

TIBET DIGEST

MARCH 2025

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.

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Summary- March Tibet Digest

March witnessed China's continued erosion of Tibetan identity through intensified surveillance, securitization, and ideological control. Tibetan monasteries and religious spaces came under increased scrutiny, with official campaigns pressing monks to pledge loyalty to the Communist Party and its ideology. Authorities announced new training programs targeting rural Tibetans, aiming to

"transform thoughts" and strengthen political obedience. In parallel, the Chinese state deepened its use of mass digital surveillance, using facial recognition and public blacklists to control religious expression and dissent.

The Sinicization of Tibetan Buddhism gained further ground, with monastic institutions ordered to adopt Mandarin as the primary language of instruction and religious discourse. State-sponsored propaganda tours of Lhasa showcased a sanitized image of Tibet, even as independent sources documented continued cultural repression. The incarceration of influential Tibetan monks and community leaders, often on vague or undisclosed charges, underscored the risks faced by those resisting state narratives.

On the international front, Indian and U.S. leaders emphasized Tibetan autonomy in key diplomatic exchanges. Tibetan communities worldwide marked Uprising Day with peaceful protests and solidarity events, drawing attention to China's human rights abuses. Meanwhile, climate experts continued to sound the alarm on environmental degradation in Tibet, linking unchecked infrastructure development and glacier retreat to regional water insecurity.

Despite Beijing's tightened grip, Tibetan resilience endured—reflected in calls for accountability, cultural revival efforts in exile, and global advocacy demanding freedom, justice, and the protection of Tibet's unique heritage.



CCP'S Tibet Policies

Graphics: Ethnic minority representation in Xizang: A Chinese white paper claims growing ethnic minority representation in Tibet's governance, stating that minorities hold significant positions across administrative and legislative levels, including over 89% of deputies in local congresses and 93% in political advisory bodies.

China doubles down on move to appoint its own next Dalai Lama: China rejected the Dalai Lama's plan to reincarnate in the free world, insisting the reincarnation must occur within China and follow state-approved procedures, asserting state control over Tibetan Buddhist practices and rejecting past recognitions like that of the 11th Panchen Lama.

Right to study and use Tibetan language guaranteed: white paper: China's white paper claims Tibetan language rights are protected, citing bilingual government documents, Tibetan-language media, and bilingual education. It also highlights developments in digital Tibetan-language content.

China makes Tibet a model area for revised law on ethnic unity, progress since Mar 1: China implemented new provincial regulations in Tibet promoting "ethnic unity," framing them as legal tools to reinforce national identity. Critics argue these efforts are part of a broader Sinicization agenda eroding Tibetan cultural and ethnic identity.

Former Tibet Party Chief Wu Yingjie Pleads Guilty to Massive Bribery Charges: Wu Yingjie, former Party Secretary of the Tibet Autonomous Region, pleaded guilty to accepting over 343 million yuan in bribes over 15 years. Known for enforcing hardline Sinicization policies in Tibet, Wu used his positions to facilitate business favors in exchange for personal gain. The trial, held in Beijing, highlighted his role in suppressing Tibetan identity while benefiting from corruption. A verdict is pending.

Xi Jinping's Contradictory Message on Preserving Ethnic Cultures: During a visit to Guizhou province, Xi Jinping called for preserving the unique cultures of ethnic minorities through integrated tourism development. However, this contrasts sharply with his previous stance advocating for Sinicization and national unity in regions like Tibet.

and Xinjiang. Analysts note this inconsistency reflects China's dual strategy—showcasing cultural tolerance in select regions while promoting assimilation in politically sensitive areas.

Tibet Highlighted as Testing Ground for CCP's New "Ethnic Unity" Policy: China's 2025 Two Sessions revealed intensified efforts to assimilate Tibetans under Xi Jinping's ethnic unity strategy. Top leaders emphasized Sinicization and modernization while Tibetan delegates echoed government narratives of "harmony." New TAR Chairman Karma Tseten denounced international criticism of Tibet's education system and reaffirmed loyalty to the CCP. Despite calls to open Tibet through tourism, restrictions on foreign access remain tight, reinforcing its role as a controlled testing ground for broader national identity campaigns.

China's Digital Dragnet Tightens Around Tibet: Tibet has become a testing ground for China's most invasive surveillance technologies. With facial recognition, biometric databases, and intrusive apps like the "National Anti-Fraud Center," Tibetan lives are constantly monitored. Traditional festivals are heavily policed, and online activity is tracked to suppress cultural or political expression. China's 2023 cybersecurity law further eliminates online anonymity. Human rights groups warn of a climate of fear and self-censorship. These technologies, trialed in Tibet, are also being exported globally, raising alarms over a growing model of digital authoritarianism.

China Vows to Continue Disputed Education Policy in Tibet: At the National People's Congress, China reaffirmed its controversial education strategy in Tibet, emphasizing "civic education" while ignoring accusations of forced assimilation. Authorities continue placing Tibetan children in coercive boarding schools to sever cultural ties. The term "Tibet" has been officially replaced with "Xizang," part of China's broader Sinicization efforts. Despite international criticism, Chinese leaders vowed to maintain these policies under the CPC's leadership, dismissing objections from the Dalai Lama and exile groups.

China Intensifies Security Ahead of Tibetan Uprising Anniversary: In anticipation of the March 10 Tibetan Uprising Day, China has heightened security across the Tibet Autonomous Region. Local governments convened multiple meetings to enforce tight surveillance, particularly in sensitive areas like Chamdo, Shigatse, and Markham. Officials were deployed to spread state narratives and oversee restrictions. The moves reflect Beijing's anxiety about unrest during politically sensitive periods, reinforcing its strategy of repression through preemptive control.

China Vows 'High Pressure' on Tibetan 'Separatists' During Two Sessions: During China's ongoing "Two Sessions," Tibet delegates praised Chinese rule and vowed to maintain a "high pressure" campaign against so-called separatists. This includes anyone promoting Tibetan identity, language, or environmental protection. Leaders lauded the Sinicization of Buddhism and widespread Mandarin education, while reaffirming plans to control the Dalai Lama's reincarnation. These pledges echo decades of Chinese policies aimed at eroding Tibetan culture and silencing dissent.

Meta Exposes Chinese Disinformation Network Targeting the Dalai Lama: Meta has uncovered a covert Chinese disinformation campaign targeting the Dalai Lama. The network, using fake accounts and websites, spread misleading content designed to discredit the Tibetan spiritual leader and sow doubt about the legitimacy of the exile movement. This campaign forms part of China's larger strategy to manipulate international opinion and assert its narrative on Tibet across global digital platforms.

State of Ecology of the Tibetan Plateau

Video Reveals Environmental Crisis from Mining in Chamdo: Leaked footage from Drongri village in Tsonga Township exposes ecological damage caused by government-approved mining. Villagers report worsening landslides, crop damage, degraded grasslands, and contaminated water. A senior villager in the video criticizes the authorities for prioritizing mining profits over community welfare and environmental safety.

Tibetan Glaciers Shrinking at Accelerated Pace: A new UNESCO report reveals a 26% loss in glacier area across Tibetan territories since 1960, with 7,000 glaciers disappearing entirely. The retreat is accelerating, heightening disaster risks and reducing freshwater supplies. The Tibetan Plateau, known as the world's Third Pole, plays a critical role in water availability for Asia.

Climate Change Threatens Tibet's Lakes and Infrastructure: A Chinese study finds that warming over the past 36 years has expanded lake areas by 26% on the Tibetan Plateau, increasing water volume and affecting local ecosystems. While water quality has improved, risks of lake overflows and damage to infrastructure like the Qinghai-Tibet Railway are rising, along with complex changes in regional carbon dynamics.

Environmental risk posed by China's Medog Dam project: During the 58th UNHRC session, the Office of Tibet in Geneva warned that China's proposed Medog Dam, set to be the world's largest hydroelectric project, poses major risks to Tibet's ecosystem and South Asia's water security. The dam, planned on the Yarlung Tsangpo River, threatens extensive deforestation, increased seismic activity, and disrupted glacier patterns. Tibetans within Tibet are expected to face habitat loss, food insecurity, and displacement. The CTA called for global cooperation to halt the project and protect environmental sustainability.

China authorizes controversial hydropower project in landslide-prone region of Tibet: China has greenlit the Motuo Hydropower Project despite warnings about frequent landslides and glacial collapses along the Yarlung Tsangpo River. Experts caution that such natural hazards could breach the dam and cause catastrophic flooding. The project may lead to the displacement of Tibetan communities and exacerbate political tensions, both domestically and with downstream nations like India and Bangladesh. Critics argue that while the shift to hydropower supports climate goals, it overlooks the severe local social and ecological costs.

Fearing climate breakdown, Chinese scientists propose turning Tibetan plateau into farmland: Chinese climate scientists have proposed transforming the Tibetan Plateau into a national agricultural hub in response to predicted global food shortages due to climate breakdown. A report by the National Climate Centre suggests developing plateau-specific agriculture using cold-resistant crops and AI-based monitoring systems. While the initiative aims to ensure China's food security, experts warn that increased human activity, such as farming and mining, could destabilize the fragile ecosystem and threaten biodiversity on the plateau.

Tibetans survived globe's last glacial maximum, belying previous assumptions: New research challenges earlier beliefs that humans couldn't survive Tibet's harsh climate during the last glacial maximum. Recent findings indicate that ancient Tibetans managed to endure extreme cold and high-altitude conditions, offering new insights into human resilience and adaptation on the plateau.

China Availing Tibet's Clean Energy to Cut Emissions: Tibet has transmitted over 15.8 billion kWh of clean energy since 2015, primarily hydropower, helping China reduce standard coal use by 4.85 million tonnes and CO₂ emissions by 13.58 million tonnes. Over 99% of Tibet's power is now clean energy, with a diversified system including solar, wind, and geothermal sources.

Dingri Earthquake Impact Far Greater Than Initially Reported: China has revealed that 681 villages, including 47 needing full rebuilding, were affected by the Jan 7 Dingri earthquake, displacing 120,000 people. Despite censorship and limited access to aid, reports now show severe damage to infrastructure, including 79 schools. Reconstruction efforts involve national teams to expedite recovery.

New Fungal Species Discovered on Qinghai-Tibet Plateau Researchers have identified 879 fungal species, including 19 new and 12 newly recorded in China, on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau. These findings, from over 3,000 specimens, highlight the region's unique ecosystem and the vital ecological role fungi play in nutrient cycling and maintaining balance.

Xizang Pushes for Ecological Civilization as Growth Strategy: Xizang (Tibet Autonomous Region) has expanded afforestation and grassland restoration, boosting forest coverage and reviving endangered species like Tibetan antelope and black-necked cranes. With high air and water quality, and a strong conservation framework, Tibet is positioned as a model for global ecological protection, though its fragile ecosystems remain vulnerable to climate change and human impact.

Tibetan Plateau Lakes Expanding Amid Global Drought Trends: NASA's three-decade survey shows a sharp increase in the number and size of lakes on the northern Tibetan Plateau, contrasting global drought trends. Between 1991 and 2023, the number of lakes over 0.1 km² grew from 4,385 to 6,159, and surface area expanded from 37,471 km² to 53,267 km². Researchers warn that continued expansion could submerge roads, settlements, and farmlands, posing ecological and societal risks.

China Doubles Estimate of Dingri Earthquake-Affected Tibetans: Chinese authorities have revised the number of people impacted by January's 7.1-magnitude Dingri earthquake to over 120,000, up from 60,000. While the death toll remains at 126, extensive damage includes 79 schools and numerous villages. Reconstruction and relocation efforts are underway, though restrictions on independent aid and reporting have drawn criticism.

China Cites Yarlung Tsangpo Dam in Climate Plans Despite Risks: China has included the controversial Yarlung Tsangpo hydropower dam in its climate action plans, aiming for carbon neutrality by 2060. The project, near India's border in seismically active Tibet, raises regional concerns due to its strategic implications and environmental risks, including vulnerability to earthquakes, such as the recent Dingri quake that damaged nearby dams.

China Expands Renewable Energy Plans While Increasing Coal Use: China has announced new offshore wind farms and energy bases in deserts as part of its carbon neutrality goals. Despite citing projects like the Yarlung Tsangpo dam, it will continue expanding coal production due to rising energy demands. China missed its 2024 target for reducing carbon intensity, highlighting ongoing tensions between economic growth and environmental goals.

China Reopens Mount Everest Scenic Area After Earthquake Closure The Mt Everest area in Tibet, known locally as Mount Qomolangma, has reopened to tourists after being closed due to a 6.8-magnitude earthquake in January that killed 126 and injured 188. Although the quake impacted Dingri, home to the mountain's northern base camp, no major geological changes were observed. Authorities conducted a 35-day safety inspection before reopening. The local tourism sector is already seeing bookings, and the area had received over 547,600 tourists last year, generating \$15.3 million in revenue.

Tibet in Exile

China's 2023 White Paper Reasserts Sinicization of Tibet: China's State Council released a White Paper claiming Tibet has "entered its best period," reaffirming CCP's Tibet narrative, justifying Sinicization policies, and denying Tibetan cultural and political autonomy.

Bill to prevent administrative deadlock sent for review: Tibetan Parliament voted to send a proposed amendment to "the Rule of Budget" to an ad hoc committee for review. The bill, introduced by CTA President Penpa Tsering, outlines contingency financial procedures for emergencies when governance structures are compromised. While some MPs supported it as precautionary, others criticised it as hypothetical and excluding the Parliamentary Secretariat.

Tibetan Parliament elects new Justice Commissioners and Auditor General: The 17th Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile unanimously passed a motion of solidarity with Tibetans inside Tibet and condemned China's language restrictions. Yeshe Wangmo was elected Chief Justice Commissioner—marking the first female appointment. Dawa Phunkyi and Phagpa Tsering were elected as Justice Commissioners, while Tashi Topgyal was elected Auditor General. Budgets for the Office of Tibet (Washington DC) and TCDF were also approved.

Tibetan Parliament condemns China's restrictions on Tibetan language: The Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile unanimously passed a six-point solidarity motion that condemned China's restrictions on the Tibetan language, reaffirmed Tibet's independence, and called for the release of political prisoners including the 11th Panchen Lama. The motion also criticised China's environmental exploitation and called for unity among Tibetans in exile.

VOA halts operations in Dharamshala; RFA to follow next month: CTA President revealed that Voice of America has ceased operations in Dharamshala and Radio Free Asia will close by end of April due to US funding cuts. The Association of Tibetan Journalists condemned the decision, citing threats to press freedom and Tibetan culture. Chinese media celebrated the closures, while most Tibetan lawmakers called for funding restoration.

SFT France Sends Legal Notice to Musée Guimet: Tibetan activists demand reinstatement of "Tibet" in museum labels, accusing it of erasing Tibetan identity and promoting China's narrative.

Bhutan Refers to Tibet as 'Xizang': Bhutan faces backlash from Tibetans for using China's preferred term, seen as aiding cultural erasure and legitimizing occupation.

USCIRF Denounces China on Dalai Lama Succession: The US religious freedom body criticizes China's interference in the Dalai Lama's succession and ongoing repression of Tibetan Buddhists.

China Redesignated CPC in US Report: USCIRF recommends China be redesignated as a "Country of Particular Concern" for egregious religious freedom violations, including in Tibet.

ICT reiterates concerns of UN Special Rapporteur on status of Tsongon Tsering: UN Special Rapporteurs have sent an allegation letter to China expressing concern over the detention of Tibetan environmental defender Tsongon Tsering, citing violations related to his protest against sand mining in Ngaba. The letter questions due process, highlights fear among relatives due to ID surveillance, and criticizes the extended prison sentence imposed for his refusal to plead guilty.

All Party Indian Parliamentary Forum for Tibet and Core Group for Tibetan Cause – India hold meeting on Tibet advocacy and awareness initiatives: Indian MPs and Tibetan representatives convened to strengthen parliamentary advocacy and raise awareness on Tibet. Discussions addressed challenges faced by Tibetans in India, lack of recognition of Identity Certificates, and resolved to develop actionable plans to boost support for the Tibetan cause.

Tenth Day of Ninth Session of Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile: The Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile reviewed and approved various departmental budgets, including those of settlements and international offices. Sikyong Penpa Tsering addressed budget concerns and housing policies. Motions for increment and reduction were approved, and the session was adjourned after detailed deliberations.

Minnesota State Capitol hosts celebration for Dalai Lama's upcoming 90th birthday: A ceremony was held at the Minnesota State Capitol to honor His Holiness the Dalai Lama's upcoming 90th birthday. Organized by the Office of Tibet, the U.S. Chotrul Monlam Association, and the Tibetan American Foundation of Minnesota, the event featured speeches from leaders like Dr. Namgyal Choedup and Kyabje Jangtse Choje Gosok Rinpoche, who emphasized the Dalai Lama's lifelong dedication to compassion and peace. Over 15 Minnesota officials received copies of the Dalai Lama's book *Voice for the Voiceless* and commemorative coins. The CTA declared 2025 the "Year of Compassion" and announced global events to highlight His Holiness's four principal commitments.

"Do-No Harm when visiting" – ICT advises official delegations to Tibet: The International Campaign for Tibet (ICT) released new guidelines urging official delegations visiting Tibet to follow a "Do-No-Harm Principle" and avoid amplifying Chinese state propaganda. The document stresses the importance of accurate assessments and highlights how China uses orchestrated visits to misrepresent the reality in Tibet. ICT President Tencho Gyatso emphasized that false portrayals allow ongoing repression to continue unchecked. The guidelines also call for unfettered access for international observers, aligning with demands made during the 2024 UN Universal Periodic Review.

Tibetans express concern about gutting of RFA, but say, 'We still hear you': Tibetans inside Tibet voiced distress over cuts to Radio Free Asia (RFA) and Voice of America (VOA), fearing the loss of their only access to uncensored news. Despite funding cuts and staff furloughs, RFA continues limited broadcasts. Chinese state media celebrated the move, while Tibetans expressed gratitude and urged U.S. authorities to restore funding. Listening to RFA remains risky, with China jamming frequencies and punishing those caught tuning in. Former political prisoner Golog Jigme stressed that RFA and VOA are vital for information in a region where media freedom is non-existent.

Westminster University Students Engage with Tibet's Political Struggle in London: Fifteen MA students from the University of Westminster attended a session at the Office of Tibet, London, to explore the role of non-state actors and paradiplomacy. Secretary Tenzin Kunga offered a geopolitical overview, while Representative Tsering Yangkey emphasized ethical diplomacy and grounded understanding. Accountant Tenzin Zeydhan introduced the Green and Blue Book initiatives to promote Tibetan unity and global solidarity. A robust Q&A followed, covering China's policies in Tibet and East Turkestan, the Tibetan government-in-exile's legitimacy, and international support. The session concluded with the gifting of *Tibet Brief 2020* and ceremonial Khatag.

Ninth Day of Tibetan Parliament Focuses on Education, Reception Centres, and Home Affairs: The Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile continued with budget approvals for Tibetan Reception Centres in Nepal, Sonauli, and Dharamshala. Kalons Gyari Dolma and Tharlam Dolma addressed issues regarding staff accommodation, educational achievements, retirement quarters for teachers, and Sunday language schools. Sikyong Penpa Tsering clarified queries on the Department of Home's budget, with discussions focusing on undocumented Tibetans in Nepal, sustaining settlements, and strengthening co-operative societies.

Eighth Day Highlights Budget Approvals Across Key Departments: Parliament approved budgets for the Department of Finance, TAWS, SARD, and His Holiness the Dalai Lama's Charitable Trust. Sikyong Penpa Tsering addressed questions on financial independence, land ownership, and pensions. Budgets for the Department of Religion and Culture and the Department of Health were also passed, with discussions on monastic support, cultural events, healthcare awareness, and immunization efforts.

Tibetan Parliament Reviews Judicial Regulations and Overseas Offices: On its seventh day, the Parliament passed the first reading of three legislative bills related to the Tibetan Justice Commission. Budgets for overseas Tibetan offices in Brussels, Paris, Pretoria, Taipei, and Brazil were approved, along with those for the Election Commission, Public Service Commission, and Auditor General's offices. Sikyong Penpa Tsering and DIIR Kalon Norzin Dolma addressed all queries during the session.

Tibetan Language Courses to End at University of Bern: The University of Bern, the only Swiss university offering Tibetan language courses, will discontinue them from autumn as part of ending its Central Asian Cultural Studies program. Tibetan student Tenzin Yundung expressed concern, calling it a threat to preserving Tibetan culture in exile. Swiss Tibet organisations have urged the university to reconsider the decision.

Tibetan Community to Host Dalai Lama's 90th Birthday and Monlam Festival in Richmond: The Gyuto Foundation and the U.S. Monlam Festival will co-host a three-day prayer festival and celebration from March 28-30 in Richmond, California, culminating in the Dalai Lama's 90th birthday. Events are open to all, with English translation and meals provided. The celebration also marks the Gyuto Foundation's 25th anniversary.

Dalai Lama's UK Representative Urges Action in Cardiff: During an outreach event in Cardiff, Dalai Lama's UK representative Tsering Yangkey met Welsh leaders to highlight China's repression in Tibet. She called for action against colonial boarding schools, language suppression, and transnational repression targeting Tibetans abroad. Welsh politician Mark Drakeford pledged support for motions protecting Tibetan linguistic rights.

28 European Nations Condemn China's Abuses in Tibet at UNHRC: At the 58th UN Human Rights Council session, 28 European nations issued a joint statement condemning human rights violations in Tibet and Xinjiang. They highlighted forced boarding schools, cultural suppression, and arrests of Tibetan activists. The group urged China to grant UN access to Tibet and to end transnational repression.

Representative Yangkey Connects with Tibetan Communities in the UK: Representative Tsering Yangkey visited Tibetan communities in Bristol and Cardiff and the Bonpo Centre in London as part of her outreach beyond London. In Bristol, she attended the weekend Tibetan language and culture school and encouraged community participation in preserving Tibetan heritage. In Cardiff, she met with Tibetans and urged unity, participation in CTA programs, and celebration of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's 90th birthday as part of the upcoming Year of Compassion.

Parliament Debates TSJC Judicial Bills: The Tibetan Parliament in Exile passed the first readings of three judicial bills related to the Tibetan Supreme Justice Commission, aiming to formalize legal frameworks before appointing the Chief Justice and two justices. Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel clarified that the original enactment dates remain, and future amendments can follow once appointments are made.

Terminology Board Finalizes 500 New Tibetan Terms: The 39th Tibetan Terminology Standardising Board meeting finalized over 500 new standard Tibetan terms across various fields, bringing the total to over 21,000. The project, supported by DANIDA, continues to publish glossaries and maintain an accessible database online and via the TibTerm app.

Sikyong Addresses USAID Grant Cut Concerns: Following concerns over an 83% cut in USAID programs, Sikyong Penpa Tsering assured the Tibetan public of continued US support, citing a letter from Secretary of State Marco Rubio reaffirming the US commitment to Tibetan human rights and freedoms.

Experts Convene at TPI for World Water Day Panel on Conservation: The Tibet Policy Institute hosted a World Water Day panel emphasizing sustainable water management in hill regions like Dharamshala. Experts including TPI's Dechen Palmo and Ven. Lobsang Dhondup discussed global water scarcity and practical conservation methods. A key highlight was the release of a new paper by Ven. Dhondup proposing actionable strategies. TPI expressed hope for broader application of these ideas beyond Dharamshala.

Freedom Trail Trek to Commemorate Dalai Lama's Escape: A six-day 'Freedom Trail' trek from March 31 to April 5 will retrace the Dalai Lama's 1959 escape route into India. Organized by the Tawang administration, the trek invites public participation to reflect on the journey and spread the Dalai Lama's message of peace and compassion. The route includes historical sites like Gorzam Chorten and Lungla, concluding in Tawang.

Tibetan Parliament Reviews Key Legislative Amendments: The sixth day of the 9th session of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile saw first readings of multiple legislative procedures, including rules on public service, budget, housing, and salaries for CTA officials. An Ad Hoc Committee presented a report on removing elected dignitaries. A new bill concerning the Tibetan Code of Civil Procedure was introduced, with further discussions scheduled.

Indian Himalayan Council Urges Bharat Ratna for Dalai Lama: The Indian Himalayan Council of Nalanda Buddhist Tradition has appealed to PM Modi to confer the Bharat Ratna on the Dalai Lama. Citing his spiritual leadership, promotion of Nalanda traditions, and global advocacy for peace, the council emphasized the importance of safeguarding the Gaden Phodrang's authority over the reincarnation process and rejecting any political interference.

Tibetan Parliament Approves Budgets for Global Offices: On the fifth day of its ninth session, the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile approved the 2025-2026 budgets for multiple Offices of Tibet worldwide, including those in Delhi, London, Geneva, Tokyo, Moscow, and Kathmandu. The session acknowledged the efforts of Representatives and Secretaries of these offices and welcomed Indian official Shri Sanjeev Bhot as an observer.

IHCNBT Asserts Dalai Lama's Reincarnation as Sacred and Non-Political: At its inaugural general assembly, the Indian Himalayan Council of Nalanda Buddhist Tradition (IHCNBT) affirmed its support for the Dalai Lama's sole authority in determining his reincarnation, rejecting any external interference. Leaders emphasized that the process must remain rooted in Tibetan Buddhist tradition and upheld His Holiness's cultural and spiritual ties with India.

Bhutan's Use of "Xizang" Sparks Criticism in Tibetan Parliament: Tibetan MP Lhagyari Namgyal Dolkar criticized Bhutan's reference to a Tibetan cultural troupe as from the "Xizang Autonomous Region," calling it a reflection of growing Chinese influence. DIIR Minister Norzin Dolma confirmed that a formal letter is being prepared for Bhutan, and reiterated concerns about Chinese terminology reshaping global perceptions of Tibet.

Buddhist Council Urges Language and Cultural Preservation: During the IHCNBT assembly in Delhi, Lochen Tulku Rinpoche called for protecting Himalayan languages and transforming monasteries into educational centers. He cited His Holiness the Dalai Lama's advice on strengthening Buddhist knowledge and institutions, and highlighted recent efforts, including Bhoti language recognition by NIOS.

Tibet Advocates Highlight Human Rights Abuses at UNHRC: During the 58th session of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva, ICT and allied Tibetan organizations raised grave concerns over China's rights violations in Tibet. A key side event showcased the environmental impact of Chinese hydropower projects, while multiple statements criticized coercive boarding schools, religious repression, and the sealing off of Tibet after a recent earthquake. ICT, Tibet Policy Institute, and other groups urged international access and action, as several countries—led by EU members, Germany, and Czechia—voiced support during the General Debate.

CTA Condemns Dam Projects and Cultural Erosion in Tibet: At a UNHRC side event on persecuted communities in China, Representative Thinlay Chukki from the Office of Tibet in Geneva condemned China's forced relocation of Tibetan nomads, monks, and farmers for reservoir construction. She warned these actions not only damage

Tibet's fragile environment but also endanger its culture and religion. Chukki emphasized the erosion of Tibetan identity through coercive boarding schools, religious bans, and ongoing surveillance, citing a powerful excerpt from His Holiness the Dalai Lama's recent book.

Representative Thinlay Chukki Addresses Rights Violations at UNHRC Side Event: Speaking at the Society for Threatened Peoples' side event during the 58th UNHRC session, Representative Thinlay Chukki joined human rights defenders from Uyghur, Kazakh, Christian, and Falun Gong communities to spotlight China's repression. Chukki underscored the grave threats to Tibetan language, culture, and religion—highlighting the Panchen Lama's decades-long disappearance and increased Chinese surveillance in monasteries. She called for global solidarity and action to protect the Tibetan way of life.

Trump Freeze on US Aid Hits Tibetan Govt-in-Exile: The Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) faces a major budget shortfall as US aid, which forms up to 50% of its funding, has been frozen under President Trump's cuts to "wasteful expenditure." The Rs 367.5 crore budget for 2025-26 will now require departmental cuts. The halted USAID programme worth Rs 200 crore, vital for Tibetan resilience in South Asia, adds to the crisis. Community leaders expressed concern but emphasized hope, resilience, and the need for self-reliance. The CTA relies primarily on diaspora contributions through the voluntary 'Green Book' system, with India contributing around 10% through various forms of support.

Tibetan National Uprising Day Observed in Mangaluru with Peaceful March: Over 300 Tibetan students in Mangaluru commemorated Tibetan National Uprising Day with a peaceful protest march under the theme "Remember. Resist. Return." Students carried powerful slogans and imagery to raise awareness about Tibet's occupation and ongoing repression. The event featured speeches from Indian Army veterans and local leaders, who expressed solidarity with the Tibetan cause and encouraged the youth to persevere in their struggle.

Tawang to Host 'Freedom Trail' Retracing Dalai Lama's 1959 Escape: Tawang District will hold a six-day commemorative trek titled the 'Freedom Trail,' retracing His Holiness the Dalai Lama's historic 1959 escape route from Tibet into India. Starting March 31, the trail will pass through symbolic locations before concluding in Tawang on April 5. Organisers hope the event will honour the Dalai Lama's journey and promote his message of peace, compassion, and resilience. The route commemorates the deeply emotional and significant chapter in Tibetan history.

China Welcomes Cuts to US-Funded Media Critical of Its Rights Record: China expressed satisfaction over US President Trump's move to defund Voice of America (VOA) and Radio Free Asia (RFA), which have reported extensively on China's human rights abuses in Tibet and East Turkestan. The decision has led to VOA staff being placed on leave, including at its Tibetan service. China's state media mocked the move, calling VOA a "lie factory." Critics argue this undermines press freedom, while the White House defends the cuts as stopping taxpayer-funded "radical propaganda."

Judge Blocks Shutdown of USAID Amid Constitutional Concerns: A US federal judge has halted the Trump administration's attempt to close USAID, calling it likely unconstitutional. The move, driven by Elon Musk's Department for Government Efficiency, had paused US aid, affecting programs supporting Tibetan refugees in India and Nepal. The ruling allows employees to access systems again but doesn't reinstate those on leave. The administration plans to appeal, citing its "America First" agenda to reduce foreign aid and redirect funds domestically.

Tibet Excluded from G7 Statement, Sparking Outcry from Activists: Tibetan activists criticized the G7 foreign ministers for omitting Tibet from their 2025 joint statement despite growing evidence of human rights abuses. Activists highlighted the mass placement of over a million Tibetan children in Mandarin-only boarding schools, calling it cultural erasure. They urged the G7 to confront China's oppressive policies, warning that silence implies complicity and undermines global human rights commitments.

ICT Urges Protection of Tibet Programs Amid US Aid Cuts: The International Campaign for Tibet raised concerns over Trump's executive orders cutting foreign assistance, warning that vital Tibet programs are at risk. These initiatives support the Central Tibetan Administration, Tibetan refugees, and independent media like VOA Tibetan. ICT emphasized that aid to Tibet aligns with US strategic interests, counters Chinese influence, and supports peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific.

Tibet Scores Zero in Global Freedom Index Again: Freedom House's 2025 report gave Tibet a score of 0/100 for the second consecutive year, citing severe political and religious repression under Chinese rule. The report highlighted mass surveillance, arbitrary detentions, and forced assimilation of Tibetan culture as key concerns.

Tibetan Parliament Debates US Funding Freeze and Self-Reliance: During the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile's budget session, MPs discussed the implications of the US funding cut and stressed the need for financial self-reliance. While President Penpa Tsering affirmed ongoing efforts to address the issue, several MPs criticized the Cabinet's lack of a proactive strategy.

Tibet Advocacy Alliance-India Urges Indian MPs to Act: Tibetan NGOs launched a 10-day advocacy campaign in Delhi, urging Indian MPs to recognize Tibet as an occupied country and raise Tibet-related concerns in Parliament. The delegation also emphasized the preservation of Tibetan identity and support for the Dalai Lama's 90th birthday celebrations.

Taiwan Workshop Voices Solidarity with Tibet: Youth activists and students from Tibet, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and other regions convened in Taiwan for a workshop titled *Closer to Tibet*. The participants condemned China's occupation of Tibet, affirmed support for the Dalai Lama, and called for Tibetan religious and political rights.

World Uyghur Congress Highlights China's Repression at UNHRC: At the 58th UN Human Rights Council session in Geneva, the World Uyghur Congress organized an exhibition spotlighting China's abuses against Uyghurs, including forced deportations, labour, abortions, and suppression of religious freedom. WUC President Turgunjan Alawdun urged international action to hold China accountable for ongoing atrocities.

Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile Discusses Budget and US Aid Suspension: On the second day of its 2025–2026 budget session, the 17th Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile deliberated on financial matters, including the impact of suspended US aid. Members stressed self-reliance while expressing gratitude for past support. Budgets for multiple departments, including the Kashag Secretariat and Tibetan Supreme Justice Commission, were approved, with the Department of Security's budget pending.

Tibetan Parliament Opens Budget Session with Call for Resilience: The 17th Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile's ninth session opened with remarks by Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel on Chinese repression during Tibetan National Uprising Day and the release of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's new book. He encouraged resilience among Tibetans, stating, "Never give up." The CTA's proposed budget of Rs. 3675.30 million was presented and tabled for debate.

Lobsang Phuntsok Remembered on 14th Anniversary of Self-Immolation: The CTA commemorated Tibetan monk Lobsang Phuntsok, who self-immolated in 2011 in protest of Chinese oppression. His act marked the second of over 150 known self-immolations since 2009, serving as a powerful call for Tibetan freedom. The CTA renewed its appeal for international awareness and resolution of Tibetan grievances.

Chinese Repression of Tibetans and Uyghurs: 'Switzerland Must Take Action Now: Switzerland's first government-commissioned study confirms widespread transnational repression of Tibetan and Uyghur communities, with victims facing surveillance, phishing attacks, and intimidation. Despite being home to one of the largest Tibetan diasporas, Swiss authorities are accused of hesitating to act for fear of jeopardizing trade ties with China. Activists say Switzerland's "change through trade" policy has failed, as China's interference continues unchecked. The delay in publishing the report, changes in asylum documentation, and failure to investigate embassy-linked violence point to systemic neglect. Human rights groups urge Switzerland to prioritize fundamental rights over economic interests in future trade negotiations.

Dalai Lama Criticizes Chinese Communist Leadership in New Book: In his newly released book *Voice for the Voiceless*, the Dalai Lama reflects on over seven decades of struggle with China, expressing deep frustration with the Chinese Communist leadership, whom he accuses of being unwilling to listen. The book recounts the Chinese invasion of Tibet, his escape into exile, and the long, unresolved Sino-Tibetan conflict. He warns of increasing repression under Xi Jinping, including forced assimilation of Tibetan children through Mandarin-only boarding schools, intensified surveillance, and the political control of religious institutions. Despite the grim situation, he appeals to the international community for continued support and stresses that Tibetans must be allowed to

determine their own future. He argues that the Tibetan issue is not about economic development but the survival of Tibetan identity, culture, and dignity.

Tibetan Parliament Begins Budget Session Amid US Aid Cuts: The Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile began its 2025-26 budget session in Dharamshala, focusing on reduced US funding to the CTA. Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel highlighted Chinese repression in Tibet and quoted His Holiness the Dalai Lama's new book. The proposed budget is Rs. 3675.30 million. Deliberations will continue over the 13-day session.

Deputy Speaker Urges Cultural Preservation at U-Tsang Cholkha Anniversary: At the U-Tsang Cholkha Association's 42nd anniversary, Deputy Speaker Dolma Tsering called for equal representation of Tibetan provinces, cultural preservation, youth empowerment, and public support for the CTA. She warned against China's Sinicization efforts, including colonial boarding schools and red tourism.

Mass Protest in London Against China's Planned Mega-Embassy: Thousands, including Tibetans, Uyghurs, and Hong Kongers, protested China's proposed "mega-embassy" at London's Royal Mint Court. Rights groups warned the site could enable surveillance of dissidents. The protest spotlighted China's human rights abuses and cultural repression in Tibet and East Turkistan.

Nechung Oracle Calls for Patience Amid External Funding Challenges: The Nechung Oracle advised CTA President Penpa Tsering to remain patient regarding foreign aid cuts, promising clarity with time. The oracle emphasized perseverance and prescribed spiritual rituals, urging trust in the CTA's long-term mission.

Tibetans Clash With Police on Uprising Anniversary in New Delhi: On the 66th anniversary of the Tibetan Uprising, Tibetans in exile marched in New Delhi and Dharamshala, chanting anti-China slogans and attempting to approach the Chinese embassy. Police intervened and detained some protestors. Penpa Tsering condemned China's strategy to erase Tibetan identity, urging liberal democracies like India to speak out. The article highlights historical context and suggests autonomy as a peaceful solution.

Dalai Lama Foresees Long Life, Reaffirms Devotion to Dharma: Concluding teachings on the Day of Miracles, the Dalai Lama shared dreams of living to 110 and visions of Buddha. Speaking to 6,000 followers in McLeodganj, he emphasized his lifelong dedication to Buddhist teachings and his role in exile. He reflected on spiritual experiences and reaffirmed his commitment to serving the Dharma in his remaining years.

Penpa Tsering Condemns China's Claims on Dalai Lama Reincarnation: Tibetan leader Penpa Tsering criticized China's attempt to control the Dalai Lama's reincarnation as "blasphemous," emphasizing that only the Dalai Lama can decide his rebirth. He argued that a non-religious, communist government has no authority over spiritual traditions and accused Beijing of suppressing Tibetan identity while maintaining international double standards.

Dalai Lama States Reincarnation Will Occur Outside China: In his latest book *Voice for the Voiceless*, the Dalai Lama declared he will reincarnate in a "free world," rejecting Chinese interference in the spiritual process. China dismissed him as a separatist, while Tibetans asserted their right to follow traditional practices without state intervention. The statement renews tensions over religious freedom and cultural sovereignty.

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Dalai Lama's New Book Chronicles Struggle for Tibet and Clarifies Succession Plan: In *Voice for the Voiceless*, the Dalai Lama reflects on decades of non-violent efforts to secure Tibetan autonomy and preserve its unique identity. The book highlights the importance of the Middle Way Approach, international support—particularly from the US—and the critical role of the Tibetan diaspora. He reaffirms that his reincarnation will occur in the free world and cautions against any politically-motivated selections by China. The book ends with a call to Tibetans to remain hopeful and urges the global community to continue supporting Tibet.

Tibetans in North America Commemorate 66th Tibetan National Uprising Day: Tibetans across North America marked the 66th anniversary of the 1959 Tibetan Uprising with demonstrations, speeches, and symbolic flag hoistings. Events emphasized Tibet’s historical independence and condemned ongoing repression by the Chinese government. Statements from the Kashag and Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile were read aloud, and solidarity was expressed by political leaders and local supporters, including at the UN headquarters in New York.

Parliamentarian Tenzin Jigdal Honors Tibetan Resistance at Chushi Gangdrug Event: At the 52nd board meeting of the Central Dokham Chushi Gangdrug, MP Tenzin Jigdal launched a book on Commander Andruk Gonpo Tashi and highlighted the organization’s legacy in resisting Chinese occupation. Marking Tibetan Women’s Uprising Day, he paid tribute to Tibetan patriots and urged greater integration of Tibetan resistance history into school curricula to strengthen national identity and resilience among youth.

66th Tibetan National Uprising Day Commemorated in Northern Europe: Tibetans and supporters across London, Copenhagen, Stockholm, Oslo, and Vilnius held protests in front of Chinese embassies. London events included a flag-raising ceremony, interfaith prayers in Glasgow, and speeches by UK MPs and activists reaffirming solidarity with Tibet.

Tibetan Women-in-Exile Protest in Shimla: Marking the 66th Tibetan Women’s Uprising Day, Tibetan women in Shimla organized a peaceful protest demanding justice and the return of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to a free Tibet. The protest recalled the 1959 uprising led by Tibetan women against Chinese occupation.

Tibetan Women’s Uprising: A Global Call for Justice: Tibetan women-in-exile in Shimla gathered to honour the historic 1959 uprising and called for international support in their fight for justice, freedom, and human rights. The event highlighted ongoing global solidarity among Tibetan women.

TYC Leads 66th Uprising Day Protests in India: Tibetan Youth Congress, alongside key Tibetan organizations, led coordinated protests in Dharamshala, Delhi, and Guwahati. Events included rallies, speeches, and symbolic actions like flag-raising and candlelight marches to condemn China’s occupation and cultural genocide in Tibet.

Chinese govt’s policies threatening Tibet’s identity, says Sikyong: Sikyong Penpa Tsering, during the 66th Tibetan Uprising Day, condemned China’s sinicisation policies and unchecked mining projects that threaten Tibet’s environment and identity. He criticized restrictions on monasteries, forced enrollment of Tibetan children in colonial-style boarding schools, and limitations on Tibetan language, calling them violations of human rights and international law. The Tibetan parliament-in-exile also rejected China’s unrealistic preconditions for dialogue.

Tibetan diaspora protests in Vienna on 66th anniversary of Uprising Day: Around 200 Tibetans protested at the Chinese Embassy in Vienna, joined by Uyghur and Chinese Christian communities. Protesters condemned the CCP’s repression of minorities, with participation from Austrian rights groups. The march ended at Stephansplatz, marking the 1959 uprising and ongoing rights violations under CCP rule.

Governments should support Tibetans in Exile, says Human Rights Watch: HRW called for increased global support for Tibetans in exile, warning of China's aggressive assimilation tactics. The report highlighted mass surveillance, closure of Tibetan institutions, restrictions on movement, and Mandarin imposition. HRW urged backing for exile organizations preserving Tibetan identity and exposing rights abuses.

Tibetans and Japanese Supporters Observe the 66th Anniversary of the National Uprising in Tibet: In Tokyo, Tibetans, Japanese supporters, and representatives of Uyghur and Southern Mongolian communities marked the 66th Uprising Day with protests and a peace march. Speakers condemned Chinese colonial policies, called for Japanese government support, and emphasized solidarity. Nearly 100 participants marched through Shibuya, with public support shown along the route.

Tibetan Cabinet Reaffirms Middle Way Approach Amid Chinese Oppression: On the 66th anniversary of Tibetan National Uprising Day, the Kashag reiterated its unwavering commitment to the Dalai Lama's Middle Way Approach, emphasizing non-violence and dialogue to resolve the Sino-Tibet conflict. The statement denounced China's systematic sinicization policies, cultural erasure, and human rights abuses, while upholding Tibetans' resilience and spiritual identity.

Dalai Lama's Fourth Commitment: Revival of Ancient Indian Wisdom: Highlighting the Dalai Lama's fourth commitment, the Kashag emphasized the role of Tibetans in preserving and reviving ancient Indian wisdom through extensive Tibetan translations of Indian texts. His dialogues with scientists, promotion of analytical reasoning, and SEE learning have influenced global education and scientific discourse, reinforcing the deep Indo-Tibetan knowledge connection.

Tibetan Institutions Uphold Cultural Legacy Through Education and Research: Tibetan academic institutions in exile—including the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, Dalai Lama Institute for Higher Education, and Tibet House Delhi—continue to preserve and promote Tibetan and Indian knowledge systems. These institutions provide education in Buddhist philosophy, logic, and modern sciences, ensuring cultural continuity and the Dalai Lama's vision of secular ethics and ancient wisdom revival.

Taiwan's Human Rights Commission Joins Tibet Uprising Commemoration: For the first time, Taiwan's National Human Rights Commission members joined Taipei's annual march commemorating the 1959 Tibetan uprising. NHRC Vice Chair Wang Yu-ling called China's actions in Tibet a form of ethnic cleansing and genocide. The march highlighted China's violations of the 1951 Seventeen-Point Agreement and emphasized solidarity between Tibet and Taiwan against authoritarianism.

Governments Urged to Support Tibetan Exiles Amid China's Crackdown: Human Rights Watch called on global governments to increase support for Tibetan exile communities on the 66th anniversary of the Tibetan uprising. The report highlighted intensified repression under Xi Jinping, including surveillance, forced assimilation, school closures, and restrictions on communication. It also warned of Chinese interference in the Dalai Lama's succession and shrinking civil spaces for Tibetans both inside and outside China.

Taiwan Holds Vigil and Protest for Tibet, Warned Against China's Threats: A vigil and protest in Taipei marked the Tibetan uprising anniversary, warning Taiwan to learn from China's suppression of Tibet and Hong Kong. CTA Representative Kelsang Gyaltsen Bawa criticized China's cultural assimilation policies and transnational repression of Tibetans. Activists stressed unity against Chinese authoritarianism, while displaced Tibetan Tashi Tsering urged Taiwanese to stand strong to avoid a similar fate.

Tibet Honors 1989 Uprising Anniversary with Prayer Service: The Central Tibetan Administration held a prayer ceremony at Tsuglagkhang on March 8 to mark the 29th anniversary of the 1989 Lhasa uprising. Sikyong Penpa Tsering emphasized the ongoing cultural resistance inside Tibet and urged the exile community to remain steadfast in their commitment to the Tibetan cause.

India Acts on Threat Against Dalai Lama from Tibetan Asylee in Australia: A Tibetan asylee in Australia, Senge (aka Gangser), has been booked under India's new criminal code for issuing online threats against the Dalai Lama and CTA. The act is seen as a potential China-backed attempt to sow discord within the Tibetan community, prompting heightened security for the Dalai Lama.

Amherst, Massachusetts to Observe Tibetan Uprising Day: The town of Amherst will host its annual Tibetan Uprising Day event on March 10, featuring a Tibetan flag raising, protest songs, and a solidarity march to Easthampton. Local officials and Tibetan leaders will speak in support of the Tibetan exile community and its contributions.

U.S. State Department Calls Tibet a 'Front Line' in Global Freedom Struggle: At a Tibetan New Year event, Acting Under Secretary Albert Gombis described Tibet as a key front in the global struggle against CCP repression. He reaffirmed U.S. support for dialogue between China and the Dalai Lama's representatives and criticized China's interference in Tibetan religious succession and identity.

Prayer Offering to Kyabje Ling Rinpoche Attended by Tibetan Parliamentarians: MP Geshe Atong Rinchen Gyaltsen of the Standing Committee of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile participated in a long-life prayer ceremony for Kyabje Ling Rinpoche at Drepung Loseling Jangchup Choeling monastery in Delhi. The ceremony was also attended by officials from the Department of Religion and Culture and other parliamentarians.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama Receives Long-Life Prayers from Namgyal Monastery and Gaden Phodrang: During an auspicious ceremony at the Old Palace in Dharamshala, monks and staff from Namgyal Monastery and Gaden Phodrang offered long-life prayers to His Holiness the Dalai Lama. His Holiness reflected on his lifelong efforts to promote peace and inner values, emphasizing the global relevance of Tibetan Buddhist knowledge and expressing hope for continued contributions, especially in China.

US State Department Hosts Losar Reception in Support of Tibet: At the annual Losar gathering, US officials reaffirmed support for Tibetan human rights and cultural preservation. Senior Official Albert Gombis criticized CCP repression, including interference in the Dalai Lama's succession, and emphasized Tibet's importance to global stability. Secretary of State Marco Rubio extended New Year wishes and reaffirmed America's commitment to Tibetan freedoms.

Tibetan Community Observes Losar Amid Grief and Resilience: This year's Losar observance began on a somber note with prayers for earthquake victims in Tibet and mourning the passing of Kasur Gyalo Thondup. Despite the loss, Tibetans reflected on resilience and unity, welcoming the Year of the Wood Snake with hope for peace and continued solidarity.

US Officially Ends Aid to Tibetans Following Policy Review: CTA President Penpa Tsering confirmed that the US has formally discontinued all aid to Tibetans after a policy review. The cut affects key programs including education, welfare, and healthcare initiatives previously funded through USAID and the State Department. The CTA plans to hold a cabinet meeting to explore alternatives and has asked the Department of Finance to prepare for the worst-case scenario. Despite the aid halt, the US reaffirmed support for the broader Tibet issue.

UN Rights Chief Alarmed by Situation in Tibet, Urges International Pressure: UN High Commissioner Volker Türk raised concerns over China's education policies and restrictions on freedom of expression and religion in Tibet. In his global update to the UN Human Rights Council, he called for increased global pressure on China and stressed the need for progress in addressing ongoing rights violations, including the arbitrary detention of lawyers, human rights defenders, and journalists.

Tibet is One of the Least Free Places in the World: Freedom House Report: Freedom House ranked Tibet among the world's least free regions, scoring zero in political and civil liberties in its 2025 report. The report highlighted forced assimilation policies, mass boarding schools, and suppression of self-determination as key issues. Tibet has consistently remained in the lowest tier of global freedom rankings since 2015, even scoring lower than mainland China.

Japan's Tibet Support Groups Hold Annual Meeting: Tibetan support groups in Japan held their annual online meeting, urging continued global pressure against Chinese oppression and calling for the protection of Tibetan identity, language, and religion.

House Approves \$4 Million Loan for Tibet Town Project: Despite concerns over transparency and financial risks, the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile approved a \$4 million CTA loan to support a Tibetan township project in Minnesota aimed at cultural preservation.

Eleventh Day of Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile Session: The Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile passed multiple second-reading amendments to laws on public service, salaries, and civil procedure, while deferring bills lacking consensus for future sessions.

Minnesota's Tibet Town Project Sparks Internal Debate: MPs debated CTA's \$4 million loan to the Minnesota project, with some raising transparency and financial concerns, while others defended it as essential for diaspora cohesion and heritage preservation.

Protests, Detentions and Other News from the PRC

Uyghur Rapper Missing After Sentencing for “Extremist” Lyrics: Yashar Shohret, a 26-year-old Uyghur rapper involved in the 2022 “White Paper” protests, has been missing since his August 2023 arrest in Chengdu. He was sentenced in June 2024 to three years in prison for writing lyrics deemed extremist and is currently held at Wusu Prison in Xinjiang. Rights groups highlight his case as part of a wider crackdown on Uyghur cultural expression, marked by secretive detentions and suppression of dissent under China's ongoing repression in the region.

CHINA'S TIBET POLICY

Graphics: Ethnic minority representation in Xizang

30 March 2025, [CGTN](#)

Ethnic minority representation in China's Xizang Autonomous Region's governance continues to expand, according to the white paper *Human Rights in Xizang in the New Era*, released by China's State Council Information Office.

Currently, ethnic minorities hold key positions across all levels of government, including 26 at the provincial level and 512 at the prefectural level. More than half of the township-level leadership consists of ethnic minority officials.

In legislative representation, 89.2 percent of the deputies in people's congresses at four levels in Xizang are from ethnic minorities. The number of deputies at the county and township levels has increased by nearly 6,500 since 2016. In the 12th Xizang People's Congress, ethnic minorities comprise 65.42 percent of the 428 deputies, while 68 percent of the region's delegation to the 14th National People's Congress consists of members from Tibetan or other minority groups, including Monba and Lhoba.

Ethnic minorities also play a major role in national political advisory bodies, with 93.1 percent of Xizang members in the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) National Committee coming from minority backgrounds.

China doubles down on move to appoint its own next Dalai Lama

30 March 2025, [Tibetan Review](#)

In what may be a response to the Dalai Lama's move, made known in his most recently published book, to have his reincarnation taking birth in the free world, without any possibility of interference by Beijing, China has said Mar 29 that it would not recognize any such rebirth.

"If the next Dalai Lama is declared to have been reincarnated abroad, I think it is illegal," the *scmp.com* Mar 29 quoted Li Decheng, deputy director general of the official China Tibetology Research Centre, as saying at a forum in Beijing on Mar 27.

"He cannot be recognised," Li has said, contending that the concept of a foreign successor to the exiled Tibetan spiritual leader "does not conform to religious rituals, historical customs or China's management methods for the reincarnation of Tibetan Buddhism's living Buddhas."

The forum, organised by the All-China Journalists Association and open to reporters and diplomats, was stated to have been held to explain the Communist Party of China-state's narrative on the reincarnation system of Tibetan Buddhism's living Buddhas.

This narrative radically differs from the centuries-old Tibetan Buddhist tradition which holds that it is the reincarnating lama who determines his own rebirth. In keeping with it, the Dalai Lama has said in his new book, *Voice for the Voiceless*, published earlier this month: "Since the purpose of a reincarnation is to carry on the work of the predecessor, the new Dalai Lama will be born in the free world so that the traditional mission of the Dalai Lama – that is, to be the voice for universal compassion, the spiritual leader of Tibetan Buddhism, and the symbol of Tibet embodying the aspirations of the Tibetan people – will continue."

In a rewriting of the historicity of this system, however, Li has said the reincarnations of the Dalai Lamas had historically been "approved by the central government", referring to the emperor Shunzhi in the early Qing dynasty (1644-1911) who he has falsely claimed anointed the fifth Dalai Lama.

