional and global contingencies in a concerted manner. On the face of it seemingly counterintuitive, but how the smaller regional states can pull their supposedly astute balancing act without the interests of the three big powers being aligned remains an intriguing question.

Concluding thoughts

THE key takeaway from this brief survey is that, by and large, their common interests far outweigh whatever peripheral bilateral issues they may have. The Sino-Indian relationship is imbued with a promising spirit of cooperation. Significantly, the scaffolding of the claims of the structural basis of their 'conflict,' China to be an 'existential threat' for India as 'a formidable adversary,' the inevitability of competition between them, or their antagonism to be organically embedded, proved to be too fragile to weather the intellectual scrutiny they were subjected to.

Despite inordinate focus on the military-strategic dimension, the fact remains that the global paradigm

shift from geopolitics to geoeconomics has to be factored in, along with what that entails for Sino-Indian relations. With economic imperatives emerging as paramount in the globalised setting and walking in the same direction as partners, China and India are on the threshold of graduating from bhai bhai status to 'twin titans,' where their border dispute strikes a discordant note (to the untrained ear, that is). Veiled behind the recital of rivalry, the cornerstone of their amity is being reinforced to provide leadership to a new politically transformational, digitally driven, Sino-centric, but business-friendly global order. With power dynamics moving in favour of the Big Tech, advanced technologies are the vectors through which the very concept of security could be redefined in the calculus of their bilateral relations. In sum, paraphrasing the late English philosopher-economist, John Maynard Keynes, in the long run, despite occasional hiccups, instead of being dead, Sino-Indian relations are expected to thrive famously.

PRC at 75: Deng Xiaoping never delivered on young people's desire for freedom

03 October 2024, [RFA](#)

Many in China feel nostalgia for the 1980s, but political authoritarianism was still the default setting.

Many in China under Communist Party leader Xi Jinping look back to the economic boom-time under late supreme leader Deng Xiaoping with nostalgia, as a freewheeling era in which it was easier to get rich, and when the government had less control over people's lives. But the reality of life under Deng was much grittier, political activists and commentators told RFA Mandarin in recent interviews.

In June 1983, postgraduate philosophy student Chen Kuide was singled out for political criticism after taking part in an academic conference in the southwestern city of Guilin, as part of a political campaign against "spiritual pollution."

It was just a few years after then supreme leader Deng had kicked off a slew of economic reforms and "opening up" to the rest of the world in the wake of the death of Mao Zedong and the trial of the Gang of Four that marked the end of the Cultural Revolution. But despite the rosy glow that often suffuses people's memories of China in the 1980s, the political campaigns didn't stop when the universities reopened and the government started the massive task of rehabilitating people who had been persecuted under Mao and his wife, Jiang Qing.



Then Chinese Vice President Deng Xiaoping meets U.S. President Jimmy Carter at the White House in Washington, Jan. 29, 1979. (AP)

Instead, Deng launched the "spiritual pollution" campaign targeting anyone with any liberal tendencies, who advocated humanitarianism, market economics or appreciation of the arts for their aesthetic, rather than social, value.

By the time Chen got back to his dorm at Shanghai's Fudan University, there was a red circle around his name on a list in the municipal government, and Chen and a fellow student were suspended from their studies for three months. Luckily for Chen, the campaign was later called off and he was reinstated.

His friend with government connections told him at the time: "There was a red circle round your name, as if you were going to be exiled to Qinghai or something."

Leaving aside the upbeat official narrative of "reform and opening up," the 1980s was not an easy time to be Chinese, according to veteran U.S.-based democracy activist Wang Juntao.

"I don't think there was any golden age during the 1980s," Wang said. "Intellectuals back then were pretty unhappy with Deng Xiaoping and Zhao Ziyang."

Fall of Hu Yaobang

A 1980 amendment to the country's constitution deleted a clause protecting people's right to "speak out, air their views freely, hold debates and make big-character posters," while a 1978 amendment made two years after Mao's death deleted their right to "reproductive freedom," amid growing concerns about the burgeoning population.

A system of film censorship was set up in 1980, while the right to private ownership of land disappeared with a constitutional amendment in 1982.

Nationwide student protests in 1986 were sparked by local officials' insistence on interfering in local elections to the People's Congresses, and spread from eastern Anhui province to Shanghai and Beijing, in protests that lasted 28 days.

Former 1989 student leader Chen Pokong also took part in the 1986 student protests in Shanghai.

"We didn't do anything much; just walked along the street and sometimes sat in front of the city

government," he said. "We weren't trying to overthrow the government, just asked them to move a little faster and meet some of people's demands for democracy and equality."

"It all fizzled out peacefully in the end, because the weather was cold, and the winter vacation was about to begin, and a lot of students wanted to go back home for the Lunar New Year," he said.



Deng Xiaoping and French President Francois Mitterrand share a toast at a state banquet in Beijing, May 5, 1983. (Gabriel Duval/AFP)

Soon afterwards, news emerged that premier Hu Yaobang would resign to take the fall for those protests, blamed for his "ineffective leadership."

Then the party expelled a number of prominent dissidents from its ranks, including journalist Liu Binyan, physicist Fang Lizhi and author Wang Ruowang.

"Before that, I didn't have much of an impression of Deng Xiaoping -- he just seemed like a short little guy among the old guys in charge of the Chinese Communist Party," Chen said. "But he had suddenly made such a big move, and I started to think about why that would be. I felt he didn't really understand young people or our ideas."

"Once young people get started with economic reform, they'll immediately start to want political reform too, and as soon as they start to interact with the West, they'll want freedom and democracy," he said.

"But this old man just wanted to take a leisurely walk - - he was behind the times, and not suited to ruling the country. He should have let younger people take charge," Chen said.

1980s political purges

Following the 1986 protests, the right to demonstrate was stripped from students in Beijing, with the passage of new regulations warning that anyone who took part in "unauthorized parades" would be prosecuted. Those rules were enshrined in national law after the 1989 Tiananmen Square mass protests.

"For me, there was nothing good about the 1980s. Anyone who tried to fight for freedom and democracy was still suppressed," said Wang, citing the heavy jail

terms handed down to 1979 Democracy Wall dissidents Wei Jingsheng and Wang Xizhe.

"The political purges continued throughout the 1980s, and large numbers of people were affected each time," he said. "I think people who remember the 1980s as a good time probably didn't care much about politics."

"I don't think there has ever been a good time under the Chinese Communist Party, and that hasn't changed."

U.S.-based former Party School professor Cai Xia agreed that life was still pretty tough for ordinary Chinese.