The title "Dalai Lama" (Ocean of Wisdom) was conferred on the Tibetan lama Sonam Gyatso by the Mongol chief Altan Khan, a descendant of Kublai Khan, in 1578 to honour him after receiving a religious teaching from him, with the title being applied posthumously to his two preceding incarnations as well, making him the third.

China's attempts to interfere in the Dalai Lama reincarnation process happened as early as during the latter-day Qing emperor Qianlong, who proposed the "golden urn" method of selecting the reincarnated spiritual leader. But Tibetan history says the golden urn method was only a suggestion from a religious patron in the event of a difficulty in making the final recognition and was, in fact, hardly ever used.

Claiming that "the Dalai Lama reincarnation system is a Chinese system," Li has said "the reincarnation of the Dalai Lama will proceed normally" with his "mother temple in China, the Drepung Monastery," making "a request to the authorities to find the reincarnated child."

Turning the very basis for the recognition of the reincarnation of a top Tibetan lama on its head, Li has said "the Dalai Lama's reincarnation ... could not be proposed by himself while he was still alive."

As regards the Dalai Lama's recognition of the 11th Panchen Lama Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, some 30 years ago, Li has maintained that it was "illegal" and "invalid", adding, "as far as I know, he is currently living in a good condition and does not want to be disturbed by others."

Nevertheless, the fate and whereabouts of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima remains one of China's best kept secrets to this day. The Panchen Lama is Tibet's second most prominent religious figure, after the Dalai Lama. The Chinese government has installed Gyaincain Norbu in his place as the 11th Panchen Lama in a reprisal against the Dalai Lama for announcing his

recognition of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima on May 14, 1995.

Right to study and use Tibetan language guaranteed: white paper

28 March 2025, [Xinhua](#)

The right to study and use the Tibetan language is guaranteed in southwest China's Xizang Autonomous Region, said a white paper released by the State Council Information Office on Friday.

All resolutions and regulations adopted by the People's Congress of Xizang and all general-purpose official documents and public notices released by people's governments at all levels in the region and their subordinate departments are published in both standard Chinese and Tibetan, it said.

The Tibetan language is widely used in publishing, media, and daily life. By the end of 2024, Xizang had 17 periodicals and 11 newspapers in the Tibetan language and had published 46.85 million copies of 8,794 Tibetan-language books, according to the white paper.

In addition to traditional media, new media has also been developed in the Tibetan language, including official accounts on social media, said the white paper titled "Human Rights in Xizang in the New Era."

Courses on both standard Chinese and Tibetan are taught in primary and secondary schools in Xizang, it added.

China makes Tibet a model area for revised law on ethnic unity, progress since Mar 1

24 March 2025, [Tibetan Review](#)

China talked about formulating for Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) a law on what it called "promoting ethnic unity and progress to forge a strong sense of national identity" for the purpose of "reinforcing the Chinese people as one cohesive community" during the two annual sessions in Beijing, which began on Mar 4 and 5 and concluded on Mar 11. However, regulations on the establishment of model areas for ethnic unity and progress in TAR had already begun to be implemented there since Mar 1, according to China's official [chinadaily.com.cn](#) Mar 23.

Regulations on the establishment of model areas for ethnic unity and progress in Xizang autonomous region have been implemented since Mar 1, strengthening legal foundation for promoting ethnic unity, the report said, citing the regional legislative authority and using China's Sinicized name for Tibet.

While the national-level law was originally issued on Jan 11, 2020, these regulations are the first of their kind at the provincial level in the PRC, the report said.

A news conference was held on Mar 21 in Lhasa to highlight the significance of implementing the newly revised regulations on the Establishment of Model Areas for Ethnic Unity and Progress in the Xizang autonomous region and explain the principles followed in the revision process, the report said.

Tenzin Lhundrup, director of the ethnic, religious, foreign, and overseas Chinese affairs committee of the region's People's Congress, has said at the news conference that the timely revision of the regulation will play a crucial role in providing a robust legal foundation for the promotion of fostering a strong sense of community for the Chinese nation.

The report said the newly revised regulations encompass seven chapters and 50 articles, covering topics such as duties and tasks, and social coordination.

However, the report did not cite or specify any of those provisions.

While China claims that its so-called Sinicization efforts in Tibet are meant to "foster a strong sense of community for the Chinese nation", critics see them as being meant to destroy Tibetan ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and religious identity, with the aim to eliminate the very foundation for engaging in any discussion with the exile Tibetan leadership.

China's former Tibet party chief took bribes totalling over 343 million yuan over 15 yrs

21 March 2025, [Tibetan Review](#)

Wu Yingjie, former Party chief of Tibet autonomous region (TAR), has pleaded guilty to bribery charges during a trial in Beijing on Mar 20, reported China's official *chinadaily.com.cn* Mar 20.

The report cited prosecutors as saying Wu had accepted bribes worth more than 343 million yuan (\$47.37 million) between Jun 2006 and Feb 2021 during his years of working in senior positions in TAR, including as the regional party secretary, vice-chairman of the regional government and head of the regional publicity department.

Prosecutors have told the court that Wu had used his positions to secure benefits for others in project contracting and business operations.

The Beijing No 3 Intermediate People's Court has said a verdict will be announced at a later date.

The hearing was stated to have been attended by more than 50 people, including national lawmakers and political advisers.

Although a native of Shandong province, Wu, 68, grew up in TAR where he also began his career in 1974, joining the Communist Party of China in 1987.

After being transferred out of TAR in 2021, Wu served as deputy head of the National People's Congress' Education, Science, Culture and Public Health

Committee between Oct 2021 and Mar 2023. And prior to his investigation in Jun 2024, he was a member of the Standing Committee of the 14th National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), serving as head of the CPPCC National Committee's Committee on Cultural, Historical Data and Studies.

China's party and government anti-corruption watchdogs have said Wu had violated Party disciplines and national laws, harming the region's development. They have also accused him of failing to implement the Party's strategy for governing Xizang and interfering with engineering projects for personal gain, the report said, using China's Sinicized name for Tibet (or TAR).

Wu, who worked as the Party Secretary of TAR from 2016 to 2021, maintained a hardline approach toward Tibetan affairs, aligning closely with Beijing's policies. His tenure was marked by a strong emphasis on Sinicization, ideological control, and stringent security measures. He prioritized political stability and Sinicization over Tibetan autonomy and cultural preservation. While occasionally speaking of respecting Tibetan customs, his actions were directed at the erosion of Tibetan identity under the guise of integration.

President Xi called for preserving distinctive culture in ethnic regions?

18 March 2025, [Tibetan Review](#)

China's state media said Mar 18 that president Xi Jinping had called for the preservation of the distinctive culture of people in areas with large ethnic minority populations, which appears to be in stark contrast with his previous calls for the Sinicization of such areas under the rubric of ethnic unity in the name of forging a "strong sense of community for the Chinese nation" in those areas.

Xi Jinping, general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, has stressed that areas with large ethnic minority populations should preserve their distinctive culture and let it shine through the integrated development of culture and tourism, reported China's official *Xinhua* news agency Mar 18.

However, it bears noting that Xi has made those remarks not in areas like Tibet or East Turkestan (Xinjiang), but in mainland China's southern province of Guizhou while inspecting a Dong ethnic minority village in Liping County. The Dong people number around 3 million and dwell in innumerable villages among the tree-clad hills dotting an extensive stretch of territory on the Hunan-Guizhou-Guangxi borders.

In contrast from what he has said in Guizhou's Liping county, Xi has, while visiting Qinghai province in Jun 2021 and Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) in Jul 2021, underscored his administration's priorities concerning

not only regional development but also cultural integration and “national unity” in the name of Sinicization. He called on local officials to foster a stronger sense of identification among Tibetans with the “great motherland, Chinese people, Chinese culture, the Chinese Communist Party, and socialism with Chinese characteristics.”

Those visits reflected Xi’s focus on integrating Tibet and Qinghai into the broader ethnic Chinese national framework, promoting not only economic development and environmental conservation, but also cultural assimilation, and loyalty to the Communist Party.

Also, in Aug 2020, during a significant conference on Tibet, Xi highlighted the necessity of guiding Tibetan Buddhism to adapt to socialist society, promoting its alignment with Chinese cultural and political norms. China’s push to foster a “sense of community for the Chinese nation” – an effort to boost a Han Chinese-centric national identity among ethnic minority regions – was first put forward by Xi at the Communist Party congress in 2017.

China’s 2025 Two Sessions show Tibetans are testing ground for a new CCP “ethnic unity” policy

17 March 2025, [ICT](#)

This year’s annual political meetings in Beijing, popularly known as the Two Sessions, saw indication of not only continued clampdown of Tibetan identity in the coming period, but also that Tibetans are currently being used as the testing ground for broader policy of assimilation of “ethnic minorities” by the Chinese Communist authorities.

The Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), said to be the political advisory body, was in session from March 4 to 10, 2025, while the National People’s Congress (NPC), claimed to be the parliament, was in session from March 5 to 11, 2025.

Regurgitating cliches and misplaced priorities

As in the past, Chinese state media reported on how Tibetan delegates to the Two Sessions this year were making laudatory remarks on Chinese government policies. Despite credible reports indicating absence of basic human rights in Tibet, Chinese state media concocts this collective quote to the Tibetan delegates gathered in Beijing: “Nowadays, happiness, peace, harmony and unity are the truest portrayal of the lives of people of all ethnic groups in Tibet.”

At the same time, remarks by China’s top national and provincial leaders charged with Tibetan affairs could be perceived setting the tone for what to come. Zhang Guoqing, member of the Political Bureau and a Vice Premier, who appears to have been entrusted with the Tibet portfolio in Beijing attended a Tibetan group meeting on March 5, 2025 and reiterated this: “We

must fully implement the Party’s Tibet governance strategy in the new era, anchor the “four major issues” of stability, development, ecology and strengthening the border, and write a new chapter in the practice of Chinese-style modernization in Tibet.” In addition to Zhang, Sun Yeli, secretary of the Party Leadership Group and minister of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, was among the other non-Tibetan national leader who attended a Tibetan delegation meeting during this year’s session.

Interestingly, Wang seems to indicate that they will use economic investment as a way to open TAR to the outside world. In the abovementioned meeting, he told the delegates, “Focus on improving infrastructure and building more open platforms. Deepen reforms in key areas, stimulate the vitality of various business entities, continuously optimize the business environment, and increase investment promotion efforts. Let the world better understand Tibet and let Tibet go to the world faster.”

The only direct reference to the continuing political challenges to the Chinese by the Tibet movement internationally was made by the new chairman of the TAR Government, Karma Tseten. In his remarks to the delegation on March 7, 2025, Tseten talked about “smear campaign against public schools in Tibet” (西藏公民教育的抹黑 a reference to the international campaign on the boarding schools) and that they “will brook no interference by the Dalai Clique”. Although the Chinese authorities know that the Dalai Lama has devolved his political authority to the elected Tibetan leadership in 2011, they continue to use “Dalai Clique”, a pejorative term to refer to the broader Tibet movement internationally. From all indications, Tseten is ambitious and since he has also been promoted to his position only in January 2025, such utterances could also be his way of proving his loyalty to the CCP.



The new TAR Chairman Karma Tseten speaking at the Tibetan delegation meeting on March 7, 2025.

Tibet continues to see general foreign tourists access restricted with only select few individuals being able to travel in organized groups. Therefore, in an indication of misplaced priorities, Wang Qiang, who took over as mayor of the Tibetan capital Lhasa in December 2022, was quoted by Chinese state media on March 6, 2025, as inviting people wanting to “play snooker” or join “bicycle race” to visit.

Where is the CCP-Selected Panchen Lama?

Interestingly, among Tibetans, the CCP-selected Panchen Lama was not in public even if he was a delegate even though he is supposed to be a member of the Standing Committee of the National Committee of the CPPCC and Vice President of the Buddhist Association of China. State media has circulated a photo of him attending a religious group meeting during 2024 Two Sessions. He was more active comparatively in 2024 in visiting Tibetan areas. However, in the aftermath of this year's earthquake in western Tibet, state media showed him in prayer only on January 13, 2025, several days after it had happened.



The CCP-selected Panchen Lama at 2024 Two Sessions religious group meeting.

Similarly, Wang Junzheng, the top CCP official in Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), in his remarks to the Tibetan delegation on March 6, 2025 stressed that it is necessary to strengthen the overall leadership of the Party and strive “to build a socialist modern new Tibet.”

Tibetans as testing ground to implement “ethnic unity” in PRC

This year's Two Sessions also saw focus on implementing Xi Jinping's strategy of a common Chinese identity being voiced by different leaders, including a legislative initiative by the NPC. In 2021, at the Fifth Central Conference on Ethnic Work, Xi had said: “We should deepen the creation of ethnic unity and progress, focus on deepening connotation, enriching forms, and innovating methods, and build a normalized mechanism for promoting and educating the Chinese nation's sense of community.”

In his work report to the NPC on March 8, 2025, its Chairman Zhao Leji announced the plan to have a new national “ethnic unity” law saying, “We will formulate a law on promoting ethnic unity and progress to forge a strong sense of national identity, reinforcing the Chinese people as one cohesive community.”

CPPCC Chairman Wang Huning, in his report to it also echoed the need of such a legislation saying, “The complex circumstances and formidable tasks we face make it all the more important for us to remain united as one. This means further consolidating the great unity of the Chinese people of all ethnic groups,

forging a strong sense of community for the Chinese nation...”

Premier Li Qiang, in his Government Work Report, also similarly stressed the need to “promote ethnic solidarity and progress.”

In perfect choreography, Chinese state media reported on how the proposed law was being welcomed by the delegates to the Two Session. It said Xing Guangcheng, a deputy to the 14th NPC, emphasized the significance of enacting such a law, “regarding it as a legislative approach to addressing issues related to the borderland and ethnic unity with the country's important strategic framework in the new era.”

In fact, the political significance of this proposed national legislation can be understood when we look at the fact that in January 2020, “Regulations on the Creation of a Model Region for National Unity and Progress in the Tibet Autonomous Region” was enacted in Lhasa. The regulations, revised in January this year, is the first such legislative initiative by the People's Republic of China and formalizes the CCP powers to enforce a Chinese-centric way of life and to nurture vigilant citizens as informants for the Party. Further, they represent an explicit legal departure from the principle of preferential treatment for people like the Tibetans, as stipulated in the Regional Ethnic Autonomy Law. It was the culmination of Xi Jinping's policy focus (to consolidate power in the party and eliminate threats) with the second generation of ethnic policy thinkers who advocate for the dilution of ethnic difference, thus enforcing assimilation of the Tibetan culture.



Press meet in Lhasa following the TAR ethnic unity regulations in January 2020.

China's political agenda behind the TAR ethnic unity law was made clear by state media. The law, which took effect on May 1, 2020, “makes it clear that Tibet has been an inalienable part of China since ancient times, and it is the common responsibility for the people of all ethnic groups to safeguard national reunification, strengthen ethnic unity and take a clear-cut stand against separatism.”

An analysis by ICT of the ethnic unity law in TAR concluded that it violates international human rights standards, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), which China ratified in 1981, and in view of

provisions regulating education, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which China ratified in 1992. The regulations also violate the right to freely pursue social and cultural development, pursuant to Article 1 of the Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which China ratified in 2001.

Given these politically-motivated agenda of the legislation, there was international concern in 2020, including by then Senator and current US Secretary of State Marco Rubio who termed it “an explicit statement of the Chinese Communist Party’s remaking of Tibetan culture,” adding, “Ultimately, the CCP is enforcing a party-approved mold in order to reinforce the party’s control of Tibetan society.” Similarly, Rubio was quoted by the Catholic News Agency saying that it was “no surprise that Tibet’s ‘autonomous’ legislature has passed rules to promote ‘ethnic unity.’” “As the Chinese Communist Party continues its attempts to wipe out Tibetan culture, the U.S. and freedom loving nations should condemn the blatant violations of human rights,” he had then said.

Similarly, in May 2020, the then High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission Josep Borrell responded to a question by MEP Isabel Santos on the TAR ethnic unity law saying, “The EU has repeatedly raised its strong concerns about restrictions on freedom of religion or belief and on the rights of minorities in Tibet, both in EU-China bilateral meetings and publicly, including in multilateral fora.” MEP Santos’ question was prefaced with, “The International Campaign for Tibet revealed how the ‘ethnic unity’ legislation recently adopted in Tibet will further erode the fundamental liberties of Tibetans and infringe their human rights.”

In any case, the Two Sessions this year indicate that the “Tibet model” is now going to be applied as a whole to PRC through such a national ethnic unity law.

Implementing CCP Directives

Despite the authoritative sounding names and projection of the Two Sessions as implementation of democratic governance, the fact that both CPPCC and NPC must submit to the diktats of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) as was evident from the similar remarks by their leaders during this year’s session. CPPCC Chair Wang told the delegates on March 4, 2025, “Let us rally more closely around the CPC Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at its core and elevate the work of the CPPCC to a new level on the new journey in the new era”. In the NPC, its Chair Zhao told his session on March 8, 2025, “Let us unite even more closely around the CPC Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at its core.” Premier Li in his report echoed the sentiments saying on March 5, 2025, “Let us rally more closely around the CPC Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at its core, hold high the great banner of socialism with Chinese

characteristics, and follow the guidance of Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era....” (Li Qiang, Government Work Report, March 5, 2025)

The Tibetan delegation also had the same theme when Vice Premier Zhang told them on March 5, 2025, “We must insist on putting work first, implement all arrangements for this year with a spirit of perseverance, and be good executors, activists, and doers of the decisions and arrangements of the Party Central Committee.

In the light of this development, it is likely that the enactment of the law on promoting ethnic unity and progress later this year could be followed by amendments to the Law on Regional Ethnic Autonomy, currently the basis for the special rights that “ethnic minorities” are supposed to be enjoying in the PRC today. If this happens, it means that even the little rights enjoyed by Tibetans on paper would go away with no basis whatsoever to challenge the authorities. This might have a major impact on China’s Tibet policy in the coming years.

China’s Digital Dragnet Tightens Around Tibet

10 March 2025, [Times Now](#), Rishabh Madhavendra Pratap

Beijing’s extensive surveillance infrastructure reveals its ambitions—and anxieties—in Tibet.

Tibet today is among the most heavily surveilled places on earth. While international attention is focused on China’s technological oppression in Xinjiang, Beijing has quietly implemented a similarly aggressive surveillance regime in Tibet—transforming the region into a digital laboratory for state control.

China’s surveillance apparatus in Tibet represents more than just a measure of authoritarian governance; it is part of a strategic push to neutralise cultural and political dissent by tightly controlling Tibetans’ daily lives. With an extensive network of facial-recognition cameras, biometric identification, AI-driven analysis software, and compulsory smartphone apps, China has established an unprecedented level of control, turning traditional Tibetan cultural and social practices into suspicious activities subject to constant monitoring.

At police checkpoints across Tibet, authorities routinely demand residents install intrusive smartphone applications like the “National Anti-Fraud Center.” Ostensibly intended to protect citizens from scams, these apps grant authorities unlimited access to users’ personal data, contacts, locations, photographs, and even audio recordings—effectively turning Tibetans’ own devices into instruments of surveillance.

Beyond smartphone apps, sophisticated facial recognition software has proliferated throughout Tibet, integrated into centralized databases. Platforms such as the ominously named “Tibet Underworld Criminal Integrated Intelligence Application Platform” blend facial recognition with internet browsing history, creating detailed digital profiles of individual Tibetans. Any engagement with banned content—especially material related to Tibetan identity, religion, or exile groups—triggers immediate alerts to authorities. The technological crackdown extends to traditional Tibetan festivals, which are integral to cultural expression and communal identity. Events such as the annual horse-racing festival in Lihang are now heavily policed, monitored by surveillance cameras, and patrolled by security personnel ready to detain participants displaying Tibetan cultural symbols or engaging in spontaneous gatherings that might suggest nationalist sentiment.

China’s strategy to enforce digital compliance is underpinned by its sweeping cybersecurity laws, including a significant update in 2023 that significantly escalated penalties for online dissent. Combined with the National Intelligence Law, which mandates real-name registration for all online activity, these measures ensure that Tibetans have virtually no space to communicate anonymously or openly about their identity, culture, or political grievances.

Human rights groups consistently highlight the chilling effects of these technologies. Reports indicate Tibetans are arrested and imprisoned merely for discussing cultural issues online, sharing images of the Dalai Lama, or advocating linguistic and cultural rights. The result is an environment of pervasive fear and self-censorship, effectively silencing dissent at its source.

Yet, China’s digital dragnet in Tibet serves a purpose beyond internal control—it’s a blueprint Beijing can export elsewhere. Chinese surveillance technology, tested first in Tibet and Xinjiang, is already finding its way into authoritarian regimes worldwide, including in Africa, Central Asia, and parts of Southeast Asia, reflecting China’s aspiration to set global standards in digital authoritarianism.

International responses, although increasingly vocal, remain insufficient. Advocacy groups and UN bodies frequently raise alarms over human rights violations in Tibet, yet China continues undeterred, defending its policies under the banner of national security. Diplomatic condemnations at forums like the UN General Assembly highlight China’s abuses, but concrete actions to deter Beijing’s technological repression have been limited.

The global community’s hesitant response has emboldened Beijing, enabling it to further refine its surveillance capabilities and turning Tibet into an enduring test case for a new era of digital authoritarian governance.

For Tibetans, the cost of this digital stranglehold is severe: their cultural autonomy, personal privacy, and freedom of expression. As Beijing’s digital surveillance deepens, the vibrant cultural traditions that once defined Tibet increasingly risk disappearing into silence—monitored, censored, and erased by an ever-watchful digital state.

China vows to continue its disputed, controversial education policy in Tibet

08 March 2025, [Tibetan Review](#)

China has on Mar 7 vowed to continue its controversial education policy in occupied Tibet, claiming its focus is on civic education without addressing claims that it coercively separates Tibetan children from their parents and society with a view to acculturate them, making them think and act like ethnic Chinese people unabashedly loyal only to the Communist Party of China-state.

At the 14th National People’s Congress in Beijing, Xizang Chairman Mr Gama Cedain said that the Xizang autonomous region will continue promoting civic education despite repeated interference from the 14th Dalai Lama and his followers, reported China’s official *chinadaily.com.cn* Mar 7.

“Xizang” is China’s Sinicized name for Tibet. It decided to stop using the word “Tibet” in all its official documents and media reports in Oct 2023 in a move to Sinicize all discourses on the Tibetan Plateau territory it has forcibly occupied and ruled with iron fist since the middle of the last century.

Under the leadership of the central government and with nationwide support, Xizang has maintained stability and development, ensures a better quality of life for our people, Gama Cedain has maintained.

He has claimed that China’s educational focus in Tibet was being “constantly smeared and disrupted by the Dalai Lama and his group. But we will not be swayed. Under the strong leadership of the CPC Central Committee and with the support of the people nationwide, we will continue to develop Xizang autonomous region, maintain its social stability and ensure a stronger sense of security, greater happiness, and a deeper sense of fulfilment for our people.”

Tibetans as well as international human rights bodies have criticized China’s education policy in Tibet even before the implementing the current, more coercive one which has reportedly snared up to a million Tibetan children in prison-like boarding school conditions.

China intensifies security measures ahead of anniversary of Tibetan Uprising Day

07 March 2025, [Phayul](#), Tenzin Nyidon



An undated photo of Chinese troops patrolling near Jokhang temple in Lhasa (Photo/CTA)

As China's Two Sessions commenced on Tuesday and the anniversary of the Tibetan National Uprising Day on March 10th approaches, Chinese authorities have ramped up security measures across the so-called Tibet Autonomous Region ((TAR). Officials from relevant government departments have been deployed to various areas, emphasizing that "ensuring security and stability in March is important and crucial."

On February 28th, the Markham County Police Department convened a meeting to launch what they call "security and stability guarantee work" for March. Similarly, in Chamdo, multiple meetings were held on February 11th, February 25th, and March 2nd in local towns, mobilizing county-level officials to oversee and enforce security protocols. These officials were dispatched to various communities in Dzogong County to propagate state narratives about maintaining security and stability during the 2025 Tibetan New Year, China's Two Sessions, and throughout March, emphasizing that these efforts should be treated as a primary political task.

Nyalam County in Shigatse City also witnessed a series of meetings in February and March regarding China's Two Sessions and what authorities term "important security and stability work" during this sensitive period. The leadership of Shigatse City issued strict directives and announcements, reinforcing the necessity of stringent monitoring and inspection of security measures. Chinese officials have reiterated that since these tasks align with state political requirements, they must be executed without any negligence.

The intensified restrictions and surveillance reflect Beijing's ongoing concerns about potential expressions of dissent within Tibet, particularly during politically sensitive periods such as March 10th. The measures also mirror the Chinese government's

broader strategy of maintaining tight control over the region, especially during important anniversaries and national political events.

China vows 'high pressure' on Tibetan 'separatists' during ongoing 'Two Sessions' in Beijing

06 March 2025, [Tibetan Review](#)

Delegates from Tibet Autonomous Region attending China's ongoing annual "Two Sessions" political conclave which opened on Mar 6 have sung the praise of Chinese rule there and vowed to keep "high pressure" on alleged separatists, according to the *AFP* Mar 6.

The delegates to the National People's Congress, China's rubberstamp parliament, have added that stability was "improving" – but warned it was necessary to maintain "high pressure" on alleged secessionists.

The delegates, handpicked by the Communist Party of China apparatus before their "election", have also hailed "Sinicization" of Tibetan Buddhism, while adding that more than 90% of "community leaders" now had basic knowledge of Mandarin.

China's definition of "separatists" include not only those seeking the restoration of Tibet's independence but also others accused of every form of real or perceived opposition to Chinese government policies, including those calling for the preservation of Tibet's cultural and linguistic identity or the protection of its natural environment.

Under the Sinicization drive, China has vowed to appoint its own "reincarnation" of the current Dalai Lama, and compels Tibetan Buddhists to subject their religious traditions and practices to loyalty to and singing the praise of the Communist Party of China-state. It has set up boarding schools where Tibetan children are taught to think and act like loyal Chinese subjects, separated from the community of their parents and ethnic group.

China annexed Tibet in the 1950s. It began this with an armed invasion of the country after the founding of the People's Republic of China on Oct 1, 1949, followed by the imposition under duress of a 17-Point Agreement which promised something of a one-country two systems policy for Tibet. That agreement, which China was accused of never adhering to, came to an end with a brutal armed suppression of the Tibetans' largely peaceful uprising protests in Mar 1959.

China is accused of having killed or directly caused the deaths of more than 1.2 million Tibetans and destroyed over 6,000 places of religious study and worship during the first two decades or so of the occupation rule, mostly during the Great Leap Forward

(1958-62) and the Cultural Revolution (1966-76) campaigns.

Meta exposes Chinese disinformation network targeting the Dalai Lama

05 March 2025, [Phayul](#), Tsering Dhundup

Global social media giant Meta has uncovered an extensive covert influence operation originating from China, designed to spread disinformation about the Tibetan spiritual leader, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, and target the Tibetan exile community.

In its fourth-quarter 2024 Adversarial Threat Report, Meta revealed that it had detected and removed 18 fake Facebook accounts linked to the operation, along with two pages, four groups, and five Instagram accounts. The influence campaign sought to discredit the Dalai Lama and mislead audiences about his health while amplifying narratives favourable to Chinese interests.

According to Meta, all the removed accounts and pages were traced back to China and were designed to target the Tibetan exile community, particularly in India, Nepal, and Bhutan. The campaign extended beyond Facebook and Instagram to other platforms, including X and Blogspot.

“The individuals behind this activity used fake accounts—many of which were detected and disabled by our automated systems before our investigation—to manage pages, post, and amplify other people’s content,” Meta stated in its report. The company also disclosed that the operation employed proxy IPs to conceal its true origins, making the accounts appear as if they were based in India, Bhutan, or Nepal.

Among the deceptive accounts, one impersonated a journalist from India’s north-eastern border state of Arunachal Pradesh, while most others pretended to be Tibetan expatriates. These accounts re-shared news and content about Tibet while amplifying anti-Dalai Lama narratives. The network primarily posted in English and Tibetan, spreading conspiracy theories regarding the Dalai Lama’s health and travel and alleging that the United States was using him as leverage against China.

The report also revealed that the campaign frequently amplified anti-Dalai Lama content shared by seemingly authentic voices, directing audiences to websites like Storify News, Dakini Translations and Publications, and a Change.org petition.

Meta uncovered this latest activity through an internal investigation into suspected recidivist behaviour linked to previous networks removed in the third quarter of 2023. In that report, Meta had taken down 12 accounts and seven groups originating from China that targeted Tibet and Arunachal Pradesh.

The removed content was found to be in violation of Meta’s policy against coordinated inauthentic behaviour, which prohibits strategic manipulation of public discourse through fake accounts. According to the company, approximately 2,400 accounts followed at least one of the removed Facebook pages, while 120 accounts had joined the eliminated groups. On Instagram, around 100 accounts followed at least one of the removed profiles.

“We took down this network before its operators were able to build an audience among authentic communities on our apps,” Meta emphasised.

The revelation, observers say, displays China’s ongoing digital influence operations, particularly against Tibetan communities and their leaders. The findings reflect broader geopolitical tensions, as China has long sought to control narratives surrounding Tibet and its exiled spiritual leader.

BUDDHISM

China intensifies crackdown on Tibetan monastic education, enforces stringent restrictions on young monks

20 March 2025, [Phayul](#), Tenzin Nyidon

The Chinese government is reportedly imposing severe restrictions on new monk enrollments across monasteries in the Amdo region (Ch. Qinghai), with particularly harsh measures at Dzoge Taktsang Lhamo Kirti Monastery and Ngaba Kirti Monastery. Authorities have not only strictly prohibited young children from residing in monasteries but have also barred them from visiting for worship, pilgrimage, or any other religious purposes, according to sources inside Tibet who spoke to *Radio Free Asia*.

A Tibetan source from inside Tibet revealed that following the dismantling of the school at Taktsang Lhamo Kirti Monastery last year, the government appointed surveillance personnel to monitor monastic activities closely. Even the presence of small children within the monastery premises triggers immediate questioning and follow-ups to identify the monks sheltering them. Individuals found harboring children face interrogation and detainment. Moreover, new monk enrollments at Ngaba Kirti Monastery now require stringent approvals from both prefecture and county-level authorities, reflecting the intensifying suppression of Tibetan monastic education.

Since October last year, Chinese authorities forcibly shut down the Buddhist preliminary school at Taktsang Lhamo Kirti Monastery, detaining monk students who resisted transfer to government-run schools. Similarly, over 1,000 monk students from Ngaba Kirti Monastery were forcibly relocated to permanent government schools in Ngaba County. Under the pretense of providing basic Chinese language education, the students were subjected to over three months of Communist Party political indoctrination. Meanwhile, teachers from Taktsang Lhamo Kirti Monastery have been repeatedly harassed, facing indefinite summons and interrogations under allegations of political dissent.

The Chinese government continues to justify these actions under the claim that minors are not permitted to reside in monasteries. However, the forced closure of monastery schools and the systematic removal of young monk students to government-run institutions—without the consent of parents or monastic authorities—has raised serious concerns about the erosion of Tibetan religious and cultural heritage. Reports indicate that last year alone, over 1,000 young monks from the two Kirti Monasteries were forcibly transferred to state-controlled schools. In an alarming incident in early September last year, five students forcibly removed from Muge Monastery and placed in government-run schools attempted suicide due to the unbearable physical abuse and

torture they endured. These distressing events, observers say, highlight the severe rights violations taking place under the guise of educational reforms, reflecting a broader strategy by the Chinese government to suppress Tibetan religious identity and dismantle monastic institutions.

China signals more hardline religious policy at the 'Two Sessions' political conclave

08 March 2025, [Tibetan Review](#)

The fourth most senior official in China's ruling Communist Party, who oversees the country's national political advisory body, has called for efforts to "ensure law-based management of religious affairs" to make sure that religious activities are "legal, safe and orderly", reported the *scmp.com* Mar 7. It said Premier Li Qiang also stressed the need to "strengthen the rule of law in the governance of religious affairs", a theme that did not appear in last year's report.

While these remarks sound innocuous enough, the nub lies in what those laws are, what the Communist Party of China-state considers "safe and orderly" activities, and what "strengthen the rule of law in the governance of religious affairs" really means especially in the case of China's so-called policy for Sinicization of Tibetan Buddhism.

Citing China's official *Xinhua* news agency, the report said Wang Huning, chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), made the remarks on Mar 6 during group discussions with the CPPCC's religious leaders.

China's laws criminalize any form of criticism or opposition to its religious policies, including one which arrogates to the atheist Communist Party of China the right to decide who the reincarnation of Tibet's top religious figures, including the Dalai Lama, should be. It also criminalizes any form of patriotism education in monasteries, or any violation of its rules for the enrolment of monks and nuns in religious schools, or the ceilings set by the party-state on the number of resident monks and nuns in any Tibetan Buddhist religious centre.

"[We must] ensure law-based management of religious affairs, and guide religious leaders and believers to enhance their national and civic consciousness, and awareness of the rule of law," he was quoted as saying.

"Guide" carries the implication of criminal persecution for disobedience, including for alleged separatism, in the case of Tibetan Buddhists.

These are the weights carried by Wang's reported remark, "[We must also] ensure that religious activities are legal, safe, and orderly."

Also, in a government work report delivered on Mar 5, Premier Li Qiang also stressed the need to "strengthen

the rule of law in the governance of religious affairs", a theme that did not appear in last year's report, the report noted.

Obviously Li wants to see a stricter implementation of President Xi Jinping's Signature policy for the Sinicization of Tibetan Buddhism as a part of his call for an overall Sinicization of all ethnic minority regions, including Tibet, under the rubric of the campaign to promote a sense of community of the Chinese nation. In keeping with it, the report noted that for years, regions with large communities of ethnic minorities have been churning out a series of stricter rules to regulate religious affairs.

In the case of Tibet, it noted that in Dec 2024, the State Administration for Religious Affairs – the government body that regulates all recognised religions in China – issued revisions to the "Measures for the Administration of Tibetan Buddhist Temples", expanding state control over Tibetan religious practices by embedding political mandates into Tibetan religious administration.

The report also said that On Mar 5, Losang Jamcan, vice-chairman of the NPC Standing Committee and chairman of the Tibet autonomous region's legislative body, said that maintaining stability was the "overriding priority" for Tibet this year, citing minutes made available to the media.

STATE OF ECOLOGY OF THE TIBETAN PLATEAU

Video exposes ecological damage from mining in Tibet

27 March 2025, [Free Tibet](#)

Government-approved mining leaves villagers facing ecological damage, video footage reveals.

Video footage from Tibet circulating on Chinese social media in the second week of this month exposes rampant ecological damage caused by government-approved mining in Drongri village (འབྲོང་རི་གྲོང་ཚོ།), in Tsonga Township (མཚོ་ངོ་ཤར་།), Markam County, Chamdo City.

Tibetan villagers seen in the footage lament the ecological damage and hardships they had to endure, revealing the local government's systemic neglect of environmental safeguards, as well as the security and well-being of local communities.

Reports indicate that a group of Chinese miners has been active in the area since August 2020. Villagers have since witnessed a series of disasters. The footage includes a written note that highlighted that the mining efforts have "severely damaged hillside vegetation and worsened landslides."

The note further explained that the ecosystem has been critically compromised by increasing and unpredictable nature of landslides and floods that were posing direct threats to the local population. Detailed in the note was the scale of loss and damage they experienced:

1) Damage to agricultural land, leading to flooding that affects crop production and soil quality; 2) Deposits from hillside erosion resulting in grassland degradation; 3) Damage to homes from flooding incidents; and 4) Deterioration of the environment, including waterway obstruction and contamination of drinking water."

The note concludes with a plea to anyone who sees that post to share it with others and support the villagers.

In one of the videos, a senior villager expresses frustration over the local government and mining companies prioritising their interest above community needs and concerns for ecology: "The miner informed us that the excavation of the mineral mountains and the road construction to the mining site was approved by party leaders, presenting us with documents authorized by county and township governments. They ignore the views and hardships of the local population and overlook the environmental damage and risks. They act in their interests. The mining contracts show that these operations only benefit the miners, not the residents. This is merely a scheme to destroy the mineral mountains and local villages."

Due to restrictions imposed by the Chinese state on communication, further details about the mining company and compensation are not yet known.

Tibetan Plateau's glacier area have shrunk by 26% over six decades, accelerating

26 March 2025, [Tibetan Review](#)

In more news from more research on the phenomenon and effects of climate change in the Tibetan Plateau region, a UNESCO report published this month has said glacier areas in the People's Republic of China (PRC), mostly in Tibetan territories, had shrunk by 26% since 1960, with 7,000 small glaciers having disappeared completely over the past 60 years and glacial retreat intensifying in recent years. The report said glaciers around the globe were disappearing faster than ever, with the largest glacial mass loss on record taking place in the last three years. As the important water towers continue to shrink, less availability of freshwater is expected to contribute to greater competition for water resources, environmental groups have warned. Glacier retreat also poses new disaster risks, noted *Reuters* Mar 26. Glaciers in the PRC are located mainly in the west and north regions, in the regions of Tibet Autonomous Region, Qinghai and Xinjiang (East Turkistan), as well as mostly in the Tibetan territories in the provinces of Sichuan, Yunnan, and Gansu.

The findings were released on Mar 21, the first World Day for Glaciers, as researchers presented the PRC's third glacier inventory at the 3rd Chinese Conference of Cryospheric Science in Lingshui, Hainan province, noted China's official *chinadaily.com.cn* Mar 26.

The reports said that the data published on the website of the Northwest Institute of Eco-Environment and Resources of the Chinese Academy of Sciences show that the total glacier area in the PRC was around 46,000 square kilometres, with around 69,000 glaciers in 2020.

This compared to around 59,000 square kilometres and around 46,000 glaciers in the PRC between 1960 and 1980, the study was stated to show.

Besides, between the second inventory completed in 2008 and the third, the glacier area has declined by about 6% — equivalent to 5.2% per decade — indicating a rapid acceleration in glacier retreat in recent years, said the *chinadaily.com.cn* report.

* * *

The report said global glacier inventory efforts, including by China, began in 1978, focusing on the distribution and volume of mountain glaciers. China's first and second glacier inventories were published in 2002 and 2014, respectively, with research detailing changes in the PRC's glaciers from the latter half of the 20th century to the early 21st century.

The *Reuters* report noted that the Tibetan plateau is known as the world's Third Pole for the amount of ice long locked in the high-altitude wilderness.

From a global perspective, the report said that the dramatic ice loss, from the Arctic to the Alps, from South America to the Tibetan Plateau, is expected to accelerate as climate change, caused by the burning of fossil fuels, pushing global temperatures ever higher. This would likely exacerbate economic, environmental and social problems across the world as sea levels rise and these key water sources dwindle, the UNESCO report was cited as saying.

Chinese scientists say climate change creating risks for Tibetans, infrastructure

25 March 2025, [Tibetan Review](#)

Climate change over the Tibetan Plateau in the past 36 years has not only created risks for the local residents but also for China's major infrastructure projects such as the Qinghai-Tibet Railway, reported China's official *chinadaily.com.cn* Mar 24, citing recent research by Chinese scientists.

The change has had a notable impact on the Plateau's lakes, which in turn has created risks for the local infrastructure and residents, they have said, publishing their findings Mar 18 in the international journal *Nature Reviews Earth & Environment* of the Institute of Tibetan Plateau Research of the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

The rise in the lakes' water volume was stated to have led to a gradual decrease in their salinity, a significant reduction in chlorophyll-a levels and enhanced microbial diversity and nutrient status.

"These changes have, in turn, affected local climate and livelihoods, leading to increased regional precipitation and posing risks of lakes overflowing and breaching, which could harm infrastructure, living conditions and pastoral areas," Ju Jianting, co-lead author of the study and an associate professor at the institute, has said.

The study is stated to be the first to systematically quantify the long-term evolution of the physical, chemical and ecological characteristics of lakes on the Tibetan Plateau, providing essential scientific evidence for evaluating regional water security and carbon cycling.

The study is stated to have found that over the past 36 years, the area of the lakes had expanded by 26%, the water volume increased by about 170 cubic kilometres and water transparency improved by 72%.

Zhu Liping, corresponding author of the study and a researcher at the institute, has said the lakes on the Tibetan Plateau store about 70% of the freshwater resources of the Asian Water Tower, directly

influencing the water cycles of major rivers like the Yangtze and Yellow rivers.

Over the study's period of 1986-2022, the total area of lakes larger than 1 sq km on the plateau had increased from 37,000 sq km to 47,000 sq km, with water storage increasing by 169.7 cubic km, equivalent to 3.8 times the maximum capacity of China's Three Gorges Reservoir.

"While the expansion of lakes has temporarily improved water quality, it could trigger a series of ecological chain reactions in the long run, potentially threatening infrastructure safety," Zhu has said.

The study's findings challenge "the traditional understanding that cleaner lakes are not necessarily carbon sinks," Zhu has said, explaining that the interchanging roles between temperature and salinity have made the plateau lakes dynamically shift between carbon sources and sinks.

On this, co-lead author Ju has said: "The changes in the plateau lakes are a product of global warming. The exact impact of lake changes on global warming, whether it will result in carbon release or absorption, remains a topic of significant debate requiring further research, enhanced observation and the development of physical balance models."

And while larger lake areas can help regulate local climates through increased precipitation, "the ongoing expansion of closed lakes poses two significant risks: overflow and breaching threatening infrastructure such as the Qinghai-Xizang Railway. And chronic salinity reduction could potentially alter existing carbon exchange patterns and exacerbate regional carbon emission fluctuations," Ju has noted.

'Environmental risk posed by China's Medog Dam project'

25 March 2025, [Hindustan Times](#), Dar Ovais

China's proposed mega dam at the Great Bend region of the Medog county in the Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR) would be the world's largest hydroelectric project, surpassing even China's Three Gorges Dam, which is currently the largest dam in the world

The office of Tibet in Geneva has flagged the significant risks posed by the planned construction of the China's Medog (Metok) Dam on Tibet's Yarlung Tsangpo River–Brahmaputra in India–during the 58th session of the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC).

According to a report published by Dharamshala-based Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), Phuntsok Tobgyal, UN Advocacy Officer at the Office of Tibet in Geneva, in his address during the session recently highlighted that the dam project seriously threatens the environment, people, and regional stability while emphasising that such large-scale infrastructure

development would severely damage Tibet's fragile ecosystem and jeopardise water security for millions across South Asia.

China's proposed mega dam at the Great Bend region of the Medog county in the Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR) would be the world's largest hydroelectric project, surpassing even China's Three Gorges Dam, which is currently the largest dam in the world. The Yarlung Tsangpo, originating from the Tibetan Plateau, flows into India as the Brahmaputra river.

The report of the office of Tibet in Geneva, stated that Tibet, often referred to as the "Third Pole" of the world, plays a critical role in global environmental stability. "The construction of the dam threatens this balance through extensive deforestation, increased seismic risks, and disruptions to glacier melt patterns—all of which could accelerate climate change. The project may also contribute to extreme weather events, altered monsoon patterns, and worsen global environmental challenges," it said.

"Tibetans inside Tibet will experience the most severe impacts of this project, including habitat destruction, desertification, and the collapse of traditional agriculture. These impacts threaten Tibetan livelihoods, increase food insecurity, and could result in population displacement, further marginalising the Tibetan people in their homeland," the report states. Phuntsok Tobgyal urged the international community to prioritise environmental sustainability over short-term economic interests. He called for transparent, cooperative action among nations to prevent irreversible ecological damage. "Addressing the climate crisis and protecting vulnerable ecosystems require global solidarity and the projects that endanger both people and the environment must be stopped and withdrawn," he said.

China authorizes controversial hydropower project in landslide-prone region of Tibet

24 March 2025, [Phys.org](#), Jenna Travers

In late December, China approved the world's largest hydropower project to begin construction, citing the economic benefits and need to shift to renewable energy sources. However, opponents argue that frequent natural hazards in the region create risk for the project and surrounding Tibetan communities, as well as for the downstream countries of India and Bangladesh.

In late December, China approved the world's largest hydropower project to begin construction, citing the economic benefits and need to shift to renewable energy sources. However, opponents argue that frequent natural hazards in the region create risk for the project and surrounding Tibetan communities, as

well as for the downstream countries of India and Bangladesh.

As glaciers in the basin shrink in response to climate change, landslides are occurring more frequently along the river. In March 2021, glacier collapse led to a massive landslide with an estimated volume of 100 million tons of rock and ice (equivalent to the mass of 302 Empire State Buildings). The debris blocked the Yarlung Tsangpo River just above the Great Bend and caused water levels to rise over 10 meters, or more than three stories. In October 2018, debris from a string of glacial landslides in the basin temporarily blocked the river and flooded the valley. In both situations, urgent evacuations prevented deaths, but the floods still damaged infrastructure.

These incidents have fueled concerns that future landslides could create waves that would breach the new dam and lead to devastating effects downstream if concrete debris, landslide material and large amounts of reservoir water flooded down the canyon. Glacier melt in the region is increasing the frequency of these landslides, putting the project at significant risk even if it were successfully built.

Beyond the natural hazards, the construction of this dam and the resulting reservoir are likely to lead to flooding and the displacement of Tibetan people and entire towns, though China has not released these estimates yet. In an interview with GlacierHub, Bryan Tilt, a professor of anthropology at Oregon State University who studies Chinese dams and development, highlighted that resettlement for infrastructure projects is "a contentious social and political issue in China today." Tilt elaborated, saying, "When you add the fact that this is an ethnically Tibetan area and there's already political tensions there, it has the potential for increased conflict."

The smaller Three Gorges Dam displaced 1.4 million people, though estimates vary, and the Chinese government has resettled thousands of Tibetans to construct the Gangtuo Dam, known in Tibetan as the Kamtok Dam, on the Jinsha River, some 1000 kilometers to the northeast of Yarlung Tsangpo. In early 2024, villagers and Buddhist monks protested over the planned Gangtuo (Kamtok) reservoir, which is expected to flood villages and sacred monasteries, including the 700-year-old Wontoe Monastery, which contains rare Buddhist murals. Authorities swiftly cracked down, beating and arresting protestors, though many Tibetan people and organizations still resist these hydropower projects as a violation of their autonomy.

In addition to domestic conflict, this dam would be constructed on a transboundary watershed known for its tense border relations, just upstream of the Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh where the river is known as the Siang or Dihang. Further south, the river is known as the Brahmaputra in most regions of India.

Eventually the water body flows into Bangladesh as the Jamuna River. Officials in both India and Bangladesh also disapprove of the authorized Motuo Hydropower Project, citing concerns about water supply and water data sharing issues with China.

In response to the Motuo Hydropower Project, India threatened to build a dam on the Brahmaputra. "This happens a lot when you've got a transboundary river and one country builds a dam; it sort of spurs competition," Tilt explained. India claims that this dam would help protect their water supply and economy, but it could further put the Jamuna's water supply in Bangladesh at risk.

The approval of the Motuo Hydropower Project sparks larger questions about how world nations navigate addressing climate change and building renewable energy projects while mitigating the risks to local communities.

"From a climate change perspective, this is what we want China to do, right? We want them to shift out of coal into a cleaner source, and hydropower's a cleaner source," Benoit explained. "But you have to find the right balance because the local populations are going to be disproportionately affected," he added.

As the Motuo Hydropower Project advances with little acknowledgement of input from local communities and downstream nations, the concerns about natural hazards, displacement and water supply remain unresolved.

Fearing climate breakdown, Chinese scientists propose turning Tibetan plateau into farmland

23 March 2025, First Post

Chinese government scientists are exploring ways to scale up farming on the Tibetan Plateau, so that the world's second-most populous nation isn't caught off guard when a global disaster hits owing to climate breakdown

Chinese scientists are predicting a major disruption in global food supply chains, potentially spurred by a climate catastrophe. Their solution? Turning the "roof of the world" into an agricultural stronghold.

Chinese government scientists are exploring ways to scale up farming on the Tibetan Plateau, so that the world's second-most populous nation isn't caught off guard when a global disaster hits owing to climate breakdown, including the collapse of the Amazon rainforest, Atlantic Ocean currents and polar ice sheets.

The impending disaster and the potential solution have been discussed in a report prepared by the National Climate Centre (NCC) in Beijing.

NCC is China's premier body for climate monitoring, research and policy advice and serves under the China Meteorological Administration.

The report, published on March 4 in the Chinese-language journal *Climate Change Research*, puts light on how the Tibetan plateau can be turned into “China’s future granary”.

Ma Lijuan, senior NCC engineer and lead author of the study, wrote in the report: “The Tibetan Plateau, recognised as the engine of environmental change in Asia, plays vital roles in water conservation, soil retention, wind breaking and sand fixation, carbon sequestration, and biodiversity preservation. Serving as a critical ecological security barrier for China and Asia, it is also a globally significant hotspot for biodiversity conservation.”

“By rigorously protecting its ecological environment and leveraging its unique natural and socio-economic conditions to develop plateau-specific agriculture, it is entirely feasible to turn the Tibetan Plateau into China’s future granary,” the report added.

Challenges

However, achieving the ambition of sustainable farming in the extreme environment of the Tibetan Plateau is no easy feat.

Here, scientists hope that evolved, cold-resistant variants of crops can help further the idea of turning the “roof of the world” into the farm of the world.

Scientists have developed cold-resistant barley strains capable of growing at 5,000 meters (16,400 feet), an altitude once considered unsuitable for cultivation.

China has also made significant progress in potato farming, achieving yields of over 75 tonnes per hectare on the plateau—double the productivity of lower-altitude regions—due to the region’s intense sunlight. China is also hoping to use artificial intelligence to facilitate farming on the rough terrain. For instance, it is looking for ways to use AI to monitor real-time data from vast numbers of sensors planted across the plateau to predict glacial floods and optimise crop rotations, reported the South China Morning Post.

However, there are fears that mining and other human activity in the region may disrupt the ecological balance at the plateau, threatening new settlers.

Tibetans survived globe’s last glacial maximum, belying previous assumptions

17 March 2025, [Tibetan Review](#)

Recent findings have belied scientific assumptions thus far that humans could not have survived on the Tibetan Plateau during the globe’s last glacial maximum, reported the *ndtv.com* Mar 17, citing the *New Scientist*. The report said researchers have unearthed 427 artefacts, including stone tools and the first ochre pieces – the red-coloured rock used in ancient art – ever discovered in Tibet.

Ancient humans survived on the plateau – the highest on Earth – during the coldest period of the past 2.5

million years, showcasing their remarkable resilience and adaptability, the report said.

The last glacial maximum, which lasted from 26,500 to 19,000 years ago, was the most severe phase of the Late Pleistocene ice age. During this period, massive ice sheets and polar ice caps covered large portions of the Earth, while global temperatures remained approximately 4 degrees Celsius to 5 degrees Celsius lower than today’s average, the *New Scientist* report was cited as saying.

“The Tibetan Plateau was previously thought to be uninhabitable during the last glacial maximum,” Wenli Li, from the University of Chinese Academy of Sciences in Beijing, has said. “Extreme cold, sparse vegetation and low oxygen levels at high altitudes made survival incredibly difficult.”

The report said that while evidence had shown that humans lived on the plateau before and after the last glacial maximum, no signs of occupation during this period had been found – until now. In 2019, Li and her team uncovered a site 3,800 meters above sea level in the Yarlung Tsangpo River valley on the southern Tibetan Plateau. The site contained numerous artefacts indicating human habitation.

Radiocarbon dating of ancient bones and charcoal from the site was stated to have revealed three distinct periods of human occupation between 29,200 and 23,100 years ago. Two of these periods, around 25,000 and 23,000 years ago, coincide with the last glacial maximum.

“No archaeological site had previously been dated to this period,” Feng He of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, who was not involved in the study, has said. “This discovery reinforces the idea that early humans were highly resilient and adaptable to extreme conditions.”

To better understand the environment during these occupations, researchers were stated to have analyzed nearby stalagmites (thin piece of rocks pointing upwards from the floor of a cave) and lake cores, which provide climate data through their chemical composition. Their findings suggest that the river valley had more moisture than expected for the harshly dry ice age in Tibet, allowing cold-tolerant plants and herbivores to persist.

“The valley likely provided essential resources – water, vegetation, and game needed for survival,” Li has said. Stone tools found at the site resemble those from older sites farther north in the plateau’s interior, suggesting that as the climate became colder and drier, people migrated into the river valley, Li has explained.

Previous research proposed that river valleys on the southern Tibetan Plateau may have served as refuges for Tibetans escaping the intensifying cold of the last glacial maximum, He has said. “It’s satisfying to see that this discovery supports that hypothesis.”

Li and her team plan to further investigate how climatic shifts during the last glacial maximum influenced human occupation and migration at the site, which they have named Pengbuwuqing after a nearby hill, the report said.

China availing Tibet's clean energy for significant help in cutting carbon dioxide emissions

15 March 2025, [Tibetan Review](#)

The transfer of clean energy, mainly from hydropower sources, from Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) over the last ten years has helped China to reduce the use of standard coal by around 4.85 million tonnes and cut carbon dioxide emissions by approximately 13.58 million tonnes, reported China's official *Xinhua* news agency Mar 12.

As of the end of 2024, TAR had transmitted 15.814 billion kilowatt-hours (kWh) of clean energy beyond the region since 2015, the report said, citing the State Grid Xizang Electric Power Co., Ltd.

The report said that by the end of last year, more than 99% of TAR's power generation came from clean energy – making its regional grid the one with the highest proportion of clean energy generation in the People's Republic of China.

With abundant solar and wind resources, TAR began sending electricity to other provincial-level regions in 2015, the report said.

It added that the TAR had established a comprehensive energy system, with hydropower as the main source, complemented by geothermal, wind and solar energy, among others.

Dingri earthquake hit 681 villages, 47 requiring complete rebuilding

15 March 2025, [Tibetan Review](#)

In yet further details about the earthquake which devastated Dingri and several other counties in Tibet on Jan 7 morning, China has said Mar 14 that tens of thousands of households in hundreds of villages needed reconstruction, including close to 50 villages requiring complete rebuilding.

China tightly restricted access, including even to relief and humanitarian aid providers, and censored information, so that the full scale of the destruction and gravity of the humanitarian disaster continues to remain unknown.

More details have been emerging from the Chinese media only recently in reports on the reconstruction efforts. On Mar 5, China's official *Xinhua* news agency reported for the first time that 120,000 people had been displaced by the earthquake, adding it destroyed

to varying degrees 79 schools, including three completely,

Before that, China said that as of Jan 13, noon, a total of 126 people had died, 407 had been rescued, over 47,500 relocated, and over 27,200 houses damaged, of which 3,612 had collapsed.

And now, China's official *chinadaily.com.cn* reported Mar 14, citing *Xizang Daily*, that over 21,400 households in 681 villages were in need of reconstruction, with 47 villages requiring complete rebuilding. The previously reported larger number of damaged houses apparently included other buildings as well.

Referring to the enormity of the reconstruction effort, the report said the regional department of housing and urban-rural development had deployed nearly 1,000 professionals from seven survey and design units around the country, including the Design Institute of Tongji University and the China Southwest Geotechnical Investigation & Design Institute, to expedite site selection, planning and design work.

Chinese researchers find new fungal species on Qinghai-Tibet Plateau

13 March 2025, [China Daily](#)¹

Researchers have uncovered a significant number of new fungal species on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, with findings published in the *Journal of Fungi and Fungal Diversity*, as reported on Wednesday by Science and Technology Daily.

Researchers from the institute of plateau biology and the key laboratory of mycology in Xizang autonomous region, Southwest China, conducted multiple joint scientific expeditions, successfully collecting 3,361 valuable specimens and obtaining a batch of wild fungal strains.

Researchers carried out an in-depth study on the specimens through detailed observation of the specimens' external characteristics and the application of fungal DNA barcoding technology alongside molecular phylogenetic analysis.

They identified 879 species, including 19 newly published species and 12 newly recorded species in China. These discoveries have enriched China's macrofungi species database, providing a vital window into understanding the mysteries of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau's ecosystem.

The plateau's unique climatic conditions and geographical environment have nurtured a rich diversity of macrofungi resources. Within this ecosystem, macrofungi play indispensable roles as decomposers and symbionts, contributing crucially to

material cycling, energy flow, and maintaining ecological balance.

Xizang advances ecological civilization to increase growth

12 March 2025, [China Daily](#), Lhag Chung

The Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, often called the "Third Pole" of Earth, is a region of immense ecological significance, with its unique topography and climate nurturing diverse ecosystems and exceptional biodiversity, profoundly influences the climate and ecological systems across China and the entire Northern Hemisphere.

Xizang is the main part of the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, and has been protecting the plateau's environment under the guidance of Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era.

The Qinghai-Tibet Plateau is a land of breathtaking grandeur. Its ecosystems, ranging from glaciers and snow-capped mountains to forests, grasslands, wetlands and deserts, are an essential component of the Earth's natural resources. The plateau's glaciers and permafrost play a crucial role in maintaining regional and global ecological balance, acting as a vast natural reservoir.

Large-scale ecological restoration projects have significantly increased forest coverage in the region, which now stands at 12.31 percent, while comprehensive grassland vegetation coverage has reached 47.14 percent. In 2024 alone, Xizang afforested 1.06 million mu (about 70,667 hectares) and rehabilitated 6 million mu (400,000 hectares) of degraded grasslands. In recent efforts, Xizang has expanded its afforestation and grassland rehabilitation initiatives, including landmark projects in the southern and northern mountains of Lhasa.

Xizang's conservation efforts have led to a resurgence of iconic high-altitude species. For example, the Tibetan antelope population has rebounded to around 300,000, while the number of black-necked cranes is close to 10,000. Yunnan snub-nosed monkeys have increased to 800 and the kiang population exceeds 100,000. Even brown bears, wolves and white-lipped deer are making a noticeable comeback.

Xizang has also made significant strides in pollution control and enhancing environmental quality, by implementing a range of environmental protection measures, including air, water and soil conservation. A substantial land area of Xizang is now designated as an ecological protection zone, ensuring the preservation of its natural environment. The percentage of days with excellent air quality in Xizang remains above 99 percent, and the water quality of major rivers and lakes meets or exceeds Grade III standards. Also, Xizang has established its first artificial forest carbon

sink monitoring demonstration base and completed its first green electricity transaction.

The renowned Tibet University plays a pivotal role in advancing ecological research, integrates interdisciplinary expertise to address national and regional strategic need, and highlights Xizang's unique ecological conditions and contributes to broader ecological security and sustainability goals.

Xizang's ecological environment is marked by its overall integrity and minimal human disturbance. However, its fragile ecosystems, simplistic structures and limited resilience make the region highly sensitive to global changes and human interference. Once damaged, their natural recovery is extremely difficult. Therefore, building a robust ecological security barrier and an ecological civilization highland on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau is a long-term and demanding mission that requires sustained investment, scientific research and institutional innovation.

First, the region should enhance the integrated management of its ecosystems — covering mountains, rivers, forests, farmlands, grasslands, deserts and glaciers — by developing a comprehensive theoretical and technical framework, which will lay the foundation for effective conservation.

Additionally, the establishment of an ecological monitoring system and fostering data-sharing mechanisms will support both fundamental and applied research.

Besides, the management of nature reserves should be improved by refining institutional frameworks, recruiting professional teams, and ensuring precise ecological oversight, and ecological restoration policies should be based on local conditions while aligning with national standards to ensure sustainability. And the development of the Xizang national botanical garden and key national ecological laboratories will further enhance research and governance capabilities.

Finally, fostering cooperation across regions and sectors in ecological protection, through clearly defined responsibilities, data-sharing platforms, and coordinated governance, will strengthen Xizang's position as a global ecological sanctuary. By embracing these initiatives, Xizang will not only consolidate its status as a global ecological stronghold but also contribute to a harmonious and sustainable future for both nature and humankind.

Expanding lakes on Tibetan Plateau portend widespread societal and ecological impacts'

09 March 2025, [Tibetan Review](#)

While lakes in many parts of the world have lost water over the past three decades, leading to severe droughts, the number and size of those in the

northern part of the Tibetan Plateau, referred to as the “roof of the world”, have risen sharply, according to a NASA survey spanning three decades published in 2024. Researchers have examined the current and anticipated effects of these expanding lakes, warning of “widespread societal and ecological impacts”.

New images published this week by the American space agency, NASA, within the framework of its Earth Observatory program, show two different sides of a same area on the Tibetan plateau. The first image, taken on Aug 1, 1994, shows an almost desert area, with two larger lakes and another handful of small or medium lakes.

The second image, taken after 30 years on Aug 11, 2024, shows the same frame, only this time, the light brown color of the ground is splashed by an infinity of small and medium-sized lakes. The two larger lakes extend by a larger surface, and are accompanied by others also of considerable size.

The images show part of the counties of Nyima in Tibet’s Nagchu City and Qiemo in East Turkestan (under the administration of the Bayin’gholin Mongol Autonomous Prefecture, Xinjiang), said the earthobservatory.nasa.gov.

Several generations of Landsat satellites have been observing the earth from orbit. According to NASA, since the 1970s, these satellites capture images of the region every 16 days. This series of images has allowed scientists to detect this unique change in the geography of the region.

Several recent studies have verified changes in the region. In 2023, a study published in the *Science* magazine revealed that, in a global context in which the dominant trend was the opposite, the Tibetan Plateau lakes were accumulating water, said rueitir.com Mar 8, reporting on the NASA report.

A subsequent study, published in *ISPRS Journal of Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing*, was stated to have quantified this proliferation in the region. The report said the Lagos count indicated that the bodies of water of more than 0.1 km² in the region went from 4,385 units in 1991 to 6,159 in 2023. And the surface covered by lakes went from 37,471 km² to 53,267 km². The Tibetan plateau is stated to be an endorheic basin, with the implication that the water flowing in it does not go to the ocean. Its only output is infiltration or evaporation. For water to accumulate, therefore, it has to flow at a greater pace than evaporation.

Factors such as precipitation levels, the rate of evaporation, and the intensity of seasonal thawing of frozen soils and melting of glacial ice are thus stated to play key roles in controlling the number and size of the plateau’s lakes.

Other researchers have looked at the current and anticipated effects of these expanding lakes. One team was stated to have reported in *Nature Geoscience* that

projected lake expansion by the year 2100 could lead to “widespread societal and ecological impacts,” noting that hundreds of kilometers of roads, hundreds of settlements, and 10,000 square kilometers of grasslands, wetlands, and croplands could be submerged.

“The dramatic increases in lake area are flooding people’s homes, displacing livestock, and making some glacial lakes vulnerable to outburst flooding,” Fangfang Yao, a researcher at the University of Colorado Boulder and lead author of the study in *Science*, has said.

“The Tibetan Plateau is a very remote, harsh environment. Satellites like Landsat are the only way to observe changes across numerous lakes and long time periods.”

China doubles estimate of Tibetans affected by Dingri earthquake to 120,000

07 March 2025, [Phayul](#), Tsering Dhundup



Tibetans in Dingri go through the rubble to find survivors following a devastating earthquake in Southern Tibet's Shigatse region (Photo/Tibet Fire and Rescue)

Chinese authorities have revised the number of people affected by January’s devastating earthquake in Tibet, doubling previous estimates to more than 120,000 individuals, according to state media reports released Wednesday.

The 7.1-magnitude earthquake that struck Dingri County in Shigatse Prefecture near the Nepal border on [January 7](#) has had a far more extensive impact than initially reported. The revised figures emerged during a ceremony in Gurum Village marking the launch of a major reconstruction effort across eight severely damaged villages.

“The government aims to relocate more than 120,000 displaced residents into new homes by the end of the year,” the state-run Xinhua News Agency reported. This represents a significant increase from earlier estimates that placed the number of affected individuals at approximately 60,000.

Despite the substantial upward revision in those affected, the official death toll remains unchanged at 126 since initial reports on January 8.

According to government plans, many villages will be rebuilt at their original locations. However, settlements in seismically active zones or areas vulnerable to landslides and flooding will be relocated to safer sites.

The Chinese government has also disclosed for the first time the extent of damage to educational infrastructure. A Xinhua report released on March 5 revealed that 79 schools sustained damage, with 76 already repaired and reinforced to meet safety standards. The remaining three schools in the worst-affected areas require complete reconstruction, with 1,479 students temporarily relocated to alternative facilities in Shigatse City.

In the earthquake's aftermath, Tibetans both within and outside the region held candlelight vigils and prayer services for victims. Many also chose to [forgo traditional Tibetan New Year celebrations](#) as a mark of respect and mourning.

The Chinese government's response has faced criticism from some quarters, particularly regarding restrictions on external aid. Reports indicate that authorities barred non-resident Tibetan volunteers from entering affected areas without official permission, while independent journalists attempting to report from the region allegedly faced restrictions. As reconstruction efforts continue, thousands of affected residents remain in temporary shelters awaiting permanent housing solutions. The government has committed to completing the resettlement process by the end of 2025, though concerns persist about whether all displaced Tibetans will receive adequate support during rebuilding.

China cites controversial Yarlung Tsangpo dam among moves to tackle climate change

06 March 2025, [Tibetan Review](#)

China has on Mar 5 cited the geologically highly dangerous and geostrategically ominous hydropower dam it is building near India's border in Himalayan Tibet on the Yarlung Tsangpo river among a package of major projects it is developing to tackle climate change as it moves to bring its carbon dioxide emissions to a peak before 2030 and become carbon neutral by 2060. Downstream India sees the projects purpose as potentially ominous despite China's assurances.

The world's largest producer of climate-warming greenhouse gas said it would develop new offshore wind farms and accelerate the construction of "new energy bases" across its vast desert areas, reported [theedgemalaysia.com](#) Mar 5, citing the National Development and Reform Commission China's economic planner, in an official report.

"China will actively and prudently work towards peaking carbon emissions and achieving carbon neutrality," the report was quoted as saying.

The report noted that the controversial hydropower facility on the Yarlung Tsangpo river in Tibet had raised concerns in India about its potential impact on downstream water flows.

The commission has also said it would develop a direct power transmission route connecting Tibet with Hong Kong, Macao and Guangdong in the southeast.

The report said China is not expected to meet its five-year goal to bring carbon intensity down by 18% by the end of this year, and it has not yet announced an annual target for 2025.

"Despite the world record expansion of renewables, an inconvenient truth is that China's economy hasn't become much more energy efficient in recent years," Yao Zhe, global policy advisor with Greenpeace in Beijing, has said.

The Yarlung Tsangpo hydropower dam is being built in a seismically active zone and China said the Dingri earthquake near Mt Everest on Jan 7 had caused damages to five dams in the area, leading to the evacuation of some 1,500 residents from six villages. Besides, the project, considered as the world's largest infrastructure or dam project, is seen as a potential weapon against India as it will enable China to control the flow of the river's waters – limiting its volume in times of shortages and unleashing it to cause massive floods at other times.

China announces plans for major renewable projects to tackle climate change

05 March 2025, [VOA](#)

China said on Wednesday it would develop a package of major projects to tackle climate change as it moves to bring its carbon dioxide emissions to a peak before 2030 and become carbon neutral by 2060.

The world's largest producer of climate-warming greenhouse gas said it would develop new offshore wind farms and accelerate the construction of "new energy bases" across its vast desert areas, the National Development and Reform Commission, the country's economic planner, said in an official report published on Wednesday.

"China will actively and prudently work towards peaking carbon emissions and achieving carbon neutrality," the report read.

Among the proposed projects cited in the report by the state planning agency was a controversial hydropower facility on the Yarlung Tsangpo river in Tibet, which has raised concerns in India about its potential impact on downstream water flows.

It also said it would develop a direct power transmission route connecting Tibet with Hong Kong, Macao and Guangdong in the southeast.

However, coal will remain a key fuel, with the NDRC report saying the country will continue to increase coal production and supply this year, even as it plans for trials of low-carbon technology at its coal-fired power plants and to promote initiatives aimed at substituting fossil fuels with renewables.

China has been struggling to strike a balance between fostering economic growth and meeting its environmental goals.

The NDRC said the 3.4% reduction in the amount of carbon emissions per unit of economic growth last year "fell short of expectations," blaming rapid growth in energy consumption as well as extreme weather.

China is not expected to meet its five-year goal to bring carbon intensity down by 18% by the end of this year, and it has not yet announced an annual target for 2025.

It will also struggle to meet a separate target to cut the amount of energy consumed per unit of growth by 13.5% by the end of this year, despite exceeding expectations with a 3.8% reduction last year, analysts said.

"Despite the world record expansion of renewables, an inconvenient truth is that China's economy hasn't become much more energy efficient in recent years," said Yao Zhe, global policy adviser with Greenpeace in Beijing.

director of Mount Qomolangma Atmosphere and Environment Comprehensive Observation and Research Station under the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

"This shows the scenic area has the safe conditions necessary for reopening," Ma told state-run *Xinhua* news agency.

To prepare for the reopening, the local government formed a joint inspection working group on January 22, which took 35 days to carry out comprehensive and meticulous inspections on important locations in the scenic area, he said.

"Only through comprehensive inspections could we ensure the safety of tourists when the scenic area reopened," said Pasang, a maintenance worker at the scenic area.

The local accommodation industry is also ready for the reopening. "All 35 rooms have been cleaned up and half of the rooms have already been booked," said Tsering Geden, a hotel owner in the county's Pasum Village.

Last year, the scenic area of the world's tallest mountain received more than 547,600 domestic and overseas tourists -- an increase of 18 per cent year on year, including 13,700 overseas tourists, mainly from Singapore, Malaysia, Germany and France, earning \$15.3 million in revenue, the *Xinhua* report said.

China reopens Mt Everest area in Tibet after January earthquake

01 March 2025, [Deccan Herald](#)

The quake claimed 126 lives and left 188 others injured.

Beijing: China on Saturday reopened the scenic area of Mt Everest, known as Mount Qomolangma, in the Tibet Autonomous Region after it was closed to the public following the January earthquake. The area was closed on January 7 after a 6.8-magnitude quake struck Dingri, home to the northern base camp of the world's highest peak. The quake claimed 126 lives and left 188 others injured. The scenic area was closed on the same day for the safety of tourists and staff.

In the Tibetan language, Mount Everest is known as Mount Qomolangma which forms the part of the border between China and Nepal.

Both countries settled their border dispute in 1961 with the boundary line passing through the summit of Mount Everest.

The Mt Everest area had not been affected by the quake, with no obvious ice falls, avalanches or geological changes being observed, said Ma Weiqiang,

TIBET IN EXILE

Japan's Tibet support groups hold annual meeting, urge action against Chinese oppression

31 March 2025, [Big News Network](#)

The Tibet Support Groups in Japan conducted their annual meeting via an online platform on March 29. According to a report from the Central Tibet Administration (CTA), the meeting was jointly organised by the Save Tibet Network, Tibet House Japan, and the Tibetan Community in Japan.

Makino Seishu, Chairman of the Save Tibet Network, greeted the attendees and shared insights about his longstanding involvement with the Tibetan cause, including his visits to Dharamshala and interactions with His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama. He encouraged the attendees to persist in their support for the Tibetan movement during this challenging chapter in Tibetan history, as stated by the CTA.

He emphasised that the democratisation of China is crucial for addressing various issues related to Chinese aggression in Asia and beyond, as noted by the CTA.

Lawmaker Yamada Hiroshi, the current Secretary of the Japan Parliamentary Support Group for Tibet, welcomed the participants and highlighted the necessity of addressing the human rights abuses occurring in China, as well as in the occupied territories of Tibet, Southern Mongolia, and East Turkistan, according to the CTA report.

Tsewang Gyalpo Arya, representing the Liaison Office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama for Japan and East Asia, expressed gratitude to all participants and informed them about the current oppressive Chinese policies aimed at completely eliminating Tibetan identity by denying Tibetan children their rights to learn their own language, culture, and religion.

The CTA report mentioned that he elaborated on the malicious intent behind the Chinese colonial boarding schools and their interference in the selection of high Tibetan reincarnate Lamas.

He asserted that the Tibetan issue is interconnected with the broader international movements advocating for peace, democracy, and justice, as emphasised by the CTA.

Approximately twenty attendees, including Secretary Karma Choeying and DIIR staff member Tenzin Palmo, took part in the meeting. Kitazawa Anri from the Save Tibet Network facilitated the event.

Finally, Chairman Makino Seishu and Representative Tsewang Gyalpo Arya expressed their appreciation to the participants and prayed for a swift resolution to the Tibet issue and for global peace, as reiterated by the CTA report.

House approves \$4 million loan for Minnesota's 'Tibet Town Project' despite calls to turn down funding

29 March 2025, [Phayul](#), Tenzin Nyidon

A resolution proposing a budget reduction for the Tibet Town Project (TTP) failed to pass the floor test during the ongoing ninth (budget) session of the 17th Tibetan Parliament in Exile on Saturday. The motion secured only eight votes in favor of the reduction, while 10 members voted against it, maintaining the existing budget allocation.



Digital render of the Tibet town project in Minnesota, USA

The Tibetan Town Project, also known as “Little Tibet,” is an innovative green town initiative spearheaded by the TTP LLC, a dedicated and holistic subsidiary of the Tibetan American Foundation of Minnesota. Designed to accommodate approximately 5,000 Tibetan Americans in Minnesota, the project aims to preserve Tibetan heritage and identity while incorporating eco-friendly infrastructure. The development plan includes residential areas, shops, restaurants, healthcare facilities, spiritual and cultural centers, daycare and fitness institutions, museums, offices, community spaces, and parks tailored for the Tibetan American community. The project is estimated to be completed within three to five years.

The resolution was tabled by MP Serta Tsultrim on Thursday, who presented Document No. 18, raising financial and logistical concerns regarding the Central Tibetan Administration's (CTA) proposed \$4 million loan for the initiative. He argued that given CTA's current financial standing, such an investment was not justifiable. He further pointed out that the project's overseeing members have not attempted to crowdfund from the approximately 300 interested households, questioning their commitment to financial self-sufficiency. Additionally, he cautioned that if the CTA extends financial support to the Tibet Support Group now, it may be obligated to do so for other groups in the future.



The ongoing budget session of the 17th Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile (Photo/TPiE)

He also referenced a letter dated March 19, 2025, from eight board members of the Tibetan American Foundation of Minnesota addressed to the Speaker, Deputy Speaker, and CTA President. He noted that these members claimed to be unaware of the CTA's loan scheme, suggesting a lack of unanimous support within the foundation.

Fellow MP Thondup Tsering of North America expressed his support for the project, emphasizing its significant importance for the diaspora community. However, he advocated for purchasing the land outright under the name of the Office of Tibet in Washington, DC, rather than securing a \$4 million loan. He raised concerns over inconsistencies in the documentation, noting that while an appeal letter mentions interest payments on the loan, another document describes it as interest-free. This discrepancy, he warned, could lead to complications if unforeseen circumstances arise during the project's implementation.

President Penpa Tsering, the incumbent minister of the Department of Finance addressed these inquiries by revealing that the project carries a total valuation of \$5.6 million, with \$4 million being financed through a loan from the CTA and the remaining \$1.6 million secured from a bank. Elaborating on the genesis of the Tibetan Township Project (TTP), he underscored its fundamental objective of serving public welfare. He highlighted that the Cabinet's primary concern has always been the migration of Tibetans, particularly targeting regions abroad with significant Tibetan populations. The project's goal, he explained, is to create a compact community where Tibetans can reside collectively, thereby safeguarding their cultural heritage while fostering an environment conducive to social cohesion, cultural preservation, and environmental consciousness—especially among Tibetan youth. It was with this vision that the project was conceived.

President Tsering further stated that the board members overseeing the initiative had initially approached him to introduce the project, to which he responded favorably, recognizing it as a commendable effort. Over the past two years, he has engaged in multiple discussions with the project's board

members, who, he emphasized, have been working on the initiative voluntarily, without any financial remuneration or profit-driven motives.

Addressing concerns raised in parliament regarding the project's transparency, he assured lawmakers that the initiative has been meticulously planned. However, he acknowledged that certain parliamentarians had voiced apprehensions over perceived opacity. He stressed that such a matter cannot be deliberated in parliament without adopting a comprehensive and holistic approach. President Tsering reaffirmed that the current administration has consistently prioritized transparency in the execution of all projects, in accordance with the rule of law. He further assured that transparency will be maintained throughout the implementation phase, with the Cabinet facilitating formal communication and exercising rigorous oversight to ensure the project's integrity.

Eleventh Day of Ninth Session of Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile

29 March 2025, [CTA](#)

Chaired by Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel, the eleventh day of the ninth session of the 17th Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile began with the second reading of legislative procedure.

The amendments to the Rules and Regulations for *the Public Service Commission* were discussed, with changes to Article 9 (i)(ii), Article 11 (ii), Article 13 (i)(ii)(iii), Article 14 (i)(vi), Article 15 (ii)(iii), Article 16 (i)(ii)(iv)(vii), Article 18 (i)(ii)(iv), and Article 20 passing the second reading. However, the amendment to Article 15 (iv) of *the Rules and Regulations for the Public Service Commission* was repealed after failing to receive the necessary votes.

During the second reading of the proposed amendment to *the Rule of Budget*, a broad consensus emerged among parliamentarians. Following a majority vote, the house agreed to constitute an ad hoc committee to conduct a thorough review of *the Rule of Budget*.

Following the requisite list of business, the amendment to *the Rules and Regulations for the Housing and Estate of Tibetan Settlements*, specifically Article 11 (i), was passed on the second reading.

Amendments to *the Rules and Regulations for Parliamentary Procedures and the Conduct of Business* concerning the removal of elected dignitaries of the Central Tibetan Administration – specifically Articles 17, 75 (i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v), and 76 (i)(ii)(iii) – were discussed. However, due to a lack of consensus among lawmakers, the house decided to freeze the bill until the 10th session to allow for further clarity in the legislature.

The amendment to *the Rules and Regulations for Salaries and Other Allowances for the Supreme Justice*

Commissioner and other Justice Commissioners – specifically Article 6(iv), Article 7(iv), Article 10(ii), and Article 13(i) – passed the second reading.

Amendments to *the Rules and Regulations for the Standing Committee of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile*'s Article 7 (i) and for *the honorarium, daily allowances, and other entitlements for members of the Tibetan Parliament*'s Article 5 (iv) passed the second reading.

The amendment to *the Rules and Regulations for Salaries and Other Allowances for the Sikyong and the Kalons* on Articles 6 (iv), 7(iv), as well as amendments to *the Rules and Regulations for Salaries and Other Allowances for the Chief Election Commissioner*'s Articles 7(i) and 7(iv), passed the second reading.

Lastly, the amendments to *the Rules and Regulations for Salaries and Other Allowances for the Chairman of the Public Service Commission* on Articles 6 (iv), 7 (iv) and to *the Auditor General of the Office of the Auditor* on Articles 6(iv), 7(iv), 10 also passed the second reading.

The legislative procedure continued with the second reading of bills related to the Tibetan Supreme Justice Commission's *Tibetan Code of Civil Procedure, Law of Evidence, and Tibetan Code of Judiciary*.

The Tibetan Code of Civil Procedure passed the second reading, with an amendment to Article 97 and appendix B-1. However, its Article 69 (I) was repealed after failing to get two third of vote to pass the second reading.

The Law of Evidence, with amendment to Articles 3 (i), 89, passed the second reading.

Likewise, the Tibetan Code of Judiciary, with amendments on Articles 6(b), 10(a), 11(b), 12, 14 (a), 43, 83 passed the second reading.

An official motion to offer concession on the Net Profit Contribution (*Tsangkhei Gyacha*) for Men-Tse-Khang, Dickyi Larsoe Tibetan Cooperative Society, Puruwalla Sakya Tibetan Society, and Sataun Kham Kathok Tibetan Society was tabled by Sikyong Penpa Tsering, the incumbent Kalon of the Department of Finance (DoF), and supported by Kalon Changra Tharlam Dolma of the Department of Education (DoE). The motion was passed with a majority vote.

An official motion to offer a concession on the Net Profit Contribution (*Tsangkhei Babh*) for the Pokhara Tashi Phelgyel Tibetan Cooperative Society was tabled by Kalon Penpa Tsering of DoH and supported by Kalon Norzin Dolma of the Department of Information and International Relations (DIIR). The motion was passed with a majority vote.

An official motion to offer a concession on the pending Administrative Charge on grants payable (*Rognyul Gyacha*) of Upper Tibetan Children's Village (UTCV) was tabled by Kalon Penpa Tsering of DoF and supported by Kalon Gyari Dolma of the Department of

Security (DoS). The motion was passed with majority vote.

An official motion to offer a concession on the pending Administrative Charge (*Zingkyong Gyacha*) for Snow Lion Foundation Schools (Nepal) was tabled by Kalon Penpa Tsering of DoF and supported by Kalon Changra Tharlam Dolma of DoE. The motion was passed with a majority vote.

The house proceeded with the continuation of report presentation of the 12 Public Accounts Committee by its Chair, Parliamentarian Geshe Atong Rinchen Gyaltsen, and Secretary Parliamentarian Phurpa Dorjee Gyaldhong.

The session adjourned at 7 pm.

-Report filed by Tibetan Parliamentary Secretariat

China releases “White Paper” on Tibet human rights, draws International concerns

29 March 2025, [Phayul](#), Tsering Dhundup



White paper titled “Human Rights in Xizang in the New Era” was released by the State Council Information Office at a press conference in Lhasa on March 28, 2025 (Photo/CTGN)

The Chinese government has released a new white paper on human rights in Tibet, drawing renewed international criticism over its treatment of Tibetan culture, education, and religious practices. The [document, titled](#) “Human Rights in Xizang in the New Era”, was released by the State Council Information Office at a press conference in Lhasa on March 28.

One of the contentious aspects of the white paper concerns the role of boarding schools in Tibet. The document asserts that these institutions provide quality education in remote pastoral and agricultural regions, emphasising that parental choice is respected and students can return home during weekends and holidays. However, human rights groups, and United Nations experts argue that over 1 million Tibetan children have been systematically separated from their families through these schools.

Critics highlight the near absence of Tibetan language, history, and cultural education in these institutions, warning that they serve as a tool for assimilation rather than genuine education. A joint statement by 28 European countries at the 58th session of the UN

Human Rights Council raised concerns about the impact of these policies on Tibet’s unique cultural identity.

The white paper also defends China’s policies on religious practices in Tibet, particularly the reincarnation process of Buddhist leaders. According to the document, 93 reincarnations have been officially recognised by 2024 under what Beijing calls a “legal and religious framework”.

However, Tibetan religious leaders, the Central Tibetan Administration and scholars argue that this policy allows the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to exert control over Tibetan Buddhism, undermining the community’s spiritual traditions. The white paper’s assertion that “the succession of living Buddhas follows religious rituals and historical convention” has been widely interpreted as an attempt to solidify Chinese state control over the future recognition of the Dalai Lama’s reincarnation.

The release of the white paper coincided with China’s March 28 celebration of the so-called “Serfs’ Emancipation Day”. A flag-raising ceremony was held in Lhasa’s Potala Palace Square, the traditional capital of Tibet, where regional government officials praised what they described as Tibet’s progress under Chinese rule.

Karma Tseten, chairman of the so-called Tibet Autonomous Region government, declared that the “abolition of feudal serfdom in Xizang” represented not only a human rights milestone but also a major advancement in global civilisation. However, Tibetan exile communities and activists see this event as a reminder of China’s ongoing suppression of Tibetan identity. On March 10, Tibetan communities worldwide marked the anniversary of their 1959 uprising against Chinese rule with protest rallies.

The Chinese government continues to push a narrative of development and modernisation in Tibet, asserting that human rights have significantly improved. Yet, critics argue that these policies represent a systematic erosion of Tibetan cultural and religious identity. The white paper makes no mention of long-standing grievances regarding restrictions on freedom of expression, religious oppression, and the suppression of political dissent.

This is the 18th white paper on Tibet released by China since 1992, underscoring the CCP’s ongoing effort to control the global discourse on Tibet’s status. Despite Beijing’s efforts, international human rights agencies and Tibetans in exile continue to counter Chinese propaganda.

Bill to prevent administrative deadlock sent to ad hoc committee for review

29 March 2025, [Phayul](#), Tsering Dhundup

The Tibetan Parliament in Exile has voted to establish an ad hoc committee to review proposed changes to “the Rule of Budget” following extensive debate during its ninth budget session.

The amendment tabled by the 16th Cabinet (Kashag), which would create emergency procedures for government expenditures when normal governance structures are compromised, sparked extensive discussion among parliamentarians.

During the eleventh day of the 17th Tibetan Parliament’s ninth budget session, Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) President Penpa Tsering, who also serves as finance minister, presented the amendment as part of broader revisions to financial regulations governing exile Tibetan government funds. The proposal had been initially introduced on the sixth day of the current session before reaching its second reading on Friday.

The most contentious provision outlines contingency plans for financial decision-making during emergencies when either the Cabinet (Kashag) or both Cabinet and Parliament are unable to function. The proposed amendment would authorise the Parliamentary Standing Committee to approve expenditures if the Cabinet is unavailable. In scenarios where both Cabinet and Parliament are inoperative, a special committee led by the Cabinet Secretary and comprising department heads and ministerial office secretaries would make decisions through a two-thirds majority vote.

Parliamentary opinion was divided on the necessity of such measures. Proponents characterised the amendment as prudent preparation for potential future challenges, while critics argued it addressed hypothetical scenarios. Some representatives expressed concerns about the exclusion of the Parliamentary Secretariat from the proposed regulations and questioned whether the Cabinet anticipated circumstances that might render the CTA non-functional.

Finance Minister Penpa Tsering responded by emphasising that the amendment serves purely as a precautionary measure designed to prevent administrative paralysis in extraordinary situations. He assured Parliament that existing financial procedures would remain in place as long as the legislative body continues to operate. “There is absolutely no intention to transform the administration into a cooperative society,” Tsering stated.

Following the debate, Parliament voted 22-17 to refer the amendment to ad hoc committee for thorough review.

Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile Elects New Justice Commissioners and Auditor General on Twelfth Day of Ninth Session

29 March 2025, [CTA](#)

Chaired by Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel, the twelfth day of the ninth session of the 17th Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile began with the official solidarity on the critical situations inside Tibet. The motion was tabled by parliamentarian Geshe Atong Rinchen Gyaltsen and supported by parliamentarian Geshe Lharampa Atuk Tseten.

The six-point official solidarity motion applauds the courageous Tibetans who have sacrificed their lives for the Tibetan cause. It condemns China’s restrictions on the Tibetan language as part of its broader objective of Sinicizing Tibet and calls for the release of political prisoners, including the 11th Panchen Lama.

The motion reaffirms Tibet’s historical independence and upholds the Middle Way Policy as the preferred approach to resolving the Sino-Tibetan conflict through dialogue. It expresses condolences and solidarity with those affected by the devastating earthquake in Tibet’s Dingri region on 7 January 2025, while denouncing China’s unchecked environmental exploitation, which has contributed to natural disasters and destruction.

Furthermore, it extends solidarity to Tibetans inside Tibet, who continue to endure the brutal occupation of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). It also urges Tibetans in the diaspora to unite in efforts to resolve the Sino-Tibetan conflict and preserve Tibet’s unique cultural heritage. The official motion of solidarity on the critical situations inside Tibet was passed unanimously.

The house proceeded with the Election of the Chief Justice Commissioner and two other Justice Commissioners of the Tibetan Supreme Justice Commission and the Election of Auditor General of the Office of Auditor General.

Yeshe Wangmo, Secretary of the Tibetan Supreme Justice Commission, was elected as the Chief Justice Commissioner, receiving 31 votes, while Sonam Gyaltsen garnered 12 votes. With this win, Yeshe Wangmo becomes the first woman to be elected as Chief Justice Commissioner in the TSJC.

Parliamentarian Dawa Phunki received 25 votes against parliamentarian Youdon Aukatsang (4 votes), Phurbu Dorjee (9 votes), and 4 null votes and was elected as a Justice Commissioner of the Tibetan Supreme Justice Commission.

Former Kalon Phagpa Tsering was elected as a Justice Commissioner with 31 votes, defeating former parliamentarian Gyari Kalsang Tsewang, who received 12 votes.

Tashi Topgyal, Secretary of Office of Auditor General, was elected as the Auditor General of the Office of

Auditor General with 32 votes against Samten Norbu with 8 votes and 3 null votes.

Continuing with the financial business, the budget of the Office of Tibet (Washington DC) was approved following due deliberation. A motion of reduction to the special recurring of the Office of Tibet (Washington DC) failed to receive majority vote. This was followed by deliberation and approval of the budget of Tibetan Community Development Fund (TCDF).

The house proceeded with the continuation of report presentation of the 12 Public Accounts Committee by its secretary parliamentarian Phurpa Dorjee Gyaldhong and members parliamentarian Lhagyari Namgyal Dolkar, parliamentarian Tsering Lhamo, and parliamentarian Tenzin Choezin.

The day concluded with reading of leaves of absence and next week's list of business by the Secretary-General.

The session adjourned at 6 pm.

-Report filed by Tibetan Parliamentary Secretariat

Tibetan Parliament condemns China's restrictions on the Tibetan language

29 March 2025, [The Tibet Post](#), Yangchen Dolma

Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile expressed its solidarity with the critical situation in Tibet and unanimously adopted a formal motion of solidarity with the Tibetans living under Chinese authoritarian regime. It also condemned China's restrictions on the Tibetan language as part of its wider objective of Sinicising Tibet and called for the release of all political prisoners, including the 11th Panchen Lama.

On the twelfth day of the ninth session of the 17th Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile (TPiE), on March 29 2025, MP Atong Rinchen Gyaltzen tabled an official solidarity motion on the critical situations in Tibet, supported by MP Geshe Lharampa Atuk Tseten. The motion was discussed by many MPs who expressed their solidarity with Tibetan brothers and sisters inside Tibet and also emphasised on the freedom movement to restore a free Tibet.

According to TPiE, "The six-point official solidarity motion applauds the courageous Tibetans who have sacrificed their lives for the Tibetan cause. It condemns China's restrictions on the Tibetan language as part of its broader objective of Sinicizing Tibet and calls for the release of political prisoners, including the 11th Panchen Lama.

"The motion reaffirms Tibet's historical independence and upholds the Middle Way Policy as the preferred approach to resolving the Sino-Tibetan conflict through dialogue. It expresses condolences and solidarity with those affected by the devastating earthquake in Tibet's Dingri region on January 7, 2025, while denouncing China's unchecked environmental

exploitation, which has contributed to natural disasters and destruction."

It also expresses its solidarity with Tibetans inside Tibet, who continue to suffer under the brutal occupation of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). It also urges Tibetans in the diaspora to work together to resolve the Sino-Tibetan conflict and preserve Tibet's unique cultural heritage. The official motion of solidarity on the critical situation in Tibet was adopted unanimously by the MPs.

VOA halts operations in Dharamshala; RFA to follow next month

28 March 2025, [Phayul](#), Tsering Dhundup

The Tibetan media in the exile community faces a major media setback as *Voice of America* (VOA) has ceased its operations in Dharamshala, with Radio Free Asia (RFA) set to follow by the end of April, according to a revelation made by the CTA President in the house on Thursday.

During the 17th Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile's 9th session, President Tsering of the Central Tibetan Administration revealed that all VOA central headquarters staff have been placed on administrative leave, while regional reporters, including those in Dharamshala have terminated operations. Similarly, RFA's central staff have been furloughed, with its regional staff being supported through reserved funds until the end of April.

The closures come in the wake of an executive order signed by U.S. President Donald Trump on March 14, instructing the reduction of operations for seven federally funded entities, including the U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM), which oversees VOA and RFA, and other organisations.

The Association of Tibetan Journalists (ATJ) based in Dharamshala has strongly condemned the funding cuts, urging the U.S. government to reinstate financial support for the Tibetan language services of both radio stations. In a [statement](#), ATJ expressed deep disappointment over the decision, emphasising the critical role these media outlets have played in providing reliable news to Tibetans inside Tibet and preserving Tibetan language and culture.

Over the years, VOA and RFA have served as vital sources of information on Tibetan life under Chinese rule, the activities of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the Tibetan government-in-exile, and the plight of Tibetan refugees. The closure of these stations, ATJ warns, significantly undermines press freedom and democratic values in the Tibetan exile community.

Chinese state-controlled media have celebrated the shutdown, portraying it as a victory against what they claim to be "false reporting". The Global Times described VOA as a "so-called beacon of freedom" that

has been “discarded like a dirty rag” by its own government. Other Chinese media outlets, including Beijing Daily, accused VOA of spreading misinformation about China. Former Global Times editor-in-chief Hu Xijin called the move “great news,” while Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning labelled VOA a “lie factory”.

While many lawmakers called for restoration of funding for the two media outlets describing them as lifelines for propagation of human rights situation inside Tibet, one lawmaker welcomed the decision saying that these two media houses have been a major proponent of disharmony in the exile Tibetan community.

The Tibetan in Tibet and in exile now face an information vacuum as these longstanding media platforms fall silent. The Central Tibetan Administration, ATJ and other Tibetan organisations have called on the U.S. government to reconsider its decision and restore the critical services provided by VOA and RFA Tibetan language divisions which served as an important source of information to the Tibetan’s inside Tibet.

SFT France sends legal notice to Musée Guimet and French culture minister over erasure of Tibet label

28 March 2025, [Phayul](#), Tenzin Nyidon



Tibetan activists and supporter protest outside Musée Guimet (Photo/SFT France)

Activist group Students for a Free Tibet (SFT) France has issued a legal notice to Musée Guimet and French Minister of Culture Rachida Dati, demanding the museum reinstate “Tibet” in all its labels, publications, and exhibitions. The notice follows months of appeals and protests against the museum’s decision to replace Tibetan exhibition spaces with the broader term “Himalayan World.”

For the past six months, Tibetan activists and supporters in France have staged weekly demonstrations outside the renowned Parisian museum, which houses one of the most extensive

Asian art collections outside Asia. Critics argue that the rebranding erases Tibet’s unique cultural and historical identity by subsuming it into a vague regional category.

“This change is not only historically and scientifically inaccurate, but also supports the Chinese colonial narrative about Tibet,” SFT France stated in its press release. “As a museum with the largest collection of Asian arts outside Asia, such a change in nomenclature appears to be an attempt to erase Tibetan culture and identity, which will have a destructive impact on future generations,” the press release stated.

SFT France President Tenzin Yangchen called on the museum to uphold its responsibility to present Asian arts without “censorship or historical distortion.”

The campaign has gained momentum following a recent victory at another Parisian institution, Musée du quai Branly, which removed the colonial term “Xizang” from its Tibetan artefact descriptions after public outcry. The museum restored “Tibet” in its labels and catalogues following swift mobilization by Tibetans and their allies.

More than 140 Tibet advocacy groups in October last year also challenged Musée Guimet’s terminology, accusing the institution of complicity in China’s efforts to erase Tibetan identity. In a letter addressed to Museum President Dr. Yannick Lintz on Thursday, the coalition demanded the restoration of “Tibet” in its exhibitions, condemning the current terminology as a tacit endorsement of China’s occupation.

“This is not just a matter of semantics,” said Rashi Jauhri of the International Tibet Network (ITN). “By prioritising China’s propaganda over historical accuracy, the museum is actively betraying every patron that walks through its door.”

Bhutan refers to Tibet as Beijing-preferred ‘Xizang,’ sparking pushback

28 March 2025, [RFA](#), Tenzin Pema and Dickey Kundol

Tibetan advocates say the term advances China’s efforts to erase Tibet’s identity



A cultural performance by Tibetan artists from Tibet Autonomous Region at the Royal Institute of Management in Bhutan’s capital Thimphu on March 18, 2025. (@China_Amb_India via X)

Bhutan became the latest nation to refer to Tibet as “Xizang,” prompting Tibetan politicians and advocates to urge Bhutan to stop using the term promoted by Beijing that they say contributes to China’s efforts to erase Tibetan identity.

In a March 17 statement, Bhutan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade used the term “Xizang” to refer to the Tibet Autonomous Region, a Chinese government-designed administrative region that makes up only part of the larger region that Tibetans refer to as “Greater Tibet.”

Bhutan’s statement — which pertained to a two-day cultural performance by Tibetan artists on March 18-19 at the Royal Institute of Management in Bhutan’s capital Thimphu — also referred to the Tibetan performers as a “Chinese cultural troupe” and the performance itself as a “Chinese cultural performance.”

Tibetan leaders and activists say such language all serves to advance Beijing’s wider campaign to erase Tibet’s historical and cultural identity. In 2023, China formally adopted the term in all its official documents to refer to Tibet.

China’s government policy in Tibet is simply “cultural genocide,” said Lobsang Yangtso, coordinator of Tibet Advocacy Alliance - India.

“As a country committed to democracy and the rule of law, the Bhutanese government’s language choices have significant implications, and using the term ‘Xizang’ exacerbates China’s cultural genocide,” she said.

On March 25, Tibetan activists, including Yangtso, delivered a letter of appeal at the Bhutanese Embassy in New Delhi, India. The letter was addressed to Bhutan’s Foreign Minister Lyonpo D.N. Dhungyel and signed by a coalition of 144 Tibet support organizations.



Tibetan activists delivered a letter addressed to Bhutan’s Foreign Minister Lyonpo D.N. Dhungyel at the Bhutanese Embassy in New Delhi, India, March 25, 2025. (Tibet Advocacy Alliance-India)

Tibet’s government-in-exile, the Central Tibetan Administration, in Dharamsala, India, also pushed back.

“Friendly expressions of cultural performances marked the beginning of the Chinese invasion of Tibet and I see similar patterns playing out in Bhutan,” said CTA Spokesperson Tenzin Lekshay. “It must remain cautious and we would like to request the government to refrain from using terms like Xizang.”

The Bhutanese government did not immediately respond to Radio Free Asia’s request for a response.

Spreading usage

The usage of the “Xizang” has gradually seeped into international media reports, statements from several governments and even at museums.

Nepal, Pakistan, and Vietnam have all issued official statements in the recent past using the Chinese-promoted term.

“Whether it is due to an oversight or a formal policy decision, the appearance of the term ‘Xizang’ for ‘Tibet’ in an official statement... is worrisome,” said Bhuchung Tsering, head of the Research & Monitoring Unit at the Washington-based International Campaign for Tibet.

US Commission on religious freedom denounces China’s interference in Dalai Lama’s succession

28 March 2025, [Phayul](#)

The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) has once again designated China as a “Country of Particular Concern” (CPC) in its latest report, citing Beijing’s persistent violations of religious freedom, including its intention to interfere in His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s succession process and persecution of Tibetans resisting such actions.

The USCIRF, an independent congressional body that advises but does not represent the U.S. government, issued one of its sharpest criticisms, stating that China remains among the world’s worst violators of religious freedom. It highlighted the Chinese Communist Party’s (CCP) continued enforcement of its “sinicization of religion” policy under the leadership of Xi Jinping, demanding absolute loyalty and control over religious communities.

The 2025 USCIRF Annual Report detailed Beijing’s systematic suppression of Tibetan Buddhism, including a ban on new monk admissions in Chamdo prefecture, restrictions on religious activities during Saga Dawa in Lhasa, and forced removal of religious symbols from Tibetan homes in parts of present-day Sichuan Province. Authorities also shut down monastery schools, forcing Tibetan children into state-run boarding institutions aimed at assimilation. Police arrested and imprisoned Tibetan Buddhists for publicly or privately mentioning the Dalai Lama.

The crackdown extended beyond Tibetan Buddhists to include Uyghurs, underground Catholic clergy, Protestant pastor Kan Xiaoyong, Falun Gong

practitioners, and members of the Church of Almighty God (CAG). The report also detailed China's use of high-tech surveillance at places of worship and its global campaign of transnational repression, including threats, blackmail, and coercion against diaspora communities to silence critics.

USCIRF urged the U.S. government to re-designate China as a CPC under the International Religious Freedom Act (IRFA) and coordinate with international allies to impose targeted sanctions on Chinese officials responsible for severe religious freedom violations, particularly those involved in interfering with the Dalai Lama's succession process.

The report is created annually by the International Religious Freedom Act (IRFA), USCIRF is an independent, bipartisan U.S. government advisory body, separate from the State Department, that monitors and reports on religious freedom abroad and makes policy recommendations to the president, secretary of state, and Congress. USCIRF bases these recommendations on the provisions of its authorizing legislation and the standards in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), and other international documents. USCIRF's mandate and annual reports are different from and complementary to, the mandate and annual reports of the State Department's Office of International Religious Freedom.

China redesignated as country of particular concern in latest US int'l religious freedom report

27 March 2025, [Tibetan Review](#)

Releasing its 2025 Annual Report, the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) has on Mar 25 included China among 16 countries that it has asked the Secretary of State to designate as Countries of Particular Concern (CPC). It has found these countries to be particularly severe in the freedom of religion or belief violations under the country's International Religious Freedom Act of 1998. The report notes that in 2024, religious freedom conditions in China remained among the worst in the world as President Xi Jinping continued to lead efforts to update and enforce China's "Sinicization of religion" policy.

It says Chinese authorities threatened Uyghur and Tibetan diaspora communities with surveillance, blackmail, and threats against their families living in China to force them into silence.

On reports of religious repression in Tibet in particular, the report says: "Officials persisted in restricting religious activities of Tibetan Buddhists. Authorities reportedly banned admission of new monks at a monastery in Chamdo prefecture, prohibited religious

activities during Saga Dawa in Lhasa, and forced residents to remove religious symbols displayed outside their homes in Sichuan Province. Authorities closed Tibetan monastery schools and enrolled students in state-run boarding schools to forcibly assimilate them, while police arrested and imprisoned Tibetan Buddhists for public and private mentions of the Dalai Lama. Authorities indicated that they intend to interfere in the Dalai Lama's succession process and punish Tibetans who oppose."

For these and other severe violations throughout the People's Republic of China, the report recommends that the US government "Redesignate China as a CPC, for engaging in systematic, ongoing, and egregious violations of religious freedom, as defined by the IRFA."

It asked the government to "coordinate with international partners to sanction Chinese officials and entities responsible for severe religious freedom violations, including those engaging in transnational repression against religious minorities on behalf of the Chinese government as well as CCP officials who interfere in the Dalai Lama's plan of succession."

The Trump administration is also asked to "work with like-minded partners to address China's use of technology to commit religious freedom violations by establishing binding multilateral export controls to counter China's economic coercion, reduce economic and trade dependence on China, and diversify supply chains, including rules governing the development and use of artificial intelligence (AI) and other emerging technologies such as genetic sequencing and collection."

The report also asks the US Congress to act, including through legislative measures, lobbying bans on behalf of Chinese entities involved in religious violations, and raising of the issue with China as well as within the country.

The US government estimates that 18% of China's 1.4 billion population are Buddhist (including Tibetan Buddhist), 5% are Christian, and 2% are Muslim. Other significant religious traditions are stated to include Taoism, Falun Gong, and folk religious practices. Besides, 33.8% in China are atheists, according to [worldpopulationreview.com](#) (2025).

The USCIRF is an independent, bipartisan federal government entity established by the US Congress to monitor, analyze, and report on religious freedom abroad. It makes foreign policy recommendations to the President, the Secretary of State, and Congress intended to deter religious persecution and promote freedom of religion and belief.

ICT reiterates concerns of UN Special Rapporteur on status of Tsongon Tsering

27 March 2025, [ICT](#)

Yesterday, multiple UN Special Rapporteur offices made public a joint communication to the Chinese government, in the form of an allegation letter, related to the summoning and interrogation of environmental human rights defender Tsongon Tsering (also spelled “Tsogon Tsering”) and his subsequent detention for his work protesting sand mining in Ngaba (Chinese: Aba Tibetan and Qiang Autonomous) Prefecture, Sichuan. In their letter, dated January 21, 2025, the Special Rapporteur highlights Tsering’s work as an environmental activist leading a volunteer initiative of around 50 members who work to clean up their local environment and their activities to prevent future pollution.

As ICT previously reported in December, the incarceration of Tsongon Tsering related to the protests of illegal sand and gravel mining in Tsaruma village, Kakhong County follows a trend of punishment for those exposing environmental neglect by the CCP in Tibet and specifically, inaction of party officials in protecting critical water sources in Asia – functions that fell victim to larger issues of corruption.

The letter referenced videos from Tsering and said, “Mr. Tsering’s video showed him holding his ID card while describing the alleged human rights violations committed in Tsaruma. This reportedly follows a common Chinese practice of publicly reporting and calling attention to abuses by officials or companies suspected of corruption, bribery, dereliction of duty, and abuse of authority.”

Upon his initial detention, Tsering and his family were detained and interrogated for two days before being released. One day later he was again detained and held incommunicado until his hearing at which his family reported, “They were notified that the ID information of any individuals attending his trial would be collected. Individuals intending to attend his trial were instructed to send photos of their IDs (front and back) to the County Police Office before their appearance. Upon arriving for the trial the next day, an officer verified attendance by cross-checking the photocopies of the IDs that had been submitted earlier.”