"The door had been left open just a crack for people to push open if they tried hard enough ... and people just wanted to survive," Cai said. "They had been poor for more than a decade."

Cai said most of the "reform" and "opening up" under Deng was largely the work of the people themselves, spurred on by new "household responsibility" contracts for farmers, by the return of exiled intellectuals to the cities in the wake of the Cultural Revolution, and by new rules allowing people to set up in business for themselves and sell their wares in "free markets."

"Even Deng Xiaoping admitted this when he said, 'we didn't do anything; it was the people who were creative, and we just affirmed their creativity,'" Cai told RFA Mandarin in a recent interview.

Part of the perception of the Deng era as a golden age stems from his lionization in Western media, including his nomination by *Time* Magazine as "Man of the Year" twice, an honor it has bestowed on just four non-U.S. citizens.

"Historical evaluations of Deng Xiaoping were really too complimentary," veteran journalist and political commentator Hu Ping told Radio Free Asia, adding that Deng had little to do with the crushing of the Gang of Four, nor with the rehabilitation of millions of people persecuted unjustly during the Mao era.

Cai said that before he ordered the People's Liberation Army to clear Beijing of unarmed civilians, causing hundreds, perhaps thousands, of deaths, Deng was a master at going with the flow, and allowing things to happen, rather than initiating change.

"He basically put his legal stamp on some new economic phenomena that were emerging among, and driven by, ordinary people," she said. "In terms of his vision and ideology, he was still pretty conservative, and was looking to maintain the status quo in China over the long term."

Only 'partially de-Maoified'

Former high-ranking Chinese Communist Party aide Yan Jiaqi, who once worked for late ousted premier Zhao Ziyang, said that China did enjoy some good years before the 1989 bloodshed, citing new rules

limiting presidents and premiers to just two terms in office.

But in written comments to Radio Free Asia, he said Deng had only "partially de-Maoified" China, paving the way for current General Secretary Xi Jinping to take the country further to the left, and step up authoritarian controls over people's lives in recent years.

Morally, Hu likened Deng to a doctor who has cured a large number of patients but murdered some along the way.

"Because of the Tiananmen massacre, Deng is guilty for a thousand years, regardless of what he did before or after," he said. "It makes no difference."

And the crackdown pretty much shut down any hopes of political reform, he said.

"A country that achieves rapid development along such a pathway will be more confident, more arrogant, and more powerfully authoritarian," Hu said. "And it is bound to be far more contemptuous, hostile and fearful of universal values like justice, human rights and democracy, and to pose a greater threat to peace and freedom around the world."

While Wang put the sense of hope in pre-Tiananmen China down to youthful dreams, Chen Pokong can still remember being overwhelmed with a dizzying sense of new possibilities, simply because people now had regular access to something outside of their daily lives. "I remember that there were really new things every day, new clothes, new books, new music, new dances," he said. "I had the feeling that the country would move forward into the future, no matter what happened."

That belief was soon to be shattered, with the news that People's Liberation Army soldiers had opened fire on civilians in Beijing on the night of June 3, 1989, on the orders of Deng Xiaoping.

Chen Pokong was lying in his dorm room in Guangzhou when a classmate shouted the news. He tuned into Hong Kong radio to find out more, and wrote big-character posters on the Sun Yat-sen University campus in protest at the bloodshed.

Chen Kuide, meanwhile, had accepted an invitation to study at Boston University. He flew out of Beijing on June 5, a day after seeing smuggled Hong Kong TV footage of the massacre.

The sense of fear as his university shuttle bus threaded its way through army roadblocks on the way to the airport, with people cycling there after public transportation was suspended, was to be his last, lingering memory of China.

Why China's soft power fails to soften its image

03 October 2024, [FirstPost](#), Tenzin Tsultrim

Without changing its attitudes toward its people and neighboring countries and its treatment of the people of the occupied nations, Beijing may continue to suffer from the soft power deficit

Joseph Nye, the father of "soft power," reveals in his latest book, *A Life in the American Century*, how in December 2013, China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi invited him to a private meal to quiz him about how China could increase its soft power. Nye replied, "Raising hundreds of millions of people out of poverty and celebrating a gorgeous traditional culture are important sources of attraction for China. At the same time, as long as it had territorial disputes with its neighbours and as long as its insistence on tight party control over civil society and human rights continued, China would face serious limits on its soft power in Asia and the West."

Before the concept of "soft power" was introduced by Nye, China had already lost a major part of its share of soft power points. After the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) took over China, strategically, it began to invade its neighbouring countries, including East Turkestan, Tibet, and southern Mongolia. Communist China also decided to intervene in the Korean War, just a week after it invaded Tibet. Worse, after entrenching its rule in Tibet, the CCP also decided to encroach on the borders of India, eventually leading to the China-India War of 1962. All these military invasions and interventions had permanently dented the international image of 'New China'. Within China too, in the name of the Great Leap Forward, the CCP pushed China to three years of famine and later euphemistically called it the three years of natural disasters. The outbreak of the infamous Cultural Revolution further made the CCP unlovable by its people.

What happens in Tibet never stays in Tibet

For decades, the CCP was convinced that Tibetan people might have been enchanted by the development shoved on them; however, the peaceful protests of 1987-89 and the 2008 uprising in Tibet pushed them out of their beds. To counter the internationalisation of the Tibet issue, from the 1990s onwards, the CCP began to churn out its first of many white papers on Tibet. This is still being dished out mechanically. Yearly reports from various well-established rights groups such as Freedom House, Amnesty International, and Human Rights Watch (HRW) continue to highlight growing human rights violations in Tibet.

Like the systematic detention of millions of Uyghur Muslims in the internment camps by the CCP in the western region of East Turkestan, which received a

tremendous amount of international attention. Similarly, the exposition by the Tibet Action Institute report that around one million Tibetan children aged six to eighteen were forced to live in Chinese government-run colonial boarding schools and preschools had also drawn international attention. In the recent report by HRW, *Educate the Masses to Change Their Minds: China's Forced Relocation of Rural Tibetans*, it is reported that over 707,000 people have relocated. Most of the Tibetan people were forcibly relocated. All these reports have severely tarnished the nosedive image of communist China and its long-held aspiration for a lovable image and the so-called responsible superpower.

Like Charity, Soft Power too begins at Home

Unlike democratic nations, the CCP needs to charm both domestically and internationally. Within China, the CCP is trying to charm its people without losing control. In other words, the CCP is implementing the carrot and stick policy. Communist China's handling of the Tiananmen Square movement earned the ire of international communities as well as the Chinese people. Many Western countries decided to freeze high-level contacts with China for around two years. There have been dramatic declines in revenues from tourism (down 20 per cent in 1989), direct foreign investment (down 22 per cent in the first half of 1990), and foreign lending (down 40 per cent in 1989). Because of this, the CCP decided to reorient its domestic and foreign policies.