Because of this, the letter continues, “[...], many of Mr. Tsering’s relatives reportedly did not attend the trial, due to concerns that the collected ID information could later be misused to deny them access to essential services. On the same day, Mr. Tsering was convicted on the charge of “disrupting social order” and sentenced to eight months in prison by the Kyungchu County People’s Court.”

Since the initial sentencing, Tsongon Tsering’s 8-month sentence has been extended by an additional 8

months because he has refused to plead guilty to his charges. There are fears that his now 16-month prison sentence may be further extended to punish his defiance and send a cautionary message to other Tibetans, ICT came to know.

Questions put to the Chinese Mission:

Specifically, the allegation letter requires the Chinese government to respond to the allegations included in their findings, as well as these five questions:

1. Please provide any additional information and/or comment(s) you may have on the above-mentioned allegations.
2. Please also provide confirmation of the location where Mr. Tsogon Tsering is detained, as well as detailed information about the conditions of his imprisonment and his access to legal assistance.
3. Please provide detailed information with regard to the arrest, charges and conviction of Mr. Tsogon Tsering and indicate the measures undertaken by the Chinese authorities to ensure the application of due process and the effective protection of his rights before the law. Please further indicate how this detention is in line with the right to freedom of expression under international law.
4. Please indicate further information regarding Mr. Tsogon Tsering’s family and relatives prolonged interrogation, and whether they have been provided with updated information regarding the charges brought against him and his detention. Furthermore, please provide information as to whether they have been granted or will be granted access to his place of detention. Please provide assurance that his family and relatives will not be subject to any kind of reprisals in connection to this case.
5. Please provide information regarding the mining operations conducted by Anhui Xianhe Construction Engineering Company Ltd, in the Tsaruma village, including in relation with the alleged dredging of the Rdangchu River, as well as information regarding the process to evaluate the environmental impact of such activities and the status of the applicable licensing or permits of such activity

“We appreciate this communication from three Special Rapporteurs addressing their concerns in this question of justice. The Chinese government must respond to these questions promptly, truthfully and in whole. ICT will continue to monitor the case of Tsongon Tsering and urges that the UN keep a close eye on the treatment of Tsongon Tsering and more generally, human rights violations against all Tibetans,”

said ICT President Tencho Gyatso. “We hope that the Chinese government will respond accordingly to this report and immediately release Tsongon Tsering and end their persistent attacks on the basic human rights of all Tibetans.”

All Party Indian Parliamentary Forum for Tibet and Core Group for Tibetan Cause – India hold meeting on Tibet advocacy and awareness initiatives

27 March 2025, [CTA](#)

On 25 March 2025, a preliminary meeting of the All-Party Indian Parliamentary Forum for Tibet (APIPFT) and the Core Group for Tibetan Cause – India (CGTC-I), facilitated by the India Tibet Coordination Office (ITCO), was held at the Constitution Club of India, chaired by Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab, MP (LS)/Convener, All-Party Indian Parliamentary forum for Tibet and co-chaired by Shri Tapir Gao, MP (LS)/Co-convenor, All-Party Indian Parliamentary Forum for Tibet. The meeting focused on strengthening parliamentary advocacy for Tibet, and raising public awareness among India masses while addressing challenges faced by the Tibetan community in India. The meeting was attended by several esteemed Members of Parliament, including Shri Supongmeren Jamir (MP, Lok Sabha, Nagaland, INC), Shri Amarsing Tisso (MP, Lok Sabha, Assam, BJP), Shri Indra Hang Subba (MP, Lok Sabha, Sikkim, SKM), Shri Gaurav Gogoi (MP, Lok Sabha, Assam, INC), Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab (Senior MP, Lok Sabha, Odisha), Shri Tapir Gao (MP, Lok Sabha, Arunachal Pradesh, BJP), Shri Kamkhyha Prasad Tasa (MP, Lok Sabha, Assam, BJP), Smt. June Malia (MP, Lok Sabha, West Bengal, AITC), Shri Alfred Kan-Ngam Arthur (MP, Lok Sabha, Manipur, INC), and Shri Joyanta Basumatary (MP, Lok Sabha, Assam, UPPL). Also present were Shri R.K. Khrimey, National Convener of the Core Group for Tibetan Cause – India (CGTC-I), and Jigmey Jungney, Representative of the Bureau of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, New Delhi. The meeting focused on key discussions related to Tibet and initiatives to strengthen support for the Tibetan cause in India.

Discussions also highlighted the importance of preserving Tibetan identity in India, particularly in light of China’s assimilation policies. Discussion item included raising the Tibet issue in Parliament and State Assemblies to garner legislative support, while also creating public awareness about Tibet and Tibetans in India. Additionally, challenges faced by Tibetans, are being addressed through policy discussions and interventions.

Concerns were raised regarding the lack of recognition of Tibetan Identity Certificates (IC) by immigration officers, causing travel difficulties for Tibetans. The meeting concluded with a resolution to hold a follow-

up session to finalise action plans for Tibet-related advocacy and awareness programs.

-Report filed by India Tibet Coordination Office, DIIR, CTA

Tenth Day of Ninth Session of Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile

27 March 2025, [CTA](#)

The tenth day of the ninth session of the 17th Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile, presided over by Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel, began with a starred question raised to Sikyong Penpa Tsering by parliamentarian Rigzin Lhundup. The Sikyong provided the necessary clarification in response to the starred question, as well as to the supplementary questions posed by other parliamentarians.

The house proceeded with the deliberation and approval of the Department of Home, the Chief Representative Office of the South Zone, and five Tibetan Settlements without Local Tibetan Assemblies. These included Tibetan settlement offices in Delhi, Sharkhum, Dickey Larsoe, Darjeeling, Lugsam, Lotserok (Nepal), and Dorpattan (Nepal).

Parliamentarians commended the department’s overall performance, recognising the dedicated efforts of the Kalon, the Secretary, officials, and staff, including settlement officers and staff from various Tibetan settlements.

Sikyong Penpa Tsering, the incumbent Kalon of the Department of Home, addressed all concerns and questions raised regarding the budget of the Department of Home. This included discussions on the CTA’s housing projects, Tibetan cooperative societies across India, the sustainability of Tibetan settlements, India’s Tibetan Rehabilitation Policy of 2014, and other related matters.

The special recurring budget, along with a motion for a reduction and *surkyol* budget of the Department of Home with motions of reduction and increment, was approved by the house. Furthermore, a motion to increment the budget of the Tibetan Refugee Welfare Office (Nepal) was also approved.

The house then moved on to the deliberation and approval of the proposed 2025-2026 budgets for the Tibet Information Office in Canberra and the Tibetan Cultural Centre Limited in Australia. The *surkyol* budget of the Tibetan Cultural Centre Limited (Australia), which was tabled with a motion for an increment, was likewise approved.

After the required discussions, the recurring budget for the Office of Tibet (Washington DC) under the Department of Information and International Relations (DIIR) was approved. The special recurring budget of the Office of Tibet (Washington DC) remains open.

The session was adjourned at 7:40 pm.
-Report filed by Tibetan Parliamentary Secretariat

Minnesota State Capitol hosts celebration for Dalai Lama's upcoming 90th birthday

26 March 2025, [Phayul](#), Tenzin Nyidon

A ceremony marking the exile Tibetan spiritual leader His Holiness the Dalai Lama's upcoming 90th birthday was held at the Minnesota State Capitol on Sunday. The event, jointly organized by the Office of Tibet in Washington DC, the U.S. Chotrul Monlam Association, and the Tibetan American Foundation of Minnesota, honored the spiritual leader's lifelong dedication to Tibet, the Tibetan people, and his humanitarian contributions worldwide.

The celebration was attended by His Eminence Kyabje Jangtse Choje Gosok Rinpoche, members of the Minnesota State Legislature, local government officials, Dr. Namgyal Choedup, Representative of His Holiness the Dalai Lama at the Office of Tibet, Washington DC, Secretary Lobsang Jinpa from the Office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, H.E. Kyabje Sharma Choeje Rinpoche, Ganden Throneholder's secretary Lobsang Gyaltsen Rinpoche, as well as members of the Tibetan-American community and local residents.



The special guests for H.H. the Dalai Lama's 90th birthday at the Minnesota State Capital on March 23, 2025 (Photo/Instagram)

During the event, North American Representative Dr. Namgyal Choedup highlighted the strong ties between the United States and Tibet. He reflected on the Dalai Lama's decades-long commitment to promoting peace, non-violence, and compassion in a world increasingly marred by conflict and man-made disasters.

The event's chief guest, H.E. Kyabje Jangtse Choje Gosok Rinpoche, emphasized the deep significance of the celebration. He recalled the Dalai Lama's six decades of teachings on environmental conservation, human well-being, and interfaith harmony. He urged that these teachings be translated into meaningful actions to create a lasting impact.

As part of the commemoration, over 15 elected leaders and local dignitaries from Minnesota were presented with copies of the Dalai Lama's latest book, Voice for the Voiceless, along with a special commemorative coin. A photographic exhibition showcasing the Dalai Lama's life and achievements was also featured.

As per the modern calendar, the Nobel Laureate will turn 90 on 6 July 2025. In honor of this milestone, the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) has designated the upcoming year as the 'Year of Compassion.' CTA President Penpa Tsering announced that a series of global events will be organized to celebrate the occasion, emphasizing the Dalai Lama's four principal commitments.

According to the CTA, the Cabinet will hold four official events throughout the year, each highlighting one of the Dalai Lama's lifelong commitments. A dedicated organizing committee, led by the Cabinet Secretary and comprising civil servants from the three pillars of Tibetan democracy, will oversee the coordination of these activities. Additionally, the Department of Information and International Relations (DIIR) will ensure that Offices of Tibet worldwide establish committees to organize national and institutional events. A dedicated online portal will be launched, offering access to films, documentaries, and other materials while allowing organizers to share event details.

"Do-No Harm when visiting" – ICT advises official delegations to Tibet

26 March 2025, [ICT](#)

The International Campaign for Tibet (ICT) continues to call on the Chinese government to provide unfettered access to Tibet for diplomats, UN experts, parliamentarians, independent media, and civil society. When granted access to Tibet by the Chinese government, official delegations should apply extreme caution and avoid amplifying Chinese state propaganda on Tibet, ICT said today, as the organization released "Guidelines for official visits to Tibet".

The document provides essential criteria that official delegations should observe when visiting Tibetan areas. Such visits, in preparation, implementation, and assessment, should follow a "Do-No-Harm-Principle". "The international community and media have a responsibility to investigate and provide accurate assessments of the conditions Tibetan people face inside Tibet. Responsibility includes understanding the reality of how their visit and reporting can impact Tibetans after they leave" said ICT President Tencho Gyatso.

The guidelines serve two necessary principles. First, an antidote to the Chinese government's orchestration of visits to serve their propaganda on Tibet, which misleads the international community. Gyatso added, "Unless challenged by facts, the PRC will continue its wanton persecution of peaceful dissent. Any inaccurate assessment of the complex architecture of repression will be manipulated to dismiss all human rights concerns."

The guidelines also caution that China routinely depicts Tibet as "stable" and Tibetans as "happy" under Chinese authoritarian rule. Documenting and reporting these claims as disinformation is of critical importance, another reason that access to Tibet must be unfettered and unfiltered by propaganda.

Of paramount importance as well is that visits and subsequent reporting abide by the principle of 'Do-No-Harm'. Delegations visiting Tibet must not amplify Chinese state propaganda, which actively works to hide the truth in Tibet from the world.

ICT has continuously urged for unfettered access to Tibet and has welcomed the US Congress "Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act (RATA)" in 2018, which was reauthorized in 2024. During the 2024 "Universal Periodic Review" at the United Nations Human Rights Council, several nations called on the Chinese government to grant open, independent and unrestricted access to Tibet, including through the UN OHCHR and special rapporteurs.

Tibetans express concern about gutting of RFA, but say, 'We still hear you'

26 March 2025, [RFA](#)

China jams RFA and VOA broadcasts, which Tibetans say are their only lifelines to uncensored news.

Celebratory Chinese media reports about the U.S. administration's gutting of Radio Free Asia and Voice of America has sparked widespread concern among Tibetans living in Tibet who fear they will no longer have access to uncensored news in their own language, sources in the region said.

But Tibetans say they are relieved to see that Radio Free Asia is still broadcasting into the region despite the March 15 termination of Congressionally-authorized federal grants that fund the editorially independent news service.

"We still see you. We still hear you," said one of the sources based in Tibet's capital Lhasa on Thursday, just days after the abrupt cut to RFA's funds forced the outlet to furlough much of its staff in its Washington headquarters.



RFA Tibetan's Instagram video Reels page. (RFA)

Chinese media and Beijing's army of nationalistic 'little pink' commentators welcomed the news about RFA and VOA, with the state-owned *Beijing Daily* declaring that the "beacon of freedom has collapsed" and that "U.S. hegemony will eventually perish under global condemnation."

With the reduced staff, RFA's nine language services -- including Tibetan, Mandarin and Uyghur -- are providing limited news updates via its website, social, and radio to regions across Asia with little or no press freedom, from North Korea and China to Cambodia and Myanmar.

"I listen and follow RFA and I am relieved to see you are still working despite the funding cut and risk of closure," a second source based in the Tibet Autonomous Region told RFA Tibetan.

"I hope and pray that the (U.S.) administration reconsiders the decision and continues to fund your work," the person said on condition of anonymity for fear of reprisals.

Risking personal safety to listen

Under Mao Zedong, Communist Chinese forces invaded and annexed Tibet in 1950. Ever since, Beijing has maintained a tight grip on Tibetan daily life, suppressing Tibetan culture, the language and Buddhist practices while trying to assimilate Tibetans into Han Chinese culture.

In Tibet, RFA serves as a rare source of factual, timely news and information about domestic and international affairs as well as about the Tibetan spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, who lives in northern India, and Tibetans abroad.

Many Tibetans risk personal safety to secretly tune in to RFA and VOA and listen to these broadcasts, which the Chinese government has frequently jammed, according to former political prisoners, Tibetans, rights groups and foreign tourists.

Chinese officials have also destroyed or confiscated hundreds of 'illegal' satellite dishes, with seizures common across the Tibet Autonomous Region and the Tibetan areas of Sichuan, Qinghai, Gansu and Yunnan provinces.

Access to RFA Tibetan's news website and social platforms are also blocked. However, some Tibetans use digital circumvention tools to get around China's "Great Firewall" that censors and blocks access to many Western websites and news sources, including X, formerly known as Twitter.

Getting caught listening to RFA or VOA or sharing information with foreign media can cause Tibetans to be arrested. Some have been sentenced to several years in jail.

"Hundreds of thousands of Tibetans living in Tibet — monks, nuns, nomads, farmers and other laypersons — try every way possible to tune in to RFA and VOA," said former political prisoner Golog Jigme Gyatso, who was detained by Chinese officials several times for listening to and participating in discussions on RFA Tibetan.

"Both these news American outlets play an essential role in filling a big information gap; that is why both have always been a thorn in the side of Communist China," he said.



A Tibetan child listens to a radio at Sera Monastery in Lhasa, Aug. 25, 2003. (Guang Niu/Reuters)

Chinese authorities often blast music on radio frequencies used by RFA to make it difficult for listeners to hear, said Gyatso, who is currently based in Zurich, Switzerland.

They also plant informers and spies in Tibetans villages, schools and monasteries to find out who might be listening to these news programs, he said.

"And now to hear that the two news outlets that serve as such an important medium of information inside Tibet is likely coming to an abrupt end is unthinkable and heartbreaking to say the least," Gyatso said.

In 2008, Gyatso helped make a documentary titled "Leaving Fear Behind," which featured interviews with Tibetans in Tibet that highlighted the injustices they face under Chinese rule. He was subsequently jailed three times between 2008 and 2012 and brutally tortured by Chinese authorities before finally escaping Tibet in 2014.

'Darkness will fall'

Other former Tibetan political prisoners and activists also expressed concerns that RFA and VOA may cease

operations, saying the services provide a lifeline of information to Tibetans in their own tongue.

RFA Tibetan, for example, broadcasts news in three different dialects of Ukey, Amkay, and Khamkay.

"If these media outlets are silenced, darkness will fall upon the minds of millions who, under authoritarian oppression, have depended solely on these voices for truth, freedom, and democracy, and their hopes will be dashed," said Jamyang Jinpa, one of the monks who disrupted a government-controlled press tour and spoke to foreign journalists during a widely publicized protest against Chinese rule in April 2008.

Jinpa said he first heard on RFA's Amdo-dialect broadcast that a group of international reporters had been invited to visit Labrang Tashikyil Monastery in Gansu province, and made preparations to protest before them.

"Over the past several decades, these two media outlets have served as bridges between Tibetans inside and outside Tibet and made indelible contributions to the Tibetan people," he said. "This will be confirmed by time itself."

'Act of resistance'

RFA began its first broadcast into China in Mandarin on Sept. 29, 1996, and in Tibetan a few months later, on Dec. 2, 1996.

It later expanded to nine languages, including Tibetan, Uyghur, Mandarin, Cantonese, Korean, Vietnamese, Khmer, Lao and Burmese.

"When I was in Tibet in 2008 and 2011, I would hear Radio Free Asia Tibetan language service quietly being played in people's homes at night," said Nick Gulotta, a New York City who traveled to Tibet in 2008 and later in 2011.

"Just listening to the news was an act of resistance and extreme personal risk," he said. "But for Tibetans resisting occupation, listening to uncensored information in their language was everything."

"Not only are these programs a lifeline for millions living under authoritarian regimes — there are simply no other high quality media options for Americans that disseminate news in many of the languages offered by RFA and VOA," Gulotta said.

However, there are signs that the U.S. administration is scaling back shortwave radio transmissions. RFA has learned that some shortwave radio frequencies that had carried its programming have stopped operating in recent days.

Most of RFA's radio broadcasts are carried by transmitters run or leased by the U.S. Agency for Global Media, which oversees U.S. government-funded broadcasters.

CTA urges lobbying

Sikyong Penpa Tsering, the democratically elected president of the Tibetan government-in-exile -- the Central Tibetan Administration -- in Dharamsala, India, said CTA is striving to ensure continued U.S. support

for both RFA and VOA through collective efforts of the Washington-based Office of Tibet and International Campaign for Tibet.

The CTA has also urged the over 30 North American Tibetan associations, made up of the Tibetan communities across the United States and Canada, to advocate on behalf of RFA and VOA with their representatives, he said.

"The continuation of RFA and VOA's Tibetan language services is not only a geopolitical necessity — it is also a moral imperative," said Tsering Passang, founder and chair of the U.K.-based Global Alliance for Tibet and Persecuted Minorities.

"These broadcasts provide a rare and vital platform for Tibetan language preservation, helping sustain a culture that the CCP has relentlessly sought to erase through colonial-style boarding schools and other assimilation tactics," he said, using an acronym to refer to the Chinese Communist Party.

Rigzin Lhundup, a member of the Tibetan parliament-in-exile, recalled how when he was younger and living in Tibet, he would see Tibetans go to the terrace of their house or to the mountainside to hear the news broadcasts better.

"Now when I reflect on it, I still feel the impact of hearing the word 'Free' in Radio Free Asia and the line, 'Reporting from Dharamsala, the place of His Holiness's residence,' which we would frequently hear in the broadcasts," Lhundup said.

"Shutting down the two media outlets would be a huge loss to the Tibetan struggle," he said.

University of Westminster Students Engage in In-Depth Tibet Session at Office of Tibet, London

26 March 2025, [CTA](#)

The Office of Tibet, London, welcomed a group of 15 Master's students from the University of Westminster for an insightful 90-minute session on Tibet. The visit, coordinated by Dr. Frands Pedersen, Course Leader of the MA Diplomacy and Global Politics program, aimed to deepen students' understanding of non-state actors and paradiplomacy, core aspects of the Office of Tibet's work.

Secretary Tenzin Kunga set the stage with an engaging presentation, offering a historical and geopolitical overview of Tibet. Using satellite imagery and maps, he underscored the strategic importance of the Tibetan Plateau, detailed the democratic structure of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), and explained the extensive diplomacy and advocacy efforts carried out by Offices of Tibet worldwide, including London.

Representative Tsering Yangkey provided a firsthand account of governance within the Tibetan civil service, encouraging students to practice values-based

diplomacy that prioritises ethical considerations over power dynamics. She emphasised the importance of understanding realities on the ground rather than being swayed by geopolitical might.

Accountant Tenzin Zeydhan introduced the Tibetan Green Book initiative, highlighting its role in fostering unity among Tibetans in exile through voluntary contributions. She also introduced the Blue Book project – the Tibet Solidarity Alliance – explaining how non-Tibetans can express their support for Tibet's cause through voluntary contributions.

The session's interactive Q&A segment saw students posing a range of thought-provoking questions, reflecting their deep curiosity about Tibet's political status and advocacy efforts. Topics included China's motivations in controlling Tibet, the legitimacy of the Tibetan government-in-exile, the distinction of Tibetan Buddhism from other Buddhist traditions, and the broader geopolitical implications of Tibet's struggle. Students also inquired about China's policies in East Turkestan, the evolution of the Tibetan language post-occupation, and the potential impact of a renewed Trump administration in the U.S. on Tibet's advocacy. In response, Representative Tsering Yangkey and Secretary Tenzin Kunga provided comprehensive insights, addressing China's erasure of Tibet's identity in favour of 'Xizang,' the assimilationist policies imposed through colonial boarding schools, and the continued relevance of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's succession. They emphasised the Tibetan diaspora's resilience and strategic advocacy to keep the resistance movement alive on the global stage.

Concluding the session, Secretary Tenzin Kunga urged students to further their engagement with Tibet by reading, discussing, and advocating for its cause within academic circles. As a token of appreciation, Representative Tsering Yangkey presented a ceremonial *Khatag* and a copy of *Tibet Brief 2020* to Dr. Frands Pedersen.

Reflecting on the event, Representative Tsering Yangkey stated, *"Engaging with university students is a vital part of our outreach at the Office of Tibet. Today's session allowed us to provide deeper insights into Tibet's situation and its global significance. The students' keen interest and critical questions were encouraging, and we look forward to conducting similar engagements with other universities in the coming months."*

-Report filed by Office of Tibet, London

Ninth Day of Ninth Session of Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile

26 March 2025, [CTA](#)



Chaired by Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel, the ninth day of the ninth session of the 17th Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile commenced with the deliberation and approval of the budgets for the Tibetan Reception Centres in Nepal, Sonauli, and Dharamshala, under the Department of Security (DoS), at 9:30 am.

Following this, the *surkyol* budget for the Tibetan Reception Centre in Dharamshala, which had been tabled with a motion for reduction, was also approved. Kalon Gyari Dolma of the Department of Security addressed questions regarding the budgets for the Tibetan Reception Centres under the department. The Kalon provided clarifications on various matters, including workshops and meetings held at the Administrative Training and Welfare Society at the Dharamshala reception centre, the availability of rooms for CTA officials and staff during official tours at the Delhi reception centre, and other related inquiries. The house continued with deliberation and approval of the Department of Education (DoE) with a motion of reduction of tabled to *surkyol* budget of the DoE.

Kalon Changra Tharlam Dolma of the Department of Education addressed queries raised in the house regarding the department's budget. The house discussed various issues, including Tibetan schools outperforming other educational bodies in India in the 2024 class XII CBSE results, the production of educational cartoons by the DoE, the availability of retirement quarters for retired teachers and staff of Tibetan schools, access to diverse children's books, and the functioning of Sunday Tibetan language schools, among other topics.

Proceeding with the set agenda, the house deliberated and approved budget of the Sambhota Tibetan Schools (STSS) under the DOE with a motion of reduction to its *surkyol* budget. Education Kalon provided needed clarifications to the questions raised on the budget of the STSS.

The house continued with the deliberation on the budget of the Department of Home (DoH). Sikyong Penpa Tsering, the incumbent Kalon of the

Department of Home, clarified all the doubts and queries raised on the budget of the Department of Home and settlements under it.

Many of the parliamentarians took part in the deliberation over the budgets of the Department of Home discussing strengthening Tibetan Co-operative Societies, problems faced by undocumented Tibetans in Nepal, sustaining Tibetan Settlements, and other departmental initiatives.

The deliberation on the budget of the Department of Home remains open for the next session.

The session adjourned at 7 pm.

-Report filed by Tibetan Parliamentary Secretariat

Eighth Day of Ninth Session of Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile

25 March 2025, [CTA](#)

Chaired by Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel, the eighth day of the ninth session of the 17th Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile commenced with the deliberation and clarification of the budget for the Department of Finance (DoF) at 9:30 am.

Budgets for the Department of Finance, the Tibetan Administration's Welfare Society (TAWS), His Holiness the Dalai Lama's Charitable Trust, the Social and Resource Development Fund (SARD), and the staff mess were all approved. The *surkyol* budget of the SARD was approved following a motion for reduction tabled by the Kashag.

Sikyong Penpa Tsering, the incumbent Kalon of the Department of Finance (DoF), provided clarifications in response to questions raised. These included discussions on efforts to achieve financial independence, the funds required for transferring land ownership, the CTA's set-apart fund, the Green Book (Tibetan voluntary contributions), and the civil servant pension, among other topics.

The session continued with the deliberation and approval of the Department of Religion and Culture (DoR&C) budget. Motions for reductions were tabled on both the special recurring budget and the *surkyol* budget of the DoR&C, while a motion for an increment was tabled for the budget of the Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts (TIPA) under the DoR&C.

Sikyong Penpa Tsering, the incumbent Kalon of the DoR&C, addressed queries regarding the return of the Karmapa to India, the importance of monasteries and nunneries, the participation of Tibetans in Buddha Jayanti, the stipend provided by the department to monks and nuns from the Himalayan region in India, Nepal, and Bhutan, and other budget-related matters. The session continued with the deliberation and approval of the proposed budgets for the Department of Health (DoHe). Sikyong Penpa Tsering, the incumbent Kalon of the DoHe, addressed the

questions raised regarding the organization of healthcare awareness talks, the establishment of medical camps in schools and settlements, immunization efforts for Tibetan children, the status of Tuberculosis (TB) cases within the community, and other budget-related matters.

The *surkyol* budget of the Department of Health with a motion of reduction was approved by the house.

The session adjourned at 5:30 pm.

-Report filed by Tibetan Parliamentary Secretariat

Seventh Day of Ninth Session of Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile

25 March 2025, [CTA](#)

The seventh day of the ninth session of the 17th Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile, chaired by Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel, continued with the presentation of the regulation on the Tibetan Justice Commission's Code of Civil Procedure, which successfully passed its first reading.

In addition to *the Tibetan Code of Civil Procedure*, two other bills related to the Tibetan Supreme Justice Commission – *the Law of Evidence* and *the Tibetan Code of Judiciary* – were introduced in the house and also passed their first readings in the legislative procedure.

As per the set agenda, the house proceeded with deliberations on the budget of the Bureau du Tibet in Brussels, which was subsequently approved.

This was followed by the approval of budgets for the Bureau du Tibet in Paris, the Office of Tibet in Pretoria, the Tibet Religious Foundation of His Holiness the Dalai Lama in Taipei, and Tibet House in Brazil, all after due deliberation.

Likewise, the proposed budgets for several other offices were also approved after detailed discussions, including the Tibetan Freedom Movement (BRDL), the Election Commission, the Public Service Commission, the Office of the Auditor General, and the Auditor General's branches in South India, Nepal, and Dekyiling.

The *Surkyol* Budgets of the Public Service Commission and the Office of the Auditor General were approved with motions of reduction tabled by the Kashag.

All queries raised in the house were duly clarified by Sikyong Penpa Tsering and DIIR Kalon Norzin Dolma.

The budgets for the Department of Finance remains open for the next seating.

The session adjourned at 7 p.m.

-Report filed by Tibetan Parliamentary Secretariat

Tibetan language courses to stop at University of Bern

25 March 2025, [Swissinfo](#)



A Tibetan boy at a rally in front of the European headquarters of the United Nations in Geneva in 2016. Keystone / Salvatore Di Nolfi

The University of Bern is currently the only Swiss university where Tibetan language courses can still be taken. These are to be discontinued from the autumn.

The background to this is that the University of Bern will no longer continue the Central Asian Cultural Studies programme, which has been decided for some time. Tenzin Yundung, who has Tibetan roots and is currently completing her masters degree in Central Asian Cultural Studies in Bern, regrets this. "If I want to deal with Tibet and Tibetan issues at an academic level, I can no longer find any courses on offer," she said.

This is also a sign that Tibetan culture is under threat in exile, she said. The language courses were also valuable for Tenzin Yundung because, as a third-generation Tibetan, it is difficult for her to cultivate the Tibetan language. "As children, we often attended Tibetan weekend schools, but they only taught the basics."

Language courses at university level are therefore helpful in order to familiarise oneself more intensively with Tibetan, she said.

+ Tibetans and Uyghurs in Switzerland fear long arm of China

No mandate

One of the largest exile communities of the Tibetan people lives in Switzerland. Switzerland is therefore an important place for the cultivation of the Tibetan language and culture. In future, this will have to take place outside the university environment.

According to the Secretary General of the University of Bern, Christoph Pappa, interest in Central Asian cultural studies was too low. As the language courses are part of the degree programme, they will now also be discontinued. In response to the fears of the Tibetan diaspora, he says: "Language training is definitely a contribution to a culture. But the

University of Bern has no specific mandate to do so. We therefore need to consider how we can organise this differently.”

Nevertheless, the Swiss Tibet organisations are concerned. The decision to discontinue the language courses means de facto that studies on Tibet are no longer possible in Switzerland. They write this in an open letter and call on the University of Bern to maintain the language courses.

Tibetan community to host three days of events, rituals in Richmond

25 March 2025, [The Richmond Standard](#)

The Tibetan community and friends will host three days of events and rituals at the Richmond Memorial Auditorium this week that will culminate with a celebration of the Dalai Lama’s 90th birthday Sunday, March 30.

Co-hosted by the Gyuto Foundation in Richmond and the U.S. Monlam Festival, the birthday celebration will occur at the conclusion of annual Monlam Prayer Festivals for world peace. Events are free and open to all and will take place from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. from March 28-30 at the Richmond Memorial Auditorium. One need not be Buddhist to attend. While all events and rituals will occur in Tibetan, English translation will be made available for attendees who bring an FM radio with headphones. Lunch and dinner will be provided to attendees.

About 100 Tibetan monks and nuns are expected to join similar events across the U.S. In Richmond, esteemed scholars and abbots Kyabje Jangtse Choeje Rinpoche and Kyabje Sharpa Choeje Rinpoche will preside over the Monlam Prayer Festival and birthday celebrations.

“We are so happy that these events have coincided with The Gyuto Foundation’s 25th Anniversary, which we will also be celebrating on April 5,” said Thupten Donyo, the founder of the Gyuto Foundation. “We warmly welcome everyone to our center on April 5 in East Richmond Heights.”

Gyuto Foundation is a Tibetan Buddhist monastery located at 6401 Bernhard Ave. dedicated to preserving Tibet’s living culture and spiritual heritage through public teachings and cultural programmings. The Foundation also offers paths and gardens of the monastery grounds as a public space, supports charitable programs for Himalayan children and provides community outreach to Tibetans living in the Bay Area and new immigrants.

Anyone who would like more information about this program, contact Thupten Donyo at 510-674-6000 or info@gyutofoundation.org.

Dalai Lama's representative Tsering Yangkey calls for action against China's repression of Tibet in Cardiff Outreach

25 March 2025, [ANI](#)



Dalai Lama's representative Tsering Yangkey calls for action against China's repression of Tibet in Cardiff Outreach

During an official outreach program in Cardiff on March 23, Tsering Yangkey, the representative of the Dalai Lama to the United Kingdom, met prominent Welsh leaders to call for action against China's continued repression of Tibet. According to the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), the key engagements were organised with the help of longtime Tibet supporter Eilian Williams and the Regional Coordinator of the Tibetan Community in Britain (TCB).

According to information provided by CTA, Yangkey sat down with Mark Drakeford, Member of Senedd (Welsh Parliament) from the Labour Party. Yangkey urged Drakeford to use his position within the UK's Labour government to push for the closure of Chinese-run colonial boarding schools in Tibet, which are part of China's broader efforts to forcibly assimilate Tibetan children and erase their cultural identity.

She also raised serious concerns about the Chinese government's transnational repression against Tibetans living in the diaspora. Furthermore, Representative Yangkey emphasised the Chinese regime's ongoing efforts to suppress the Tibetan language, urging Drakeford to bring attention to the issue within the Welsh Parliament. As per the report, Mark Drakeford expressed his concern about the alarming repression of Tibetan linguistic rights and confirmed that while foreign policy is largely under Westminster's jurisdiction, he would collaborate with his colleagues in the Welsh Parliament to support motions and statements advocating for the preservation of the Tibetan language in Tibet.

During the meetings, Representative Yangkey also

presented a briefing paper highlighting the urgency of defending the Tibetan language against Chinese government policies aimed at cultural assimilation. The document called on both leaders to raise the issue in the Welsh Parliament. Last year, Tsering Yangkey, a civil servant from the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) in Dharamsala, was appointed as the new representative of Dalai Lama to the United Kingdom. This marked a significant milestone, as it was the first time in 15 years that a senior Tibetan civil servant from Dharamsala took the helm of the Office of Tibet in London.

28 European nations condemn China's rights abuses in Tibet at UNHRC

24 March 2025, [Phayul](#), Tenzin Nyidon

A coalition of 28 European nations has expressed deep concern over the worsening human rights situation in Tibet during the ongoing 58th session of the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) in Geneva.

The joint statement, delivered on Thursday by Mirosław Broilo, Poland's Permanent Representative to the UN Office in Geneva, highlighted human rights violations in Tibet and Xinjiang (East Turkestan) while urging China to cease transnational repression.

The statement was endorsed by Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, and Sweden.

"We are concerned about the situation in China, particularly in Tibet and Xinjiang, and the treatment of human rights defenders, lawyers, and journalists. China must refrain from transnational repression," Broilo stated in his address. In their written submission, the 28 nations urged China to uphold its commitments under both national and international law, ensuring the protection of fundamental human rights.

Addressing the deteriorating conditions in Tibet, the statement underscored alarming trends such as mandatory boarding schools, suppression of protests against hydropower projects, and the forced closure of Tibetan schools that teach the Tibetan language and culture. The nations expressed grave concern that Tibetan students are increasingly being funneled into state-run schools where their language is relegated to a secondary subject.

The joint appeal also called for the immediate and unconditional release of imprisoned Tibetan, Uighur, and Chinese human rights defenders, including Chadrrel Rinpoche, Go Sherab Gyatso, Golog Palden, Semkyi Dolma, and Tashi Dorje. Additionally, the countries urged Beijing to grant unrestricted access to

Tibet for the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and special mandate holders.

Beyond the joint statement, individual nations—including the Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Japan, Lithuania, Netherlands, and Switzerland—voiced their concerns over China's rights abuses in Tibet during the general debate.

Thinlay Chukki, Representative of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Central Tibetan Administration at the Tibet Bureau-Geneva, welcomed the strong stance taken by the European countries. "We thank each of the 28 European Countries for their joint statement and other member states for their individual statements highlighting the critical situation in Tibet," she remarked. She further urged China to heed these calls, end its repression of Tibetans, and allow independent international access to the region, stating, "We urge the Chinese government to heed the calls of these many countries to stop the suppression of the Tibetan people, to unconditionally release all the Tibetan human rights defenders. It is of utmost importance that the Chinese government allows free and open access to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Special Procedure Mandate Holders to Tibet."

Representative Tsering Yangkey Connects with Bonpo Centre in London and Tibetan Communities in Bristol & Cardiff

24 March 2025, [CTA](#)



Representative Tsering Yangkey Connects with Bonpo Centre in London and Tibetan Communities in Bristol & Cardiff

On 24 March 2025, Representative Tsering Yangkey visited Bristol, 118 miles west of London, and Cardiff, the capital of Wales, over the weekend as part of her official outreach beyond London. The office organised this visit with the close coordination of the Tibetan Community in Britain's Council member and Regional Coordinator, Tenzin Sangmo.

On Saturday, 22 March 2025, the Tibetan community members in Bristol (about 40 Tibetans) warmly

welcomed Representative Tsering Yangkey at St Werburghs Community Centre, the venue for the weekend Tibetan language and culture school. The school, supported by Tibet House Trust, functions every Saturday for two hours from 3 p.m., and has about 10 Tibetan students with two teachers, one each for teaching Tibetan language (first session) and Tibetan songs and dances (second session). The Representative silently observed the Tibetan language classroom in session. Instead of the next session, the Tibetan community members organised a welcome ceremony for the Representative, led by the President of the Tibetan Community in Britain – Bristol. The students recited Tibetan verses, played dranyen and performed Tibetan cultural dance, highlighting the knowledge gained through attending the school. Representative Yangkey remarked that the weekend Tibetan language schools are important centres for preserving and promoting Tibetan language and culture for communities based in the West and urged the parents to send their children to these schools.

The Representative expressed her appreciation for the strong community bond among the relatively small Tibetan community in Bristol, which she reasoned proved crucial in delivering successful programs highlighting Tibet in and around the region. She urged the community members to continue the good work thereby serving as a shining example for other regions in the UK and beyond. Afterward, the Representative engaged in a robust interaction with the Tibetans present there discussing Tibet matters frankly.

The following day, on Sunday, TCB's Regional Coordinator (current and former) drove the Representative 45 miles west of Bristol to Cardiff, the capital city of Wales, to meet the Tibetan Community in Cardiff. The local Buddhist centre in Cardiff kindly hosted the Tibetan community gathering and welcomed the Representative to the centre and the shrine room.

Tibetans living in and around Cardiff, about 20, arrived at the centre to meet and greet the Representative, followed by a community potluck lunch. A Tibetan lady performed a couple of melodious songs as a welcome gesture.

In her address to the Tibetans in Bristol and Cardiff, Representative Yangkey underscored the crucial importance of Tibetan unity, preservation of Tibetan language and cultural heritage, and Tibetan participation in programs and activities of the Central Tibetan Administration. The Representative highlighted His Holiness the Dalai Lama's selfless contributions, since his childhood, to resolve the just cause of Tibet and reminded everyone that we owe a huge debt of gratitude to His Holiness for his visionary leadership and unparalleled compassion.

The Representative informed the Tibetans that the Central Tibetan Administration has declared the

period from 6 July 2025 (when His Holiness reaches 90 years of age) to 5 July 2026 as the Year of Compassion, and urged everyone to join the 90th birthday celebrations, Ghoton Trungkar, in London at the Tibetan Peace Garden on 5 July 2025 and to also participate in year-round Compassion programs and activities to honour the Life of His Holiness the Great Fourteenth Dalai Lama.

Tenzin Kunga, Secretary, Office of Tibet, London, accompanied the Representative during the visits to Bristol and Cardiff. In the spirit of working closely with the Tibetan Community in Britain, the Council member with responsibility for Green Book matters, Pema Chodon, joined the delegation and used the opportunity of the visits to interact with the Tibetans in Bristol and Cardiff. Pema Chodon facilitated collections towards the Green book, and encouraged Tibetans to become donors for the Tibetan Refugee Charitable Trust in the spirit of giving to fellow Tibetans in need.

Last week, Representative Tsering Yangkey and Secretary Tenzin Kunga visited Ku-soom Lhundrub Ling Bonpo Gon-pa [The Yungdrung Bon Study Centre (TYBSC)] in London as part of the official outreach to Dharma centres in England. The centre's spiritual Master Khyimsar Lama Rinpoche along with the core team extended a warm hospitality to the Representative and then gave a tour of the centre. Over tea and sweetened rice, a brief meeting was held where the Representative shared information about The Year of Compassion and Ghoton Trungkar program and activities and extended an invitation for Khyimsar Lama Rinpoche. Khyimsar Lama Rinpoche appreciated the visit and assured all possible support and participation in the GoThon celebrations. The visit helped strengthen the working relationship between the office and the centre.

-Report filed by Office of Tibet, London

House debate on bills related to Tibetan Supreme Justice Commission

24 March 2025, [Phayul](#)

On the seventh day of the ongoing budget session on Monday, lawmakers passed the first readings of three bills concerning the Tibetan Supreme Justice Commission (TSJC): the Code of Civil Procedure (Document No. 32), the Law of Evidence (Document No. 33), and the Code of Judiciary (Document No. 34). During deliberations, MPs raised concerns about whether the proposed laws align with the Charter of Tibetans in Exile. MP Karma Gelek highlighted that these laws were originally drafted by the Tibetan Justice Commission and officially sanctioned by His Holiness the Dalai Lama on March 28, 1996. He questioned the necessity of re-passing them and how

their implementation would be interpreted under the current framework.



The seventh day of the ongoing ninth (budget) session of the 17th Tibetan Parliament in Exile on March 24, 2025 (Photo/TPIE)

Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel addressed these concerns, clarifying that the original enactment date remains unchanged and that the legislative history of the laws remains intact. He underscored the urgency of passing these bills, noting that without them, the Justice Commissioners would lack a legal foundation to carry out their duties. He further stated that once the three Justice Commissioners are appointed, any necessary amendments to the laws could be proposed and debated.

While the primary focus of the ongoing parliamentary session is budget approval, the immediate priority remains finalizing these judicial bills to facilitate the appointment of the Chief Justice and two other justices, addressing the leadership vacuum at the TSJC. The parliamentary session has scheduled judicial appointments for March 29.

Following the discussions on the judiciary, the Parliament proceeded to approve budgets for key Tibetan offices abroad, including the Bureau du Tibet in Paris, the Office of Tibet in Pretoria, the Tibet Religious Foundation of His Holiness the Dalai Lama in Taipei, and Tibet House in Brazil. Additionally, proposed budgets for various institutions, such as the Tibetan Freedom Movement (BRDL), the Election Commission, the Public Service Commission, the Office of the Auditor General, and its branches in South India, Nepal, and Dekyiling, were also approved after deliberations.

39th Tibetan Terminology Standardising Board Meeting Finalises Over 500 Standard Terms

24 March 2025, [CTA](#)

The 39th meeting of the Tibetan Terminology Standardising Board was held over six days from 17 to 22 March 2025, at the Department of Education's Conference Hall. The session was organised by the Terminology Section of the Depar



The 39th Tibetan Terminology Standardising Board Meeting Successfully Concludes, Finalising Over 500 Standard Terms

tment of Education, Central Tibetan Administration. Additional Secretary Kunga Gyaltsen, the president of the Board from the Department of Religion and Culture (CTA), presided over this meeting. The board members, including Dr Lhakpa Tsering, Dr Kelsang Wangdue, Geshe Ngawang Namdol, Menrampa Sonam Dolkar Oshoe, former TCV English teacher Tenzin Dargye, former director of the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives' science department Karma Thubten, and Ugyen Tenzin, the Head of the Terminology Section at the Department of Education, along with the section staff attended this meeting.

The meeting successfully finalised 500 terms out of a total of 700 terms presented across various fields including science, education, law, politics, economics, mathematics, environment, and machinery. Thus far, 21,091 terms have been finalised, and 17 terminology books have been published (17 glossaries of standardised terms). All the standardised terms can be access on www.tibterminology.net and through the TibTerm application software. This project is supported and funded by DANIDA (Danish International Development Agency).

-Report Filed by Department of Education, CTA

Himachal: Sikyong allays concerns over reduction in USAID grants

23 March 2025, [The Tribune](#)

The US government's decision to cancel 83 per cent of the USAID programmes has raised concerns among Tibetan exiles and supporters of Tibet about its potential implications for their ongoing campaigns for the freedom of Tibet. In response to these...

The US government's decision to cancel 83 per cent of the USAID programmes has raised concerns among Tibetan exiles and supporters of Tibet about its potential implications for their ongoing campaigns for the freedom of Tibet.

In response to these concerns, Sikyong Penpa Tsering, president of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), said he had received a reassuring letter from US Secretary of State Marco Rubio on March 10.

The letter reaffirmed the USA's steadfast commitment to advocating for the human rights of Tibetans and supporting Tibetans to exercise fundamental freedom without fear of persecution and to live lives in peace and dignity.

During the ongoing ninth Tibetan parliamentary session, Sikyong Penpa Tsering remarked that a letter has been sent by the US Chief Diplomat, which reflects the USA's commitment to the Tibetan cause. Inspired by the teachings of the 14th Dalai Lama, this historic gesture, probably the first of its kind, signifies recognition of the Tibetan people's struggle. It further strengthens the bond between the Tibetan community and the US government, he said.

Sikyong acknowledged the ongoing efforts of the 16th Kashag, the Office of Tibet in Washington DC, and the International Campaign for Tibet and the Tibet Fund, which continue to press for securing necessary assistance vital to the preservation of Tibetan culture, language, and religious heritage. For these efforts to succeed, Sikyong said that the Central Tibetan Administration's programmes and initiatives must align with the interests of the current US administration and above all the broader aspirations of the Tibetan people.

Earlier on March 1, Secretary Marco Rubio extended his Losar greetings via his official X platform (formerly Twitter), reaffirming the USA's commitment to the Tibetan cause.

His message said, "Losar Tashi Delek to all those around the world celebrating Tibetan New Year. We celebrate the strength and perseverance of the Tibetan community worldwide and reaffirm our commitment to the preservation of Tibetans' distinct cultural, linguistic, and religious heritage."

Medog Dam Threats on Tibet's Yarlung Tsangpo River Raised at UN Human Rights Council

22 March 2025, [CTA](#)

On 20 March 2025, Phuntsok Tobgyal, UN Advocacy Officer at the Office of Tibet in Geneva, delivered an address during the 58th session of the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC), highlighting the significant risks posed by the planned construction of the Medog (Metok) Dam on Tibet's Yarlung Tsangpo River. The dam project seriously threatens the environment, people, and regional stability. Phuntsok Tobgyal emphasised that such large-scale infrastructure development would severely damage Tibet's fragile ecosystem and jeopardise water security for millions across South Asia.

Tibet, often referred to as the "Third Pole" of the world, plays a critical role in global environmental stability. The construction of the dam threatens this balance through extensive deforestation, increased seismic risks, and disruptions to glacier melt patterns—all of which could accelerate climate change. The project may also contribute to extreme weather events, altered monsoon patterns, and worsen global environmental challenges.

Tibetans inside Tibet will experience the most severe impacts of this project, including habitat destruction, desertification, and the collapse of traditional agriculture. These impacts threaten Tibetan livelihoods, increase food insecurity, and could result in population displacement, further marginalising the Tibetan people in their homeland.

The Yarlung Tsangpo River, known as the Brahmaputra in India and Bangladesh, is a vital water source for millions. Dam construction along its course could drastically alter its natural flow, heightening the risk of water scarcity and catastrophic flooding downstream. Such developments could also escalate geopolitical tensions between regional countries, jeopardising peace and stability in South Asia.

Phuntsok Tobgyal urged the international community to prioritise environmental sustainability over short-term economic interests. He called for transparent, cooperative action among nations to prevent irreversible ecological damage. Addressing the climate crisis and protecting vulnerable ecosystems require global solidarity. Projects that endanger both people and the environment must be stopped and withdrawn. The Office of Tibet, Geneva, continues to appeal to governments, environmental organisations, and international bodies to mobilise efforts to halt the Medog Dam project before irreversible damage occurs.

— *Report filed by The Office of Tibet, Geneva*

Experts Convene for World Water Day Panel on Water Conservation at Tibet Policy Institute

22 March 2025, [Tibet Policy Institute](#)

Environmental specialists and community leaders gathered at the Tibet Policy Institute's Library Hall today to commemorate World Water Day through a significant panel discussion centered on collective water conservation efforts and sustainable management practices.

Organized by the Tibet Policy Institute (TPI) of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), the event brought together experts to address mounting concerns regarding water resource management, with particular focus on hill regions such as Dharamshala. The hour-long session commenced at 10:00 AM with Tempa Gyaltsen Zamlha, Deputy Director of TPI,

outlining the purpose of the gathering and institutional expectations. He extended a warm welcome to speakers, audience members, and media representatives for their attendance and interest.



Research Fellow at TPI, Dechen Palmo, delivered a thorough assessment of global water resources and the growing challenges of water scarcity. This was followed by Venerable Lobsang Dhondup, author of “Tsawa Khamtseng,” who presented proposals for water source conservation and sustainable management approaches. Tibetan Settlement Officer of Dharamshala, Kunchok Migmar, completed the presentations by detailing ongoing practical initiatives for sustainable water resource management in the region.

A key moment during the event was the unveiling of a new paper titled “Environmental Care: A Current Necessity. A Proposal for Sustainable Water Source Conservation & Water Resource Management,” authored by Ven. Lobsang Dhondup. The publication offers forward-thinking concepts and actionable strategies for protecting water sources and implementing sustainable water resource management.

Notable attendees included Member of Parliament Lopon Thupten Gyaltsen and TPI Director Mr. Dawa Tsering, alongside researchers, observers, and media personnel.

Concluding the session, Tibet Policy Institute representatives expressed optimism that the discussed proposals would produce “positive and practical results in managing water resources sustainably” beyond Dharamshala to other hill stations facing similar challenges. The event aligns with global World Water Day observances, established by the United Nations in 1993 to emphasize the importance of freshwater conservation and sustainable management practices.

6-day trek to commemorate Dalai Lama’s Tibet escape from March 31

22 March 2025, [The Tribune](#), Lalit Mohan

Tawang district administration in Arunachal Pradesh will organise a six-day trekking event titled the ‘Freedom Trail’ to commemorate the Tibetan spiritual

leader’s the Dalai Lama’s historic escape from Tibet in 1959. The event would begin on March 31 and retrace...

Tawang district administration in Arunachal Pradesh will organise a six-day trekking event titled the ‘Freedom Trail’ to commemorate the Tibetan spiritual leader’s the Dalai Lama’s historic escape from Tibet in 1959. The event would begin on March 31 and retrace the path taken by the Dalai Lama when he entered India as a refugee 66 years ago.

Many Tibetan exiles and supporters of Tibetan cause from Dharamshala are expected to participate in the trekking event that would attract the attention of world towards the issue of Tibet, said a Tibetan activist Tsering in Dharamshala who intends to participate in it. Sources here said that the district administration of Tawang made the official announcement, stating that the foot march will commence from Khen-Dze-Mane in Arunachal Pradesh on March 31 and conclude in Tawang on April 5. The journey will take participants through significant historical sites like Chuudangmo, Gorzam Chorten, Shakti, Lungla and Thongleng before reaching Tawang. Each stop will serve as a moment of reflection, mirroring the Dalai Lama’s own pauses during his arduous journey in 1959.

March 31 marks exactly 66 years since the Dalai Lama and his entourage of 80 people first stepped into the Mon region of India after fleeing Norbulingka Palace in Tibet. Then 24-year-old the Dalai Lama and his close aides and family members took an exhausting trek, travelling day and night before finally crossing into India via the Ke-Dze-Mani mountain pass. Upon arrival, he was received by TS Murti, Assistant Political Officer of Tawang, along with security personnel from the 5 Assam Rifles and local residents of Jemeithang. The organisers of the event have said that the trekking event aims not only to honour the Dalai Lama’s journey but also spread his message of peace, non-violence and compassion. Participants will have the opportunity to engage in spiritual reflection and gain a deeper understanding of the resilience and struggles faced by the Tibetan people, they said.

The Dalai Lama in a recent interview had said that he gets emotional because in 1959, when he escaped from Tibet, he came from this route. “I was physically very weak. Mentally, there was a lot of anxiety, hopelessness and helplessness. It was difficult. The local people here and officials extended a very, very warm welcome. I get emotional every time I visit Tawang,” the Dalai Lama had said.

The district administration of Tawang has invited the public to participate in a deeply spiritual and historically significant event. The trek aims to inspire people to implement the Dalai Lama’s teachings of harmony and compassion in their daily lives,

reinforcing his enduring legacy in the region, the administration has said.

Sixth Day of the 9th Session of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile

22 March 2025, [CTA](#)

Chaired by Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel, the sixth day of the 9th session of the 17th Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile began at 9:30 AM with the first reading of several legislative procedures, including the Rules and Regulations for the Public Service Commission, the Rules of Budget, and the Rules and Regulations for Housing and Estate of Tibetan Settlements.

Following this, the Ad Hoc Committee presented its report on the review of the Rules and Regulations concerning the removal of elected dignitaries within the Central Tibetan Administration. The report was presented by the Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee, Parliamentarian Geshe Lharampa Gowo Lobsang Phende.

Amendment to the Rules and Regulations for Parliamentary Procedures and Conduct of Business, based on the committee's review, passed its first reading.

The first reading of legislative procedures also included amendments to several other rules and regulations, including Rules and regulations for salaries and other allowances for the Supreme Justice Commissioner and other Justice Commissioners, Rules and Regulations for the Standing Committee of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile, Rules and regulation for honorarium, daily allowances and other entitlement for the members of the Tibetan Parliament, Rules and regulation for salaries and other allowances of the Sikyong and the Kalons, Rules and regulation for salaries and other allowance for the Chief Election Commission, Rules and regulation for salaries and other allowances for the Chairman of the Public Service Commission, and Rules and regulation for salaries and other allowances for the Auditor General of the Office of the Auditor.

Additionally, a bill related to the Tibetan Supreme Justice Commission (TSJC), the Tibetan Code of Civil Procedure, was introduced in the house today. The presentation of the draft regulation will continue in the next sitting.

Secretary-General Sonam Dorjee of the Tibetan Parliamentary Secretariat read out the leaves of absence and next week's list of business.

The session adjourned at 5 pm until next Monday.

Indian Himalayan Council of Nalanda Buddhist Tradition urges Bharat Ratna for Dalai Lama

21 March 2025, [The Tribune](#)

The IHCNBT highlighted the Dalai Lama's lifelong dedication to fostering human values and interfaith harmony, preserving Tibetan culture and environment, and reviving India's ancient Nalanda Buddhist traditions.

In a historic resolution passed during its First General Assembly, the Indian Himalayan Council of Nalanda Buddhist Tradition (IHCNBT) has unanimously appealed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi to confer the Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian award, on 14th Dalai Lama.

The council acknowledged his unparalleled contributions to preserving and promoting the cultural, religious, and philosophical heritage of the Indian Himalayan region.

The resolution was adopted at an event in New Delhi, where the council emphasised the strong cultural and spiritual ties shared between the Indian Himalayan people and the Dalai Lama.

The IHCNBT highlighted the Dalai Lama's lifelong dedication to fostering human values and interfaith harmony, preserving Tibetan culture and environment, and reviving India's ancient Nalanda Buddhist traditions.

The resolution underscores the deep respect and admiration that the Indian Himalayan communities hold for the Dalai Lama. It acknowledges his contributions in promoting Buddhist teachings, strengthening India's historical ties with Tibet, and advocating for peace and non-violence globally.

The demand for the Bharat Ratna comes shortly after the release of the Dalai Lama's latest book, "Voice for the Voiceless: Over Seven Decades of Struggle with China for My Land and My People," on March 10, 2025. In the book, he reaffirmed India's significance in shaping Tibetan Buddhism and its traditions, crediting India as the land of the noble ones (Aryavarta).

Alongside the Bharat Ratna appeal, the IHCNBT also passed two key resolutions regarding the continuation of the Dalai Lama institution.

The council reaffirmed that the recognition of the Dalai Lama's reincarnation is a sacred religious process deeply rooted in Nalanda Buddhist traditions. It declared that no government or political entity has the authority to interfere in this process, emphasising that the Gaden Phodrang Institution is the sole authority on the matter.

Additionally, the council strongly opposed any external interference in selecting the next Dalai Lama.

It resolved that if any government or organization attempts to politically appoint a successor, such a

move would be rejected by the Himalayan Buddhist communities.

The appeal for the Bharat Ratna recognizes the Dalai Lama's role as a global ambassador of peace and India's spiritual heritage. With this resolution, the IHCNBT has called upon the Indian government to honour his legacy and reaffirm India's commitment to upholding its ancient Buddhist traditions

If granted, the Bharat Ratna would mark a historic recognition of the Dalai Lama's contributions, further strengthening India's deep-rooted spiritual and cultural connections with the Himalayan Buddhist communities.

Fifth Day of Ninth Session of Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile

21 March 2025, [CTA](#)

Chaired by Deputy Speaker Dolma Tsering Teykhang, the fifth day of the Budget Session of the 17th Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile began at 9:30 AM, with the continuation of discussions on the Bureau of His Holiness the Dalai Lama (Delhi).

The proposed budgets for 2025-2026 for various Tibetan offices were discussed and sanctioned, including the Bureau of His Holiness the Dalai Lama (Delhi), Indo-Tibet Coordination Office (ITCO) in Delhi, the Office of Tibet in London, Tibet House Trust in London, the Liaison Office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama in Tokyo, Japan Tibet House Trust, Tibetan Refugee Welfare Office in Kathmandu, and Tibetan Culture and Information Centre in Moscow.

The proposed budget for the Tibet Bureau in Geneva was approved with a motion for reduction tabled by the DIIR Kalon and supported by the DoS Kalon.

The house acknowledged the overall work of the Offices of Tibet, particularly the efforts of the Representatives and Secretaries of the Offices of Tibet (OoTs).

Kalon of the Department of Information and International Relations (DIIR) provided necessary clarifications in response to queries raised during the session.

The house also gave a warm round of applause to Shri Sanjeev Bhot, Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) of Dharamshala, who attended the afternoon session as an observer.

The session adjourned at 5:00 PM until the following day.

Indian Himalayan Council of Nalanda Buddhist Tradition holds inaugural general assembly with delegates from across Himalayan states

21 March 2025, [India Narrative](#)

The First General Assembly of the Indian Himalayan Council of Nalanda Buddhist Tradition (IHCNBT) was successfully organised at the India International Center (IIC). The assembly brought together 120 Buddhist delegates from various Himalayan states across India.

This historic gathering was attended by prominent personalities, including Lochen Tulku Rinpoche, the President of IHCNBT; Maling Gombu, the General Secretary; Sonam Wangchuk, a founding member of IHCNBT and Rajiv Kumar, Director of the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS), along with other distinguished dignitaries.

In his keynote address, Lochen Tulku Rinpoche stated, "We have strong feelings to preserve local languages. We have decided to organise Himalayan region conference. His Holiness Dalai Lama advised not only to protect language but also monasteries and transform institutions into learning centers. We must be Buddhists of the 21st century. One must have good knowledge of Buddhism. Everyone should be given the opportunity to learn in this center. We were granted permission from the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) to recognise Bhoti language."



He further highlighted the reincarnation of Dalai Lama and said, "It is very clear that we, Indian Himalayan Buddhists, will accept whatever His Holiness decides about his reincarnation. If he says he will be born in India, then we shall be the happiest people. It is totally up to the Dalai Lama, and it is purely non-political."

Rinpoche lamented, "China is a communist country and does not accept religion, so we don't care about what China thinks about Buddhist practices."

Maling Gombu, General Secretary of IHCNBT emphasised on Dalai Lama's book, Voice for Voiceless and stated, "This book is about the Tibetan cause and how they have been lost to the Chinese. There have been many human rights violations against the Buddhist culture and languages. But the people of Tibet have stood against the violation of human rights."



Later on agenda points of the General Assembly were discussed in the conference.

Regional Chapters Vice President from Himachal Pradesh, Ladakh, Uttarakhand, Jammu and Kashmir, Sikkim, North Bengal and Arunachal Pradesh were also present at the assembly.

Tibetan MP condemns Bhutan's use of "Xizang" for Tibet

21 March 2025, [Phayul](#), Tenzin Nyidon



Minister Norzin Dolma during the ongoing budget session of the 17th Tibetan Parliament in Exile on Thursday, March 20, 2025 (Photo/TPIE)

A Tibetan lawmaker has raised objections to Bhutan's recent use of the term "Xizang Autonomous Region" while referring a cultural troupe from Tibet. The concern was voiced on Thursday during the fourth day of the ninth (budget) session of the 17th Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile's Department of Information and International Relations (DIIR).

This issue arose following an announcement by the Bhutanese Ministry for Foreign Affairs and External Trade which referred to a cultural troupe from Tibet to be from the "Xizang Autonomous Region of the People's Republic of China," who were scheduled for March 18 and 19, 2025, at the Royal Institute of Management in Thimphu.

MP Lhagyari Namgyal Dolkar raised the issue during the session, highlighting concerns over the use of "Xizang" instead of "Tibet" to describe the cultural troupe from Tibet. She emphasized that such terminology influences perceptions of Tibetan performers and reflects a possible lack of formal

communication between the exile Tibetan government and Bhutan. She further noted the disparity, pointing out that while Bhutan hosts a troupe from Tibet, exiled Tibetans are unable to send their own cultural performers to Bhutan, despite the presence of a vibrant Tibetan Opera Troupe in exile.

Minister Norzin Dolma of the DIIR voiced concern over Bhutan's use of the colonial term "Xizang," stating that a draft letter addressing the issue has been prepared for the Bhutanese Foreign Ministry. She also acknowledged MP Lhagyari's call for strengthening formal communication between the Tibetan exile government and Bhutan.

The use of "Xizang" by Bhutan is not an isolated case. In September 2024, the Musée du Quai Branly in Paris faced public backlash after using the term in its catalog of Tibetan artifacts. Following criticism, the museum reverted to the term "Tibet." That same month, the British Museum in London also labeled a cultural exhibition covering the period 500-1000 CE with "Xizang Autonomous Region." After facing opposition from Tibetan activists and human rights organizations, the museum modified the term to "Tibetan Autonomous Region," a change critics argued still adhered to China's official designation and failed to recognize Tibet's broader historical and geographical identity.

President Penpa Tsering of the exile Tibetan government, officially known as the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), has repeatedly cautioned against the use of Chinese state terminology. In January 2025, he urged international media to avoid Chinese propaganda terms when reporting on the Dingri earthquake, warning that such language carries significant geopolitical implications. "We appeal to the international community not to fall into the trap of Chinese propaganda by using Chinese names for Tibetan places," he stated.

Although the term "Xizang" has gained traction in Western institutions and international media, critics view this increasing adoption of "Xizang" in official and media discourses as part of China's broader strategy to promote their narrative and reshape international perceptions of Tibet and promote territorial expansion. They argue that this shift seeks to undermine Tibet's distinct identity, which is deeply rooted in its sovereignty prior to the colonial and illegal occupation by the People's Republic of China.

IHCNBT asserts sacredness of Dalai Lama's reincarnation, rejects external interference

21 March 2025, [ANI](#)

The Indian Himalayan Council of Nalanda Buddhist Tradition (IHCNBT) has issued a resolute statement affirming their unwavering respect for

the reincarnation process of the Tibetan spiritual leader, Dalai Lama, emphasizing that it should remain free from any external interference. The statement came during the inaugural general assembly of the Indian Himalayan Council of Nalanda Buddhist Tradition (IHCNBT) at the India International Center (IIC).

IHCNBT emphasized that the recognition of the Dalai Lama's reincarnation is a deeply religious and cultural matter, emphasizing that it must remain a sacred process free from external interference. Lochen Tulku Rinpoche, the President of IHCNBT, highlighted the importance of respecting the wishes and decisions of the Dalai Lama regarding his future reincarnation. He stated, "It is very clear that we, Indian Himalayan Buddhists, will accept whatever Dalai Lama decides about his reincarnation. If he says he will be born in India, then we shall be the happiest people. It is totally up to the Dalai Lama, and it is purely non-political." This statement comes amid heightened discussions about the future of the Dalai Lama's lineage, especially following the release of Dalai Lama's new book, *Voice for the Voiceless: Over Seven Decades of Struggle with China for My Land and My People*, which was launched on March 10.

In the book, the Dalai Lama reaffirms the deep cultural, spiritual, and historical ties between Tibet and India, stating that Tibetans have regarded India as "the land of the noble ones" (Aryavarta) since the seventh century.

He highlights the significant contributions of India to Tibetan culture, philosophy, astrology, medicine, and more.

The Indian National Sangha Council also joined in supporting the Dalai Lama's institution and reiterated the deep reverence that Himalayan Buddhists have for the Dalai Lama's teachings and his role in the spiritual leadership of the Tibetan people. In their statement, they declared that the continuation of the Dalai Lama institution and his reincarnation are highly cherished aspirations for all Himalayan Buddhists.

According to the resolution, the methods and traditions for recognizing the reincarnation of the Dalai Lama are deeply rooted in the religious and cultural practices of Nalanda Tibetan Buddhism. This system of identifying reincarnated spiritual leaders is a distinctive religious practice within Nalanda Buddhism, tied to the philosophy of life after death. No individual or government has the right to interfere in this process. It must be carried out according to the duties entrusted by the Dalai Lama. The sole authority on recognizing the Dalai Lama's reincarnation lies with the Gaden Phodrang Institution, and no external authority or government

should interfere with this sacred religious procedure. (ANI)

Claiming space for Tibet at the United Nations Human Rights Council – ICT welcomes states raising Tibet at General Debate

21 March 2025, [ICT](#)

During the 58th session of the United Nations Human Rights Council, Tibetan rights advocates vocally raised the systematic rights violations of the Chinese Communist Party in Tibet.

Most prominently, a side-event in the Palais des Nations in Geneva which houses the Human Rights Council, highlighted the devastating impact of Chinese hydropower projects in Tibet. Hosted by the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights, the event featured a presentation by ICT Senior Researcher Palmo Tenzin. Tenzin summarized the findings of the recent ICT report "Damning Tibet", and Tibet Watch Senior Researcher Tenzin Choekyi spoke to the Tibetan people's nonviolent protest of these projects on the ground. Dechen Palmo from Tibet Policy Institute, based in Dharamshala, India, provided a statement underscoring the significant regional security implications of China's hydropower construction on Tibet's rivers. The event, moderated by ICT's EU Policy Director Vincent Metten, was attended by a number of diplomatic missions and civil society representatives. Notably, the Chinese mission to Geneva felt compelled to take the floor in response to the panel, recycling the standard CCP propaganda script.

Earlier during the session, ICT echoed recent criticism by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Türk, regarding the human rights situation in Tibet. In his Global Update before the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva on March 3, Türk expressed that he is "concerned about the impact of education policy and the restriction of freedom of expression and religion in the Tibet Autonomous Region." Türk committed to continue raising these issues in his ongoing discussions with the Chinese government.

In two statements at the plenary of the Human Rights Council, Kai Mueller, Executive Director of ICT Germany, and Sangmo Tenzin, ICT Field Researcher in Dharamshala, raised the assault on cultural rights in Tibet and China's mishandling of the devastating earthquake. Tenzin stated on behalf of the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights:

"Even after a major natural disaster, China has sealed off Tibet. No international journalists have reported from the site and no humanitarian organisations have been able to visit and provide assistance. We don't know the true scale of the damage, whether aid is reaching those in need, or whether reconstruction will respect and integrate Tibetan community's needs."

Tenzin then urged “the international community to demand immediate and unhindered access to Tibet. States have a responsibility to raise individual cases of persecution as well as policies that are erasing the Tibetan civilization.”

At another side-event organized by the Society for Threatened Peoples, Representative Thinlay Chukki from the Office of Tibet in Geneva presented the overall human rights situation in Tibet. Chukki raised the forced expulsion of thousands of Tibetans for the construction of dams, the consequences of Chinese coercive boarding schools for Tibetan children, the ban on religious activities and the slander of the Dalai Lama. She also recalled the disappearance of the Panchen Lama, who was kidnapped by the Chinese government 30 years ago at the age of six together with his family.

States raise Tibet at General Debate

On March 20, at the General Debate of the Human Rights Council, several delegations raised the human rights situation in Tibet. A group statement by 28 European states (all EU member states excluding Hungary, but joined by Montenegro), delivered by Poland, read *“The human rights situation in Tibet continues to be dire. Indicators of this include obligatory boarding schooling and the suppression of protests against hydropower projects. We are deeply concerned over reports that Tibetan schools teaching Tibetan language and culture have been shut down and that Chinese authorities have insisted that all students attend state schools where Tibetan is only taught as a stand-alone subject.”* The statement also called for the immediate and unconditional release of the Tibetans Anya Sengdra, Chadrel Rinpoche, Go Sherab Gyatso, Golog Palden, Semkyi Dolma and Tashi Dorje.

Germany, in its statement, particularly highlighted the intervention of the Chinese state into the appointment of Tibetan Buddhist leaders, stating “We condemn continuing violations of civil and political rights, including in the Xinjiang Autonomous Region, the Tibet Autonomous Region and the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. We call on China to respect freedom of religion and belief. Religious communities must be allowed to choose their leaders without interference.”

The Czech Republic stated: “Czechia condemns the continuing human rights violations in China, such as arbitrary detentions, forced labour, torture, gender-based violence and denial of cultural rights, especially in Xinjiang and Tibet. We urge China to end the discrimination and mistreatment of ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities and reiterate our call on China to implement the recommendations of the 2022 OHCHR human rights’ assessment.”

In addition to these statements, Finland, Denmark, Ireland, Japan, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Switzerland and the UK raised the human rights situation in Tibet. ICT President Tencho Gyatso stated, *“Tibetans are at the forefront of defending universal values in an increasingly autocratic world. Their struggle is thus not theirs alone, but the struggle shared by all freedom loving people. The United Nations is a battleground between autocracy and justice. At the UN, Tibetan advocates speak truth to power while they challenge autocracy and dictatorship. They deserve undivided support.”*

CTA expresses deep concern over China's construction of large-scale reservoirs in Tibet

20 March 2025, [The Tibet Post](#), Yangchen Dolma

Thinlay Chukki, representative of the Office of Tibet in Geneva, has expressed deep concern about the large-scale construction of reservoirs by the Chinese government in Tibet. The Chinese government is forcibly relocating Tibetan nomads, farmers and large numbers of monks and nuns without any consultation with local communities. These Chinese projects are not only changing the natural landscape of Tibet, but also posing a serious threat to the survival of Tibetan cultural traditions and way of life.

According to the Office of Tibet in Geneva, Representative Thinlay Chukki attended a side event on the situation of persecuted communities in China, organised by the Society for Threatened Peoples as part of the ongoing the 58th session of the UN Human Rights Council, to discuss the Chinese Communist government's crimes against ethnic and religious minorities on March 18, 2025.

The event was also attended by human rights activists Lebin Ding, a survivor and son of imprisoned Falun Gong practitioner; Dolkun Isa, the former President of the World Uyghur Congress; and Erbakit Otarbay, an ethnic Kazakh who survived the reeducation camps in East Turkestan (so called Xinjiang), along with representatives from the Chinese Christian Community as well as from 13 participating countries. Puntsok Topgyal, the UN Advocacy Officer, and Sangye Kyab, Chinese Liaison Officer, from the Tibet Bureau Geneva also joined in the event.

Representative Thinley Chukki spoke to the assembly about three major issues concerning the Tibetan language, culture, religion and environment.

The representative emphasised that safeguarding Tibet's unique identity is a vital concern, as there is a real risk that it will not survive. Tibetan children in Tibet are forcibly separated from their families and placed in Chinese boarding schools where Chinese is the main language, and the Tibetan language, culture and traditions are being eroded day by day.

The second point highlighted was the suppression of religious freedom. Representative Thinlay Chukki expressed her deep concern at the continued repression of religious freedoms in Tibet by the Chinese government, in particular the ban on displaying portraits of His Holiness the Dalai Lama in Tibetan homes. She also recalled that 30 years have passed since the disappearance of the 11th Panchen Lama of Tibet. Despite constant calls from the international community to find out where he is, the Chinese government has still not provided any clear answers.

The third theme was environmental protection and social well-being. Representative Thinlay Chukki expressed his deep concern about the large-scale construction of reservoirs in Tibet by the Chinese government. In the process, Tibetan nomads, farmers and large numbers of monks and nuns are being forcibly relocated without any consultation with local communities. These Chinese projects are not only changing the natural landscape of Tibet, but also posing a serious threat to the survival of Tibetan cultural traditions and way of life.

To justify the suppression of religious freedom in Tibet by the PRC, representative Thinley Chukki quoted an extract from His Holiness the Dalai Lama's latest book, ***Voice for the voiceless, over seven decades of struggle with China for my land and my people***: "On the religious front, there is a new policy of direct control by the Party over monasteries and nunneries, imposing intensified surveillance and control over monastic communities. I am told that today, many monasteries have police stations within their compounds. Tibetan monasteries are also being forced to have Communist Chinese officials within the administration of the monasteries' management. This tightening of control over the Tibetan people's religious life, especially in monasteries, began in 2017 with a specific policy adopted by China's State Council Regulation on Religious Affairs. In brief, various new regulations are being introduced, all aimed at what the Chinese authorities call promoting "Tibetan Buddhism with Chinese characteristics." One of these new regulations mandates that the monastic curriculum must include courses on politics, laws, regulations, policies, Chinese language, and the history of the relationship between Tibet and the "motherland." As for the general Tibetan populace, I am informed that in Lhasa and elsewhere, there has been a significant increase in pervasive surveillance of everyday life and internet use. Community leaders, environmental campaigners, philanthropists, and social activists are especially targeted"

Representative Thinlay Chukki Speaks at Side Event on Persecuted Communities in China During 58th UNHRC Session

20 March 2025, [CTA](#)



Swiss Representative Attends and Addresses at United Nations Event.

Representative Thinlay Chukki of the Tibet Bureau Geneva participated in a side event on the situation of persecuted communities in China, organised by the Society for Threatened Peoples as part of the ongoing 58th session of the United Nations Human Rights Council, to discuss the Chinese communist government's crimes against ethnic and religious minorities on 18 March 2025.

It was also attended by human rights activists Lebin Ding, a survivor and son of imprisoned Falun Gong practitioner; Dolkun Isa, the former President of the World Uyghur Congress; and Erbakit Otarbay, an ethnic Kazakh who survived the reeducation camps in East Turkestan (so called Xinjiang), along with representatives from the Chinese Christian Community as well as from 13 participating countries. Puntsok Topgyal, the UN Advocacy Officer, and Sangye Kyab, Chinese Liaison Officer, from the Tibet Bureau Geneva also partook in the event.

Beginning with the emotional moment when she had the opportunity during the 66th commemoration of the Tibetan National Uprising Day in Dharamshala to hear His Holiness the Dalai Lama recount crossing the Kyi Chu River in Lhasa at the start of His exile in 1959, and how he looked back at Lhasa, praying for the Tibetan people, Representative Thinley Chukki spoke to the gathering on three major issues concerning Tibet and Tibetans.

Focusing on the protection of Tibetan identity, culture, and education, the Representative emphasised that safeguarding Tibet's unique identity is a vital concern, as there is a real risk that it may not survive. Tibetan children in Tibet are forcibly separated from their families and placed in boarding schools, where Chinese is the primary language, and Tibetan

language, culture, and traditions are eroding day by day.

The second issue highlighted was the suppression of religious freedom. Representative Thinlay Chukki expressed grave concern over the Chinese government's ongoing repression of religious freedoms in Tibet, including the prohibition of displaying His Holiness the Dalai Lama's portraits in Tibetan homes. She also reminded the audience that it has been 30 years since the disappearance of the 11th Panchen Lama. Despite continuous calls from the international community for clarification about his whereabouts, the Chinese government has yet to provide any clear answers.

The third issue addressed was environmental protection and social welfare. Representative Thinlay Chukki voiced deep concern about the Chinese government's construction of large-scale reservoirs in Tibet. In the process, Tibetan nomads, farmers, and a significant number of monks and nuns are being forcibly displaced without any consultation with local communities. These Chinese projects are not only altering Tibet's natural landscape but also pose a serious threat to the survival of Tibetan cultural traditions and way of life.

To provide further details on the PRC's suppression of religious freedom in Tibet, Representative Thinlay Chukki quoted from His Holiness the Dalai Lama's recently published *Voice for the Voiceless*:

"On the religious front, there is a new policy of direct control by the Party over monasteries and nunneries, imposing intensified surveillance and control over monastic communities. I am told that today, many monasteries have police stations within their compounds. Tibetan monasteries are also being forced to have Communist Chinese officials within the administration of the monasteries' management. This tightening of control over the Tibetan people's religious life, especially in monasteries, began in 2017 with a specific policy adopted by China's State Council Regulation on Religious Affairs. In brief, various new regulations are being introduced, all aimed at what the Chinese authorities call promoting "Tibetan Buddhism with Chinese characteristics." One of these new regulations mandates that the monastic curriculum must include courses on politics, laws, regulations, policies, Chinese language, and the history of the relationship between Tibet and the "motherland." As for the general Tibetan populace, I am informed that in Lhasa and elsewhere, there has been a significant increase in pervasive surveillance of everyday life and internet use. Community leaders, environmental campaigners, philanthropists, and social activists are especially targeted"

She further quoted, *"To Chinese brothers and sisters: I appeal to you to open your hearts to the ongoing plight of the people of Tibet. The Chinese and Tibetan peoples*

share a common spiritual heritage in Mahayana Buddhism, and cherish compassion for all suffering beings. I assure you that through the long history of my struggle on behalf of the Tibetan people, I have never harbored enmity against the people of China. I have always urged Tibetans not to give in to hatred due to the injustices inflicted by a cruel government in the name of the Chinese people. I ask you to be vigilant against any attempts to promote racial hatred against the Tibetans, through state propaganda aimed at splitting the long history of good feeling, neighbourliness, and friendship between our peoples. I appeal to you to make efforts to understand that the Tibetan struggle for freedom is not only just; it is also not anti-Chinese. Help us find a peaceful, lasting solution to the issue of Tibet through dialogue in the spirit of understanding and accommodation. Over the years, many Chinese scholars and intellectuals have spoken out. I believe many Chinese who know the truth about Tibet, its culture, and its people will come out when they are able to express their true feelings without fear of reprisals. Protecting Tibet is a matter important also to the very heart of China itself. I want to share with you that for me, like for so many across the world, one sad thing is that the amazing economic liberalization of China was not matched with progress in respect for human rights and democratic freedom for your people."

-Report filed by Office of Tibet, Geneva

Trump freeze on US aid hits Tibetan govt-in-exile

20 March 2025, [Times of India](#), Sanjay Versain

Parliamentarians attending the 17th budget session of the Tibetan govt-in-exile face an impossible calculation - that of reconciling their annual proposed budget with the United States Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) targets.

The proposed budget of Rs 367.5 crore for the Year 2025-26 is set to be cut as a substantial portion of the Tibetan govt-in-exile's funding has been stopped by the US govt following President Donald Trump's drive to cut 'wasteful expenditure'.

The US contributes around 40% to 50% of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) annual budget, and 90% of the CTA budget is funded by external donors. Almost half of the funds from the US used to be routed through the US Agency for International Development (USAID), which the Trump administration aims to disband. In Nov 2024, USAID launched a new five-year programme, 'Strengthening economic, social, and cultural resilience of Tibetan communities in South Asia,' estimated at Rs 200 crore, which now stands frozen.

CTA president Penpa Tsering proposed a consolidated budget of Rs 367.5 crore on Monday, an increase of

around 10% over the previous year. However, he informed the House that the budget proposal was initially prepared under the assumption that the US aid would continue, and therefore budget cuts would be proposed across various departments to compensate for the funding shortfall. The allocation includes Rs 244 crore for social expenses, Rs 79 crore for political expenses and Rs 44 crore for administrative expenses. The social-related expenses primarily go into running 73 schools, operating hospitals and public health programmes, and supporting 58 settlements in India, Nepal, and Bhutan by providing housing, agricultural support, and economic development projects.

Geshe Lharampa Atuk Tseten, the chair of the Budget Estimate Committee, in his speech, stated that approximately Rs 10 crore has been allocated for celebrations marking His Holiness the Dalai Lama's 90th birthday on July 6, though this expenditure too is subject to review in the coming sessions. Reacting to the development, Tibetan Women's Association president Tsering Dolma, said, "Being a political organisation we receive no foreign aid, and all our activities are supported by member contribution. However, stopping of the US aid will affect every Tibetan individual because all humanitarian activities are carried out with the support of external donors." She also expressed faith in the US govt's support for the Tibetan cause and hoped that the financial aid would be restored.

Ugyen Padma Nyingpo, former president of the Chandigarh chapter of the Regional Tibetan Youth Congress, said the consensus within the Tibetan community is that they should work for self-reliance so that such a situation does not arise in the future. Tsering Dolkar, a social worker who has been active in the healthcare sector for three decades, fears that critical services may get affected in the short run but is hopeful that alternate arrangements will be made. Prof. Kanwar Chanderdeep Singh, director of the Centre for Tibetan Studies, Central University of Himachal Pradesh at Dharamshala, said the Tibetan govt-in-exile is not expected to give a knee-jerk reaction as the US itself would not like to jeopardise its long-term interests. "CTA may feel the heat in the short run, but the situation is expected to normalise once the US govt settles down," he said. The 13-day budget session, which started on March 17, is scheduled to conclude on March 31.

Tax-free budget
The Tibetan govt-in-exile does not collect taxes but has a system of voluntary financial contributions from the diaspora through the 'Green Book,' a document issued to Tibetans-in-exile that functions as an identity and citizenship record. Tibetans are encouraged to make annual contributions based on their income — often referred to as a 'voluntary freedom tax' to support the

administration's activities such as education, healthcare, and cultural preservation. Employed Tibetans are asked to contribute a small percentage of their income (around 2-4% depending on earnings), while students and the unemployed may pay a nominal fixed amount. This system is not legally enforced but is framed as a moral and patriotic duty.

India's contribution
No new Tibet-specific announcements were highlighted in the Budget speech of Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Feb 1, 2025. India contributes around 10% of the Tibetan budget as support for the refugee community and is channelled through direct grants, state-level aid, and indirect assistance like providing land and infrastructure for settlements, besides supporting cultural and religious activities.

Parliament-in-exile
The Tibetan parliament-in-exile consists of 45 members: 10 members each from the three traditional provinces of Tibet; two members each from the four schools of Tibetan Buddhism and the traditional Bon faith; two members each from Europe and North America; and a member representing Tibetans in Asia and Australasia (excluding India, Nepal, and Bhutan). The parliament holds its session twice every year with an interval of six months, a budget session in March and a general session in September.

Tibetan National Uprising Day observed in Mangaluru with peaceful march

20 March 2025, [Daijiworld](#)



Over 300 Tibetan students participated in a peaceful march to commemorate the Tibetan National Uprising Day, marked by the motto 'Remember. Resist. Return'. The march began from Bharath Mall and concluded near Mini Vidhana Soudha near the Clock Tower. The protest aimed to raise awareness about Tibet's

occupation by China between 1950 and 1959 and the continued struggle for freedom.

Students carried placards with messages such as 'Free Tibet Now,' 'Because Tibet is Not Free,' 'People of the World, Support Us #FreeTibet,' and 'Allow Media in Tibet.' They also chanted slogans like 'People die, China lies.' A particularly emotional moment of the march was when students displayed an image of a protestor who self-immolated during the 1959 resistance against Chinese occupation.

The event concluded with speeches from distinguished guests. Colonel (Retd) Sharath Bhandary, a veteran of the Indian Army with over 30 years of service, addressed the students and protestors, recounting the escape of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to India and his reception by Prime Minister Pandit Nehru. He also spoke about the resilience and hard-working nature of the Tibetan community and encouraged students to excel in their studies.

Avikshith Rai, BJP politician and businessman, expressed his unwavering support for Tibetan students, assuring them that they will always have a big brother in him and that Mangalore is their home. Jigmey Tsutrim, chief representative officer of south zone central Tibetan administration, thanked Avikshith Rai and Colonel Sharath Bhandary for their support and urged students never to forget the valiance (sacrifice) of their ancestors. He emphasized the long-standing relationship between India and Tibet and how Mangalore has always treated Tibetan students as its own.

Prabhakar Rai, an ex-serviceman of the Indian Army, was also present at the event.

Tashi Choetso, president of the Tibetan Mangalore organization, thanked the guests, while Tenzing, the student vice president, delivered an inspiring speech, motivating students to continue their movement with courage and unity.

On March 10th, Tibetan National Uprising Day was observed across India through peaceful protests, reinforcing the unwavering spirit of the Tibetan cause. The Tibetan National Uprising Day was observed across India through similar peaceful demonstrations, reflecting the enduring spirit of the Tibetan community and their call for global support.

Tawang to host 'Freedom Trail' foot march retracing Dalai Lama's 1959 escape

20 March 2025, [Phayul](#), Tsering Dhundup



His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama in Mon Tawang in 1959 (Photo/Tawang tourism)

The Tawang District Administration has announced a six-day trekking event titled the 'Freedom Trail' of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to commemorate the Tibetan spiritual leader's historic escape from Tibet in 1959. The event, set to begin on March 31, will retrace the path taken by the Dalai Lama when he entered India as a refugee 66 years ago.

Deputy Commissioner Kanki Darang made the official announcement on Wednesday, stating that the foot march will commence from Khen-Dze-Mane in Arunachal Pradesh and conclude in Tawang on April 5. The journey will take participants through significant historical sites, including Chuudangmo, Gorzam Chorten, Shakti, Lungla, and Thongleng, before reaching Tawang. Each stop will serve as a moment of reflection, mirroring the Dalai Lama's own pauses during his arduous journey in 1959.

March 31 marks exactly 66 years since the Dalai Lama and his entourage of eighty people first stepped into the Mon region of India after fleeing Norbulingka Palace in Tibet. The 24-year-old spiritual leader endured an exhausting trek, travelling day and night before finally crossing into India via the Ke-Dze-Mani mountain pass. Upon arrival, he was received by T.S. Murti, the Assistant Political Officer of Tawang, along with security personnel from the 5 Assam Rifles and local residents of Jemeithang.

Organisers emphasise that the trekking event aims not only to honour the Dalai Lama's journey but also to spread his message of peace, non-violence, and compassion. Participants will have the opportunity to engage in spiritual reflection and gain a deeper understanding of the resilience and struggles faced by the Tibetan people.

Reflecting on his escape, the Dalai Lama shared in a past interview with The Times of India: "I get emotional because in 1959, when I escaped from Tibet, I came from this route. I was physically very

weak. Mentally, there was a lot of anxiety, hopelessness, and helplessness. It was difficult. The local people here and also officials extended a very, very warm welcome. So I get emotional every time I visit Tawang.”

The district administration has invited the public to participate in what they describe as a deeply spiritual and historically significant event. The trek aims to inspire people to implement the Dalai Lama’s teachings of harmony and compassion in their daily lives, reinforcing his enduring legacy in the region

US Secy of State Marco Rubio writes letter to Tibetan President in-exile, reaffirms strong support for 'Tibetan cause'

20 March 2025, [ANI](#)



US Secy of State Marco Rubio writes letter to Tibetan President in-exile, reaffirms strong support for 'Tibetan cause'

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio has sent a letter to Tibetan President in-exile, Sikyong Penpa Tsering, the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) said in a statement.

Rubio, in the letter sent on March 10, reiterated the US' unwavering commitment to promoting Tibetans' human rights and assisting them in exercising their fundamental liberties without fear of retaliation and leading peaceful, dignified lives. Sikyong Penpa Tsering, during the current ninth Tibetan parliamentary session, said that a letter personally sent by Marco Rubio to the Sikyong of the Central Tibetan Administration demonstrates the US' steadfast support for the Tibetan cause. This historic gesture, likely the first of its kind, signifies a profound and continuous awareness of the struggle of the Tibetan people, according to a CTA statement. It further solidifies the long-standing relationship between the US government and the Tibetan population.

Sikyong praised the 16th Kashag, the Office of Tibet in Washington, DC, the International Campaign for Tibet,

and the Tibet Fund for their continued efforts to secure aid that is essential to the preservation of Tibetan religious heritage, culture, and language, according to CTA.

Sikyong emphasized that the goals and programs of the Central Tibetan Administration must be in line with the objectives of the current U.S. government and, most importantly, the larger ambitions of the Tibetan people.

Earlier on March 1, Marco Rubio has extended wishes to Tibetans on Losar, also known as the Tibetan New Year and expressed US' commitment to protecting the "universal, fundamental, and inalienable human rights" of Tibetans and promoting their distinct cultural, linguistic, and religious heritage. In a statement, Rubio stated, "I extend my warmest wishes to all those celebrating Losar, the Tibetan New Year. On this first day of the Year of the Wood Snake, we celebrate the strength and perseverance of the Tibetan community worldwide." "The United States remains committed to protecting the universal, fundamental, and inalienable human rights of Tibetans and promoting their distinct cultural, linguistic, and religious heritage. I wish Tibetans celebrating all across the world peace and prosperity in the new year. Losar Tashi Delek and Happy New Year," he added. The constant reiteration across many platforms, notwithstanding the suspension of USAID assistance, highlights the United States' unwavering commitment to enforcing its policies on Tibet and its longstanding support for the Tibetan cause, CTA emphasized. (ANI)

China expresses delight at potential exit of VOA, RFA; judge halts closure of USAID

19 March 2025, [Tibetan Review](#)

China has expressed delight over the fact that US President Donald Trump has moved to cut public funding for news outlets – along with others – *Voice of America* and *Radio Free Asia*, which have long reported on its human rights abuses, including in Tibet and East Turkestan (Xinjiang). Meanwhile, a federal judge has blocked the Trump administration from taking any further steps to shut down the US Agency for International Development (USAID), saying the move likely violated the US constitution “in multiple ways”.

Asked about the Trump administration’s move on the publicly funded media outlets, China’s Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning said during a daily news briefing: “I think it is no secret that some of the US media you mentioned have a notorious track record in reporting on China,” reported the *AFP* Mar 18.

The move has affected thousands of employees – some 1,300 staff have been put on paid leave at *Voice Of America* (VOA) alone, including at its Tibetan service – since Trump’s Mar 14 executive order.

China’s state newspaper *Global Times* used the news to denounce VOA for its “appalling track record” in reporting on China, saying it has “now been discarded by its own government like a dirty rag”. The editorial called VOA a “lie factory.”

Hu Xijin, the former *Global Times* editor-in-chief, wrote: “*Voice of America* has been paralysed! And so has *Radio Free Asia*, which has been as vicious to China. This is such great news,” noted the *bbc.com* Mar 18.

While critics have called the move a setback for democracy, the White House has defended its decision, saying it will “ensure that taxpayers are no longer on the hook for radical (left) propaganda”.

Trump’s cuts target the US Agency for Global Media (USAGM), which is supported by Congress and funds the affected news outlets, such as VOA, *Radio Free Asia* (RFA) and *Radio Free Europe*.

They have won acclaim and international recognition for their reporting in places where press freedom is severely curtailed or non-existent, from China and Cambodia to Russia and North Korea, said the *bbc.com* report.

Although authorities in some of these countries block the broadcasts – VOA, for instance, is banned in China – people can listen to them on shortwave radio, or get around the restrictions via VPNs.

* * *

Meanwhile, a federal judge has on Mar 18 blocked the Trump administration from taking any further steps to shut down the USAID. Judge Theodore Chuang said the efforts led by Trump ally Elon Musk’s Department for Government Efficiency (DOGE) to close the agency likely violated the US constitution “in multiple ways”, reported the *bbc.com* Mar 19.

“The court finds that Defendants’ unilateral actions to shut down USAID likely violated the United States Constitution,” *edition.cnn.com* Mar 18 quoted Judge Theodore of the US District Court in Maryland, as saying.

The DOGE-advised Trump decision on USAID has led to a significant pause in US funding for Tibetan projects in India and Nepal, leading the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) to revise its budget during the ongoing exile parliament session with large cuts.

The *bbc.com* report said Judge Chuang ordered DOGE to restore access to USAID’s computer and payment systems for employees, including those who were placed on leave.

While the judge also ruled that termination of USAID employees should stop, he did not order the reinstating of employees previously placed on leave, the report said.

The ruling came in a case brought on behalf of 26 unnamed USAID employees.

Judge Chuang has ruled that with their move on USAID, Musk and DOGE “likely violated the United States Constitution in multiple ways, and that these actions harmed not only plaintiffs, but also the public interest.”

The report said it was unclear what effect the ruling will have on USAID operations. It cited administration officials as saying more than 80% of its activities had been halted.

The Trump administration has criticised Judge Chuang’s ruling, calling it a “miscarriage of justice”, and vowed to appeal.

USAID has been a powerful soft power tool of the USA for decades.

The Trump administration wants to dismantle USAID on account of its broader “America First” policy, which emphasizes reducing US involvement in international organizations and reassessing global commitments. The administration argues that defunding USAID addresses issues of wasteful spending and corruption in foreign governments, reallocating resources to domestic priorities.

Tibet activists call on G7 to take stronger action against China

19 March 2025, [Phayul](#), Tsering Dhundup

Tibetan activists have expressed strong disappointment with the Group of Seven (G7), urging the international body to take a firmer stance on China’s human rights violations in Tibet. The outcry comes after the G7 foreign ministers failed to include Tibet in their 2025 joint statement, despite mounting evidence of severe human rights abuses in Tibet.

The G7 summit, held in Charlevoix, Quebec, Canada from March 12 to 14, brought together representatives from Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, the United States, and the European Union. Ahead of the meeting, global Tibet advocacy groups lobbied G7 foreign ministers to address China’s oppressive policies in Tibet. However, their concerns were omitted from the final statement, prompting widespread condemnation from activists.

A key point of contention is China’s mass placement of Tibetan children in state-run boarding schools. Reports indicate that over one million Tibetan children have been forcibly separated from their families and subjected to Mandarin-language education and political indoctrination. Human rights organisations have documented cases of abuse, neglect, and even deaths in these facilities. Many Tibetan children, some as young as four years old, are losing their ability to speak their native language, further eroding their cultural identity and severing ties with their families.

Prominent Tibet activists have spoken out against the G7's failure to address the crisis. Lhadon Tethong of the Tibet Action Institute stated, "As China removes a generation of Tibetan children from their families, world leaders cannot ignore the situation. The G7 must take a position on China's actions in Tibet."

Similarly, Tesla Zoksang from Students for a Free Tibet criticised the omission, saying, "The G7 ministers' failure to address Tibet marks a shift in their approach to human rights. Silence on Tibet signals a position on China's actions."

Sherap Therchin of the Canada Tibet Committee added, "The G7's silence on Tibet disregards the concerns of the Tibetan people. The failure to address China's actions shows a shift in approach."

John Jones of Free Tibet further condemned the G7's stance, highlighting the severe implications of China's policies. "The political situation in Tibet and the placement of nearly a million children in state-run boarding schools should have been mentioned in the G7 statement. The large-scale development projects in Tibet have displaced many Tibetans and have consequences for the rest of Asia," he said.

Rashi Jauhri of the International Tibet Network also questioned the G7's inaction. "What does it take for G7 ministers to address Tibet? One million Tibetan children have been placed in state-run boarding schools. The G7's response influences China's policies in Tibet."

Over the past two years, multiple United Nations human rights bodies have raised concerns about Tibet's deteriorating situation. Reports have highlighted the mass boarding school system, a forced labour transfer programme, large-scale displacement of rural Tibetans, the imprisonment of Tibetan environmental defenders, and restrictions on Tibetan-language education. Tibetans who resist these policies continue to face severe repression, including detention and enforced disappearances.

The G7's failure to include Tibet in its statement comes despite a recent declaration by 15 UN member states, including six G7 nations, condemning China's human rights abuses in Tibet. Activists argue that by remaining silent, the G7 is failing its commitments to uphold human rights and pressuring China to change its policies in Tibet.

ICT statement on US Assistance to Tibetan Programs

19 March 2025, [ICT](#)

The Trump Administration has issued Executive Orders (EO) that reduce foreign assistance and freeze other international support programs. The broad implementation of this decision is severely affecting programs supporting Tibet and the Tibetan people. In response, the International Campaign for Tibet has

been working in coordination with the Office of Tibet in Washington, DC to meet with Congressional and Administration officials reminding them about the importance of Tibet and the statutory requirement to help the Tibetan people.

For decades, the United States has been one of the Tibetan people's staunchest friends. There is bipartisan agreement that the Tibetan people deserve self-determination, democracy, and the right to religious freedom. Our laws, including the Tibet Policy Act of 2002, the Tibet Policy and Support Act of 2020, the Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act, the Resolve Tibet Act and numerous Congressional appropriations reflect that.

Furthermore, America's fiscal support to Tibetans fits into their wider national security interests. Its stoppage will erode a successful investment that is combatting China's malign influence and its further ambitions throughout the world, particularly in the Indo-Pacific region.

Tibet programs bolster the capacity of the Central Tibetan Administration, which provides democratic governance for Tibetans in exile, serves as a powerful counterpoint to Chinese Communist Party repression, preserves Tibetan religion and culture, and provides basic services to Tibetan refugee communities in India and Nepal. The Tibetan programming on Voice of America and Radio Free Asia provide factual information to Tibetans living under Chinese occupation enabling them to hear the truth about the US and the world.

The stability of Tibet directly impacts US interests. Tibet is the source of Asia's major rivers which sustain the lives of 1.8 billion people in downstream nations. China's dams and other infrastructure expansion threatens broad swaths of South and Southeast Asia, livelihoods of communities there, and by extension, US economic and trade relationships in the Indo-Pacific.

And most importantly, the Tibetan people's nearly 70-year nonviolent resistance in the pursuit of human rights, rule of law, and freedom offers a path of peace in a world fraught with conflict.

The International Campaign for Tibet is committed to utilizing every tool in the toolbox to ensure the continuation of programs benefitting Tibet and the Tibetan people. On behalf of our 50,000 members, we look forward to working with Congress and the Administration in support of US policy and law on Tibet.

Tibet scores zero in 'Freedom in the World 2025' index

19 March 2025, [Phayul](#), Tsering Dhundup

Tibet has once again received the lowest possible freedom rating in the Freedom in the World 2025 report by Freedom House, a U.S.-based human rights organisation. The region was given an overall score of 0 out of 100, reflecting severe restrictions on political rights and civil liberties under Chinese rule. According to the report, Tibet scored -2 out of 40 for political rights and 2 out of 60 for civil liberties. This marks the second consecutive year that Tibet has received a zero rating, further cementing its status as one of the least free country in the world.

“Tibet is ruled by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) government based in Beijing, with local decision-making power concentrated in the hands of Chinese party officials,” the report states. “Authorities are particularly harsh in suppressing Tibetan religious beliefs and cultural identity, imposing policies that weaken the presence of ethnic Tibetans.” The report also highlights forced assimilation tactics, including mass surveillance, arbitrary detentions, and the relocation of Tibetan communities.

From 2017 to 2023, Tibet received a 1 out of 100 rating, with a political rights score of -2 and a civil liberties score of 3. However, in 2024, the score dropped to 0, a trend that has continued into this year. The ongoing suppression of political and religious freedoms in Tibet has drawn widespread international criticism. Human rights organizations have repeatedly condemned the CCP’s policies in the region, citing mass surveillance, arbitrary detentions, and the forced assimilation of Tibetan culture as key concerns. Reports also indicate increased government incentives for Han Chinese migration to Tibet, further reducing the ethnic Tibetan population’s proportion.

MPs debate US funding freeze, self-reliance during budget session

19 March 2025, [Phayul](#), Tenzin Nyidon

On the second day of the 17th Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile’s budget session on Tuesday, lawmakers deliberated on the Department of Finance’s budget, focusing strongly on the implications of the US funding freeze and strategies for financial self-reliance for the exile Tibetan set up.

MPs questioned the CTA administration’s response to the US funding cuts and the alternative plans for the upcoming fiscal year. A significant portion of the discussion centered on self-reliance, with some MPs urging the administration to present concrete plans for achieving financial independence. While some argued that self-reliance is challenging given Tibetans’ refugee status, others stressed the importance of collective effort between the administration and the public.

MP Lhagyari Namgyal Dolkar questioned the cabinet on the concrete measures it has implemented for the

new fiscal year. “While advocating for self-sufficiency is important, taking decisive action is even more critical. I had hoped that instead of prioritizing official visits to settlements, the Kashag would have convened an emergency meeting to formulate a clear strategy in response to the funding suspension. Moreover, rather than simply sending an official letter, I believe the President should have personally travelled to the United States to address the matter at the highest level.”

MP Ven. Geshe Lharampa Gowo Lobsang Phende criticized the Cabinet for failing to devise concrete plans for a self-reliant administration during his three years in office. “As elected leaders, we must develop strategies for a self-sustaining government. Rather than simply urging the public to reduce dependence on aid, we must lead by example—ensuring that we do not take these funds for granted and instead prioritize building a self-sufficient administration,” he asserted.

Fellow MP Mingyur Dorjee highlighted the wider impact of the new US administration’s “America First” policy, affecting Tibetans, the CTA, but also other nations. He cautioned Tibetans against uninformed social media remarks on funding cuts and stressed that self-reliance is a shared responsibility of both the Cabinet and Parliament. He further acknowledged that the Cabinet has already stated its commitment to exploring alternative revenue sources and expressed confidence that efforts are underway in that regard.

In response, President Penpa Tsering stated that as soon as the directive was issued, the cabinet held multiple discussions with stakeholders including the Department of Finance, the Office of Tibet in the US, and the Washington-based advocacy group International Campaign for Tibet (ICT).

Regarding questions said that he remains fully prepared to visit the US whenever necessary, should a relevant authority in the US administration be available for discussions. Providing an overview of the US funding situation, he noted that ₹500 million was received from US sources, with ₹340 million cut, mainly affecting minor initiatives and not core projects or housing initiatives.

Tibetans urge Indian MPs to recognise Tibet as an occupied country

19 March 2025, [The Tibet Post](#), Yangchen Dolma

Members of the Tibet Advocacy Alliance-India, launched their advocacy for Tibet, in New Delhi on Monday, during the budget session of the Indian Parliament. The Tibetan NGO members urge Indian MPs urge India to recognise Tibet as an occupied country, which historically has been the border between India and Tibet, not between India and China.

The members of Tibet Advocacy Alliance - India includes Sonam Tsering from the Tibetan Youth Congress (TYC), Geden Tsepphel from the National Democratic Party of Tibet (NDPT) and Tenzin Lekden from Students for a Free Tibet-India (SFT), Dr Lobsang Yangtso from the International Tibet Network (ITN) and Tenzin Nyima from the Tibetan Women's Association (TWA).



Members of the Tibet Advocacy Alliance-India, launched their advocacy for Tibet, in New Delhi on Monday and meeting with Indian MPs. (Photo:file)

The Tibet Advocacy Alliance-India began its 10 days of lobbying for Tibet in New Delhi on March 17, 2025. They scheduled to advocate for Tibet from March 17 to 27, 2025. They met with the following prominent parliamentarians on their first day of advocacy: Shri Premachandran N.K (RSP) MP from Kerala, Shri. Parshottambhai Rupala, (BJP), MP from Gujarat, Shri. Ganesh Singh, (BJP), MP from Madhya Pradesh, Shri. Suresh Kumar Kashyab (BJP), MP from Himachal Pradesh, Shri Deepender Singh Hooda, (INC) MP from Haryana, Shri. Mohmad Haneefa, (IND.), MP from Ladakh, Thiru Vijayakumar Vasanth (INC) , MP from Tamil Nadu, Shri Shanta Kumar Sharma, former Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh and Dr. Rajeev Bharadwaj, (BJP) MP from Himachal Pradesh.

During their visit to the MPs, they made five-points appeals, urging India to recognise Tibet as an occupied country, which historically has been the border between India and Tibet, not between India and China. They asked parliamentarians to raise the issue of Tibet, in particular the systematic eradication of Tibetan language, Buddhism and culture by the Chinese government, including the forced placement of at least one million Tibetan children in Chinese colonial-style boarding schools, where only Chinese language, culture and ideologies are taught.

They also asked India and MPs to recognise the contribution of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to the revival and preservation of Indian traditional knowledge, as His Holiness the Dalai Lama celebrates his 90th birthday this year, and urged them to support events or activities that celebrate His Holiness the Dalai Lama's birthday this year, July 6, 2025. Additionally, they urged for a statement supporting the decision of the Tibetan people and Buddhists to choose the reincarnation of the next Dalai Lama.

Sonam Tsering, General Secretary of TYC and a member of the Tibet Advocacy Alliance – India, told TPI: “We met eight MPs on the first day of our lobby for Tibet, four of whom we had already met and four of whom we had not met before. We were able to explain Tibet to them, the critical situation in Tibet and urge them to raise the Tibet issue in Parliament.”

"So far, the lobby has been very successful, we were able to make MPs aware of the situation in Tibet, many of them have knowledge about Tibet and they have shown their interest and support for the issue of Tibet," he added.

He said, “The aim of this advocacy is to get the Indian Parliament to support Tibet by visiting MPs and requesting them to raise the Tibet issue in Parliament, discuss the Tibet issue in Parliament.”