However, the CCP is still wary of its own people, and it is no wonder that China's domestic security spending is higher than its defence-related expenses. Covid-19 further proved the mismanagement and brutalities of the CCP, and common Chinese people realized the importance of freedom and the free flow of information. The death of Dr. Li Wenliang became the most talked-about topic on WeChat and Weibo (China's two biggest social media platforms), attracting millions of posts and searches and garnering an estimated 1.5 billion views. Following the Covid-19 pandemic, negative views of China increased by double digits in more than half of the countries surveyed in the international poll by the Pew Research Center. If the CCP is not able to win the hearts and minds of its own people, it will be very difficult to charm the international community. In other words, if you are not soft towards your family members and always create problems inside your home, you cannot expect your neighbours to smile back.

Good Fences Make Good Neighbours

China has one of the highest numbers of territorial disputes with its neighbouring countries on land and sea. For instance, with India, China has one of the oldest territorial disputes in the world, which is still unresolved, and China is not in the good books of many countries. According to a 2023 Pew Research

Center survey, a median of 67 per cent of adults across 24 countries express unfavourable views of China. A median of 71 per cent thinks China does not contribute to global peace and stability. Not only that, a median of 76 per cent think China does not take into account the interests of other countries in its foreign policy, and a median of 57 per cent say China interferes in the affairs of other nations a great deal.

According to Nirupama Rao, former Ambassador of India to the United States, "The mistrust of China only deepened after Xi Jinping came to power. He is viewed as being at the helm of a nation that is much more muscular, confrontational, and aggressive in the pursuit of territorial claims across the Indo-Pacific region, both on land and sea." Out of 133 countries surveyed by Gallup in 2023, the US enjoyed a soft power advantage in 81 of them, and China in 52. Hence, the global approval of US leadership is higher than that of China. In short, every neighboring country is on its toes when it comes to dealing with China.

Conclusion

Despite spending billions of dollars on infrastructure development and security apparatuses, the CCP fails to win the hearts and minds of the Tibetan people. Because of the CCP's continued crackdown on Tibetan Buddhism, Tibetan language, and Tibetan culture every year, the situation in Tibet is worsening. Hence, without improving the situation inside Tibet, the CCP will be solely responsible for waning China's soft power. Similarly, because of what the CCP has unleashed on the Chinese people, the ghosts of the Tiananmen Square movement will continue to haunt the CCP.

The mismanagement of Covid-19 by the CCP in China further widens the gaps between the CCP and the Chinese people. After the Covid-19 pandemic, the negative views of China increased by double digits in more than half of the countries surveyed by the Pew Research Center. The territorial disputes with neighbouring countries are another important factor that hinders China's soft power. Because of its frequent incursions and unlawful maritime claims in the South China Sea, Beijing is viewed as an aggressor and troublemaker in Asia. Hence, according to a 2023 Pew Research Centre survey, a median of 71 per cent of adults across 24 countries think China does not contribute to global peace and stability.

In a speech at the National Propaganda and Ideology Work Conference on August 19, 2013, Xi Jinping voiced the importance of "telling China's story well". In 2021, he told senior Communist Party officials that it was important to present the image of China as "credible, loveable, and respectable." Since the party-state propaganda machinery works from the top down, the CCP is not telling a story; rather, it is pushing China's story. According to David Shambaugh, "Soft power is

like a country that is a magnet that attracts others to you; others want to emulate you; they respect you; they value your political system. In other words, they want to be like you. That is soft power. It comes from society. It does not come from the government.”

Similarly, one can act loveable, but one cannot force someone to like you. Therefore, without changing its attitudes toward its people and neighboring countries and its treatment of the people of the occupied nations, Beijing may continue to suffer from the soft power deficit, and the Chinese people will continue to receive backlash because of the CCP’s actions.

After 19 years, a docent at the Rubin Museum says goodbye to his ‘home away from home’

03 October 2024, [Gothamist](#), Ryan Kailath

After 20 years in Chelsea, the Rubin Museum, which houses art from Tibet, Nepal and the Himalayan regions of India and China, will close its doors permanently on Sunday and transition to a touring exhibition model that will loan its collection to other institutions.

It’s a loss for New York City, which has experienced a spate of small museum closures this year, including Fotografiska and the Center for Italian Modern Art.

It’s also a loss for Nitin Ron, a docent who has led tours of the museum for 19 of its 20 years.

“This museum was home away from home for me,” Ron said last Wednesday on what would be one of his final tours. “I’ve done 19 hikes in the Himalayas and climbed Mount Everest. So when I walked in here, this space made my heart beat faster.”

A neonatal doctor at South Brooklyn Health in Coney Island, Ron arrived in New York in 2001, after a fellowship in neonatal-perinatal medicine at Brown University. A friend brought him to the museum a few days after it opened in 2004, and he hit it off with founders Donald and Shelley Rubin.

Ron soon signed up for the volunteer docent program, which at the time consisted of a year of weekly classes on topics like the tenets of Buddhism and the cultures represented at the museum, he said. (That program has since been shortened to 10 weeks.) He graduated with the inaugural class in 2005, and estimates he’s given at least two tours a month since then.

“We had actors come in to teach us how to emote in public,” said Ron. “A person from the FBI came to teach us how to read body language in a crowd.”

Since his day job at the hospital also included teaching, Ron soon made field trips to the Rubin a part of the curriculum for medical students, tying art appreciation and meditation into the practice of medicine.

The Rubin has faced the same challenges of declining attendance and deficits that have plagued many small art museums, and plans to sell its building on 17th

Street near Seventh Avenue, according to Executive Director Jorrit Britschgi. The space was originally purchased for \$22 million before it was converted into the museum.

A spokesperson for the museum highlighted its endowment of more than \$150 million and overall financial strength despite operational deficits.

Although the collection will be kept in storage in New York, Britschgi said there are plans to tour as many of the works on the road as possible, or loan them out to other organizations.

“Our docents may be the most important people here, because they’re the intersection between what we do in the galleries and what visitors experience,” Britschgi said via Zoom.

Ron’s personal favorite work is one of the museum’s most popular: the quiet and meditative Tibetan shrine room, which will move to the Brooklyn Museum for a six-year loan starting in June 2025.

“My dad and mom also love to meditate, and when they visit from India they say, ‘Take us to the shrine room,’” Ron said. “They close their eyes and feel the energy of the place.”

Now that the museum’s doors are closing, Ron, who lives on Staten Island, is considering volunteering at the small Jacques Marchais Museum of Tibetan Art there, or perhaps giving tours of the United Nations.

“I’m going to miss the museum and my Friday evenings here connecting to people, connecting to musicians, connecting to actors, connecting to my medical students,” said Ron. “But I feel the effect has been long lasting and the museum is going to evolve into something very beautiful and even more universal.”

Museum admission is free all day Thursday through Sunday. Ron’s final tour at the Rubin will be on Friday evening, Oct. 4. The last day to visit the museum is this Sunday, Oct. 6.

Geopolitics and the fate of Manipur

03 October 2024, [The Sangai Express](#), Haorokcham Anil

India has a long-standing unresolved border dispute with China in the Himalayan region, particularly over Aksai Chin, which India considers part of Jammu and Kashmir. This claim is based on the Johnson Line (1865), drawn by surveyor William Johnson and later endorsed by John Charles Ardagh as the official boundary of India. However, China rejected this boundary, instead claiming Aksai Chin as a part of its Xinjiang province, according to the McDonald Line proposed by the British Empire in 1893. China currently controls much of the region under what is called the “Line of Actual Control” (LAC). The violent clashes in the strategically important Galwan Valley on

June 15, 2020, resulting in casualties on both sides, were a consequence of this ongoing territorial dispute. To this day, the boundary between the two Nations remains a point of contention.

The border dispute extends beyond the western Himalayas to the eastern sector, where China claims the Indian State of Arunachal Pradesh as a part of South Tibet. This claim challenges the McMahon Line, which India recognizes as the official boundary. The region has also become a significant flashpoint in India-China relations.

The Chinese incursions of 1962 at Arunachal Pradesh and Aksai Chin underscore the volatility of these disputed areas. This threat was further highlighted by the 2017 Doklam standoff near the Siliguri Corridor, a strategically vital region for India. Known as the "Chicken Neck", this narrow strip of land is only about 20 km wide and 60 km long, connecting the North Eastern States to the rest of India. Its geo-strategic importance is amplified by its proximity to Nepal in the northwest, Bangladesh to the south, and Bhutan to the northeast. The presence of Chinese military forces just 130 km away in Tibet's Chumbi Valley, within the range of Chinese artillery, heightens the vulnerabilities of the area.

Given China's unpredictable behavior in disputed territories, exemplified by the 1962 incursion, India has recognized the need for an alternative route to ensure continued connectivity with its North Eastern States in case of conflict at the Chicken Neck preventing North East India from being cut off from the mainland that will create two blocks like the erstwhile West and East Pakistan. This concern has driven the development of the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project apart from facilitating NER region access to the Indian Ocean for economic boost. Some believe, the Kaladan project is one the reasons for the ethnic violence that erupted on May 3, 2023, between the Meitei and Kuki communities in Manipur although it may not account as the direct cause. The Government's appeasement of certain groups or communities to safeguard the project's interests has been questioned. Factors such as large-scale deforestation by the Kuki community, the influx of illegal immigrants from Myanmar's Chin province, the destruction of poppy cultivation by the Manipur State Government, and narco-terrorism have all contributed to tensions and the ensuing violence. Moreover, opposition from tribal communities, particularly the Kuki, against the directive of the Hon'ble Manipur High Court to the Government of Manipur to send the sought socio-economic report for inclusion of the Meitei/Meetei community in the Scheduled Tribe (ST) list further fuelled the conflict.

The Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project, part of India's Act East Policy, passes through the strife torn regions of Rakhine (Arakan) and Chin State in

western Myanmar. These areas are home to Ethnic Armed Organizations (EAOs) that oppose Myanmar's military junta, seeking greater autonomy and democratic reforms. The 110 km roadway section of the project, from Paletwa to Zorinpui on the India-Myanmar border in Mizoram, traverses the Chin State, where the Kuki-Chin and Chin EAOs are the influential groups.

India's geopolitical interests in the region include safeguarding the Kaladan project and countering Chinese influence. China has invested heavily in the Kyaukpyu Deep Sea Port, part of the China-Myanmar Economic Corridor (CMEC) under its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Located about 75 km south of India's Sittwe Port (developed as part of the Kaladan project), Kyaukpyu offers China an alternative route to the Malacca Straits and the South China Sea, bypassing several strategic choke points.

The competition between India and China in this region is now evident, with both Nations seeking to strengthen ties with the local populace for strategic advantages. For India, maintaining good relations with the Kuki-Chin people is vital for the success of the project if the threat looming at the Chicken Neck is pertinent. The strategic relationship with the locals is also required for projects like the India-Myanmar-Thailand (IMT) Trilateral Highway, which spans 1,360 km and originates from Mae Sot (Thailand) passing through Myawaddy, Bago, Mandalay, Tamu (Myanmar) and entering India through Moreh is an important component of India's Act East policy to connect with ASEAN through road connectivity. It is also important to note that this important IMT Trilateral Highway passes through Chin State of Myanmar.

In Manipur, the Kuki community, originally brought by the British in the early 19th century, has been seeking geographic, demographic and political dominance, through illegal immigration mainly from Myanmar's Chin State. This, combined with the State's Scheduled Tribe (ST) status for "Any Kuki tribe" and the influx of funds from poppy cultivation and narco-terrorism, has led to challenges against the "Idea of Manipur" which have more than 2000 plus years of history and well-defined territorial boundary when merged to the Union of India on 15th October, 1949.

The strong demand for a "Separate Administration" for the Kuki-Chin people in the State of Manipur following the incitement of violence on the Meitei community on 3rd May 2023 with an ulterior motive is seen as a part of a long-standing agenda.

Given these dynamics, a critical question remains: "Are we willing to risk the destruction of Manipur to secure the broader interests of North East India through the appeasement of a particular community?"

China is using an “anaconda strategy” to squeeze Taiwan

03 October 2024, [The Economist](#)

Taiwan’s navy commander warns that his forces are increasingly strained

China’s dislike of Taiwan’s president Lai Ching-te is no secret. Chinese authorities call him a stubborn, confrontational “separatist” who may provoke war in the Taiwan Strait. But since Mr Lai’s election in May, it is China’s People’s Liberation Army (PLA) that has been raising the chances of conflict by deploying more air and naval craft around Taiwan. “The PLA is using an ‘anaconda strategy’ to squeeze the island,” says Admiral Tang Hua, Taiwan’s navy commander.