Closer to Tibet: Empowerment and Reconnection for the Movement – Taiwan, 2025

18 March 2025, [ITN](#)



We the undersigned 30 participants of ‘Closer to Tibet: a workshop on empowerment and reconnection for the movement’, comprising of youth activists and students from Tibet, Uyghur, Taiwan, Taiwan indigenous and Taiwan second generation immigrant communities, Hong Kong, and Malaysia, condemn the over 70-year occupation of Tibet and express our solidarity with the Tibetan people and their struggle to restore their rights under international law to determine Tibet’s political, economic, social, religious, and cultural status.

We acknowledge the unique challenges faced by Tibetans living under Chinese rule and recognise their resilience in maintaining their distinct national identity and culture. We believe that all people deserve fundamental freedoms and the right to practice their traditions without fear of persecution. We particularly value the rich spiritual and cultural heritage of Tibet, embodied by Tibetan Buddhism.

We stand in unwavering support of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, and his leadership. Furthermore, we strongly believe in the inalienable right of the Tibetan people to choose their own spiritual leaders, including the next Dalai Lama, without interference from the Chinese government.

This is a fundamental right to freedom of religion and culture and is a crucial aspect of Tibetan identity. Any attempt by the Chinese authorities to control or influence this process is unacceptable and a violation of these fundamental rights.

We stand in support of the Tibetan people's right to peacefully express their aspirations, and call on the Chinese government to engage in meaningful dialogue with representatives of His Holiness the Dalai Lama or the Tibetan Government in Exile leaders, to resolve the conflict caused by the People's Republic of China's illegal invasion of Tibet and occupation of Tibet.

Similarly, we believe that Hong Kongers, Taiwanese, Malaysians, and other peoples affected by China's sharp power and neo-colonialism are entitled to undisrupted agency and self-determination, and under this premise, engage in equal and reciprocal exchange with China.

We resolve to strengthen our support for Tibet by continuing to work with our cross-movement allies.

2025 台灣圖博工作坊宣言

主辦單位：國際西藏網絡

協辦單位：西藏台灣人權連線、台灣自由圖博學聯

我們，共同參與「進一步認識圖博：培力與再串連」工作坊的成員，共30位來自圖博/西藏、維吾爾、台灣、台灣原住民、在台移民二代、香港、馬來西亞的青年運動者及學生，共同譴責中共政權對西藏70年以來的佔領，並表達對西藏人民的聲援及根據國際法恢復其權利的奮鬥，西藏人應該有決定自己的政治、經濟、文化、社會及宗教的權利。

我們承認生活在中國統治下的西藏人面臨獨特的挑戰，也驚艷他們在維護民族認同和文化的韌性。我們相信，所有人都應享有基本自由和實踐自身傳統，而不必擔心遭受迫害的權利。我們尤其珍惜藏傳佛教所體現的西藏豐富精神文化遺產。

我們堅定不移的支持第14世達賴喇嘛丹增嘉措及他的領導。此外，我們也堅信西藏人民擁有不可剝奪的權利，可以選擇自己的精神領袖，包括下一任達賴喇嘛，而不受中國政府的干涉。這是宗教和文化自由的基本權利，也是西藏認同非常重要的面向。中國當局控制或影響這一進程的任何企圖都是不可接受的，也是對這些基本權利的侵犯。

我們支持西藏人民和平表達訴求的權利，並呼籲中國政府與達賴喇嘛尊者的代表或藏人行政中央（西藏流亡政府）領導人，能夠進行有意義的對話，以解決中華人民共和國非法入侵和佔領西藏所造成的衝突。

同樣的，我們也認為所有受到中國銳實力／新殖民主義影響的香港、台灣、馬來西亞及其他人民

，也應當擁有不受干預的主體性，並在此前提下與中國進行對等交流。

我們決心與跨運動盟友合作，加強對圖博的支持。

World Uyghur Congress exposes China's repression at UN Human Rights Council session

18 March 2025, [ANI](#)

At the 58th session of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva, the World Uyghur Congress (WUC) organised an exhibition aimed at exposing China's ongoing repression of Uyghurs

In a post shared on X, WUC highlighted that the exhibition shed light on critical issues such as transnational repression, including the forced deportation of Uyghurs from Thailand, forced labour, the detention of Uyghur intellectuals, and forced abortions.

WUC stated that the organisation, through this initiative, aims to raise global awareness and called on the international community to take meaningful action. Moreover, during the session, WUC President Turgunjan Alawdun delivered a speech, emphasising the denial of religious freedom to Uyghurs, the widespread translational repression, including forced deportations, and the continuous persecution Uyghurs are subjected to. He urged the international community to act decisively to hold China accountable for its grave human rights violations, highlighting the urgency of addressing these atrocities.

The World Uyghur Congress (WUC) is an international organisation that advocates for the rights and freedoms of the Uyghur people, an ethnic group primarily living in the Xinjiang region of China. The WUC was founded in 2004 and serves as a representative body for Uyghur people worldwide, particularly on issues of human rights, cultural preservation, and political autonomy. The Uyghur issue in China centres around the ongoing human rights violations faced by the Uyghur people, a Muslim Turkic ethnic group in Xinjiang. Reports have emerged of over a million Uyghurs detained in so-called "re-education camps," where they face forced indoctrination, physical abuse, and cultural suppression.

The Chinese government justifies these actions as measures to combat extremism, but human rights groups describe them as crimes against humanity, including genocide. Additionally, Uyghurs are subjected to intense surveillance, forced labour, and religious repression. Their language and cultural practices are increasingly restricted, and reports of

forced sterilizations and family separations have surfaced.

Second day of Ninth Session of 17th Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile

18 March 2025, [CTA](#)

The second day of the ninth session of the 17th Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile commenced at 9:30 am today chaired by Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel with deliberations on the statement of Finance Kalon and the 2025–2026 budget precis presented by the Budget Estimate Committee.

The house discussed the suspension of aid from the USA, with many members advocating for the Central Tibetan Administration to work towards financial self-sufficiency, while others expressed gratitude to the US for its past support in preserving and promoting Tibetan culture, language, and religion.

Other topics of discussion included the loan sought by the Tibetan American Foundation of Minnesota to acquire land for the Tibet Town Project, the Department of Home's housing initiatives for newly arrived Tibetans, and other related matters.

Sikyong Penpa Tsering, the incumbent Kalon of the Department of Finance, addressed the queries raised in the house.

Parliamentarian Geshe Lharampa Atuk Tseten, Chair of the Budget Estimate Committee, also provided needed clarification to the questions raised in the house.

The session proceeded with the continuation of discussion and approval on the proposed budget of the various departments and offices under the Central Tibetan Administration for the year 2025-2026, starting from discussion and approval *Nyechen* Budget, Recurring Budget, Special Recurring Budget, and *Surkyol* Budget of the Parliamentary Secretariat.

The proposed budget for the Tibetan Supreme Justice Commission and local justice Commissions includes the *Nyechen* Budget, Recurring Budget, Special Recurring Budget, & *Surkyol* Budget of the Tibetan Supreme Justice Commission, followed by the Recurring Budget & Special Recurring Budget of the Northern Local Tibetan Justice Commission; Recurring Budget & Special Recurring Budget of Southern Tibetan Justice Commission; Recurring Budget & Special Recurring Budget of Ladakh Tibetan Local Justice Commission; and Recurring Budget of Tibetan Circuit Justice Commission were also approved.

Thereafter, the Recurring Budgets & Special Recurring Budgets of 37 Local Tibetan Assemblies and Recurring Budget, Special Recurring Budget and *Surkyol* Budget of the Kashag Secretariat were also approved unanimously.

The Recurring Budget of the Department of Security remains open for discussion.

Today's session had former West Bengal official and member of Salugara Himalayan Buddhist Cultural Association, Tsering Lhamo Bhutia, and others as observers.

The session adjourned at 5 pm.

-Report filed by Tibetan Parliamentary Secretariat

The Budget Session of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile Commences Today

17 March 2025, [CTA](#)

The ninth Session (budget session) of the 17th Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile for the fiscal year 2025-2026 scheduled to be held from 17 to 31 March commenced today with the Speaker's session commencement announcement at 9:30 am today.

Assembled with Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel, Sikyong Penpa Tsering, Deputy Speaker Dolma Tsering Teykhang, Kalons and parliamentarians, the house continued with the singing of the Tibetan national anthem, followed by Speaker's session opening speech and the appointment of Acting Speakers and Ad Hoc committee members.

Offering his prayers and prostrations to His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the Speaker began his opening address by greeting the Sikyong, Kalons, Deputy Speaker, and the Members of Parliament present. Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel spoke on the deteriorating situation in Tibet, particularly highlighting the Chinese restrictions on Tibetan students on 10 March 2025, Tibetan National Uprising Day. He also noted the release of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's latest book, *Voice for the Voiceless*, on 11 March 2025, which received widespread coverage from major global media outlets. The book also featured His Holiness's statement that his reincarnation will be born outside of China, a declaration to which China responded with criticism. Reiterating that reincarnation is a deeply religious process and cannot be manipulated as a political tool by China, the Speaker quoted a passage from the book: *"To my fellow Tibetans: Never lose hope, however dark the sky may become. As our saying goes, 'If you fall nine times, you get up nine.' Always remember that a bright sun awaits behind the clouds."* He urged everyone to "Never Give Up!"

The house continued with official obituary references to former Indian Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and former American President Jimmy Carter alias James Earl Carter Jr.

Followed by official obituary references to former Chief Justice Commissioner and former Deputy Speaker Jadur Sonam Sangpo, former Kalon Trisur (prime minister) Gyalo Thondup, former Kalon (minister) Shewo Lobsang Dhargyal, former

parliamentarian Choeje Ayang Tulku Rinpoche, former parliamentarian Khortsa Sonam Damdul, and former parliamentarian Kyunglung Thokmey.

Sikyong Penpa Tsering, the incumbent Finance Kalon of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), presented the 2025-2026 Budget of the Central Tibetan Administration, proposing an amount of Rs. 3675.30 million.

Followed by Parliamentarian Geshe Lharampa Atuk Tseten, the Chairman of the Budget Estimate Committee of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile, presenting the Précis report of the Committee.

The motion for debate on the Central Tibetan Administration's 2025-2026 Budget was tabled by Parliamentarian Geshe Atong Rinchen Gyaltsen and supported by Parliamentarian Tenzin Jigdal.

Thereafter, Parliamentarian Geshe Atong Rinchen Gyaltsen, Chair of the 12th Public Accounts Committee (PAC), presented the report of the committee.

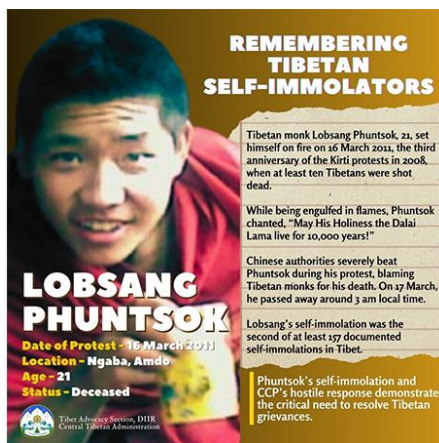
Today the house welcomed German MP Anna-Elisabeth, Kate (member of Tibet Support Group from UK), and former parliamentary Secretary-General Tsering Dorjee as observers.

At 3 pm, the first day of the budget session adjourned until 9:30 am of the next day.

-Report filed by Tibetan Parliamentary Secretariat

Tibetan Monk Lobsang Phuntsok remembered on 14th anniversary of self-immolation

17 March 2025, ANI



Tibetan Monk Lobsang Phuntsok remembered on 14th anniversary (Photo/Central Tibetan Administration)

The Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) commemorated the life and sacrifice of Tibetan monk Lobsang Phuntsok, who tragically self-immolated on March 16, 2011, in Ngaba, Amdo, at the age of 21.

According to a commemoration posted on the official website of CTA, Phuntsok's self-immolation came on the third anniversary of the violent 2008 Kirti protests, a period of intense repression when at least ten

Tibetans were shot dead by Chinese authorities. As he set himself on fire, Phuntsok was heard chanting, "May His Holiness the Dalai Lama live for 10,000 years!"

The CTA, in its remembrance, emphasised the significance of Phuntsok's sacrifice and the ongoing struggle for Tibetan autonomy. As per CTA, his self-immolation was the second of at least 157 such acts by Tibetans, each one a call to the world to take notice of the ongoing human rights violations in Tibet. The CTA's post called for the immediate resolution of Tibetan grievances and highlighted the urgent need for international awareness and action.

According to the London-based group Free Tibet, over 150 individuals have self-immolated in Tibet since March 2009 to protest the oppressive Chinese occupation.

The peak of self-immolation protests occurred in 2012, with more than 80 such acts. While the number has significantly decreased since 2013, it continues to be a form of resistance, with two confirmed self-immolations in Tibet in 2022. Although many of those who have set themselves on fire have been monks and nuns, the majority of self-immolators have not come from religious institutions. Protesters have included teachers, students, herders, and both mothers and fathers. The youngest individual to self-immolate was only 15 years old. The Tibet issue revolves around Tibet's political status and its relationship with China. Since China's military occupation in 1950, Tibetans have sought greater autonomy, preservation of their culture, and religious freedom, led by the Dalai Lama. The Chinese government asserts sovereignty, leading to ongoing tensions, protests, and human rights concerns over Tibetans' rights and freedoms. (ANI)

Chinese repression of Tibetans and Uyghurs: 'Switzerland must take action now'

17 March 2025, [SWI](#)



Tibetan and Uyghur people pause for a moment of silence to honour all victims at a rally on the Place des Nations in front of the UN's European headquarters in Geneva on September 16, 2016. Keystone / Salvatore Di Nolfi

The world's first government-commissioned study, by Switzerland, on intimidation of Tibetan and Uyghur communities sheds a light on transnational repression by China. Are countries such as Switzerland doing enough to protect its people from transnational repression?

Switzerland is often considered the human rights capital of the world due to the presence of numerous international organisations. However, for Uyghurs and Tibetans living in the country, who still feel they can't escape China's surveillance, intimidation and threats, it's also seen as a place where they often confront their cross-border oppressors.

"We are aware that we are subjected to surveillance, especially on the internet," Arya Amipa, co-president of the Tibetan Youth Association in Europe, who lives in Switzerland, told SWI swissinfo.ch. "We keep receiving suspicious emails asking us to send confidential data, such as renewing our email passwords, from what at first glance appears to be our email provider. It's only when you look closer that you notice the email address changes when you hover over it."

Amipa believes that the Chinese government is behind these phishing operations with targets in the Tibetan diaspora communities. So "we have to protect ourselves by using end-to-end encrypted messengers, two-factor identification, and VPN clients", even when communicating with others in Switzerland.

Jigme Adotsang, a systems engineer in Switzerland who is a second-generation Tibetan-Swiss, also experienced China's surveillance. He says that at public events and demonstrations by the Tibetan community "again and again, on the fringes of such events, we notice unknown people of Asian origin carrying large cameras", sometimes equipped with long lenses that can capture the faces well. "As they aren't bothered to be seen, it looks more like intimidation tactics."

The consequence, he says, is that "fear has increased, especially among young Tibetans" and many Tibetans don't take part in protests anymore. Adotsang shared his experience of China's surveillance [External link](#) with Swiss NGO Gesellschaft für Bedrohte Völker (Society for Threatened Peoples).

The claims of Amipa and Adotsang are backed up by a recently released report, "*Situation of Tibetans and Uyghurs in Switzerland*", based on the findings of a University of Basel study commissioned by the Swiss government. This details extensive surveillance and pressure tactics by Chinese authorities against Tibetan and Uyghur individuals residing in Switzerland.

The research report concluded that it's "highly probable" that members of the Tibetan and Uyghur communities in Switzerland are "systematically monitored, threatened, and co-opted by actors from

China". The Swiss government added that "the extent and intensity of the forms of pressure identified in this research report are more likely to be underreported than overreported". This is partly because the perpetrators often operate in the shadows and the targets fear reprisals if they speak out about their experiences.

Response to China's transnational repression

The Swiss report is the first of its kind in the international sphere. Nicole Bibbins Sedaca, vice president of Washington-based NGO Freedom House, wrote [External link](#) that China, which tops the list of countries for transnational repression and "conducts the most comprehensive and sophisticated campaign of transnational repression in the world, is responsible for 30% of the cases".

China's transnational repression has become a hot topic over the past year, but the phenomenon is not new. Some Western governments have taken steps in recent years to address the issue more meaningfully. The US government formally addressed the problem first in 2023. A bipartisan group of US senators introduced the Transnational Repression Policy Act [External link](#), which aims to "hold foreign governments and individuals accountable when they stalk, intimidate or assault people in the United States and US citizens abroad". The US is also the only country so far to have dedicated great resources at all levels of government to understand the issue and propose meaningful action points, such as establishing hotlines for those experiencing transnational repression and conducting consultations with the affected communities.

Canada and Germany have made similar efforts, the World Uyghur Congress told SWI swissinfo.ch. "We hope like-minded governments can work together to counter all of this."

The World Uyghur Congress confirms that Uyghurs face increasing levels of transnational repression abroad through surveillance technologies including WeChat and the Integrated Joint Operations Platform (IJOP), a policing program based on big data analytics in Xinjiang, harassment through video and phone calls, malware, spyware, hacking and espionage. But "we are not aware of any resources or tools available to address this issue within the Swiss context" it told SWI swissinfo.ch.

Long-awaited report delayed

Some 8,000 Tibetans are estimated to live in Switzerland, making it one of the largest Tibetan exile communities outside India. The Uyghur community, however, is in the double or low triple digits. Both communities have awaited the Swiss report for years. The report was produced after a parliamentary postulate in 2020. Normally, a postulate should be answered within two years, so the report should have been published two years ago, according to Nicolas

Walder, a member of the House of Representatives and the Foreign Affairs Committee, who submitted the postulate.

However, Walder says the report has been delayed three times, “each time without good reason”. The State Secretariat for Migration, which commissioned the external expert report on behalf of the government, attributed the reasons to the subordination of the processing of the report to the priority with the outbreak of war in Ukraine in February 2022 and the implementation of protection status S for refugees in Switzerland. “The processing of the results of the report took longer than originally planned,” it admitted to SWI swissinfo.ch.

Hesitance of Swiss authorities

Amipa from the Tibetan Youth Association believes that the delay in releasing the report is because Switzerland doesn’t want to enrage its largest trading partner in Asia. However, he thinks that “remaining silent and inactive on these issues is an active choice to allow the atrocities to continue”.

Switzerland followed a “change through trade” approach regarding China for decades. That means Switzerland believed that trade would bring about positive changes, including a greater emphasis on human rights, as China gradually opened up. But the past ten years have shown the opposite to be true. China’s treatment of Tibetans and Uyghurs, including the diaspora, has deteriorated sharply.

Regarding the actions of the Swiss authorities, the research report indicates that a perceived tightening of restrictions on peaceful demonstrations and asylum practices is described as a form of pressure.

For example, the documents of Tibetans in Switzerland used to give “stateless” as their country of origin. Now it says “China”. This change forces Tibetans to have regular contact with the Chinese consulate, exposing them to registration and further surveillance and intimidation by Chinese officials who remind them not to engage in political activities.

Migmar Dolma, a 33-year-old Swiss citizen of Tibetan heritage, expressed to SWI swissinfo.ch her disappointment at the Swiss authorities’ hesitance and failure to address the violation of the democratic rights of Tibetans in the country.

At a political demonstration in 2014, she was forcibly grabbed, pushed and held to the ground by Chinese embassy officials. She filed a complaint against an unknown person in the footage, but the case was rejected by the public prosecutor. She believes the decision was politically motivated.

“The Swiss authorities have not fulfilled their duty to protect their citizens from the Chinese embassy’s activities,” she said. “Don’t we belong to Switzerland? Should we, Swiss people with Tibetan roots, keep our mouths shut because we should be grateful that our parents and grandparents were granted asylum? As a

Swiss citizen and the daughter of Tibetan refugees, I feel ashamed to see Switzerland kowtowing to China,” she said, stressing that Switzerland must stand by its principle of promoting human rights.

‘Afraid of Chinese reaction’

“Our government is afraid of the reaction of the Chinese government,” Walder says. He believes that the government is concerned that the release of the report may affect its plan to extend the free trade agreement (FTA) with China. Not only because of Beijing’s reaction, but also because of the impact the report could have on public opinion, since the updated FTA must be approved by the Swiss people.

Switzerland is the only European country to have signed a free trade agreement with China, apart from Iceland and Serbia. Walder thinks Switzerland has always prioritised trade interests over human rights.

“The result is that while our trade has increased by 70% since the signing of our free trade agreement in 2013, the human rights situation in China has deteriorated sharply. China’s hostile actions against Tibetans and Uyghurs in Switzerland have never been more frequent,” he says.

“The more dependent a country is on investment from China, the more likely it is to cooperate or to turn a blind eye [to transnational repression],” David Tobin [External link](#), a lecturer in East Asian Studies at the University of Sheffield in the UK, whose current research focuses on collecting Uyghur diaspora narratives on genocidal violence and trauma, told the [BBC](#) [External link](#).

Tobin and his colleagues conducted some of the most comprehensive research on the topic of China’s transnational repression to date, interviewing and surveying more than 200 members of the Uyghur diaspora in several countries, and published their conclusions in 2023.

Among the countries he studied was Turkey, traditionally a safe haven for Uyghurs, where 50,000 live in one of the largest communities outside China, but as its economic dependence on China deepens, its tolerance for China’s transnational repression has changed dramatically.

In order to avoid a repeat of the Turkish scenario, the Swiss Social Democrats and the Greens are insisting that the new report on the Chinese regime’s violations of the fundamental rights of the Tibetan and Uighur communities in Switzerland be taken into account in the ongoing FTA negotiations with Beijing, even though the idea of including the situation of Tibetans in Switzerland and negotiating binding rules on the protection of human rights in the new FTA was narrowly rejected in the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives last year.

Although the Swiss government has held several consultations with affected communities in the country experiencing Chinese transnational

repression, the Swiss Tibetan Friendship Association told SWI swissinfo.ch that it was “not aware of any concrete action taken by the Swiss government”.

The recent publication of the government’s report is certainly seen as a positive signal in these circles. The report’s findings were also on the agenda for discussionExternal link at the bilateral human rights dialogue between Switzerland and China at the end of February.

But for Amipa, it’s not enough to acknowledge the reality of transnational repression for Tibetans and the Uighur diaspora. “Switzerland must take action now. These things will continue to happen as long as China doesn’t fear any consequences.”

Chinese Communist leaders have only a mouth to speak but no ear to listen: the Dalai Lama

17 March 2025, [The Tibet Post](#), Tenzin Lhadon

His Holiness the Dalai Lama said in his new book, “I have engaged with people who have shown a commitment to shared vision, an openness to trust, the honesty to express one’s thoughts even in disagreement, and the willingness to truly engage and learn. With the Chinese Communist leadership, from Chairman Mao Zedong to President Xi Jinping in the current era, sadly, the situation has been very different. I have often complained that the Chinese Communist leaders have only a mouth to speak but no ear to listen.” His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the spiritual leader of Tibet, published a book entitled ***Voice for the voiceless***, over seven decades of struggle with China for my land and my people, on March 11, 2025. In this book, His Holiness recounts the Chinese invasion of Tibet, his escape from Tibet, the suffering of Tibetans, the dialogue between Tibet and China and his hope for Tibet.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama's latest book, *Voice for the voiceless*, over seven decades of struggle with China for my land and my people, has a total of 16 chapters: 1: The Invasion and Our New Master 2: Meeting Chairman Mao 3: A Visit to India 4: Fleeing Home 5: A Geopolitical Reflection 6: Devastation at Home and Rebuilding in Exile 7: Overtures Toward a Dialogue 8: Reaching Out to Our Fourth Refuge 9: In the Aftermath of Tiananmen 10: Practices I Find Helpful in the Face of Suffering 11: As the Millennium Came to an End 12: The Final Series of Dialogues 13: Taking Stock 14: What Gives Me Hope 15: Situation Today and the Path Forward 16: Appeal.

In this book, His Holiness the Dalai Lama recounts the Chinese invasion of Tibet in 1950s, how Chinese soldiers entered Kham, eastern Tibet, then central Tibet and invaded Tibet, how His Holiness, at a young age, tried to negotiate with the Chinese leaders and resolve the problem, how the Tibetan leaders sent a

letter of appeal to the Secretary General of the United Nations to help Tibet, with the exception of El Salvador, no country supported Tibet at the time.

His Holiness had to flee Tibet after Chinese soldiers entered Lhasa, the capital of Tibet. Even after exile, His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the representatives of Tibet tried to resolve the Sino-Tibetan conflict through dialogue. Although the Sino-Tibetan dialogue has made no progress to date, he remains hopeful in the Chinese people and appealed to the Tibetans, the Chinese, the Indians and the international community to continue to support Tibet and the Tibetan people's struggle.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama wrote, "On March 17, 1959, in the darkness and frozen air of the night, I slipped out of the main gate of the Norbulingka Palace disguised and wearing a chuba, an everyday layman's form of clothing. That began what turned out to be more than six decades of life in exile away from my homeland of Tibet. Although the seed that grew into my need to flee was sown by the Communist Chinese invasion of my country in 1950, the immediate trigger was the tension that had been building up in the Tibetan capital city of Lhasa, exploding into a people's uprising on March 10, 1959. For nearly nine years, after the invasion, I had tried to come to some kind of accommodation with the Communist Chinese for the sake of my people's well-being, but it was an impossible task. A few days after my departure, China's People's Liberation Army bombarded the city. In this way, the tragic tale of my homeland and people over the second half of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first unfolded.

"Ever since first being forced into exile in India in 1959, my primary task has been the cause of Tibet and its people. I am now approaching my ninth decade. The issue of Tibet remains unresolved, while my homeland is still in the grip of repressive Communist Chinese rule. Tibetans inside Tibet continue to be deprived of their dignity as a people and their freedom to live their lives according to their own wishes and their culture, as they did for more than a millennium before 1950. Since any expression of Tibetan identity is seen today as a threat by Tibet's new rulers, there is the danger that in the name of “stability” and “territorial integrity” attempts might be made to erase our civilization.

In the chapter of present situation in Tibet and the path forward, His Holiness wrote, "Sadly, at present the situation inside Tibet looks grim. The policies of Xi Jinping, who visited Tibet in 2021 (the first visit of a Chinese leader in more than thirty years), seem to be focused on the tightening of control and intensification of measures aimed at assimilation. For example, on the language front, Chinese is being enforced as the primary medium in education, aimed at creating a generation of Tibetans whose first

language will be Chinese, not Tibetan. There are worrying reports of children— according to some sources, up to a million—being taken away from their families and placed in Mandarin-only boarding schools, suggesting that the Chinese government is adopting a totally discredited colonial practice. This practice, in fact, contradicts China's own constitution, which guarantees that "all nationalities have the freedom to use and develop their own language." It is also in direct violation of the Law on Regional National Autonomy, which stipulates that schools and other educational institutions with "ethnic minority students may use their own language for teaching." I am deeply concerned by this situation.

"On the religious front, there is a new policy of direct control by the Party over monasteries and nunneries, imposing intensified surveillance and control over the monastic communities. I am told that today there are police stations within the compounds of many monasteries. The Tibetan monasteries are also being forced to have Communist Chinese officials within the administration of the monasteries' management. This tightening around the Tibetan people's religious life, including especially the monasteries, began in 2017 with a specific policy adopted by China's State Council's Regulation on Religious Affairs. In brief, various new regulations are being introduced, all aimed at what the Chinese authorities call promoting "Tibetan Buddhism with Chinese characteristics." One of these new regulations states that the monastic curriculum must include courses on politics, laws, regulations, policies, Chinese language, and the history of the relationship between Tibet and the "motherland."

"With respect to the general Tibetan populace, I am informed that in Lhasa and elsewhere, there has been a significant increase in pervasive surveillance of both everyday life and internet use. Community leaders, environmental campaigners, philanthropists, and social activists are especially targeted. There is still no news on the fate of the Panchen Lama, while any display of the Tibetan national flag or my portrait remains banned. In effect, a new social experiment is being conducted through intimidation and forced assimilation, amplified by the apparatus of new technology and digital media. Increasingly, the Tibetans inside Tibet are being made to feel that what is wrong with them from the Chinese authorities' perspective is simply that they are Tibetans.

"If Beijing were to look at past history, it would see that policies of repression and forced assimilation do not actually work. It is, in fact, counterproductive, with the main result being the creation of generations deeply resentful of Communist China's presence on the Tibetan plateau. If the Chinese leadership truly cares about a stable and harmonious country wherein the Tibetan people could feel at home, its policies need to

be grounded in respect for the dignity of Tibetans and to take serious note of their fundamental aspiration to thrive as a people with a distinct language, culture, and religion.

"If, in the end, Beijing deems our foundational objective to be incompatible within the framework of the People's Republic of China, then the issue of Tibet will remain intractable for generations. I have always stated that, in the end, it is the Tibetan people who should decide their own fate. Not the Dalai Lama or, for that matter, the Beijing leadership. The simple fact is no one likes their home being taken over by uninvited guests with guns. This is nothing but human nature.

"I, for one, do not believe it would be so difficult for the Chinese government to make the Tibetans feel welcome and happy within the family of the People's Republic of China. Like all people, Tibetans would like to be respected, have agency within their own home, and have the freedom to be who they are. The aspirations and the needs of the Tibetan people cannot be met simply through economic development. At its core, the issue is not about bread and butter. It is about the very survival of Tibetans as a people. Finding a resolution of the Tibetan issue would undoubtedly have great benefits for the People's Republic of China. First and foremost, it would confer legitimacy to China's presence on the Tibetan plateau, essential for the status and stability of the People's Republic of China as a modern country composed of multiple nationalities willingly joined in a single family.

"In the case of Tibet, for instance, it has now been more than seventy years since Communist China's invasion in 1950. Despite the physical control of the country, through brutal force as well as economic inducements, the Tibetan people's resentment, persistent resistance in various forms, and moments of significant uprising have never gone away. Even though generations and economic conditions have changed, very little has changed when it comes to the Tibetan people's perception and attitude toward those they still view as occupiers. The simple fact is that insofar as the Tibetans on the ground are concerned, the Communist Chinese rule in Tibet remains that of a foreign, unwanted, and oppressive occupying power. The Tibetan people have lost so much. Their homeland has been forcibly invaded and remains under a suffocating rule. The Tibetan language, culture, and religion are under systematic attack through coercive policies of assimilation. Even the very expression of Tibetaness is increasingly being perceived as a threat "to the unity of the motherland." The only leverage the Tibetan people have left is the moral rightness of their cause and the power of truth. The simple fact is Tibet today remains an occupied territory, and it is only the

Tibetan people who can confer or deny legitimacy to the presence of China on the Tibetan plateau."

In the chapter of what gives me hope, His Holiness the Dalai Lama wrote, "Although to date there has been no meaningful breakthrough with the Beijing government, what gives me hope is that the relationship between the two peoples—Tibetans and Chinese—has not been irreparably damaged. As more and more ordinary Chinese come to understand the issue of Tibet, they are coming to understand and sympathize with our just struggle."

In the final chapter, His Holiness the Dalai Lama appeals to the Tibetans, the Indian government and Indians, the Chinese, and the nations and peoples of the world. His Holiness wrote, "To my fellow Tibetans: Never lose hope, however dark the sky may become. As our saying goes, 'If you fall nine times, you get up nine times.' Always remember that a bright sun awaits behind the clouds. We are an ancient people with a long history of resilience. For millennia we tsampa eaters have been the custodians of the expansive Tibetan plateau known as the 'roof of the world.' Throughout our history of more than two millennia, we have navigated through all sorts of ups and downs, always sure of our identity as a people with our distinct language, culture, and religion, and the core values that define us. Today's dark period of Communist Chinese occupation may seem endless, but in our long history, it is but a brief nightmare. As our Buddhist faith teaches us, nothing is immune to the law of impermanence. What we need is patience, unflagging determination, unity, and courage rooted in the clarity of our goal.

"To the great nation of India and our Indian dharma brothers and sisters: You have been my host and my home since 1959. I have spent more of my life in India than in my own homeland of Tibet. I will never forget the amazing and long generosity you have offered to me and my people in exile. The fact that India gave us a new home, a base, is what enabled us, more than anything else, to reestablish our civilization in exile and to keep the torch of justice for Tibet alight for so many decades. We Tibetans have always looked to India as the source and teacher of wisdom, knowledge, and spirituality in our Buddhist tradition that was received from you many centuries ago. Throughout our long religious and cultural history, India (arya-bhumi, 'the land of the noble ones') has been our guru, and we Tibetans the chela (student). I thank you for your unflagging support of me and my people, and I request of you to continue to extend the same as long as we need it.

"To Chinese brothers and sisters: I appeal to you to open your hearts to the ongoing plight of the people of Tibet. The Chinese and Tibetan peoples share a common spiritual heritage in Mahayana Buddhism, and cherish compassion for all suffering beings. I

assure you that through the long history of my struggle on behalf of the Tibetan people, I have never harbored enmity against the people of China. I have always urged Tibetans not to give in to hatred due to the injustices inflicted by a cruel government in the name of the Chinese people. I ask you to be vigilant against any attempts to promote racial hatred against the Tibetans, through state propaganda aimed at splitting the long history of good feeling, neighborliness, and friendship between our peoples. I appeal to you to make efforts to understand that the Tibetan struggle for freedom is not only just; it is also not anti-Chinese. Help us find a peaceful, lasting solution to the issue of Tibet through dialogue in the spirit of understanding and accommodation. Over the years, many Chinese scholars and intellectuals have spoken out. I believe many Chinese who know the truth about Tibet, its culture, and its people will come out when they are able to express their true feelings without fear of reprisals. Protecting Tibet is a matter important also to the very heart of China itself. I want to share with you that for me, like for so many across the world, one sad thing is that the amazing economic liberalization of China was not matched with progress in respect for human rights and democratic freedom for your people.

"To the nations and peoples of the world, especially those who have stood in solidarity with the Tibetan people: Your expressions of concern and support, as well as the attention of the international media on Tibet, continue to encourage us and give us comfort. I thank you and ask you not to forget Tibet at this critical and challenging time in our people's long history."

Session of Tibetan Parliament begins with debate on CTA's budget, amid funding cuts from US

17 March 2025, [The Tibet Post](#), Yangchen Dolma

The budget session of the 17th Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile for the fiscal year 2025-2026 commenced on Monday in Dharamshala. Members of Tibetan Parliament and Ministers of Cabinet began to discussing the 2025-2026 budget of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), in a context of reduced funding from the United States.

The ninth session ((budget session)) of the 17th Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile (TPIE) is scheduled to be held for 13 days from March 17 to 31, 2025, at the Parliament hall of TPIE, Gangkyi, Dharamshala, H.P, India. The Speaker of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile, Khenpo Sonam Tenphel, presided over the meeting, while the Deputy Speaker, Dolma Tsering, members of the 17th Parliament and the Sikyong (President) Penpa Tsering and the Kalons (Minister) of the 16th Kashag attended the session.

In his opening speech, Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel spoke on the deteriorating situation in Tibet, particularly highlighting the Chinese restrictions on Tibetan students on March 10, 2025, Tibetan National Uprising Day. He also noted the release of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's latest book, Voice for the Voiceless, on March 11, 2025, which received widespread coverage from major global media outlets. The book also featured His Holiness's statement that his reincarnation will be born outside of China, a declaration to which China responded with criticism. Reiterating that reincarnation is a deeply religious process and cannot be manipulated as a political tool by China, the Speaker quoted a passage from the book: "To my fellow Tibetans: Never lose hope, however dark the sky may become. As our saying goes, 'If you fall nine times, you get up nine.' Always remember that a bright sun awaits behind the clouds." He urged everyone to "Never Give Up!"

The house continued with official obituary references to former Indian Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh, former American President Jimmy Carter alias James Earl Carter Jr, former Chief Justice Commissioner and former Deputy Speaker Jadur Sonam Sangpo, former Kalon Trisur (prime minister) Gyalo Thondup, former Kalon (minister) Shewo Lobsang Dhargyal, former parliamentarian Choeje Ayang Tulku Rinpoche, former parliamentarian Khortsa Sonam Damdul, and former parliamentarian Kyunglung Thokmey.

Sikyong Penpa Tsering, the incumbent Finance Kalon of the CTA, presented the 2025-2026 Budget of the Central Tibetan Administration, proposing an amount of Rs. 3675.30 million. This followed by Parliamentarian Geshe Lharampa Atuk Tseten, the Chairman of the Budget Estimate Committee of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile, presenting the Précis report of the Committee.

The motion for debate on the Central Tibetan Administration's 2025-2026 Budget was tabled by Parliamentarian Geshe Atong Rinchen Gyaltsen and supported by Parliamentarian Tenzin Jigdal. The debate on the budget began.

Thereafter, Parliamentarian Geshe Atong Rinchen Gyaltsen, Chair of the 12th Public Accounts Committee (PAC), presented the report of the committee.

At 3pm, the first day of the budget session was adjourned until 9.30am tomorrow. The debate on the Finance Minister's statement and the report on the 2025-2026 budget by the Budget Estimate Committee of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile will continue tomorrow morning, and the Finance Minister and Budget Estimate Committee will answer questions from members of the Tibetan Parliament.

Deputy Speaker Dolma Tsering Teykhang Speaks at 42nd Anniversary of U-Tsang Cholkha Association

17 March 2025, [CTA](#)

The 42nd anniversary of the U-Tsang Cholkha Association was commemorated on 16 March 2025, at the U-Tsang Cholkha Hall in McLeod Ganj. The event was honoured by esteemed guests, including Chief Guest and former Tibetan political prisoner Tsedrung Jampa Tenzin, as well as Special Guest Deputy Speaker Dolma Tsering Teykhang. Also in attendance were MP Dawa Tsering (President of the U-Tsang Cholkha Association), Parliamentarians from U-Tsang such as MP Dawa Phunkyi and MP Tsering Yangchen, representatives from Tibetan NGOs, and members of the general public, all gathered to mark the occasion. Addressing the gathering, the Deputy Speaker emphasised the political significance of the three provinces of Tibet and the importance of ensuring equal representation of these provinces in the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile while reminding the audience of China's integration of several Tibetan areas from the Kham and Amdo provinces into Chinese provinces. Additionally, she underscored the relevance and importance of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), urging the audience to align their efforts with the CTA.

Highlighting the importance of Tibetan culture, language, and religion, the Deputy Speaker urged the Tibetan people, especially the younger generation, to preserve and protect Tibet's unique cultural heritage. She also shed light on China's coercion of Tibetan children into colonial boarding schools as part of its efforts to Sinicise Tibet. Speaking on the significance of Tibetan voluntary contributions, she encouraged Tibetans to reduce their dependence on the CTA by striving for self-sufficiency and independence. Furthermore, she emphasised the importance of supporting the CTA in nurturing young Tibetans in various fields of expertise with public contribution.

The Deputy Speaker also commended U-Tsang Cholkha for its valuable contributions to society, including providing financial assistance to elderly individuals and former political prisoners, as well as organising Buddhist classes. She further advised the association to extend support to scholars working in the fields of Tibetan culture and language preservation.

Concluding her address, the Deputy Speaker highlighted the current situation in Tibet, explaining how China is strategically replacing the name 'Tibet' with the term 'Xizang' in its efforts to Sinicise the region. She also discussed the influx of large numbers of Chinese tourists into Tibet, a phenomenon known as 'red tourism,' and its negative impact on the daily lives of Tibetans. Furthermore, she pointed out the suppression of Tibetan cultural and religious practices,

and the efforts to undermine Tibetan identity through state-controlled education and media. She emphasised that these actions are part of China's broader campaign to erode Tibet's unique heritage and autonomy.

-Report filed by Tibetan Parliamentary Secretariat

Rights groups stage protest against China's proposed "mega-embassy" in London

16 March 2025, [ANI](#)

Hong Kong rights groups, along with several Tibetans, Uyghurs, and local residents, gathered at the historic former Royal Mint Court in London to protest China's plan for a 'mega-embassy.' They expressed concerns that Beijing might use the facility to intimidate and surveil dissidents living overseas, Radio Free Asia(RFA) reported. This marks the second mega protest in five weeks at the location near the Tower of London, with organizers estimating around 6,000 participants. The rally ended peacefully with no arrests. The Chinese government bought the historic building with plans to develop what would be Beijing's largest diplomatic facility worldwide.

An architect involved in the project disclosed details regarding the construction of the embassy, which includes a tunnel linking two of the former Royal Mint buildings, basement spaces, and accommodation for hundreds of staff. Protesters have placed signs at the proposed site of the Chinese "mega-embassy" featuring UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer and Chinese President Xi Jinping depicted as Winnie the Pooh. Earlier, a similar protest took place in London against China's planned "mega-embassy" at the former Royal Mint Court, RFA reported. In 2018, the Chinese government acquired the historic site with plans to build an embassy that would be ten times larger than a typical one. The development would also feature cultural exchange centers and 225 residential units.

The persecution of human rights defenders in China involves severe human rights violations, such as mass detentions in "re-education camps," forced labour, and intense surveillance. The Chinese government has been accused of religious repression, cultural destruction, and forced assimilation, which include restrictions on the language, religion, and cultural practices of minorities. Reports highlight family separations, forced indoctrination, and the destruction of minority heritage sites. International organizations have condemned these actions as genocide and crimes against humanity, but China rejects these allegations, claiming they are false and part of efforts to combat

extremism. The issue remains a major global human rights concern.

Nechung Oracle urges patience amid US aid cut to Tibetans and CTA

16 March 2025, [Phayul](#), Tenzin Nyidon



President Penpa Tsering of the CTA pays obeisance to state oracle Nechung in July 2022 (Photo/tibet.net)

The Chief State Oracle of Tibet, Nechung has issued a prophetic message to the President of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), Penpa Tsering, advising patience regarding the aid and funding from external parties. Delivered on the 10th day of the first Tibetan lunar month (Tse-chu), the prophecy emphasized that clarity will gradually emerge if patience is maintained. In an official announcement released by the CTA, the oracle's message stated, "The political leader of the Land of Snow should keep the nectar of teachings from my master, the venerable Tongwa Donden, in their heart and, without losing patience in any undertaking, strive toward the fundamental cause. Regarding external funding for the Central Tibetan Administration, be patient for a while, and gradually clarity will emerge. Have no doubts."

To support this process, the oracle prescribed several ritual practices, including the offering of three golden ritual items, the recitation of the Vajra Claw Sutra, fulfillment offerings to the Goddess of Desire Realm, a thousand recitations of confession, the Golden Light Drum Sound, the consecration of white statues at stupas in the four cardinal directions, and supplication prayers to Urgyen of the Four Elements Goddess. The prophecy further urged efforts to dispel darkness in all directions, with an assurance of divine support.

This prophecy follows the announcement of a major funding cut by the new U.S. administration under President Donald Trump, which has suspended all USAID funding to Tibetan refugees and the CTA. However, the U.S. State Department has retained a \$2 million allocation for population, refugee, and migration-related programs (PRM).

CTA President Penpa Tsering publicly disclosed the aid termination at a gathering in Bylakuppe Tibetan Settlement on the second day of Losar (Tibetan New Year), stating that the U.S. government had formally notified the CTA of the decision on March 27. The U.S. administration has justified the move by emphasizing that its foreign aid policies must align with American interests.

In response, President Tsering reaffirmed that U.S. support for Tibet aligns with its strategic interests. During a recent Tibetan New Year celebration at the U.S. State Department, an official representative acknowledged that backing the Tibetan cause is in the United States' national interest.

Diplomatic efforts to address the situation are ongoing. On February 27, President Tsering sent a letter to U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Acting USAID Director Peter Marocco. Senator Rubio responded on March 10, stating that there is "no change in the U.S. government's stance on Tibet" and reaffirming "continued support for the Tibetan people's struggle for freedom and justice." Despite this, the status of U.S. aid to the CTA remains uncertain at the moment.

Tibetans In India Clash With New Delhi Police On Anniversary Of Uprising Against China

16 March 2025, [OWP](#), Reva Sathe

On March 10th, the 66th anniversary of the Tibetan uprising against China, there was a scuffle with the police in New Delhi, India. Tibetans who live in exile in India played the national anthems of Tibet and India, chanted anti-China slogans such as "Remember, Resist, Return," and attempted to enter the Chinese embassy in New Delhi. The police blocked them from entering the embassy and detained some people, as they have done in past years. Tibetans also marched in Dharamshala, the North Indian city that serves as the seat of the exiled Dalai Lama. The people want to return to an autonomous region and say that China is committing human rights violations against Tibetans. According to AP News, the president of the Tibetan government in exile, Penpa Tsering, has condemned the so-called "deliberate and dangerous strategy to eliminate the very identity of the Tibetan people... As we commemorate the Tibetan National Uprising Day, we honor our brave martyrs and express solidarity with our brothers and sisters inside Tibet who continue to languish under the oppressive Chinese government." According to the Council on Foreign Relations, some people, such as Indiana University professor Sumit Ganguly, believe third parties like India should intervene in the tensions. He says, "[i]f India is indeed a liberal democracy, it must be willing to speak out about gross Chinese human rights

violations."

China and Tibet have had a complicated relationship over the past century. After the Qing dynasty collapsed in 1913, Tibet became independent until the Chinese invasion in 1950. A few years later, in 1959, a failed uprising led to the Dalai Lama and 80,000 others fleeing to India. This upheaval was followed by a period of many atrocities during Mao's Cultural Revolution. In 1978, Deng Xiaoping attempted to reconcile with the Dalai Lama, but Tibetan nationalism led to martial law in the region for two years until 1989. After that, China adopted rigorous economic development policies and encouraged Han Chinese migration to Tibet in hopes of making the next generation of Tibetans less nationalistic. In 2008, the Dalai Lama and five hundred others met in Dharamshala, where he advocated for the "middle-way" of peaceful strides for autonomy. China claims Tibet has been part of the empire since the 13th century. Tibet claims it was an independent protectorate of the Mongols and Qings during this period, having some protection from the empire and its own government. There is also a dispute over the region's geography, with China claiming only the West and Central parts are included in Tibet, not the entire plateau. China is worried that if Tibet gets independence, Uighurs and Taiwan will want the same, seeing these regions as part of their nationalistic identity.

The best solution would be for China to grant Tibet the autonomy it seeks to prevent further cultural and political repression. The Dalai Lama and other exiles should be allowed to return to their home safely if they wish. There could be an intermediary phase, where Tibet returns to being a protectorate with its own government and decides if it wants to regain complete independence. India and other third-party states should act as mediators or forums for peace talks. Tibet and China can maintain economic ties if they mutually agree. Granting this autonomy to Tibet seems like the only way for China to take a step toward overcoming the suppression of minorities in the country.

Despite a long and complicated history, peace is still possible if China grants the people what they have been striving for. Tibetan independence would help the region avoid further conflict and human rights abuses.

'I had dreams that I would live to be 110 years or more': Dalai Lama

15 March 2025, [The Tribune](#), Lalit Mohan

Concludes teachings to celebrate Day of Miracles

The Dalai Lama, while delivering teachings at his main

temple in Mcleodganj on Saturday, said that he had dreams of living to be 110 years or more. This came after he said in his latest book that he would reincarnate outside of China.

The Dalai Lama today concluded his two-day teaching to celebrate the Day of Miracles, when Buddha performed miracles at Shravasti in response to a challenge from six rival spiritual leaders. The celebrations were attended by about 6,000 people.

The Dalai Lama said that this event is part of the Great Prayer Festival (the Mönlam Chenmo), established by Jé Tsongkhapa at the Jokhang in Lhasa in 1409. He added that after some time the celebration lapsed, but was revived during the time of Gendun Gyatso, the 2nd Dalai Lama, and has continued to be observed to this day.

The Dalai Lama shared a personal experience, saying, "On one occasion, I saw the Buddha in the centre of the space in front of me. He beckoned to me, so I approached him. He seemed very pleased with me, but I was very conscious of not having anything to give him other than a small chocolate sweet, which I offered. I feel that having dreams of the Buddha like this shows that I am sincere disciple of the Buddha. I may even be so bold as to say that I am someone who has purposely taken rebirth as a follower of the Buddha."

He further said, "We have lost our country and come to live in exile here in India and elsewhere. Here and in other parts of the world, we have encountered growing interest in the teachings of the Buddha. I have discussed what the Buddha taught with scientists, and when I talk with them, I feel, I am also a scientist. But when I talk with monks, I am aware that I am also a monk."

The Dalai Lama concluded, saying, "Avalokiteshvara is described as having 1,000 eyes, which I don't have, but I have served the Dharma to the best of my ability. I was born in the vicinity of Siling and was given the name Lhamo Dondup, which prompted the prediction that I would be discovered as a boy with a girl's name. Later, I was enthroned as the Dalai Lama. I took the exams to become a Geshé Lharampa. In exile, I have served the Buddhadharma and beings to the best of my ability, and there have been indications in my dreams that I may live to be 110 years old or more. In my remaining years, I am determined to continue to serve the Dharma and beings as best I can. I am moved by the prayer Jé Tsongkhapa wrote at the end of his 'Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment.'"

Tibetan govt-in-exile President slams China over Dalai Lama reincarnation claims, calls it 'blasphemous'

14 March 2025, [Times of India](#)

Tibetan Government-in-Exile President Penpa Tsering has strongly criticised the Chinese government's recent statement on the reincarnation of the 14th [Dalai Lama](#), calling it a "blasphemous statement." Speaking to ANI, Tsering said that the Dalai Lama himself has to decide where he is going to be reborn and to whom he is going to be reborn and added that it is not something that a government can decide, particularly the one who does not believe in any religion.

Tibetan spiritual leader Dalai Lama has said that his successor would be born in the "free world," referring to areas outside of China, as reported by Radio Free Asia (RFA).

Reacting to the Dalai Lama's comments in his new book Voice for the Voiceless, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning called the 14th Dalai Lama a "political exile engaged in separatist activities under the guise of religion" and said he has no right to represent the people in Tibet. On being asked about China's statement on Dalai Lama's comments, Penpa Tsering stated, "The communist China invaded a land that does not belong to them, then they suppressed our people and now they are saying that we should not follow our own traditions so how outrageous can you become. Not just invading a country and suppressing them, but also depriving the Tibetan people of their traditions. So, everyone knows that the system of reincarnation is very unique to Tibetan Buddhism. It is not there in other Buddhist countries also, and to believe in reincarnation, one has to believe in life after death. The Chinese government is a communist government that does not believe in any religion. So, his holiness (Dalai Lama) has always said that if the Chinese government wants to be responsible for recognising reincarnation, first they should recognise Mao Zedong's reincarnation because he is no more with us.... If the Chinese government are really serious about reincarnation, then his holiness may be the Dalai Lama's." "So, first you have to believe in these principles to practice and Chinese government's claim that they should be golden urn. The golden urn was invented by the Chinese in 1793, in the late 18th century, and it was implemented in only one or two cases. But, before 1793, there were so many Dalai Lamas, up to the seventh Dalai Lamas, 17th century, there was eighth, ninth Dalai Lama. Before that, there was no golden urn. So, the process has been there; this is very unique, and so it depends on the individual who is going to be reborn and where he or she will be reborn. So, here in this case, his holiness the Dalai Lama himself has to

decide where he is going to be reborn and to whom he is going to be reborn. It is not something that government can decide and particularly a government that does not believe in any religion so for us this is blasphemous statements coming from Chinese government," he added. He stated that the Chinese government talks about peace, negotiations and resolving conflicts through talks internationally. However, they are not doing it with Tibetans, Hong Kongers, Mongols and Uyghurs who live in China and accused Beijing of having double standards.

Stressing that the Chinese government cannot decide on the reincarnation of Dalai Lama, he said, "They are talking about peace, negotiations and resolving conflicts through dialogue and all that internationally but they are not doing it with the Tibetans, with the Uyghurs, with the Mongols, with the Hongkongers who live under China. So, they have double standards; internationally, they say something else, domestically they do something else. So, these double standards need to be removed if China wants to be taken seriously by the international community. So, unless they do away with these double standards, nobody can trust them, and particularly in the case of his holiness reincarnation, this is not something that the Chinese government can decide as far as Tibetans are concerned. We have also been preparing on our side." He said that Dalai Lama has been clear in his position that whether there should be next Dalai Lama or not will be decided by Tibetans. He recalled that the Dalai Lama, since 1969, has been saying that he will travel to Tibet but will not stay there as "there is no freedom."