In an interview with *The Economist*, Admiral Tang (pictured) warns that Chinese forces are “slowly, but surely” increasing their presence around his country. “They are ready to blockade Taiwan at any time they want,” he says. His concerns are backed up by the data. The number of PLA air incursions across the median line, the de facto border in the middle of the Taiwan Strait, has jumped more than five-fold, from 36 in January to 193 in August. The number of PLA ships operating around Taiwan has steadily risen, too, doubling from 142 in January to 282 in August. These vessels are also coming closer to Taiwan—right along its contiguous zone, or 24 nautical miles from its coast. And they are patrolling for a few days at a time, up from a few hours previously, according to Taiwan’s naval commander.

These are relatively new developments. Until August 2022 the PLA had operated mostly in Taiwan’s south and west, around the Bashi Channel between the island and the Philippines. Taiwan’s rugged east coast, home to aircraft hangars built underneath its mountains, was seen as safer and harder to reach from China. But that changed after a visit to the island that year by Nancy Pelosi, then a high-ranking American official. The trip enraged China and, soon after, the PLA conducted a mock blockade near Taiwan’s east. That sent a signal that the region was no longer safe. Now the PLA has normalised patrols there and regularly encircles the island by sea and air. It has also increased the number of navy transits through the Yonaguni channel between Taiwan and Japan.

Few people in Taiwan are aware of how close and regular the PLA patrols are. Since 2020 Taiwan’s defence ministry has published daily updates on air activity around the island, including maps of Chinese warplanes’ locations. In 2022 it added updates on the number of PLA naval vessels operating “around Taiwan”. But it does not specify what types of ships, where they go, or for how long. The government may be worried that too much disclosure would damage Taiwan’s public morale or economy, says Admiral Tang.

The PLA’s increased patrols are straining Taiwan’s navy. China has twice as many frigates and ten times as many destroyers. Taiwan often has to deploy 25-50% of its combat vessels just to match China’s patrols, according to Cheng-kun Ma and Tristan Tan, a pair of Taiwanese defence researchers. “They give you extreme pressure, pressure, pressure. They’re trying to exhaust you,” says Admiral Tang. A government audit found that more than half of Taiwan’s main warships had fallen behind on regular maintenance.

As the PLA Navy presses closer to the island, Taiwan is focused on avoiding confrontation. “The PLA is trying to force Taiwan to make mistakes,” says Admiral Tang, and looking for “excuses” to trigger a blockade. That is why Taiwan’s military leaders issued new rules of engagement this year that define ethical and legal use of force in self-defence: “We restrain our guys, not to provoke or escalate.”

Even as Taiwan’s armed forces practise restraint its leaders are working with allies on how to keep sea lines of communication open in case of a blockade. Taiwan is also seeking international help to resist Chinese pressure. Japan’s navy conducted a transit exercise through the Taiwan Strait for the first time in September, as did naval ships from Australia, New Zealand and Germany. America’s navy sails through it several times a year. The exercises send a signal to China that the strait is international territory. The Chinese authorities protest. But they show no sign of loosening the anaconda’s squeeze.

Did Jaishankar’s long story of China mean Mao’s 5 fingers...this secret of the dragon will force you to think

03 October 2024, [Press Wire](#)

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar recently said in America that our relations with China have a long story. However, in short, we had agreements to maintain peace and stability on the border, China has violated those agreements. Let us understand what Jaishankar’s long story is about China. We also know what agreements were made, which China has always been violating. Defense and Strategic Affairs Analyst tries to understand every move of China through Lieutenant Colonel (Retd) JS Sodhi and his/her book *China’s War Clouds: The Great Chinese Checkmate*.

When Mao said, take the palm and 5 fingers

According to Defense Analyst Lt. Col. (R) JS Sodhi, relations between India and China had been good for centuries. In 1949, when the civil war in China ended and China emerged as a new nation, a part of it, Taiwan, separated from it. After this, India-China relations started turning sour. This sourness came because in 1949, the founding leader of the Republic of China, Mao Zedong i.e. Mao Zedong said that the

palm and 5 fingers should be captured by China. The palm meant Tibet and the 5 fingers meant Ladakh, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Nepal and Bhutan. From here, China's policy towards its neighbors kept changing.

China ready for war after Dalai Lama takes refuge

JS Sodhi explains that after Mao's nefarious intentions became apparent, China illegally occupied Tibet in 1950. Relations between India and China deteriorated further when the Dalai Lama fled Tibet in 1959 and took refuge in India. These relations deteriorated so much that in 1962, China treacherously attacked India and there was a war between the two countries.

Do you know about India-China war of 1967?

The Nathula and Chola conflict took place in 1967, also known as the Sino-Indian War of 1967 or the Sino-Indian War of 1967. This conflict was a series of border clashes between China and India along the border of Sikkim in the Himalayan region. The Nathula conflict began on 11 September 1967, when China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) attacked Indian posts in Nathula and the conflict continued till 15 September 1967. Another military duel took place at Chola in October 1967, which ended the same day.

India had driven out Chinese soldiers

It is believed that at that time India gained a decisive strategic advantage and managed to hold its ground against the Chinese forces and push them back. Several PLA fortifications were destroyed in Nathula. There the Indian soldiers drove back the attacking Chinese army. 340 Chinese soldiers were killed in Nathula. At the same time, 88 Indian soldiers lost their lives in Chola. When the Chinese army attacked with machine guns, the Indian soldiers responded with cannons.

What was that agreement, which Jaishankar hinted at?

According to JS Sodhi's book China's War Clouds: The Great Chinese Checkmate, in 1993, Border Peace & Tranquility Agreement, 1993 was signed between India and China, in which it was decided that the soldiers of both the countries would patrol the border and before patrolling a- Will inform others about this. Peace prevailed on both sides till 2017. But, everything changed in 2017. At that time China increased its military activities in Doklam area. With this aggressive action, China made a huge movement of its troops. This action was directed from China's theater command.

Being directed by China's Army Theater Command

China created several new theater commands in 2015. Chinese forces started taking aggressive action on the borders as per the theater command. he/she created areas of controversy in many new places. In 2020, he/she sent his/her army to Galwan Valley, in which there was a lot of clash with Indian soldiers. From then

till today relations between India and China have never been normal.

Are India and China moving towards another war?

According to JS Sodhi, on February 5, 2024, America's government agency Directorate of National Intelligence of America has told that the way the tension between India and China is increasing, they are gradually moving towards war.

China's strategy to attack India in 2035

According to the book China's War Clouds: The Great Chinese Checkmate, China's official newspaper Wenhui Daily published from Hong Kong says that there will be three wars in the next 11 years i.e. by 2035. The first war among these is to be with Taiwan in 2027. At that time China will attack Taiwan. The second attack will take place in 2029 on the Spratly Islands located in the South China Sea, which is surrounded by Vietnam, Philippines, Malaysia. This island is considered very strategically important. Apart from this, China and Pakistan together will attack India in 2035. This is going to be a two front war, under which China will wage war on the Arunachal Pradesh border and Pakistan will fight in Jammu and Kashmir.

China has its eyes on Shaksgam valley also, has already claimed

Defense and Strategic Affairs Analyst Lt. Col. (Retd) JS Sodhi says that Dragon is now adopting a dual strategy through the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. Firstly, it is strengthening itself economically and secondly, it is preparing to tighten the noose on countries like India. In a way, he/she is preparing himself for the future war. From Shaksgam Valley, China wants to reach Pakistan's Gwadar port and reach Central Asia through Afghanistan. he/she has also claimed this valley.

Aksai Chin was not on the map of China till 100 years ago

Sujan R Chinoy, author of 'The Forgotten Fact of China Occupied Kashmir', writes that China had started establishing its presence in the Karakoram area since the 1750s. At that time, Qian Long was the fourth king of the Qing Empire in China. China had then claimed that the eastern part of the Karakoram Pass passing through the Kunlun Range adjacent to the Pamir Plateau had been incorporated by the Manchu Empire in 1759 itself. In the historical map of China of that time, only the lower part of Yarkand and the rivers originating from Shaksgam were shown. Before 1890, China made no claims to the Shaksgam Valley, nor was Aksai Chin shown as part of Xinjiang province.

Chinese PM claimed the area by writing a letter to Nehru

With the Karakoram Tract Agreement signed with Pakistan on March 02, 1963, China captured Raskam and also started claiming the Shaksgam area. On January 23, 1959, Chinese Prime Minister Zhou Enlai, in a letter to the then Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal

Nehru, talked about his/her claim in the Frontiers area of Jammu and Kashmir. In 1953, Chinese forces started infiltrating from the eastern Hunza area.

Jinping's CPEC project is a big dream

One reason behind the continuous attacks by Pakistan-backed terrorists in Jammu instead of the valley is China's economic corridor which is passing through PoJK. China has already invested US\$65 billion in the CPEC (China-Pakistan Economic Corridor) project. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor is an ambitious plan of Chinese President Xi Jinping, which was launched in 2013. India has been opposing this project because PoJK is an integral part of India.

India's geopolitical manoeuvring disrupts Mongolia's religious harmony

02 October 2024, [Pakistan Today](#), Imran Khalid

Interference in matters beyond its ken.

India has long pursued an assertive stance, intruding into the domestic affairs of its neighbouring countries. Whether it's Sri Lanka, the Maldives, Bangladesh, Nepal, or Bhutan, India's hand in meddling is unmistakable, driven by a desire to cement its sway in the region.

Yet, this tendency to interfere doesn't stop at its immediate vicinity. Far from the Indian subcontinent, we see Mongolia— an isolated, landlocked country squeezed between Russia and China— emerge as the latest theatre for India's ambitions. Here, India seems bent on chipping away at the strong ties Mongolia shares with Russia and China, countries with which it has historically enjoyed warm relations.

Recent actions by India regarding Mongolia's religious affairs have caused significant concern, particularly in the context of the 10th Bogd Jebtsundamba Khutuktu, the spiritual leader of the Gelug lineage of Tibetan Buddhism in Mongolia. The Bogd— an emblem of Mongolia's very soul— traces roots back nearly four centuries, intertwined with the legacy of the Mongol emperor, Kublai Khan. A lineage that embraced Tibetan Buddhism, spreading its influence far beyond Mongolia, even into the vast stretches of China and the conquered lands.

In the early 1900s, a Tibetan-born Bogd (pronounced bogged) ruled Mongolia as a theocratic leader, revered not just as a ruler but as a god-king. However, when the last Bogd passed away in 2012, murmurs of concern rippled through Mongolia. The fear? That India, wielding the influence of the Dalai Lama— who's been in exile in India since 1959— might attempt to steer or even dictate the selection of the next Bogd. The ninth Jebtsundamba Khutuktu spent much of his life in exile— first in Tibet, then in India. It wasn't until 1990, long after his identity had been kept under

wraps by the Dalai Lama, that it was finally disclosed. It wasn't until 2011— just a year before his death— that he was finally able to take up residence in Mongolia and be enthroned as the leader of Mongolian Buddhists. After the death of the ninth Bogd, the Dalai Lama asserted that the reincarnation of the Jebtsundamba Khutuktu had been found. Yet, he remained tight-lipped, revealing nothing until 8 March 2023, during a ceremony in Dharamsala. The Dalai Lama introduced the world to the new Jebtsundamba Khutuktu— a young boy named "A. Altannar."

But here's where the tale takes a twist. The full first name? Not disclosed. And the plot thickens, for there aren't just one but two "A. Altannar." Identical twins. Both their names begin with an "A" – Achildai Altannar and Agudai Altannar. So, which one is the true Jebtsundamba Khutuktu? The answer lies shrouded in secrecy, known only to five people: the two 8-year-old boys, their mother (a college professor of mathematics), their father (a scion of a mining fortune), and, of course, the Dalai Lama himself.

Apparently, at the behest of India, the Dalai Lama's has embraced an American passport holder boy as the 10th Jebtsundamba Khutuktu, marking an upsetting moment in the spiritual and political landscape of Tibetan Buddhism. For believers, reincarnation is a divine mystery, guided by higher powers. Yet, it's hard to ignore the political undercurrents that often shape the lives of these spiritual figures, particularly in how they are educated and positioned within the broader geopolitical context.

Policymakers in New Delhi seem to believe that by steering the selection of the 10th Bogd in their favour, India could subtly expand its influence in Mongolia – a move that might serve to unsettle both China and Russia over the long haul. This strategic calculation reflects India's broader geopolitical ambitions, where cultural and religious diplomacy intertwine with the pursuit of regional power dynamics.

India's involvement in this sacred process, especially in the identification and education of the 10th Jebtsundamba Khutuktu, represents a concerning overreach into Mongolia's internal affairs. The Dalai Lama's acknowledgment of the 10th reincarnation further denotes India's growing interference in Mongolia's religious sphere. This move suggests a strategic attempt by India to exert influence over Mongolia's cultural and religious landscape. The Dalai Lama's handling of matters pertaining to the selection and education of the 10th Jebtsundamba Khutuktu reflects this complex interplay of spirituality and politics.

It is still shrouded in mystery why he has selected an American-born boy from a rich family— despite intense resistance by the boy's parents, who initially refused to accept his verdict about their son.