Penpa Tsering said, "We know for fact that till his holiness the 14th Dalai Lama is alive, there is nothing that the Chinese government can do about this and his holiness has been very very consistent in his position that whether there should be next Dalai Lama or not will be decided by the Tibetan people. Since 1969, his holiness has been saying that, in the last many years his holiness has always said if I can go to Tibet I will go but I will not stay there because there is no freedom and I will be born in a free world and this is the wish of his holiness who is going to be reborn or whose reincarnation, his holiness has to decide and not the Chinese government."

He said that China should have learned a lesson from the Panchen Lama saga. He said that Tibetans living in Tibet do not believe in the Panchen Lama selected by China and noted that the pictures of the Chinese Panchen Lama are not sold on the streets of Tibet. Sikyong further said, "They (China) should have learned a lesson from the Panchen Lama saga; that is why I keep saying. They made a strategic mistake by not recognising the same boy that His Holiness had recognised way back in 1995. If they had done that,

then the real Panchen Lama would be in Chinese hands and then something would be seen, but they didn't do that. They didn't recognise his holiness' recognition of 11th Panchen Lama, and they appointed their own boy who is seen as another political leader by Tibetans inside Tibet. So, Tibetans inside Tibet don't believe in the Chinese select Panchen Lama."

"If you go to Lhasa today, you will not find pictures of Chinese Panchen Lama being sold on the streets or Dalai Lama's chosen child, you cannot sell his pictures but they sell pictures of the 10th Panchen Lama to show their displeasure against the Chinese government and Chinese government also tries to send Chinese Panchen Lama to Tibetan areas to show the world that Tibetans inside Tibet have respect for him," he added.

He accused the Chinese government of paying people to listen to the teachings of the Panchen Lama selected by them and stressed that this practice is more corruption than spiritual.

"As I mentioned earlier also, earlier days, when you meet a Lama you have to make an offering and do your religious practice. But, these days to receive Chinese Panchen Lama. Chinese government gives money to listen to his teachings. Chinese government gives money that is not spiritual that is more corruption. You are trying to corrupt people's minds, and the Chinese government claims to fight against corruption in China to remove all their opposition, but they are promoting corruption everywhere else in the world. So, there are lot of things that they do and say and which are not in conformity with each other," he said. In his new book, 'Voice for the Voiceless,' the Dalai Lama wrote, "Since the purpose of a reincarnation is to carry on the work of the predecessor, the new Dalai Lama will be born in the free world so that the traditional mission of the Dalai Lama--that is, to be the voice for universal compassion, the spiritual leader of Tibetan Buddhism, and the symbol of Tibet embodying the aspirations of the Tibetan people--will continue," RFA reported.

Reacting to the Dalai Lama's comments, a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson called him a "political exile engaged in separatist activities." She said that the 14th Dalai Lama himself was found and confirmed in accordance with this set of rituals and conventions and approved by the then-central government. Mao Ning said, "The reincarnation of Living Buddhas is unique to Tibetan Buddhism. It follows established religious rituals and historical conventions...The 14th Dalai Lama himself was found and confirmed in line with this set of rituals and conventions and was approved by the then central government." "The Chinese government issued Regulations on Religious Affairs and Measures on the Management of the Reincarnation of Living Buddhas, and respects and

protects this method of succession. The reincarnation of Living Buddhas, including the Dalai Lama, must comply with Chinese laws and regulations as well as religious rituals and historical conventions, and follow the process that consists of search and identification in China, lot-drawing from a golden urn, and central government approval," she added.

US aid suspension threatens Tibetan education programs, CTA seeking alternative funding

14 March 2025, [Phayul](#), Tsering Dhundup

The suspension of U.S. aid could significantly impact Tibetan education programs, but the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) is actively working to ensure continued funding, said President Penpa Tsering of the CTA during the opening ceremony of the 12th Education Council and Advisory Committee Joint Meeting on Thursday.

The meeting, held at the Kashag Conference Hall in Gangchen Kyishong, addressed the consequences of the recent decision by the new U.S. administration to cut USAID funding to Tibetan refugees and the Central Tibetan Administration. President Penpa Tsering noted that the termination of the aid could affect Tibetan schools in exile, impacting student scholarships, workshops, conferences, human resource development programs, and other initiatives. However, he assured that the CTA remains committed to finding alternative funding solutions to mitigate these challenges.

While all the aid from USAID has been suspended, the U.S. State Department has maintained a \$2 million allocation for population, refugee, and migration-related programs (PRM). The new U.S. administration has emphasised that its foreign aid policies must align with U.S. interests. Addressing this, President Penpa Tsering highlighted that US government support for Tibet is indeed related to US interests, and during a recent Tibetan New Year celebration at the US State Department, a State Department representative acknowledged in a speech that supporting the Tibet issue is connected to US interests.



Tibetan Childrens village students at Thekchen Choeling Monastery. Dharamshala (Image representational/tibet.net)

President Tsering revealed ongoing diplomatic efforts to address the situation, including a letter sent to United States Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Acting Director of USAID Peter Marocco on February 27. Senator Rubio responded on March 10, reassuring that there are "no changes in the U.S. government's stance on Tibet" and reaffirming "continued support for the Tibetan people's struggle for freedom and justice." However, President Tsering acknowledged that the aid situation remains under review.

Beyond the funding concerns, Sikyong emphasised the importance of nurturing children's talents beyond academic studies. He advocated for adopting models similar to those in Switzerland to support children with exceptional extracurricular abilities, such as handicrafts, in addition to traditional education.

The two-day joint meeting of the Tibetan Education Council and Education Advisory Committee will deliberate on nine agendas. Key discussions include countering policies implemented by the People's Republic of China that threaten Tibetan religion, culture, and language; promoting effective programs to preserve Tibetan heritage in exile; fostering Tibetan language proficiency within Tibetan communities; and enhancing Tibetan children's engagement with their language and culture, particularly for those living abroad. The integration of Tibetan folk arts and crafts into the education sector is also under review.

Tibet groups urge Miliband to stand up for climate justice in Tibet during China trip

14 March 2025, [Free Tibet](#)

UK Minister Ed Miliband is travelling to Beijing next week to discuss green energy cooperation with the Chinese government

Ahead of Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero Ed Miliband's visit to China, UK-based Tibetans and Tibet campaign groups have called on him to press Chinese officials on climate justice for Tibet.

In a joint letter, groups including Free Tibet stated that energy cooperation with China must not come at the cost of Tibet's environment, human rights, and cultural heritage. They called for a series of tangible measures to ensure that energy cooperation is tied to Tibetan rights.

Miliband's meeting is happening against a backdrop of increasing exploitation of Tibet's natural resources by the Chinese government and protests by Tibetans. In recent years, China has increased the proliferation of extraction and megadevelopment projects across the Tibetan plateau. A series of new hydropower dams are being constructed across Tibet's rivers, including the announcement in December of the Medog

hydropower station, the world's largest hydropower dam.

In February 2024, unprecedented mass protests broke out in Dege County against the Kamtok hydropower dam, which will flood villages and destroy six monasteries with 500-year-old Buddhist frescoes. The protests were met by mass arrests and prompted thirteen UN human rights experts to raise serious concerns over the destructive impact of the dam with the Chinese government and China Huadian, the state-owned energy company responsible for its construction.

Later last year, the 19th century Atosk Monastery was demolished and subsequently flooded after the construction of the world's largest 3D-printed dam on the Machu River. 160 monks were made homeless during the destruction of their monastery.

At the same time the mass displacement of millions of rural Tibetans has taken place, removing nomads and farmers from their pastures and into urbanised settlements. Environmental defenders who speak out, such as Tsongon Tsering, have been imprisoned.

Citing the Labour government's stated commitment to human rights, climate justice and responsible business conduct, the UK-based Tibetans and Tibet groups behind the letter called on Ed Miliband to "reject any cooperation or partnerships involving China Huadian or other companies involved in megadevelopment projects in occupied Tibet, and to support the call by the Tibetan people for an immediate moratorium on environmentally damaging projects in Tibet."

UK-based global think tank awards its 2025 visionary governance award to HH the Dalai Lama

14 March 2025, [Tibetan Review](#)

Gold Mercury International, a UK-based global Governance Think Tank Envisioning the Sustainable Future of People and Planet, has decided to award its Gold Mercury Award 2025 to His Holiness the Dalai Lama for Advancing a Global Culture of Peace, Compassion and Sustainability in an Era of Great Conflict and Uncertainty. Gold Mercury is a globally recognised, independent international organisation dedicated to advancing Visionary Governance for our planet.

The 2025 award marks a historic year for the spiritual leader of Tibetan Buddhism, as His Holiness the Dalai Lama celebrates his 90th birthday, honouring a life devoted to peace, non-violence and compassion, said the Think Tank in a press statement announcing the award.

The award ceremony will be held in Dharamshala, the exile home of the Dalai Lama since May 1960 in the Indian state of Himachal Pradesh on Mar 31, 2025. It

will honour His Holiness in a momentous celebration of his life and legacy, the statement said.

The statement further said: "Rooted in Buddhist philosophy, His Holiness has always emphasised reverence for all living beings and the deep interdependence between humanity and nature. His philosophy of peace is based on the idea of universal responsibility, where each individual has a duty to foster harmony, not just among people and nations but also between humanity and the natural world.

"His philosophy of peace and compassion are rooted in the principle of Universal Responsibility, as reflected in his Four Main Commitments in life: promoting human values, fostering religious harmony, preserving Tibet's spiritual heritage and environment, and advancing ancient wisdom culture in education."

Nicolas De Santis Cuadra, President, Gold Mercury International, has said: "His Holiness, the 14th Dalai Lama's profound Buddhist commitment to non-violence, compassion, a culture of wisdom, and the environment has transformed our global consciousness. In this milestone year of his 90th birthday, we recognise his extraordinary efforts to contribute to earth creating a planetary culture of peace, non-violence, and environmental responsibility. His message of peace, compassion, human dignity, and environmental stewardship is more vital than ever in guiding humanity towards a sustainable future."

The award announcement referred to the Dalai Lama's contributions in a wide range of fields that included championing of peace and reconciliation, promotion of interfaith dialogue, advocacy for human rights and justice, environmental stewardship in the context of the critical importance of the Tibetan Plateau for global sustainability, innovation in wisdom culture and ethical education and learning, stewarding a pathway to healing and being a messenger of hope to our world, and establishing a legacy of global leadership in peace and compassion for others.

The Think Tank said that the award for the 14th Dalai Lama reaffirms Gold Mercury International's commitment to promoting a planetary culture of peace and sustainability, in alignment with its vision of a more ethical, responsible, and forward-thinking global society.

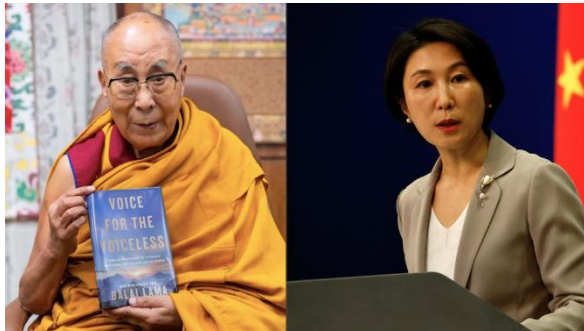
Established in 1961, the Gold Mercury Awards are one of the most historic and established global recognitions for Visionary Governance and Ethical Leadership. The Gold Mercury Awards are presented to heads of state, global CEOs, individuals, companies and organisations that demonstrate vision and foresight in eight critical areas of global governance.

Past winners have included US Presidents Ronald Reagan and Gerald Ford for their diplomatic efforts on nuclear disarmament, President Anwar Sadat of Egypt,

Prof Robert Gallo for discovering HIV as the cause of AIDS, and organisations like UNICEF and the Red Cross.

China rejects Dalai Lama's claim on successor being born outside China

14 March 2025, [Phayul](#), Tenzin Nyidon



His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Mao Ning

The Chinese government on Tuesday strongly refuted the exiled spiritual leader His Holiness the Dalai Lama's assertion that his reincarnation will be born outside China, reaffirming its stance once again that the process of selecting the next Dalai Lama must adhere to Beijing's laws and directives.

In his newly released book, *Voice for the Voiceless: Over Seven Decades of Struggle With China for My Land and My People*, the 89-year-old Tibetan spiritual leader stated unequivocally that his successor will be born in a "free world" to continue his work, rejecting China's long-standing claim of authority over Tibetan Buddhist reincarnation, particularly that of the Dalai Lama.

In response, Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Mao Ning at a press briefing said that Dalai Lama is a "political exile engaged in separatist activities under the guise of religion. He is a splittist. The 14th Dalai Lama has no right to represent the Tibetan."

Ning further stressed that the Dalai Lama's lineage, status, and title have been determined by the government in China for "hundreds of years," asserting that Beijing will choose his successor when the time comes. "The reincarnations of living Buddhas, including the Dalai Lama, should abide by national laws and regulations, follow religious rituals... (and be subject to) the approval of the central government," she stated.

The octogenarian leader, in his new book, stated that "Since the purpose of a reincarnation is to carry on the work of the predecessor, the new Dalai Lama will be born in the free world so that the traditional mission of the Dalai Lama — that is, to be the voice for universal compassion, the spiritual leader of Tibetan Buddhism, and the symbol of Tibet embodying the aspirations of the Tibetan people — will continue."

The Dalai Lama further wrote, "Unless the recognition of the next Dalai Lama is done through traditional Tibetan Buddhist methods, no acceptance should be given by the Tibetan people or Tibetan Buddhists across the world to a candidate chosen for political purposes by anyone, including those in the People's Republic of China."

China has consistently insisted that the reincarnation of Tibetan spiritual figures must be sanctioned by the Communist Party. In 2007, Beijing enacted *State Religious Affairs Bureau Order No. 5*, which stipulates that all reincarnations of Tibetan Buddhist lamas must receive government approval, effectively giving the Party control over the selection process. The policy has been widely condemned by the exile Tibetan government known officially as the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) as an attempt to co-opt Tibetan religious traditions for political ends.

Tibetan political leader President Penpa Tsering has strongly criticized Beijing's stance on reincarnation, stating, "The Chinese government is not bothered by the living 14th Dalai Lama, but they are more concerned about the yet-to-come 15th Dalai Lama." His administration, the 16th Kashag (Cabinet), reaffirmed Tibet's position on the matter by releasing an official statement titled *Position on the Issue of Reincarnation of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama* on September 29, 2022. The Position Paper directly counters China's so-called *Management Measures for the Reincarnation of Living Buddhas in Tibetan Buddhism*, or Order No. 5, reinforcing the Tibetan people's right to determine the issue of reincarnation of His Holiness the Dalai Lama without external interference.

Thousands rally in Hague to mark Tibetan National Uprising Day

13 March 2025, [ANI](#)

Over 3,000 Tibetans and supporters from across Europe gathered in The Hague to mark the 66th Tibetan National Uprising Day at the Fifth Edition of the 'Europe Stands With Tibet Rally,' as reported by the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), showing their unwavering commitment to the Tibetan struggle for freedom against China. The rally, held in the heart of Europe, brought together a coalition of passionate voices, including prominent political figures, international celebrities, and human rights advocates. According to CTA, the event was headlined by Kelsang Gyaltsen, former envoy to the Dalai Lama, who delivered a powerful keynote address. Gyaltsen spoke candidly about China's growing influence on European security, describing the country as a "threat to peace and security in Europe."

"There is no hope of China becoming a responsible stakeholder in the international community unless there are major fundamental changes in China. This is our political imperative," Gyaltsen said, stressing the need for Europe to ally with Tibetans, Uyghurs, Chinese democracy activists, and other marginalized groups from China. He continued, "This imperative creates a conducive basis for strategic discussions and cooperation on China, accepting us as stakeholders in this common cause."

The rally's participants also heard from a diverse group of influential figures, including Richard Gere, a long-time friend and supporter of the Dalai Lama. The Hollywood actor shared an impassioned address condemning China's human rights abuses in Tibet and urging world leaders to hold the Chinese government accountable for its actions, as reported by CTA.

"I stand with Tibet and its people," Gere declared. "This is about justice; this is about the dignity of a people who have suffered under China's oppression. We cannot remain silent while China continues to violate the rights of Tibetans." Enes Kanter Freedom, a former NBA player and outspoken advocate for Tibet, joined the rally. Kanter reiterated his commitment to the Tibetan cause, calling on the global community to unite and apply pressure on China to end its abuses, CTA reported. "Tibet's struggle is not just a Tibetan issue; it's a human rights issue," Kanter Freedom said. "It's time for the world to stand up for Tibet, just as we stand for any oppressed community around the globe." Dutch lawmakers, including Jan Paternotte and Isa Kahraman, also addressed the crowd, strongly condemning China's policies in Tibet and voicing their support for the Tibetan people. Paternotte emphasized the importance of diplomatic pressure on China, while Kahraman promised continued solidarity with the Tibetan cause, CTA reported. In addition to political figures, the rally also featured former Dutch MP Erica Terpstra, Tibetan activist and community organizer Chime Lhamo, and President of the International Campaign for Tibet Tenchoe Gyatso. Their collective presence highlighted the growing international support for Tibet's struggle and underscored the need for continued activism, as cited by CTA.

The event in The Hague marked a significant moment in the global campaign for Tibetan rights and freedom. With the participation of over 3,000 people, it served as a reminder that the Tibetan cause remains a priority for the international community, as Tibetans continue to demand their right to freedom, autonomy, and human dignity.

Dalai Lama sheds light on decades of efforts to save Tibet in new book

13 March 2025, [ICT](#)

"The right of the Tibetan people to be the custodians of their own homeland cannot be indefinitely denied, nor can their aspiration for freedom be crushed forever through oppression."

These are the Dalai Lama's words as he reflects on his lifelong work to save Tibet's unique civilization. The Dalai Lama, who turns 90 in July, has pursued this goal ever since he was a young monk meeting with Mao Zedong, and he says that this struggle will continue beyond his lifetime – if necessary.

"Voice for the Voiceless," the Dalai Lama's new book, was released on March 11, 2025. It presents an inside look at the efforts Tibetans have made to pursue the Middle Way Approach, which calls for a negotiated solution to China's occupation of their historically-independent country. It also lays out how important international support has been for champions of the Tibetan cause and shows how the United States Congress has played a pivotal role in pushing China to resume dialogue.

The Dalai Lama also writes about the plan for his succession in the clearest terms yet, illustrating the geopolitical importance of Tibet. A Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson reacted to the release of the book with numerous false and misleading statements on the history of Tibet and the institution of the Dalai Lama.

Decades of efforts

Since 1950, the Dalai Lama writes, "I have carried the duty of protecting Tibet and its people as well as our culture at the center of my heart and will do so as long as I am alive."

Initially this meant interceding with occupying Chinese authorities on behalf of the Tibetan people and then fleeing the country when this arrangement became untenable. In the following decades it has involved varying levels of contact with successive Chinese leaders, including ten rounds of dialogue between 2002 and 2010 that form the most recent period of intense engagement between China and representatives of the Tibetan people.

Last year Penpa Tsering, the Sikyong (President) of the Central Tibetan Administration, confirmed that back-channel talks with China are ongoing.

International support

Saying that Tibetans are fortunate to have friends around the world standing in solidarity with them, the Dalai Lama specifically mentions several important pieces of legislation such as the Tibetan Policy Act and the Tibetan Policy and Support Act. He also refers to resolutions passed by the United Nations and the European Parliament.

The United States Congress has maintained longstanding bipartisan support for Tibet, most recently expressed in the 2024 passage of the Resolve Tibet Act. This act – now the law of the United States – supports the resumption of dialogue between China and the Tibetans and empowers the State Department to combat Chinese disinformation on Tibet. It advanced through Congress through a series of overwhelming bipartisan votes, including unanimous approval from the Senate.

Future of the Dalai Lama lineage

The Dalai Lama says that people inside and outside of Tibet, “as well as Tibetan Buddhist communities from the Himalayan region and Mongolia,” have petitioned him to request that his lineage should continue.

Asserting that the Chinese Communists have no authority to “meddle,” the Dalai Lama states that “since the purpose of a reincarnation is to carry on the work of the predecessor, the new Dalai Lama will be born in the free world so that the traditional mission of the Dalai Lama – that is, to be the voice of universal compassion, the spiritual leader of Tibetan Buddhism, and the symbol of Tibet embodying the aspirations of the Tibetan people – will continue.”

He also warns against accepting any candidate for his successor chosen for political ends, “including those in the People’s Republic of China.” China has repeatedly claimed the right to select the next Dalai Lama in a brazen assault against the religious freedom of Tibetan Buddhists in Tibet and across the globe.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson’s statement on the Dalai Lama’s reincarnation echoes the CCP’s duplicitous propaganda on Tibet and is precisely the sort of disinformation that the State Department now has an explicit mandate to counteract thanks to the Resolve Tibet Act.

The book concludes with advice to the Tibetans not to lose hope and an appeal to the international community “not to forget Tibet at this critical and challenging time in our people’s long history.”

Voice for the Voiceless

Voice for the Voiceless follows other books by the Dalai Lama exploring the political situation in Tibet and the struggle of the Tibetan people for human rights and democratic freedoms such as Freedom in Exile. It was published by HarperCollins and is available now in the United States, with subsequent publication already planned in Australia, Canada, Germany, Italy, France, Holland, Brazil, and Spain.

Tibetans and Supporters in North America Commemorate the 66th Anniversary of Tibetan National Uprising Day

13 March 2025, [CTA](#)

10 March 2025 marks the 66th anniversary of the 1959 uprising in Lhasa, the capital of Tibet, when a large gathering of people from all three traditional provinces of Tibet staged a mass uprising against the oppressive Chinese Communist regime. It is also an important day to commemorate the Tibetan heroes and heroines who sacrificed their lives for the Tibetan nation and people. Every year, Tibetans in exile around the world commemorate 10 March as Tibetan National Uprising Day by holding various events and activities. Similarly, the 66th anniversary of the 10 March uprising was also commemorated across North America.

In North America, commemorations and events are typically held on weekends to coincide with holidays. However, since the 10 March anniversary holds significant political importance, it is observed on the actual date, 10 March. Even though many Tibetans are working on this day, they take time off to participate in the commemoration.

In North America, there are more than 30 Tibetan associations of varying sizes. On 10 March, most local Tibetan associations took responsibility for organising events, while in some locations, Tibetan associations collaborated with non-governmental organisations to jointly commemorate the 66th anniversary of the 10 March uprising in Lhasa. Tibetans organised protests against the brutal repression policies that the Chinese Communist government has implemented and continues to enforce in Tibet.

Tibetans held protest rallies and demonstrations; local officials and Tibetan supporters delivered speeches about the significance of 10 March in Tibet’s history. The Tibetan flag was hoisted in front of state, city, and other official buildings as a symbol of solidarity. Speeches focused on the events of the Tibetan National Uprising Day and Tibet’s historical status as a fully independent nation. Official statements were issued by the Kashag and the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile were read aloud. The national anthem of Tibet was played, followed by prayers for truth and for the long life of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Protest marches took place, with participants carrying Tibetan flags, banners, and posters displaying various slogans. Additionally, settlement offices issued proclamations to observe 10 March, commemorating Tibetan National Uprising Day.

Representative, Dr. Namgyal Choedup of the Office of Tibet, Washington DC, traveled specifically to New York to participate in the 66th Tibetan National Uprising Day commemoration in front of the United Nations headquarters. At the ceremony, he delivered

a speech in both Tibetan and English and read a statement from the Kashag. The President of the Tibetan Association also delivered an official statement from the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile. Similarly, the President of the Tibetan Youth Congress, former political prisoner Tawu Lobsang Jinpa, New York City Council member Julie Won, and Tibetan supporter Ganden Thurman gave speeches in support of Tibet and the Tibetan people.

These events were covered by in local news, television, online and newspapers.

-Report filed by Office of Tibet, Washington DC

Parliamentarian Tenzin Jigdal Attends the Inaugural Ceremony of the Dokham Chushi Gangdrug Board of Directors Meeting

13 March 2025, [CTA](#)

The inaugural event of the 52nd meeting of the Board of Directors of the Central Dokham Chushi Gangdrug was held in Delhi on 12 March 2025, with Parliamentarian Tenzin Jigdal of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile serving as the Chief Guest.

MP Tenzin Jigdal, representing the Standing Committee of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile, officially launched the book *'Four Rivers, Six Ranges,'* a historical account of Andruk Gonpo Tashi – Commander of Chushi Gangdrug.

The event was attended by other parliamentarians of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile, executive members, and members of Dokham Chushi Gangdrug.

As the day coincided with Tibetan Women's Uprising Day, MP Jigdal, addressing the meeting, paid homage to the patriotic Tibetans (males and females). He expressed deep respect and appreciation for the unwavering courage of Tibetans living in Tibet.

He emphasised the significance of Chushi Gangdruk, an organisation founded out of necessity and with great purpose. He particularly highlighted its historical role as a military force that resisted the Chinese Communist government during Tibet's occupation.

Speaking on the importance of historical awareness for a nation's development and prosperity, the MP stressed that Dhokham Chushi Gangdruk's defiance of the Chinese government, marked by the sacrifices of countless individuals for Tibet and its people, remains a crucial chapter in the Tibetan struggle. He underscored the need for this history to be acknowledged and widely educated among the public. Highlighting the importance of national identity and patriotism in a nation's struggle to endure, the MP emphasised the need to cultivate these values and instil a deep awareness of the nation's history in children, both at home and in schools.

"Given that the history of the Chushi Gangdrug is closely tied to the Tibetan people's struggle and

represents a crucial chapter in our national identity and patriotism, it is essential to incorporate it into school curricula. Moreover, it is equally important to continue presenting this history through illustrated books and exhibitions. The stronger the preservation of Tibetan ethnic identity, the more resilient the Tibetan nation's struggle will be."

MP Jigdal also praised various initiatives of Dokham Chushi Gangdrug, including the Andruk Gonpo Tashi Award, which recognises Tibetan students in exile who excel in Tibetan language examinations after completing the twelfth grade. He also commended the organisation's efforts in awarding scholarships to many Tibetan students, contributing to the preservation of the Tibetan language and culture and the revitalisation of what has been lost.

Furthermore, he acknowledged their social service work, particularly their dedication to caring for the elderly by providing stipends, healthcare, and essential facilities for the older generation. On behalf of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile, he expressed appreciation for these efforts.

Finally, he prayed for the long life of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and extended his best wishes for the successful 52nd meeting of the Board of Directors.

-Report filed by Tibetan Parliamentary Secretariat

Joined by Chinese, other supporters, Tibetans rally across Europe on their 66th uprising day

13 March 2025, [Tibetan Review](#)

Apart from Tibetans from across Europe and foreign political leaders and prominent public figures, more than a hundred Chinese people took part in the Fifth edition of the annual "Europe Stands With Tibet Rally" held to commemorate the 66th Tibetan National Uprising Day in the Dutch city of Haque. Tibetans and supporters have also held rallies in front of Chinese embassies in other cities in Europe.

More than 3,000 people, including some 100 Chinese people, took part in the Hague demonstration which was organised by the Tibetan community of the Netherlands with support from other Tibetan communities in Europe, the Tibet Support Group Netherlands, the International Campaign for Tibet (ICT)-Europe, Students for a Free Tibet and Voluntary Tibet Advocacy Group, said the Bureau du Tibet, Brussels, in a *Tibet.net* report Mar 12.

Those who addressed the gathering included the chief guest Mr Kelsang Gyaltzen, Former Envoy of His Holiness the Dalai Lama & Special Representative to Europe, as well as Hollywood star Richard Gere, former NBA basketball player Enes Kanter Freedom, Dutch Members of Parliament (MP) Jan Paternotte and Isa Kahraman, and former Dutch MP Erica Terpstra.

The participants undertook a 6-km rally which started from the iconic Gorbachev and Kennedy places and passed through the Chinese Embassy, the report said. Apart from the more than 100 Chinese people who joined the protest rally in the Hague, marking the largest Chinese participation since the event's inception, more 30 Chinese individuals also marched in solidarity with Tibet's freedom movement in a protest rally in Zurich, Switzerland, said the Tibet Bureau Geneva in a *Tibet.net* report Mar 11.

Also, Tibetans and the supporters in various central and eastern European countries, including Switzerland, Liechtenstein, the Czech Republic, Austria, Germany, and Italy commemorated the 66th Tibetan national Uprising Day, said the Office of Tibet, Geneva, in a *Tibet.net* report Mar 11.



Fifth edition of the annual "Europe Stands With Tibet Rally" held to commemorate the 66th Tibetan National Uprising Day in the Dutch city of Hague. (Photo courtesy: Lungta Belgium)

Also in Europe, protests were held in front of the Chinese Embassies in London, Copenhagen, Stockholm, Oslo and Vilnius, while an interfaith prayer ceremony was held in Glasgow, Scotland, for the occasion, said the Office of Tibet, London, in a *Tibet.net* report Mar 12.

A Tibetan National Flag Raising event was held at the Town Hall of the Royal Borough of Greenwich, London. An Office of Tibet event held in Indian YMCA was joined by Chris Law, MP and Co-Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Tibet in the UK Parliament, and Tim Loughton, former MP and former Co-Chair of the APPG Tibet.

Protest was also held earlier in the day at Whitehall, opposite 10 Downing Street, the official residence of the UK's Prime Minister, addressed by, among others, Norman Baker, former Minister and Member of Parliament; Luke de Pulford, Executive Director, Inter-Parliamentary Alliance on China; and Mandie McKeown, Executive Director, International Tibet Network.

The 200-strong crowd then marched to the Chinese Embassy in Portland Place, where Uyghur, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Southern Mongolian representatives also spoke to express solidarity with the Tibetan people, the report said.

in Glasgow, Tibet Solidarity, working with the Cross-Party Group for Tibet in the Scottish Parliament, organised an interfaith prayer ceremony at the Peace Cairn. Ross Greer, MSP and Chair of the CPGT, gave a short address at the ceremony and laid the first flowers at the cairn, the report said.

The commemoration in Berlin, Germany, held in front of the Chinese embassy, was addressed by Michael Brand, a member of German Parliament, said the Office of Tibet, Geneva, in a *Tibet.net* report Mar 11.

In Kasterlee, a picturesque town in the Belgian province of Antwerp, Mayor Ward Kennes organized a ceremony to hoist the Tibetan national flag in front of the town hall, a continuing annual event since 2010, said the Office of Tibet, Brussels, in a *Tibet.net* report Mar 11.

Meanwhile, in the USA, Former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi; Congressmen Jim McGovern, Chris Smith, and Raja Krishnamoorthi have issued statements, condemning China's ongoing repression in Tibet and expressing solidarity with the Tibetan people in their struggle for human rights and freedom.

66th Tibetan National Uprising Day Commemorated in the UK, Scandinavia and Lithuania

12 March 2025, [CTA](#)

Tibetans and supporters commemorated the 66th Anniversary of the Tibetan National Uprising Day across Northern Europe with protests in front of the Chinese Embassies in London, Copenhagen, Stockholm, Oslo and Vilnius; and an interfaith prayer ceremony in Glasgow, Scotland.

In London, the day began with the annual Tibetan National Flag Raising event at the Town Hall of the Royal Borough of Greenwich. The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Linda Bird, and Representative Tsering Yangkey jointly raised the Tibetan national flag in the presence of Deputy Leader Councillor Averil Lekau, Councillor David Gardner, local Tibetans and friends of Tibet. The flag-raising was accompanied by Tibetans singing the Tibetan national anthem and commemorative songs. Gathering inside the Mayor's office following the flag-raising, Councillor Bird expressed her admiration for the resilience of the Tibetan community and the rich Tibetan culture. Representative Yangkey thanked the Royal Borough for raising the Tibetan flag to commemorate Tibetan National Uprising Day annually since 2015. She urged the Mayor and the Councillors to consider an official Motion, Resolution or Statement declaring the upcoming 90th Birthday of His Holiness the Dalai Lama as a Day of Compassion and to co-host events with the Tibetans living in the borough to mark the milestone.

At the official commemoration in Indian YMCA, Hon'ble Chris Law, MP and Co-Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Tibet in the UK Parliament, and Hon'ble Tim Loughton, former MP and former Co-Chair of the APPG Tibet, joined a packed auditorium to mark Tibetan Uprising Day. Representative Tsering Yangkey read extracts from Kashag's Statement on the occasion and spoke about the day's significance in

Tibet's history. Chris Law MP committed to strengthening his support for Tibet in the UK Parliament. Tim Loughton reassured his continued support for Tibet. They both recalled their 2018 meeting with His Holiness the Dalai Lama in Dharamshala. Speaking about the current status of the Tibet movement in the UK, John Jones, Head of Campaigns, Policy & Research, Free Tibet, remarked that despite some challenges, the path forward was optimistic given the new generation of young Tibetan leaders, effective collaborations across different campaign groups and the increasing support among the parliamentarians with the launch of the All Party Parliamentary Group for Tibet in the current parliament. He dispensed practical advice to the Tibetan youth in their advocacy for Tibet. The official commemorative event featured other speeches, including by the Chairperson of the Tibetan Community in Britain and commemorative songs performed by Tibetan community members.

Earlier in the day, at Whitehall, opposite 10 Downing Street, the official residence of the UK's Prime Minister, Tibetans and Tibet supporters gathered for a static protest. Hon'ble Norman Baker, former Minister and Member of Parliament; Luke de Pulford, Executive Director, Inter-Parliamentary Alliance on China; Mandie McKeown, Executive Director, International Tibet Network, and Kunsang Tsephel, Campaigns and Youth Coordinator, Tibetan Community in Britain, delivered speeches to set the tone for the protest march.

A couple of hundred people, Tibetans and friends of Tibet, marched through the London streets from Whitehall to the Chinese Embassy in Portland Place, accompanied by loud slogans highlighting atrocities China continues to commit in Tibet, drawing the attention of Londoners. Another round of speeches in front of the Chinese Embassy saw representatives from different groups, Uyghurs, Hongkongers, Taiwanese and Southern Mongolians, join and express their solidarity with the Tibetan people.

The 66th Anniversary of Tibetan National Uprising Day was thus commemorated across Northern Europe with protests to remind the Chinese government that Tibetan resilience is as strong as ever.

Meanwhile, in Glasgow, Tibet Solidarity, working with the Cross-Party Group for Tibet in the Scottish Parliament, organised an interfaith prayer ceremony at the Peace Cairn to commemorate all the Tibetans who were killed in the 1959 Tibetan uprising and those who have given their lives for Tibet or died as a result of Chinese oppression in the decades since. Ross Greer, MSP and Chair of the CPGT gave a short address at the ceremony and laid the first flowers at the cairn.

-Report filed by Office of Tibet, London

Tibetan women-in-exile hold protest against Chinese authorities in Shimla

12 March 2025, [ANI](#)

Tibetan women-in-exile on Wednesday in the northern Indian hill town Shimla gathered to hold a peace protest against Chinese authorities, marking the 66th anniversary of Tibetan Women's National Uprising Day. The protest saw participation from Tibetan Buddhist women students and other members of the community, who assembled in the city to commemorate the historic struggle for Tibetan freedom.

Speaking at the ANI, Tsering Paldon, organiser and member of the Regional Tibetan Women's Association Shimla, said it is essential for them to mark this day.

"Today, we have gathered here to commemorate the 66th anniversary of the Tibetan Women's Uprising Day. This started for the first time on March 12, 1959, when the Chinese Communist Party captured Tibet. All Tibetan women and others gathered in front of the Potala Palace. Since then, we have observed this uprising to demand justice and freedom for Tibetans inside and outside exile. We request the United Nations and the Government to support us so that we can bring our spiritual leader, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, to a free Tibet." Paldon said. As part of the ongoing global movement, Tibetan women across the world are holding protests today, remembering the sacrifices of those who were killed nearly seven decades ago inside Tibet. The protest in Shimla is one of many demonstrations across different regions as Tibetan women continue to raise their voices for justice, human rights, and the right to return to their homeland. On March 12, 1959, thousands of Tibetan women in Lhasa courageously rose against the People's Republic of China (PRC) in protest of its occupation of Tibet. The brutal crackdown led to the deaths of countless Tibetan women and forced over 80,000 Tibetans, including His Holiness the Dalai Lama, to flee to India. Since then, Tibetans have lived in exile across India and other parts of the world, continuing their fight for freedom and human rights. (ANI)

Tibetan Women's Uprising: A Global Call for Justice

12 March 2025, [Devdiscourse](#)

Tibetan women-in-exile in Shimla marked the 66th anniversary of the Tibetan Women's National Uprising Day with a protest against Chinese authorities. The event highlighted the struggles of Tibetan women for justice and freedom, seeking international support for their cause and the return of the Dalai Lama to Tibet.

In the tranquil setting of Shimla, Tibetan women-in-exile convened Wednesday to voice their dissent against Chinese rule. This demonstration, part of a broader movement marking the 66th Tibetan Women's National Uprising Day, saw participation from students and community members advocating for Tibetan freedom.

Tsering Paldon, a prominent figure in the Regional Tibetan Women's Association of Shimla, emphasized the importance of the occasion. In remarks to ANI, she recalled the historic 1959 uprising in Lhasa, where countless women stood against Chinese occupation, resulting in a brutal crackdown and mass escape to India, including that of the Dalai Lama.

Echoing international efforts, protests like this one in Shimla continue to remember those lost in the fight for freedom nearly seventy years ago. The global Tibetan community remains steadfast in its plea for justice and the right to return home, urging support from the United Nations and global leaders in their ongoing struggle.

COMMEMORATION OF THE 66TH TIBETAN NATIONAL UPRISING DAY

11 March 2025, [TYC](#)

On March 10, 2025, the Tibetan Youth Congress, in collaboration with the Tibetan Women's Association, National Democratic Party of Tibet, and Students for a Free Tibet, organized a protest rally in Dharamshala to commemorate the 66th Tibetan National Uprising Day. Preparations for the event began a month in advance, with artists and volunteers gathering to create posters and banners. These were then displayed throughout Dharamshala to raise awareness among foreign tourists and remind Tibetans of the significance of March 10th.

Before the day of the protest, the Tibetan National Flag was proudly raised and hanged along McLeod Street, and announcements were made to gather the public. As the rally progressed, banners were carried, and slogans were chanted as the crowd marched through Dharamshala.

The event at Dharamshala commenced with addresses from the TYC Vice President and the President of the Indo-Tibet Friendship Association. The President of the Tibetan Women's Association and the SFT-India President also read out Hindi and English statements on behalf of the four NGOs.

The TYC Centrex, RTYC Samyeling, and RTYC Rohini jointly organized the commemoration event in Delhi. Preparations began on March 8th, with a meeting at Majnu Katilla to distribute tasks and create banners.



On March 9th, the TYC General Secretary, Social Media officer along with the RTYC Samyeling team briefed college student activists on the protest plan outside the Chinese Embassy. The next morning, protesters gathered outside the embassy, condemning China's occupation and cultural genocide in Tibet. Although detained at Nirmala police station at the outskirts of Delhi, they were released in the evening.

Upon their return, RTYC Samyeling and RTWA Samyeling welcomed them with scarves, followed by a candlelight march at Majnu Katilla. The Peace Rally from Janpath to Jantar Mantar, was participated by the Tibetans in Delhi and demanded freedom and justice for Tibet. TYC General Secretary and Kungo Archarya Yeshe Phuntsok la, along with other Indian supporters and Dawa Tsering la, one of the participants of TYC indefinite hunger strike in 1998 in Delhi addressed the gathering, encouraging continued participation in the freedom movement.

Tibetan Youth Congress Organisational Secretary Yeshe Chomphel la joined the North East Tibetan Youth Congress regional chapters in commemorating the 66th Tibetan National Uprising Day in Guwahati. He read out the TYC statement and addressed the gathering, which drew over 500 participants from the north-east region.



The event featured a peace rally from Shir Gham to 6 Mile, promoting awareness and solidarity. Furthermore, 50 activists led by RTYC Gangtok President Tsephel la participated in a protest program outside the Assam Assembly, raising awareness about the Tibetan cause. Although they were detained for over six hours, they were eventually released.

Chinese govt's policies threatening Tibet's identity, says Sikyong

11 March 2025, [Hindustan Times](#), Dar Ovais

Tsering, while reading the statement of cabinet on the 66th anniversary of Tibetan National Uprising Day, said all these practices of China defies international and domestic laws, and basic human values

Sikyong (president) of Tibetan government-in-exile Penpa Tsering on Monday said that Chinese government's 'unchecked' mining and construction projects have caused extensive damage to Tibet's natural environment.

Tsering, while reading the statement of cabinet on the 66th anniversary of Tibetan National Uprising Day, said all these practices of China defies international and domestic laws, and basic human values. The cabinet, or the kashag, is the highest executive office of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) and is headed by Sikyong.

On March 10, 1959, the people of Tibet from the three traditional provinces rose in protest against the repression by the Chinese communist forces in capital Lhasa. The failed uprising led to the exile of 14th Dalai Lama and approximately 80,000 Tibetans.

Tsering said that in these past 66 years and more so today, under the current leadership, a deliberate and dangerous strategy to eliminate the identity of the Tibetan people is evident.

"Under the pretext of strengthening the consciousness of Chinese national unity, the Chinese government is implementing extensive sinicisation policies that is resulting in the gradual annihilation of Tibetans' identity and deprivation of the fundamental human rights," he said. He added, "Under its sinicisation campaign, large scale restrictions are imposed in the monasteries with complete denial of freedom of religion. Over a million Tibetan children have been forcibly enrolled in colonial-style boarding schools across Tibet. Under the guise of promoting the national common language, the use and teaching of Tibetan language is severely restricted."

The Tibetan parliament-in-exile said in a statement that the preconditions set by the Chinese government to resolve the Sino-Tibetan dispute have no basis in reality and there is no question of the Tibetan side being in any position to be able to accept them.

Tibetan diaspora protests in Vienna on 66th anniversary of Uprising Day

11 March 2025, [DD News](#)

The Tibetan Diaspora Organisation (TGO) held a large-scale protest in front of the Chinese Embassy in Vienna to mark the 66th anniversary of Tibetan Uprising Day. Approximately 200 members of Austria's Tibetan community gathered outside the embassy to denounce the ongoing oppression of Tibetans by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Protesters waved Tibetan flags and displayed banners condemning the CCP's genocidal actions against ethnic and religious minorities in China.

The demonstration gained further momentum with the participation of around 60 members from the Chinese Christian and Uyghur communities. Chinese Christians expressed concerns about the CCP's crackdown on religious freedoms, citing the destruction of churches, removal of crosses, and persecution of religious leaders. They condemned the regime's attempts to impose state-controlled versions of Christianity, calling it an attack on their faith and liberties.

Uyghur activists also spoke out against the CCP's oppressive policies in Xinjiang, highlighting the mass detention of over a million Uyghurs and other Muslim minorities in so-called internment camps.

Joining the rally were Austrian organizations such as Youth for Human Rights and Save Tibet, which expressed their solidarity with the oppressed groups. Their participation underscored a shared commitment to human rights and religious freedom.

The protest concluded with a march from the Chinese Embassy to Vienna's central Stephansplatz, where participants continued chanting slogans and delivering speeches to raise awareness about the suffering of Tibetans, Uyghurs, and other marginalized communities under CCP rule.

The Tibet Taiwan Human Rights Network said that, China invaded Tibet in 1951, leading to severe repression of Tibetan culture, religion, and traditions. On March 10, 1959, a major uprising in Lhasa was violently suppressed by the Chinese military, resulting in significant casualties and the Dalai Lama's exile to India, where he established a government-in-exile. This event is commemorated annually as "Tibet Uprising Day."

Governments should support Tibetans in Exile, says Human Rights Watch

11 March 2025, [Phayul](#), Tsering Dhundup

As Tibetans and supporters of the Tibetan cause worldwide commemorated the 66th anniversary of the 1959 uprising in Tibet on Monday, *Human Rights*

Watch (HRW) called for increased international support for Tibetans in exile.

In a statement released on March 9, Maya Wang, Associate China Director at Human Rights Watch, highlighted the worsening conditions for Tibetans under President Xi Jinping's policies of forced assimilation targeting non-Han peoples in China.

"After nearly 70 years of repressive Chinese state rule, government policies that seek to forcibly assimilate non-Han peoples in China under President Xi Jinping represent an alarming turn for the worse for Tibetans," Wang stated.

The human rights organisation warned that while China's abuses against Uyghurs and Turkic Muslims in East Turkestan have received global attention, the increasingly severe repression of Tibetans has gone relatively unnoticed due to what Wang described as "ever more intrusive and watertight policing, surveillance, and censorship in Tibetan areas."

According to HRW, Tibet now faces a complete absence of independent civil society and fundamental freedoms of expression, association, assembly, and religion. The statement detailed how Chinese authorities have used national policing campaigns such as the "anti-gang crime crackdown" and "anti-fraud" crackdown to systematically dismantle remaining Tibetan civil society institutions.

These measures have reportedly included shutting down Tibetan-language websites, closing privately funded schools, and imposing strict controls on daily life. Wang noted that Tibetans are being forced to use Mandarin Chinese in schools, relocate from traditional villages to government settlements, and witness environmental exploitation with no recourse.

"Any questioning of government policies, however mild, can result in arbitrary detention, enforced disappearance, torture, and long-term imprisonment," the statement warned.

The organisation also pointed out that escape routes previously used by Tibetans fleeing across the Himalayas following the 1959 uprising have been effectively closed since 2008 through increased border policing, while passport restrictions implemented in 2012 have further limited movement. Even contacting relatives abroad has reportedly become dangerous for Tibetans.

With the Dalai Lama now 89 years old, Human Rights Watch expressed concern about the Chinese government's intentions to interfere in the selection of his successor. Additionally, the organisation highlighted challenges facing Tibetan exile communities, including uncertainty around U.S. foreign aid and Chinese government pressure on Tibetans in countries like Nepal and in Western nations.

Wang concluded by urging governments that support Tibetan human rights to "step up their assistance to

Tibetan groups worldwide that document rights and report on abuses in Tibet, advocate in international forums, and seek to preserve Tibetan identity and culture."

Tibetans and Japanese Supporters Observe the 66th Anniversary of the National Uprising in Tibet

11 March 2025, [CTA](#)

On 9 March 2025, Tibetans and Japanese supporters, along with members of the Southern Mongolian and Uyghur communities, observed the 66th anniversary of the Tibetan people's uprising against the Chinese communist regime in Tokyo. The Tibetan Community in Japan (TCJ) and the Students for Free Tibet Japan (SFTJ) organised the function and the peace march.

A group of Tibetan and Japanese demonstrators protested before the Chinese Embassy in Tokyo in the morning. They raised slogans to free Tibet and stop repression and cultural genocide in Tibet. They raised slogans to stop the Chinese colonial boarding schools in Tibet. Taro Kanada of the Students for Free Tibet Japan read the statement drawing the attention of the Chinese leadership to the worsening human rights situation in Tibet. The statement was posted in the embassy's letterbox later.

The main function was held at Jingu Dori Park in Shibuya city. Taro Kanada of the SFTJ moderated the event. After observing a minute of silence to pray for the recent earthquake victims and the demise of His Holiness's elder brother Gyalo Dhondup, the Tibetan national anthem was sung at the event.

Representative Dr Tsewang Gyalpo Arya of the Liaison Office of H.H. the Dalai Lama thanked the gathering for their participation and support of the Tibet issue. He talked about how Tibet has been an independent country since ancient times and how the CCP has been trying to distort its history. He informed the gathering about the US Resolve Tibet Act and its main content and requested the Japanese government to establish a similar Tibetan policy. Dr Arya explained the CCP's deadly religious laws and the colonial boarding schools to rob the Tibetan children of their identity, language, religion, and culture.

He explained that the Tibetans are not anti-China or anti-Chinese, Tibetans are against the brutal colonial and repressive policy of the CCP regime. He prayed for the freedom of the Chinese people and democracy in China.

Dorjee Shiota of the Tibetan Community Japan briefed the gathering on the illegal occupation of Tibet by the CCP and the Chinese atrocities in Tibet. He urged the Chinese leadership to stop killings and atrocities in Tibet.

Tsering Dorjee of the Students for Free Tibet Japan thanked the Japanese, Uyghur, and Southern Mongolian participants for their continued support for

the Tibet issue and resolve to work together for freedom and justice.

The gathering composing nearly a hundred people did a peace march from Jingu Dori Park and passed through the busy Shibuya street of Miyashita Park, Shibuya scramble square with Hachiko's monument and Ometosando pass for more than two hours. The passerby showed their support by waving hands, raising thumb stand, and clapping.

A Japanese supporter has made a banner with photos of the Tibetans, who committed self-immolation to protest the CCP regime, to appeal for the Tibet issue more forcefully. Some Japanese have come from far-off distant prefectures to show their solidarity with the Tibetans on this important historic day. Representatives of the Japan Uyghur Association and Southern Mongolian Congress participated in the event to demonstrate their solidarity.

-Report filed by the Office of Tibet, Japan

Tibetan cabinet reiterates mid-way approach of Dalai Lama to resolve China-Tibet conflict

10 March 2025, [Hindustan Times](#)

Tibetan cabinet reiterates mid-way approach of Dalai Lama to resolve China-Tibet conflict

Dharamshala, The Kashag of the Tibetan government-in-exile has reiterated its commitment to the middle-way approach of the Dalai Lama to resolve the China-Tibet conflict through non-violence and dialogue.

"A deliberate and dangerous strategy to eliminate the very identity of the Tibetan people as a unique human race under the pretext of 'strengthening the consciousness of Chinese national unity', is clearly evident under the current Chinese leadership," the Kashag said in a statement released on Monday, the 66th anniversary of the Tibetan National Uprising Day. The current Chinese leadership is implementing a policy of extensive sinicisation, resulting in the gradual annihilation of Tibetans identity and deprivation of their fundamental human rights, the statement added.

It, however, added, "As envisioned by His Holiness, Tibetan people remain committed to the path of non-violence and dialogue in finding a lasting and mutually beneficial solution to resolve the Sino-Tibet Conflict through Middle Way Approach. It also reaffirms our confidence that the Tibetan people the rightful custodians of the Tibetan plateau since its formation embody unique religious and cultural traditions that cannot be erased, an indomitable spirit that cannot be broken, and an unparalleled leadership of His Holiness the Dalai Lama that cannot be replaced."

Asserting that the unparalleled leadership of the Dalai Lama, who turns 90 later this year, cannot be replaced, the statement said the year would be celebrated as

the 'Year of Compassion', with focus on learning, practising and promoting his four commitments.

Besides, the mission of promoting human values, global religious harmony and preservation of the Tibetan religion and culture, the Dalai Lama has stressed on the revival of ancient Indian wisdom as the fourth mission and these commitments transcend the national boundaries and ethnic interests to create a compassionate society and peaceful world, the statement stressed.

The Kashag further said that "nurtured by the far-sighted vision and unwavering compassion of the Dalai Lama, we have not harboured hatred or animosity toward the Chinese Communist government that has occupied our homeland and caused the untimely death of more than 1.2 million Tibetans and destruction of over six thousand monasteries".

Dwelling on the Dalai Lama's fourth mission, the statement said that he believes that Tibetans, who have safeguarded and practised this knowledge for generations, can contribute to this revival as an act of gratitude towards India.

Tibetan language has preserved extensive collections of ancient Indian knowledge, both in quantity and quality that is unmatched in any other language, and about 5,000 Indian classical texts including on grammar, Tibetan medicine, arts, Buddhist logic, and Buddhist philosophy, according to the statement.

It said that five minor sciences poetry, performing arts, lexicography, composition, and mathematics and astrology have been translated into Tibetan due to dedicated efforts by Indian and Tibetan scholars and translators over centuries, the statement highlighted.

The Dalai Lama has initiated 38 dialogues with modern scientists on these categories which has significantly influenced scientific discussions on psychology, human values, neuroscience, and other fields and greatly influenced scientific discussions and enhanced the revival of the ancient Indian wisdom.

Further, the Dalai Lama's efforts have impacted analytical thinking based on logic and his SEE learning was introduced and implemented in more than 170 countries, including 100,000 schools across India, the statement added.

Talking about the uprising, the statement said that on this date 66 years ago, Tibetans from all three provinces unitedly rose up against the "illegal occupation of Tibet and China's brutal inhumane policies and practices in Tibet".

"Under the violent suppression of Chinese forces, over a million Tibetans lost their precious lives and compelled the legitimate Tibetan government led by His Holiness the Great 14th Dalai Lama, followed by approximately 80,000 Tibetans into exile. This marks the darkest and most critical period in the history of Tibet," it said.