This manoeuvre, however, hasn't been met with universal approval. In Mongolia, reactions have been mixed, with many taking to social media to express scepticism and confusion. It's clear that not everyone is comfortable with the 14th Dalai Lama's actions

The Dalai Lamas have long claimed that the Jebtsundamba Khutuktu is an incarnation of Taranatha, a 16th-century Tibetan master of the Jonang tradition. However, the Jonang School itself has not publicly endorsed this recognition, raising further questions about the legitimacy of the Dalai Lama's decision. Historically, the Gelug tradition, to which the Dalai Lama belongs, has had a contentious relationship with the Jonang School, adding another layer of complexity to this situation.

This development is being viewed as a potential threat to the stability and independence of Mongolia, raising alarms about the broader implications for regional sovereignty. When external powers, like India, intervene in such a delicate process, it not only undermines the sovereignty of the affected nation but also disrupts the sanctity of its religious practices. Concerns extend beyond the immediate political ramifications; they encompass the preservation of religious integrity.

The recent involvement of India in the selection process of the 10th Bogd Jebtsundamba Khutuktu raises serious questions about the intentions behind such actions. This move is not merely a matter of religious significance; it carries the potential to destabilize regional harmony.

The selection of the 10th Bogd Jebtsundamba Khutuktu should remain an internal matter, free from external interference, to ensure that the process aligns with Mongolian customs and religious practices. In the interest of regional stability, it is imperative that all nations honour the internal affairs of their neighbours, safeguarding the delicate balance that underpins peace and cooperation in the region.

Policymakers in New Delhi seem to believe that by steering the selection of the 10th Bogd in their favour, India could subtly expand its influence in Mongolia – a move that might serve to unsettle both China and Russia over the long haul. This strategic calculation reflects India's broader geopolitical ambitions, where cultural and religious diplomacy intertwine with the pursuit of regional power dynamics.

Chinese are seeing India as going soft. Talk of 'consensus' over disengagement rings hollow

02 October 2024, [The Print](#), Sana Hashmi

A review of Chinese media and social platforms reveals a widespread perception that India has adopted a more conciliatory approach towards China.

The India-China border dispute remains a critical flashpoint in bilateral relations, where the nuances of diplomacy are often overshadowed by competing narratives.

A statement last week from the Chinese Defence Ministry asserted that both countries have been able to "reduce differences" and build "some consensus" on disengaging troops in eastern Ladakh, indicating a possible thaw in relations that could facilitate long-awaited normalisation. However, beneath this surface optimism lies a complex web of distrust and grievances.

As winter approaches and troop deployments along the LAC escalate, the stark reality persists: despite the hopeful rhetoric, a profound trust deficit continues to impede meaningful progress in India-China relations.

Chinese hints at India's conciliatory approach

A review of Chinese media and social platforms reveals a widespread perception that India has adopted a more conciliatory approach towards China.

Commentators suggest that the Indian government recognises that a confrontational stance may jeopardise its own interests, particularly in the manufacturing sector, which has faced significant repercussions due to hardline policies against China.

Amid US pressure to reduce reliance on China, a reporter from *Guancha* noted that American companies are increasingly viewing India as a potential manufacturing hub to mitigate supply chain risks. However, this strategy is complicated by India's growing dependence on trade with China. Commentators have highlighted a perceived contradiction: while hopes persist that Chinese investment could strengthen India's economy, concerns about China are on the rise. This dynamic reflects India's emphasis on the threat posed by China, even as it actively seeks Chinese investments—which is viewed as a stronger inclination for normalisation from India than from China.

Discussions within Chinese media often exhibit an air of arrogance regarding India's potential as a manufacturing alternative to China. Analysts remain sceptical about India's ability to serve as a viable substitute in the economic sphere. Many argue that India will struggle to surpass China or replicate its achievements over the past three decades within a similar timeframe, citing significant challenges in advancing its manufacturing capabilities.

Notably, Indian External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's recent statement that India can "chew gum while walking" has been interpreted as an indication of India's willingness to pursue normalisation with China while maintaining its alignment with the Quad, BRICS, and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). However, some warn that this so-called "fence-sitting diplomacy" could result in greater losses for India.

In a media comment, Qiu Yonghui, a professor at the Centre for South Asian Studies at Sichuan University, cautioned against hasty assertions regarding India's potential to significantly recalibrate its relations with China. She noted that while some adjustments may be likely, the ongoing stalemate over border issues necessitates improvements in infrastructure and engineering technology—areas where India remains heavily dependent on China. And Long Xingchun, a professor from the School of International Relations at Sichuan International Studies University, characterised India as a regional hegemon grappling with concerns over its declining influence in South Asia.

But overall, there is a growing perception among Chinese commentators that India's stance has softened in recent years. Enhanced communication with China is seen as an indication of India's genuine interest in swiftly resolving territorial disputes. Moreover, Chinese analysts observe that Indian media increasingly reflects optimism about Sino-Indian negotiations, likely influenced by India's current economic situation. The discourse is stuck between the idea that India will never be able to catch up with China and the belief that China should not help its adversary's rise.

On platforms like Weibo, users frequently disparage India's infrastructure, with some advocating for China to assist in its development by highlighting its high-efficiency, low-cost construction capabilities as a potential solution. However, one commentator argued against Chinese companies investing in India and aiding its industrial capacity, warning that a stronger India would pose a greater threat to China than the US. Furthermore, a Weibo user pointed out that Chinese state-owned enterprises have helped India build its largest steelmaking blast furnace — which has angered many in China who believe this contributes to India's industrial advancement and could pose a future threat.

China's deception

China's attempts to emphasise aspects of bilateral relations beyond border disputes may be misleading. This strategy does not change the realities on the ground or alter China's actual position. Last Friday, Chinese spokesperson Lin Jian reiterated: "The area of Zangnan is Chinese territory, and it's illegal, and null and void for India to set up the so-called Arunachal Pradesh in Chinese territory. China's position on this issue is consistent and clear."

China's actions simply do not align with its words regarding India. While Beijing has long urged New Delhi to focus on issues beyond the border dispute, the current narrative suggesting consistent disengagement by China—while portraying India as eager to adjust its stance for commercial interests—

appears disingenuous. This effort seems designed to distract from underlying issues and points of contention, while also fostering a false narrative that India is going soft on China.

The Tibet International Communication Center and China's Latest Manipulation Exercise

02 October 2024, [Japan Forward](#), Professor Pema Gyalpo

China has launched the Tibet International Communication Center to control the narrative on Tibet, suppress Tibetan voices, and spread disinformation globally.

In a brazen move that underscores its relentless campaign to control the global narrative on Tibet, China has launched its latest propaganda tool, the Tibet International Communication Center in Lhasa. This development, unveiled on September 2, 2024, marks a significant escalation in Beijing's efforts to manipulate international public opinion. In addition, it seeks to further suppress the voices of Tibetans.

Far from an isolated incident, the establishment of this center is a well-calculated strategy that has been years in the making. It follows the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) longstanding playbook of information control and narrative manipulation. Now, however, it is supercharged with modern technology and global reach. As the International Campaign for Tibet (ICT) rightly warns, this move signals an imminent intensification of China's propaganda machine. It aims to dominate the global conversation on Tibet with its distorted storytelling.

Constructing a False Reality

At the heart of this propaganda offensive lies a sinister attempt to rewrite history and erase Tibetan identity. For example, the CCP's push to replace the internationally recognized name "Tibet" with the Sinicized term "Xizang" in global discourse. Beijing discreetly initiated this linguistic sleight of hand in 2021 during the COVID-19 pandemic. It aligns perfectly with CCP General Secretary Xi Jinping's vision to "tell a good Chinese story" on the world stage. But make no mistake - this "good story" is nothing more than a fabrication designed to obscure the harsh realities of China's occupation and oppressive rule in Tibet.

The launch of the center came with a flurry of official statements that revealed the true nature of China's intentions. Wang Junzheng, the CCP's top leader in the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), didn't mince words when he stressed the importance of "ideological guidance" in external propaganda.

His call to "build a foreign discourse system and narrative system related to Tibet" is a thinly veiled

admission of the CCP's intent to construct an alternative reality. In this CCP-constructed reality, a narrative of Chinese benevolence and progress replaces Tibet's rich cultural heritage and struggle for autonomy. They believe if they chant their lies a hundred times, it becomes a reality.

Disseminating False Narratives

This new propaganda center is set to leverage a multi-pronged approach to spread its false narrative. State-controlled media outlets like *China Daily* and the China Global Television Network (CHTN) will undoubtedly play pivotal roles in disseminating China's perspective on Tibetan issues to a global audience.

A recent agreement between *China Daily* and the China Tibetology Research Center to establish the Tibetology International Communication Center shows this strategy in action. Shifting away from "monotonous data" towards "storytelling" represents a more insidious form of manipulation. Through this, the CCP seeks to "win attention and hearts worldwide" through emotional appeal rather than factual representation. This constitutes a significant threat to authentic information about Tibet's situation.

The implications of this propaganda offensive are far-reaching and deeply troubling. As the CCP intensifies its efforts to control the narrative, the voices of Tibetans are at risk of being further marginalized and silenced. Their true stories of cultural suppression, human rights abuses, and the ongoing struggle for genuine autonomy are in danger of being drowned out by a flood of state-sanctioned misinformation. Moreover, the international community faces increased pressure to adopt China's narrative on Tibet.

Diplomatic efforts to influence policy decisions and public statements regarding Tibet's status are likely to intensify. This could potentially compromise the integrity of international bodies and governments. Expanding Chinese "cultural and educational" initiatives presenting a China-centric view of Tibetan history and culture threaten to distort the global understanding of Tibet's rich heritage and complex political situation.

A Broader Agenda

Recognizing that this propaganda center is not an isolated entity but part of a broader, more insidious strategy is crucial. The CCP's claim of facing "restrictions" in conveying its message about Tibet to the West is laughably hypocritical, considering its systematic suppression of dissent within Tibet. This false narrative of victimhood is a classic tactic authoritarian regimes employ to justify their propaganda efforts and deflect criticism.

In the face of this propaganda onslaught, the international community must remain both vigilant and critical. China's narrative of "high-equality

development" in Tibet often serves as a smokescreen for human rights violations and cultural suppression. It is imperative that global leaders, media, and civil society organizations scrutinize China's claims. They must seek out authentic Tibetan voices to counter this state-sponsored disinformation campaign.

Recent actions by United Nations human rights experts are demanding answers regarding China's repression of dam protests in Tibet. These actions serve as a model for the international scrutiny needed in such situations. Such initiatives are vital in challenging China's narrative and bringing attention to the realities on the ground in Tibet. As China ramps up its propaganda efforts, the need for Independent, fact-based reporting on Tibet becomes even more critical. The international community must support and amplify the voices of Tibetans, both inside and in exile, to ensure their stories and struggles are not erased by China's propaganda machine.

Standing Firm for Tibet

Establishing this center in Lhasa is not just about controlling information- it is about controlling minds and shaping global perceptions. It represents a direct assault on truth, freedom of expression, and the right of Tibetans to tell their own story. China seeks to "seize the power in the international discourse about Tibet."

The world must stand firm in its commitment to truth, human rights, and the preservation of Tibetan culture and identity. Against this propaganda offensive, silence is not an option. Ensuring that the authentic voices of Tibetans are heard and challenging China's false narratives demand a renewed commitment from the international community to support Tibet. Sustained vigilance, critical analysis, and unwavering support for human rights are essential to counter China's propaganda machine. Only then can we preserve the truth about Tibet for future generations.

THE SUNDAY FUNNIES

ཉེ་ལོ་གི་ཁྱི་ཞིག་དང་བྱང་ཀོ་རི་ཡའི་ཁྱི་ཞིག་ རྒྱ་མིའི་ཁྱི་ཞིག་བཅས་
 མཉམ་དུ་བསྐྱེད་ཡོད།
 ཉེ་ལོ་གི་ཁྱི་འདིས་ངའི་རྒྱལ་ཁབ་ལ་གལ་ཏེ་རང་གིས་རྒྱ་ན་རིང་པོ་འབྱང་
 པ་ཡིན་ན་རང་ལ་ཤ་སྲོད་ཀྱི་རིང་ཟེར་ལའ།
 བྱང་ཀོ་རི་ཡའི་ཁྱིས་འདིས་ཤ་ཟེར་ན་ག་རེ་རིང་ཟེར་ལའབ་དུས། རྒྱ་མིའི་ཁྱི་
 འདིས་ཁྱི་གཞན་གཉིས་ལ་བཞྱུས་ནས་བཤད་པར། འབྱང་པ་ཟེར་ན་ག་རེ་
 རིང་དམ།



A Japanese dog, a North Korean dog, and a Chinese dog sit together. The Japanese dog says, "In Japan if you bark long enough, you will get some meat." The North Korean dog says, "What is meat?" The Chinese dog looks at the other two and says, "What is a bark?"

Publications