The Kashag's Statement on the 66th Anniversary of the Tibetan National Uprising Day

10 March 2025, [CTA](#)

On this date, sixty-six years ago, in Tibet's capital Lhasa, Tibetans from all three provinces unitedly rose up against the illegal occupation of Tibet and China's brutal inhumane policies and practices in Tibet. Under the violent suppression by Chinese forces, over a million Tibetans lost their precious lives and forced the legitimate Tibetan government led by His Holiness the Great 14th Dalai Lama, followed by approximately 80,000 Tibetans into exile. This marks the darkest and most critical period in the history of Tibet. As we commemorate the Tibetan National Uprising Day, we honour our brave martyrs, and express solidarity with our brothers and sisters inside Tibet who continue to languish under the oppressive Chinese government. In these past sixty-six years and more so today, under the current Chinese leadership a deliberate and dangerous strategy to eliminate the very identity of the Tibetan people as a unique human race is evident. Under the pretext of "strengthening the consciousness of Chinese national unity", the Chinese government is implementing extensive sinicisation policies resulting in the gradual annihilation of Tibetan identity and deprivation of the fundamental human rights of the Tibetan people.

Furthermore, under its sinicisation campaign, large scale restrictions are imposed in the monasteries with complete denial of freedom of religion and over a million young Tibetan children have been forcibly enrolled in colonial-style boarding schools across Tibet. Under the guise of "promoting the national common language", the use and teaching of Tibetan language is severely restricted.

The Chinese government's unchecked mining and construction projects have irrevocably caused extensive damage to Tibet's natural environment with severe implications far beyond its borders. All these acts & practices of China defy not only International and Domestic laws but even the basic human values. Tibetans, nurtured by the far-sighted vision and unwavering compassion of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, have not harboured hatred or animosity toward the Chinese Communist government that has occupied our homeland, causing the untimely deaths of more than 1.2 million Tibetans and destruction of over six thousand monasteries. As envisioned by His Holiness, Tibetan people remain committed to the path of non-violence and dialogue in finding a lasting and mutually beneficial solution to resolve the Sino-Tibet Conflict through Middle Way Approach. It also reaffirms our confidence that the Tibetan people—the

rightful custodians of the Tibetan plateau since its formation—embody unique religious and cultural traditions that cannot be erased, an indomitable spirit that cannot be broken, and an unparalleled leadership of His Holiness the Dalai Lama that cannot be replaced. The Kashag's official statements last year on His Holiness's Birthday, Tibetan Democracy Day, and the Conferment Day of Nobel Peace Prize to His Holiness the Dalai Lama briefly highlighted the three out of four principal commitments. On this occasion, the Kashag would like to highlight on His Holiness's fourth commitment which is to revive the ancient Indian wisdom.

After His Holiness the Dalai Lama devolved his political powers to the elected leaders, His Holiness began to focus more on his four commitments which includes revival of the ancient Indian wisdom. The revival of ancient Indian wisdom is not simply reviving a particular religion or religious tradition. Rather, His Holiness considers the importance of balancing external material progress with inner spiritual growth based on ancient wisdom.

His Holiness believes that Tibetans, who have safeguarded and practiced this knowledge for generations, can contribute to this revival as an act of gratitude towards India. Tibetan language has preserved extensive collections of ancient Indian knowledge, both in quantity and quality that is unmatched in any other language. Approximately 5,000 Indian classical texts have been translated into Tibetan, the result of dedicated efforts by Indian and Tibetan scholars and translators over many centuries. These include the five major sciences: Grammar, Tibetan Medicine, Arts, Buddhist Logic, and Buddhist Philosophy, as well as the five minor sciences: Poetry, Performing Arts, Lexicography, Composition, and Mathematics and Astrology—comprising ten fields of knowledge. There are not only a large number of translated texts, but Tibetan scholars have also written extensive commentaries on these works.

It is well known that His Holiness the Dalai Lama does not seek to propagate Buddhism. The essence of Buddhism is studied in three categories: Buddhist religion, Buddhist philosophy, and Buddhist science. Since the 1980s, His Holiness has initiated 38 dialogues with modern scientists on the latter two categories. This has significantly influenced scientific discussions on psychology, human values, neuroscience, and other fields. These dialogues have greatly influenced scientific discussions around the world, and enhanced the revival of the ancient Indian wisdom.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama's efforts towards the revival of ancient wisdom has impacted including analytical thinking based on logic, and introduced SEE learning (Social, Emotional and Ethical) was introduced and implemented in more than 170 countries, including in 100,000 schools across India.

The Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies in Varanasi has published about 355 books, including 80 works restored from Tibetan to Sanskrit, a 16-volume Tibetan-Sanskrit dictionary, a 4-volume medical dictionary, and has trained over one thousand students from the Himalayan regions.

The Dalai Lama Institute for Higher Education in Bangalore provides education in Tibetan studies and various modern subjects primarily to Tibetan and Himalayan students. Sarah College for Higher Tibetan Studies provides one-year courses in Buddhist logic, secular ethics, Buddhist science and philosophy to not only Tibetan and Indian student but also to foreign students. The Library of Tibetan Works and Archives in Dharamsala conducts Tibetan language classes, and six-year Buddhist studies programs and science workshops. Similarly, the International Nalanda Masters Course and other short term Nalanda Courses at Tibet House Delhi has been attended by over 6,000 students from 91 countries through its degree programs and short-term training courses. There are a number of Tibetan Buddhist centres around the world serving Buddha dharma and the Offices of Tibet (CTA) co-ordinates and works closely towards fulfilment of the commitments of His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

Since the 1980s, His Holiness the Dalai Lama repeatedly advised the Tibetan monastic institutions in exile to study modern science and instructed Tibetan schools to incorporate logical reasoning in their curriculum. The Department of Religion and Culture and the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives continue to organize training programs for science teachers in monasteries. Various collaborative projects have been initiated between monasteries and Indian universities. Tibetan schools maintain a policy of educating students in both traditional and modern subjects through the Tibetan language. The results of training thousands of monks, nuns, and students from the Himalayan regions in Tibetan monasteries and schools in exile are now visible from India's border regions to prestigious international platforms.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama assigned special responsibilities to his close associates and monastic scholars, resulting in the successful compilation and publication of the twelve-part "Compilation of Buddhist Science" and the nine-part "Compilation of Buddhist Philosophy". These works are being translated into English and other languages. For reviving ancient Indo-Tibetan philosophical and Buddhist traditions, the Dalai Lama Centre for Tibetan & Indian Ancient Wisdom is being established at the sacred site of Bodhgaya, open to interested people worldwide. These are just some examples of the efforts to revive ancient Indian culture.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama's mission of promoting human values, global religious harmony, preservation of Tibetan religion and culture, and revival of ancient

Indian wisdom are interconnected at their core. These commitments transcend the boundaries of specific national and ethnic interests, striving to create a compassionate society and peaceful world for all humanity.

Marx maintained that oppressed nationalities have the right to self-determination. He opposed national oppression, national exploitation, while criticizing nationalism. However, the Chinese Communist Party has turned its back on its founder's ideology and forcibly imposed a fabricated concept of Chinese nationhood on so called ethnic groups, including the Tibetan people. Tibetans are politically treated as lower-class citizens, requiring constant surveillance in all their activities day and night. Tibetan children are forced to learn Chinese language and communist ideology, and Tibetan Buddhism is being Sinicised. These policies contradict Marxist principles and violate international laws, while the communist regime continues to inflict irreparable damage to the historical friendship between Tibetan and Chinese peoples.

According to western calendar, His Holiness the Dalai Lama turns 90 this year. As announced earlier by the Central Tibetan Administration, the year will be celebrated as the Year of Compassion. The essence of this celebration is to learn, practice, and promote the four commitments of His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

The best way to address Tibet's immediate and long-term challenges for us Tibetans is to understand and follow the path shown by His Holiness the Dalai Lama. The indomitable spirit of Tibetans inside Tibet is the foundation of Tibetan people's aspiration which inspires and strengthens the determination and commitment of the Tibetans in exile. We must face all the challenges confronting us with courage and in unity under the benevolent leadership of His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

The Kashag would like to take this opportunity to express our heartfelt gratitude to governments including the Government of India, organisations and individuals who have supported the Tibetan cause and the welfare of the Tibetan community.

In conclusion, we earnestly pray for the long life of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. May the Truth of Tibet Prevail!

The Kashag

10th March 2025

**Note: This is the translation of the Tibetan statement. Should any discrepancies arise, please treat the Tibetan version as final and authoritative*

Ithaca's Tibetan Community Commemorates the 66th Tibetan National Uprising Day

10 March 2025, [The Cornell Daily Sun](#), Taehee Oh

Around 50 community members waved Tibetan flags and held signs demanding freedom from China to commemorate the 66th Tibetan National Uprising Day in the Ithaca Commons on Monday. The demonstration was organized by the Tibetan Association of Ithaca, which is part of the larger International Tibet Network that is dedicated to maximize “the effectiveness of the worldwide Tibet movement.”

In 1950, the People's Republic of China invaded Tibet and the region was integrated as an autonomous region under Chinese rule in 1965.

On March 10, 1959, Tibetans rebelled against Chinese occupation in Lhasa, and gathered to protect their spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama amid fears of an assassination attempt. In the aftermath of the uprising, the Dalai Lama fled to India, where he established a government in exile.

Now, every year on March 10, Tibetan communities all over the world commemorate this day with protests.

In 2023, U.S. Department of State recorded human rights violations in Tibet including restrictions on freedom of expression, religious freedom and assimilation policies that are “aimed to suppress ethnic Tibetans’ cultural, religious, and linguistic identity.”

Tibetan Association of Ithaca board member Chime Dolma emphasized the importance of the demonstration in amplifying Tibetan voices who face suppression.

“Tibetans in China are not able to protest today,” Dolma said. “So people all over the world, like Tibetans in India, America, in Europe ... we gather together today to [let] China [know] that we want our freedom back, in a nonviolent way.”

Demonstrators chanted slogans including “China lies, people die,” and “What do we want? We want justice,” as they marched.

Yangzom Noga '27, a member of the Coalition of Students Resisting China, a group of Tibetan, Taiwanese, Uyghur, Chinese and Hong Kong students who aim to achieve collective liberation, highlighted the Tibetan movement's focus on nonviolence.

“[Even] when faced with such an invasion, [Tibetans] reverted to their true morals and said, we have to combat it with nonviolence,” Noga said. When Ex-Tibetan Prime Minister Lobsang Sangay came to speak in 2023 at Cornell, Noga explained that he said in a “scenario where we get Tibet back as our nation, we would still remain with the nonviolent strategy, because it's rooted in Buddhism — that's who we are.”

Dhondup Zurkhang, a member of the Tibetan Association of Ithaca and a Cornell custodian, said that the Tibetan community in Ithaca preserves their culture by educating the next generation of Tibetans.

“Every Saturday and Sunday, we have a class at the Namgyal Monastery where our young children are being taught Tibetan dance and our cultural background. So we've been successful in keeping our identity alive,” Zurkhang said.

Located on 201 Tibet Dr., the Namgyal Monastery Institute of Buddhist Studies serves as the North American Seat of the Dalai Lama's Personal Monastery. Established in 1992, the monastery offers opportunities to study Tibetan Buddhism and is a cultural center for the Tibetan community in Ithaca.

Noga explained that while visiting the Tibetan Sunday school, which is part of the Namgyal Monastery, she taught children about the significance of the Tibetan National Uprising Day and led a workshop to create posters before Monday's protest. During the workshop, each person was asked to share one word about what Tibet means to them. Workshop students shared words like “hope,” “home,” “love” and “community.”

“During March 10, every single one of those people who marched out on the streets of Lhasa, had the same words in their hearts,” Noga said to the students. “We have to keep having the same words in our hearts too, as we go out there in front of the Ithaca streets as well.”

Having worked at Cornell for over 7 years, Zurkhang reflected on the University's relationship with Tibetan issues. While acknowledging Cornell's past support for Tibet, he criticized what he saw as the University's reluctance to take a more outspoken stance.

Cornell Media Relations did not immediately respond to a request for comment regarding the University's position on Tibetan issues by the time of publication.

Additionally, Noga pointed to opportunities and limitations within the University's academic offerings in regards to Tibetan culture. She shared that she found Cornell “special” for offering the shared course initiative, but she said the China and Asia-Pacific Studies major is “flawed” as it only offered one class during the fall 2024 semester that centered on Tibet.

For Zurkhang, the Tibet Uprising Day is a reminder of the three Rs that drive the Tibetan movement: “remember, resist and return.”

“We should never forget and remember [that] our forefathers have laid down their life for the our country, do whatever we can do [to] preserve the traditional culture before the Chinese eradicate us, [and] hope one day we can return to Tibet with [the] Dalai Lama,” Zurkhang said.

National Human Rights Commission members attend Tibet uprising event

09 March 2025, [Focus Taiwan](#)

Members of Taiwan's National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) for the first time attended an annual march in Taipei on Sunday organized by civic groups to commemorate the 1959 Tibetan uprising, which also called for a Tibet free and independent from Chinese rule.

Speaking during the commemoration to mark the Tibetan uprising 66 years ago, Wang Yu-ling (王幼玲), vice chairperson of the NHRC, said members of the commission under the government's watchdog agency, the Control Yuan, attended the annual event for the first time since its founding in August 2020.

The NHRC was launched to promote and protect human rights in Taiwan and fulfill the government's commitment to meet the Paris Principles, according to Wang.

The 1993 Paris Principles regulate the status and functions of national institutions for the protection and promotion of human rights known as National Human Rights Institutions.

"We believe the Tibet issue is a human right issue where the Chinese Communists Party invaded Tibet and violated a peace agreement both signed," Wang said before the march.

What the Chinese government has done in Tibet since the 1950s could be considered an act of "ethnic cleansing and genocide," she said, citing Chinese oppression of Tibetan human rights activities.

"Human rights have no borders," she said, adding that "Today's Tibet could be the future of Taiwan."

Wang said that is why the NHRC chose to stand alongside civic groups and Tibetans in Taiwan for the annual march.

Kelsang Gyaltsen Bawa, representative of the Tibetan government-in-exile to Taiwan, said before Sunday's march that it has been 66 years since the Tibetan uprising against Chinese communist rule in 1959.

Ever since the Chinese government used military force to compel Tibet to sign a Seventeen-Point Agreement in 1951, the so-called "peace deal" has since resulted in the death of more than 1.2 million Tibetans, the eradication of Tibetan culture, the destruction of more than 6,000 temples, and the self-immolation of at least 157 Tibetans in protest at Chinese rule.

Beijing's violations of clauses in the agreement, which originally promised to keep Tibetan culture, religion and education, led to the 1959 uprising, he said.

On March 10, 1959, about 10,000 Tibetans gathered in Lhasa to protest China's tightening control, but the uprising was brutally suppressed, leading to the Dalai Lama fleeing to India and around 150,000 Tibetans following him into exile overseas.

"We are gathering here today not only to commemorate the brutal crackdown but to hope that one day Tibetans will be able to return to their homeland," he said.

Kelsang Gyaltsen Bawa also said the annual event, held in Taipei since 2004, is also a reminder to people in Taiwan and the international community, that we should never forget what China has done to Tibet or the same fate is awaiting Taiwan and other places around the world.

The march, attended by around 100 participants chanting slogans such as "Free Tibet" and "Tibet belongs to Tibetans," began at 1:30 p.m. outside Exit 2 of Zhongxiao Fuxing MRT Station in downtown Taipei and concluded around 4:30 p.m. at Xinyi Smoke-Free Plaza near the Taipei 101 Building.

Governments Should Step Up Support for Tibetans in Exile

09 March 2025, [HRW](#), Maya Wang

March 10 Marks Anniversary of 1959 Uprising Against Chinese Rule in Tibet

Today, March 10, 2025, Tibetans worldwide commemorate the 1959 uprising in Tibet.

After nearly 70 years of repressive Chinese state rule, government policies that seek to forcibly assimilate non-Han peoples in China under President Xi Jinping represent an alarming turn for the worse for Tibetans. While the Chinese government's crimes against humanity against Uyghurs and other Turkic Muslims in Xinjiang received global attention, the slow drip of news about its intensifying repression against Tibetans has garnered less notice due to ever more intrusive and watertight policing, surveillance, and censorship in Tibetan areas.

In Tibet, there is no independent civil society, freedom of expression, association, assembly, or religion. Under the pretext of national policing campaigns such as "the anti-gang crime crackdown" and the "anti-fraud" crackdown, the Chinese government has decimated what little Tibetan civil society remained, shut down Tibetan websites that promote Tibetan language and culture, and closed privately funded schools; even those that followed the government-approved curriculum.

Tibetans are told how to live their lives: use Mandarin Chinese as the medium of instruction in schools, relocate en masse from their long-established villages to new government-built and managed settlements, silently witness their rivers being dammed to generate electricity for large-scale mining or to power regions far away in China. Any questioning of government policies, however mild, can result in

arbitrary detention, enforced disappearance, torture, and long-term imprisonment.

Following the 1959 uprising, many Tibetans fled across the Himalayas. But even this perilous option has been closed off since the government increased policing of the border in 2008 and made it extremely difficult for Tibetans to obtain passports in 2012. Even phoning relatives living abroad has become dangerous for Tibetans in Tibet in recent years.

The Dalai Lama is 89 years old, and the Chinese government is poised to interfere and dictate the selection of the next Dalai Lama. The Tibetan government-in-exile and Tibetan civil society groups in the diaspora face uncertainty as the US government freezes foreign aid around the world. The Chinese government's abuses beyond its borders have silenced Tibetans in Nepal and targeted those living in Western countries.

Governments that profess support for the human rights of Tibetans should step up their assistance to Tibetan groups worldwide that document rights and report on abuses in Tibet, advocate in international forums, and seek to preserve Tibetan identity and culture.

Taipei to mark Tibetan uprising with vigil

09 March 2025, [Taipei Times](#), Hollie Younger

With tomorrow marking the 66th anniversary of the Tibetan uprising of 1959, a "free Tibet" march is to be held in Taipei today, and a candlelit vigil at Liberty Square tomorrow night.

The march is to begin at 1pm outside Exit 2 of Zhongxiao Fuxing MRT Station in Taipei, while the vigil would take place at 7pm, the event sponsors said.

Sponsors include the Tibet Religious Foundation of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, which represents the Dalai Lama and the Central Tibetan Administration in Taiwan, and other civil groups.

Taiwanese should support Taiwan and say "no" to Chinese autocracy, Kelsang Gyaltsen Bawa, the foundation's chairman and representative of the Tibet Office in Taiwan, told a news conference in Taipei on Thursday.

Following the death of the Dalai Lama's second-oldest brother, Gyalo Thondup, on Feb. 8, the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs two days later announced that it would be open to negotiating with the Dalai Lama if he recognized that Tibet and Taiwan are inalienable parts of China, whose sole legal government is that of the People's Republic China, Kelsang Gyaltsen Bawa said.

In 1951, the Chinese government used military force to compel Tibet to sign the Seventeen-Point Agreement, or the "Agreement on Measures for the

Peaceful Liberation of Tibet," agreeing that Tibet was a part of China, he said.

However, in the following nine years, the agreement was broken and Tibet was violently suppressed and occupied, resulting in the death of more than 1.2 million Tibetans, the eradication of Tibetan culture, the destruction of more than 6,000 temples and the self-immolation of at least 157 Tibetans in protest of Chinese rule, he said.

In an attempt to ethnically cleanse Tibet, China confines Tibetan children and adults in "cultural assimilation schools that resemble concentration camps," he said.

Even Tibetans living in free societies are subject to transnational repression and persecution, he added.

China imposed "one country, two systems" on Hong Kong in 1997, but in fewer than 22 years it crushed the territory's freedoms, forcing many Hong Kongers into exile and displacement across the world, he said.

As the Chinese Communist Party also says it wishes to unify China with Taiwan, Taipei needs to heed the cautionary tales of Tibet and Hong Kong, he added.

The parade was first held in Taiwan 22 years ago, growing from just seven attendees in 2003 to a large gathering, Human Rights Network for Tibet and Taiwan secretary Tashi Tsering said.

Tashi Tsering, a displaced Tibetan and the last surviving member of his family, expressed his hope of avoiding a second exile, urging Taiwanese to stand resolute and remain strong in the face of China's threats.

Central Tibetan Administration Commemorates 1989 Martyrs with Prayer Service

08 March 2025, [CTA](#)

The Department of Religion and Culture, Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), conducted a prayer service lasting one hour to honour the sacrifices made by peaceful Tibetan protesters who participated in the 1989 demonstrations against the Chinese government.

In 1989, thousands of Tibetans took to the streets of Lhasa to voice their opposition to the oppressive and unjust policies imposed by the Chinese government while also marking the 29th anniversary of the Tibetan National Uprising Day. In retaliation, Chinese authorities imposed martial law and opened fire on the protesters, resulting in the deaths of hundreds and leaving many others wounded.

Since then, the CTA has held an annual prayer service on March 8 to remember and pay homage to the Tibetan individuals who gave their lives and suffered for the greater cause of Tibet.

Following an hour-long prayer service, Sikyong Penpa Tsering addressed the media, stating, "Tibetans inside Tibet have demonstrated an unwavering dedication to

safeguarding their rich cultural and linguistic heritage despite the Chinese government's escalating efforts to erase Tibetan identity through stricter restrictions and surveillance. Likewise, we in exile, despite our limited population and resources, must continue our work with the same dedication as Tibetans on both sides, drawing strength and inspiration from one another. Today is the day to reflect on the events of 1989 and the years that followed, and to recognise the important responsibilities that rest upon us."

Cabinet Secretary Tsegyal Chukya Dranyi also gave a brief explanation of the significance and purpose behind the prayer service before the gathering at Tsuglagkhang.

Tibet commemorates 29th anniversary of 1989 uprising against China with prayer service

08 March 2025, [ANI](#)

The Department of Religion and Culture of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) held a one-hour prayer service on March 8 to honor the sacrifices of peaceful Tibetan protesters who participated in the 1989 demonstrations against the Chinese government, as reported by Tibet.net. According to Tibet.net, the event commemorated the 29th anniversary of the Tibetan National Uprising Day, during which thousands of Tibetans in Lhasa protested against the oppressive policies of the Chinese authorities.

In response, the Chinese government imposed martial law and opened fire on the demonstrators, resulting in numerous deaths and injuries. Since that tragic day, the CTA has organized an annual prayer service to remember those who lost their lives and those who suffered in the struggle for Tibet's freedom, Tibet.net reported.

The prayer ceremony took place at Tsuglagkhang and was followed by a media address from Sikyong Penpa Tsering.

Sikyong Penpa Tsering stated, "Tibetans inside Tibet have demonstrated an unwavering dedication to safeguarding their rich cultural and linguistic heritage despite the Chinese government's escalating efforts to erase Tibetan identity through stricter restrictions and surveillance. Likewise, we in exile, despite our limited population and resources, must continue our work with the same dedication as Tibetans on both sides, drawing strength and inspiration from one another. Today is the day to reflect on the events of 1989 and the years that followed, and to recognise the important responsibilities that rest upon us." Cabinet Secretary Tsegyal Chukya Dranyi also addressed the gathering, offering a brief explanation of the purpose and significance of the annual prayer

service.

As reported by Tibet.net, the prayer service underscored its role in remembering the sacrifices made by Tibetans for the greater cause of Tibet's freedom and autonomy. The prayer service reinforced unity and commitment to Tibet's enduring cause. The ceremony served as a moment of reflection on the past and a call to action for the ongoing struggle for Tibet's future.

India sees China-hand in Tibetan asylee in Australia's Dalai Lama threat

07 March, [Tibetan Review](#)

India has put a Tibetan residing in Adelaide, Australia, under a prohibitory order under its new criminal code called Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) after he issued an online video threat calling for the assassination of the exile spiritual leader of Tibet and sabotage of the Tibetan administration in exile, allegedly as a tool of China.

An asylee from China-ruled Tibet, Senge, known online as Gangser, had made his threats in a bitterness-spewing online video post, accusing the Dalai Lama and the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), Dharamshala, of betraying Tibet by seeking autonomy, not independence. The CTA strongly condemned his action and vowed to pursue legal actions against him. Eight major exile Tibetan NGOs in Sep 2024 also condemned his action as a "terrorist behaviour".

The Kangra district administration has cited various violations of the BNS by Senge, including waging war against India and acts causing public nuisance and community disturbance. It has booked him under various sections of the BNS, reported *news18.com* Mar 4.

The report suggested that one reason why India upgraded the security details of the Dalai Lama last month to Z, the third highest level in the country's security protocols, was the threat from Senge.

Top intelligence sources reveal that the government considers this threat to Dalai Lama with utmost seriousness due to its international implications, the report said.

The Dalai Lama is under threat from an Australian citizen of Tibetan origin named Singe (Senge). He has issued threats on social media, specifically *Facebook*, calling for the assassination of the Dalai Lama, comparing the act to the assassination of Libya's Muammar Gaddafi, the report said.

The report cited intelligence sources as saying, "There is concern that harm to the Dalai Lama would not only devastate the Tibetan community but also severely damage India's global reputation. This incident follows a pattern of China allegedly using individuals of

Tibetan origin to sow discord within the exile community.”

Town of Amherst Will Observe the Commemoration of the Tibetan Uprising on March 10

07 March 2025, [Amherst INDY](#)

The Amherst Town Council will welcome the Regional Tibetan Community of Western Massachusetts at the steps of Town Hall on Monday March 10 at 9:00 a.m. to Commemorate the 66th Anniversary of the Tibetan Uprising and Tibetan Women’s Uprising. This event is an expression of solidarity for the Tibetan Peoples in exile across the world. The event includes the raising of the Tibetan flag, the reading of a proclamation by the Town Council, songs of protest and remembrance, speeches by community leaders, and a march from Amherst to Northampton along Route 9 and concluding in Easthampton.

President of the Amherst Town Council, Lynn Griesemer notes, “We are honored to host this commemorative event and have done so since our change of government in 2018. It presents a wonderful moment to acknowledge and celebrate the robust contributions of the Tibetan Community in exile throughout the Valley. We continue to stand with our neighbors and friends to acknowledge the difficult past as we look forward to a better future.”

The gathering and subsequent march includes support from Community Participation Officers, the Department of Public Works, the Police Department, and the Community Responders for Equity, Safety, and Service Department.

Community members are welcome to join in this solemn commemoration of the Tibetan Uprising.

Speakers include:

- Yonten Gyatso, President of the Regional Tibetan Association of Massachusetts
- State Representative Mindy Domb
- Amherst City Council President Lynn Griesemer

Schedule of Events

9:00 a.m. Raising of the Tibetan flag and reading of the proclamation by the Amherst Town Council, songs of protest and remembrance, and speeches by community leaders followed by a walk to Northampton along Route 9 and concluding in Easthampton. Amherst Town Hall, 4 Boltwood Avenue

2:30 p.m. at Northampton City Hall, 210 Main St, Northampton

4:00 p.m. at Easthampton City Hall, 50 Payson Ave, Easthampton

Tibet is a ‘front line’ in struggle for freedom with Beijing: US official

07 March 2025, [RFA](#), Tashi Wangchuk and Tenzin Pema



Six masters from Gyuto Tantric Monastery pray at the State Department’s Losar celebration, March 4, 2025. (Passang Dhonden/RFA Tibetan)

The senior State Department official made the remark at a Tibetan New Year celebration in Washington.

Tibet’s struggle for autonomy in China is “one of the front lines” in America’s battle with the Chinese Communist Party, a senior State Department official said at a Tibetan New Year celebration.

Albert Gombis, the acting under secretary of state for civilian security, democracy and human rights, made the remark at an event marking Losar, or Tibetan New Year, at the State Department on Tuesday.

Gombis told the gathering that U.S. national security was “inextricably bound to the battle of ideas and influence” with Beijing, which annexed Tibet in the early 1950s and has since governed the territory with an oppressively heavy-hand while seeking to erase Tibetan culture.

“The decades-long struggle for Tibet’s autonomy is important not only to the six million Tibetans in China and the many tens of thousands in the Tibetan diaspora; their struggle constitutes one of the front lines in the global effort for freedom from the Chinese Communist Party’s repression,” Gombis said, calling for a renewed American focus on Tibet.

“The CCP’s efforts to erase Tibetan identity and militarize the Himalayas reverberate across the region and threaten the safety of U.S. partners and the Indo-Pacific more broadly,” he added.

Beijing denies it represses Tibet or seeks to erase its cultural traditions, instead pointing to economic development in the region as evidence of its positive impacts on the population of about 6 million Tibetans.

Losar celebrations

Tibetans around the world held subdued celebrations this Losar – or Tibetan Wood Snake Year, which began Feb. 28 – due to the earthquake that struck Tibet in

January and the death of Gyalo Thondup, the elder brother of the Dalai Lama, in February.

The annual U.S. State Department gathering held Tuesday was the 11th such event organized by the department since the Tibetan New Year was first celebrated at its headquarters in February 2015. It was also the first held since the new Trump administration returned to office.

It was a largely somber observance of the new year, with religious rituals by Tibetan Buddhist monks and participation of young Tibetan Americans explaining the significance of the Losar traditions.

Last week, in what was the new U.S. administration's first remarks on U.S. policy on Tibet, a State Department spokesperson told RFA Tibetan that the Trump administration will continue to call on China to return to direct dialogue with the Dalai Lama or his representatives.

"We will also continue to call on China to cease its interference in the succession of the Dalai Lama and other Tibetan Buddhist lamas and to respect the freedom of religion or belief of individuals of all faiths," the spokesperson said, noting long-running bipartisan support for Tibet.

China invaded far-western Tibet in 1950 and has controlled the territory ever since. The Dalai Lama fled into exile in India amid a large-scale Tibetan uprising against Chinese rule in March 1959.

Since then, Beijing has sought to legitimize Chinese rule through the suppression of dissent and policies undermining Tibetan culture and language. More recently, China has also sought to control the reincarnation process of Tibetan religious leaders in an attempt to interfere in the selection of the Dalai Lama's reincarnation.

At Tuesday's event, Gombis said Tibet should not be forgotten as the United States tries to counter Chinese expansion in other areas, such as its expansionist claims on the South China Sea and Taiwan.

China's Sinicization of Tibetan Buddhism, including its interference in the Dalai Lama's succession process, he said, mirrors its "larger efforts to co-opt other religious traditions," both within China and elsewhere.

"We must challenge the CCP's brazen efforts to undermine the ideals that are a key source of our strength and identity as a nation," he said.

Parliamentarian Geshe Atong Rinchen Gyaltsen Attends Long-Life Prayer Offering to Kyabje Ling Rinpoche

07 March 2025, [CTA](#)



Parliamentarian Geshe Atong Rinchen Gyaltsen Attends Long-Life Prayer Offering to Kyabje Ling Rinpoche

Parliamentarian Geshe Atong Rinchen Gyaltsen, a member of the Standing Committee of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile, attended a long-life prayer offering to Kyabje Ling Rinpoche on 7th March 2025. The longevity prayer was held by Drepung Loseling Chagzoe Khang at Drepung Loseling Jangchup Choeling monastery, Delhi.

The long-life prayer offering was also attended by Secretary Dhondul Dorjee of the Department of Religion and Culture (DoR&C), MP Geshe Lharampa Gowo Lobsang Phende of TPiE, former Deputy Speaker Acharya Yeshe Phuntsok of TPiE, and others.

-Report filed by Tibetan Parliamentary Secretariat

His Holiness the Dalai Lama Attends Offering of Long-life Prayers by Gaden Phodrang and Namgyal Monastery

06 March 2025, [CTA](#)

Today, the first 'auspicious Wednesday' of the new Wood-Snake year, the monks and former monks of Namgyal Monastery and the staff of the Gaden Phodrang, the Office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, offered prayers for his long life to His Holiness the Dalai Lama. The ceremony took place in the halls of the Old Palace at His Holiness's residence. When His Holiness entered the building, Prof Samdhong Rinpoché and the Abbot of Namgyal Monastery were there to greet him. Today's ceremony was based on the rite 'Granting the Essence of Immortality' composed by the Great Fifth Dalai Lama following a vision he had of Guru Padmasambhava in the form of Amitayus. The Abbot of Namgyal Monastery, Thamthog Rinpoché presided over the ritual.

Prof Samdhong Rinpoché made a thanksgiving mandala offering and presented representations of the enlightened body, speech and mind. Then, His Holiness addressed the congregation.

“Today, the office of the Gaden Phodrang, as well as the monks and former monks of Namgyal Monastery, have offered these prayers for my long life. You’ve done it with unwavering faith in recognition of your spiritual bond with me. As you have seen, I have been able to benefit the people of the world to a good extent. In addition, I feel I’ve been able to help Tibetans both inside Tibet and in exile with advice and instructions I have given sincerely.

“So far, I’ve fervently aspired to do my best to benefit the world. I have sincerely given talks with the intention of being helpful to people, whether they think of themselves as religious or not. People with no religious commitment as such have taken interest in what I have to say. I have spoken not so much in praise of religion, but to help people feel at peace with themselves and willing to be of help to others and ultimately create peace in the world.



The Abbot of Namgyal Monastery, Thamthog Rinpoché, presiding over the Long Life Prayer for His Holiness the Dalai Lama at the Old Palace at His Holiness’s residence in Dharamshala, HP, India on 5 March 2025. Photo by Tenzin Choejor

“I’ve shared my thoughts about inner peace in different parts of the world, particularly with regard to our emotions and the workings of our minds as described in Buddhist psychology. On the basis of what I’ve learned about the Buddhist science of mind, I’ve had discussions with modern scientists. Many of them are interested to know more about the mind and how we can tackle our negative emotions to achieve peace of mind within ourselves. Educated people have paid attention to what I’ve had to say. I’ve shared my understanding of the workings of our minds and emotions in scientific terms. When I interact with scientists, I feel I’m a scientist too.

“Scholars and scientists have found what I have to say helpful. I have done my best to help the world by drawing on the profound traditions we have preserved in Tibet. This is a tradition not based on faith alone, but founded on reason and logic. It enables us to put our minds to good use. This is a special feature of our Tibetan heritage, making the best use of our

intelligence. This precious tradition of ours can be of real help to people.



Prof Samdhong Rinpoché presenting traditional offerings to His Holiness the Dalai Lama during the Long Life Prayer at the Old Palace at His Holiness’s residence in Dharamshala, HP, India on 5 March 2025. Photo by Tenzin Choejor

“Since I was a child, I’ve studied mind and awareness in the context of logic. I’ve thoroughly explored the ‘Treasury of Higher Knowledge’ (Abhidharmakosha), which describes cosmology and the formation of the world and so forth in terms that may not comply with current empirical views. These descriptions may be likened to legends. However, books about the Perfection of Wisdom, Middle Way (Madhyamika) Philosophy, logic and epistemology contain sound knowledge about the workings of the mind and emotions. We can share this with the people of the world, without having to touch on religion as such, to encourage the achievement of peace of mind and overcome mental afflictions. This spiritual tradition we uphold is incredible.

“Today, you are offering me these prayers for my long life. I feel I still have many more years to live. I hope to continue to be of help to the people of the world, particularly those in China where there is growing interest in the teaching of the Buddha. I have many friends among them who appreciate what I have to say and I wish to help them.

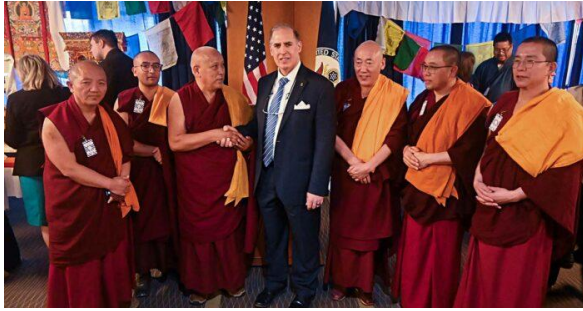
“Today, I’d like to thank you all for offering this long-life ceremony to me.”

The Chant-master then began to recite the final prayer, the ‘Words of Truth’. His Holiness rose from his seat and was escorted back to his residence.

Prayers for earthquake victims and statements of American support for Tibet at State Department Losar event

05 March 2025, [ICT](#)

This weekend saw the beginning of a somber observance of the Tibetan New Year as Tibetans reflected on the recent earthquake inside Tibet and the death of Kasur Gyalo Thondup, His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s brother. As tradition holds, Losar also is a time to forward to the coming year as a time of hope and renewal.



Senior Official Albert Gombis, performing the duties of the Under Secretary for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights with members of the Gyuto Tantric Monastery at the State Department 2025 Losar reception.

Losar, the Tibetan New Year, began on Feb. 28, 2025, marking the start of the Year of the Wood Snake – 2152 in the Tibetan lunar calendar.

State Department event

Yesterday, representatives of the Tibetan community and invited guests joined together at the US State Department's annual gathering to observe Tibetan New Year. State Department leaders; including Senior Official Albert Gombis performing the duties of the Under Secretary for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights attended the event.

Last week, Secretary of State Marco Rubio released a statement saying, "I extend my warmest wishes to all those celebrating Losar, the Tibetan New Year. On this first day of the Year of the Wood Snake, we celebrate the strength and perseverance of the Tibetan community worldwide. The United States remains committed to protecting the universal, fundamental, and inalienable human rights of Tibetans and promoting their distinct cultural, linguistic, and religious heritage.

I wish Tibetans celebrating all across the world peace and prosperity in the new year. Losar Tashi Delek and Happy New Year!"

At the State Department 2025 Losar Reception, Senior Official Gombis spoke to the close relationship between America and all Tibetans, "We recognize that the safety of the United States is inextricably bound to the battle of ideas and influence with the Chinese Communist Party... their struggle constitutes one of the front lines in the global effort for freedom from the Chinese Communist Party's repression.

He continued, "US strength is reinforced in an international system that upholds and promotes universal, fundamental, and inalienable human rights, including the freedom of religion or belief. The CCP's co-optation of Tibetan Buddhism, including its interference in the Dalai Lama's succession process, mirrors its larger efforts to co-opt other religious traditions, both within China and globally. We must challenge the CCP's brazen efforts to undermine the ideals that are a key source of our strength and identity

as a nation. We must also empower Tibetans to negotiate an enduring solution for Tibet – one that guarantees meaningful autonomy and allows them to express their religious and cultural identity without fear of repression.

As Asia's high ground and source of the regions major rivers, that sustain 1.8 billion people, Gombis further attested to the critical role Tibet plays in US and global stability adding, "The CCP's aggressive extraction of Tibet's resources and construction of hydropower dams threaten the stability of broad swaths of South and Southeast Asia, livelihoods of communities there, and by extension, US economic and trade relationships in the Indo-Pacific."

He concluded, "US advocacy for Tibet contributes to America's own strength, prosperity, and stability and is important if we believe that religious freedom is indeed a universal, fundamental, and inalienable right, then standing up for the Tibetan community and supporting you all here today is simply the right thing to do." The full remarks of Senior Official Gombis can be found here.

These remarks represent the newly inaugurated Trump Administration's first statement regarding Tibet, continuing decades long bipartisan support. In addition to the State Department speakers, Namgyal Choedup, Representative of the Office of Tibet spoke to "As the Tibetan people all over the world mark another Losar in the face of China's relentless assault on the Tibetan civilization, the spirit and determination of the Tibetan people remains ever stronger because the human desire for freedom and dignity can never be suppressed."

ICT President, Tencho Gyatso shared remarks and thoughts on the coming year, saying, "This year, Losar is being marked in a somber way as Tibetans reflect on the uncertain aftermath of the recent devastation and loss of the life in the earthquake in Western Tibet, as well as the recent passing of the elder brother of His Holiness. Tibetans are gathering in prayer and marking the new year with traditional cultural activities without the usual festivities."

Tibet in US Foreign Policy

US policy and investment in Tibet has always been a critical facet of an overall regional strategy to confront China's political and military expansion across the region. The United States must enhance and focus its engagement or risk allowing China to achieve its goal, weakening the US interest. Tibetans have stood on the frontlines of resisting CCP repression for decades, and relatively small funding amounts are crucial to enabling this resistance.

Currently, all foreign assistance that supports many programs worldwide, has been frozen by the new administration. ICT, the Office of Tibet, and other organizations are working to ensure that this funding is not lost.

Further Losar events

Events were held nationwide including a busy Losar in New York City. Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer joined in observing Losar at a NYC Tibetan Community Center, marking his first Losar with the Tibetan community. The City Council added Losar to the list of officially recognized holidays in the city, providing observers of Losar with eased parking restrictions. Finally, the Mayor's office unveiled a new Tibetan language Facebook page for the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs.

ICT sends our best wishes to all as we begin the year of the Wood Snake and our hopes for abundant blessings of peace, health, and happiness to all.

The Tibetan gully boys who have found a new groove

05 March 2025, Times of India, Mohua Das

Tibetan music used to be unmistakable - think guttural chants of Buddhist monks, and healing bowls and bells set to the rock and reggae anthems of the '90s that tapped into sentiments of Tibetan refugees to unite and fight for independence. It was a window into their relationships and traditions in exile. So, when G-Tashi, 32, born in a refugee settlement in Karwar, Karnataka; K Kush, born Tenzin Kulsang in McLeod Ganj; and Tenzin Namsel, 27, better known as T-Nammy, from Delhi's Tibetan colony Majnu Ka Tilla decided to flip the script, few took their bedroom raps seriously. They took the unconventional route of dropping their impromptu freeverses on YouTube with its laidback swagger, and gritty hooks and riffs often paired with low-budget videos shot in deserted alleys, bedrooms, atop cars, in under-construction buildings - classic hip-hop territory - and their persistence and potent voice are paying off. Rap seems to come naturally to Tibetans. G-Tashi says Tibetan Buddhist chants often sync perfectly with rap beats "due to their repetitive and structured use of mantras and phrases." T-Nammy agrees, recalling a Swiss artist who had remarked on the similarity. "It made sense to me because it takes a lot of practice for monks to recite those prayers quickly, much like mastering a rap flow. Even though there wasn't a beat back then, the rhythm was already there." This fresh wave of Tibetan musicians still sings about the ache of 1959 and their need to connect with a homeland they've never seen, drawing from the struggles of their parents and grandparents who had fled Tibet during the Chinese invasion and followed the 14th Dalai Lama into India's capital-in-exile for the Tibetan diaspora, Dharamshala. But they're also pushing beyond nostalgia to build a new narrative for their community using the raw, unfiltered world of hip-hop - on why Indians shouldn't lump Tibetans with the Northeast, their desire for connection, and even about

'tasampa', a traditional Tibetan food made from roasted barley flour.

When 19-year-old Tenzin Younten from Darjeeling spotted two Tibetans conversing in Nepali, he knew he had to do something. "Seeing them speak another language made me want to preserve our own," Younten told Radio Free Asia last year. It fuelled him to write 'Speak in Tibetan if you are Tibetan,' a rap aimed at rallying young Tibetans in exile to embrace their native tongue. Today, Younten - whose stage name is Youns BoB - has a YouTube following running into 15,000.

G-Tashi's 'Can You Hear Me?' has racked up over two lakh views. He usually raps about the "dilemma with oneself as an artist, life as Tibetan youth in the hill towns and the unity we share." T-Nammy, who was raised in a modest home made of plastic sheets and wooden planks and counts American rapper-activist Tupac Shakur as his idol, recalls his uncle's CD shop as his "gateway to music." His song 'Letter to God,' with over 40,000 views, is an emotional response to a period of repeated rejections from international shows, a break-in that robbed him of his music equipment and a personal crisis that led to emotional conversations with his father. "I used to be caught up in a destructive lifestyle - weed, alcohol, wasting family money... Music became my anchor, gave me a sense of purpose. Seeing the impact my music was having on other young folks made me clean up my act," he says. As he matured, T-Nammy's music embraced the intangible reality of his ancestral land. "Even though I've never set foot in Tibet, I need no reason to love my country," says the 27-year-old who uses their traditional flute (gyaling) and guitar (sgra-snyan) in his music as his way "to honour this deep-seated connection and cultural pride." G-Tashi, too, reflects on how the idea of 'home' shapes his music. "It touches on themes of exile and Tibetan identity. The collab with Kush is about my 'D-Town,' a nod to Dhasha, short for Dharamshala. We also reference the year 1959 with the line 'nyapchu nga gu nantso sempa nangla,' meaning '59 in our heart'." K Kush, who traces his ancestry to Tibet's Kham region, channels this heritage into his groove-heavy verses and uses traditional Tibetan instruments like the dra-nyen and piwang with modern sounds. "To keep our culture relatable to younger Tibetans," he explains. Being young and Tibetan in India can be complex. "Sometimes, my Indianness overshadows my Tibetan-ness, which isn't always a bad thing. But I have to remind myself of the responsibility I carry as a Tibetan in exile to pass on what I've inherited," says G-Tashi. Passionate about keeping his culture alive, he has been integrating Tibetan lullabies his father sang to him into his music. "There's more to us than the image of chanting 'Om mani padme hum.' It's not about deliberately breaking stereotypes, but proving that

Tibetan music is diverse and evolving." Their music is on all major streaming platforms. They perform for Tibetan audiences around Dharamsala, Delhi, and at cafes and clubs in Tibetan settlements across India, as well as concerts organised by Tibetan NGOs abroad, especially during Losar, the Tibetan New Year (Feb 28-March 2). "We hope our listeners walk away with a sense of self-love, positivity and deeper connection to our unique heritage and lost homeland," says K Kush.

Sikyong Penpa Tsering says not all US assistance for Tibetans may have been paused

05 March 2025, [Tibetan Review](#)

President Donald J Trump's Jan 20 decision to pause all US foreign development assistance programmes for 90 days pending a comprehensive review has affected a major portion of US aid programs for Tibetans, but possibly not all of them, Sikyong (executive head) Mr Penpa Tsering of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) said Mar 3.

Earlier, addressing the Tibetan public at the Bylakuppe Tibetan Settlement in Karnataka state of India, the Tibetan Sikyong said the CTA had been informed by the US government on Mar 27 of the latter's discontinuation of aid to the Tibetan exile community. US aid programs for Tibetans are administered under the US Agency for International Development (USAID), the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM), and others.

Later, in an interview with the Tibetan service of *Radio Free Asia* on Mar 4, the Tibetan Sikyong explained that he had since been informed by sources that the PRM aid for Tibetans might continue; that this aid program directly functions under the US State Department.

Referring to Secretary of State Marco Rubio's greetings to Tibetans on their Losar (New Year) celebrations which began on Feb 28, Sikyong Penpa Tsering called him a long-time supporter of Tibetans, noting his remark that Washington's supportive policy on Tibet will remain unchanged.

The temporary global freeze of US assistance under USAID has led to a pause in the continuation of two ongoing major projects under the CTA's Department of Religion & Culture and two other five-year projects that are in their 4th and 5th years of operation.

There is also the five-year USAID program titled "Strengthening Economic, Social, and Cultural Resilience of Tibetan Communities in South Asia", estimated to be worth \$23-24 million, launched in Nov 2024 which is yet to takeoff, with its future remaining uncertain.

The Trump administration plans to cut approximately \$60 billion in foreign aid by terminating 92% of the USAID grants and contracts, effectively reducing its

workforce from over 10,000 to fewer than 300 employees. However, the plans face serious legal and political hurdles. A looming US government shutdown on Mar 14, 2025, adds uncertainty to the implementation of these cuts.

On Mar 5, The Supreme Court rejected President Trump's emergency request to freeze nearly \$2 billion in foreign aid as part of his efforts to slash government spending. By a 5-4 majority decision, the justices ruled that the Trump administration must follow through with those payments. The court is dominated by Republican-President appointees, including three by Trump in his previous term.

US officially ends aid to Tibetans following policy review: CTA President

04 March 2025, [Phayul](#), Tenzin Nyidon

The President of the exile Tibetan government known officially as the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), Penpa Tsering, confirmed on March 1 that the United States has formally discontinued all aid funding for Tibetans following a policy review.

Addressing a public gathering at the Bylakuppe Tibetan Settlement on the second day of Losar (Tibetan New Year), President Tsering disclosed that the U.S. government had officially notified the CTA of the funding cut on March 27. He acknowledged the decision and its potential impact on the Tibetan exile community, emphasizing that the cessation of funds could lead to delays or suspensions in several key programs, including welfare initiatives, educational scholarships, and socio-economic development projects.

"This discontinuation presents unforeseen challenges— something that no one had anticipated. It will be difficult to respond swiftly and secure alternative support," he stated. However, he urged the community to remain resilient, assuring that efforts to restore the aid were ongoing.

President Tsering further elaborated that the U.S. government has historically supported Tibetan initiatives and the CTA through multiple channels. The aid suspension will disrupt several key programs, including the \$7 million allocated via Tibet Fund for Tibetan refugee and diaspora community development and education, the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM), funding of \$2 million for healthcare initiatives in India and Nepal, and the CTA's five-year developmental program, now in its fourth year, which had been receiving an annual grant of \$3 million, totalling \$15 million. Additionally, the suspension will affect the Department of Religion and Culture three-year Tibetan Digital Library project and the \$10 million Inside Tibet program, funded

through USAID, which operates independently of CTA oversight.

He also noted that the US had enacted broad funding cuts to multiple countries worldwide, including \$14 million earmarked for education, healthcare, and social welfare programs benefiting the Tibetan refugee community.

The executive head reaffirmed his commitment to lobbying for the restoration of financial assistance. However, should these efforts prove unsuccessful, he outlined alternative solutions. He recalled that when the initial executive order suspending the funds was issued, the Tibetan diaspora had voiced concerns over the potential hardships this would create for the administration. At the time, some members of the diaspora had proposed making voluntary contributions to offset the shortfall, but he advised them to wait until the final decision was confirmed.

President Tsering announced that he will convene a cabinet meeting on March 6 to discuss alternative strategies. He has already directed the Department of Finance to prepare for a worst-case scenario and evaluate the possible repercussions for the Tibetan exile community. Furthermore, he indicated that a review of the budget plan would be undertaken ahead of the upcoming budget session, set to commence on March 17.

Historically, the US government has provided substantial financial assistance to Tibetan communities in exile to support education, cultural preservation, and humanitarian initiatives through various channels, including the State Department, USAID, and congressional appropriations, as well as through non-governmental organizations like the Tibet Fund.

The U.S. Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) spearheaded the massive slash in foreign aid, impacting numerous countries worldwide, including Tibetan programs. While the funding for Tibetans are relatively smaller compared to those affecting other nations, the exile Tibetan administration has, nonetheless been significantly affected by this policy shift.

Following the announcement of the aid termination, President Tsering told Radio Free Asia that the U.S. government has reaffirmed its commitment to the broader Tibet issue. While confirming the official cessation of funding, he noted that the State Department's PRM allocation might continue. He also indicated that ongoing efforts are being made to sustain funding for certain programs, as specific policy considerations may allow for the continuation of select aid initiatives.

Despite multiple inquiries by Phayul, CTA officials declined to comment, citing directives from the executive instructing them not to discuss the matter with media houses.

UN rights chief alarmed by situation in Tibet, urges int'l pressure on China

04 March 2025, [Tibetan Review](#)

The UN human rights chief has said Mar 3 he was "concerned about the impact of education policy and the restriction of freedom of expression and religion in the Tibet Autonomous Region" and vowed to continue to raise these issues in his ongoing discussions with the Chinese government.

Presenting his Global Update before the 58th session of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Türk, also emphasized that while China has engaged with the international human rights system, progress in addressing systemic violations has been insufficient, and the international community must ramp up its efforts, reported the *ANI* news service Mar 3.

Welcoming Türk for explicitly referring to the situation in Tibet, Washington-based International Campaign for Tibet ([savetibet.org](#)) said in a statement Mar 3: "We welcome the explicit reference to Tibet in the UN High Commissioner's statement. This is especially important because his predecessor, Michelle Bachelet, didn't reference the deeply troubling situation in Tibet forcefully. The international community, the United Nations, and nation-states must once again focus more on the situation in Tibet. This is about peaceful conflict resolution and the survival of a civilization."

Overall, Türk has particularly highlighted the ongoing persecution in the People's Republic of China of lawyers, human rights defenders, and citizen journalists, many of whom face arbitrary detention under vague criminal charges.

"While China is engaging with the international human rights system, I refer back to my previous updates raising serious concerns and hope to see meaningful progress on these issues. I continue to make representations on behalf of lawyers, human rights defenders, and citizen journalists who have been arbitrarily detained under vague criminal offences."

He has called for heightened international pressure on China to address these pervasive human rights violations and respect fundamental freedoms.

Tibet is one of the least free places in the world: Freedom House Report 2025

03 March 2025, [The Tibet Post](#), Yangchen Dolma

Freedom House released its "Freedom in the World 2024" report on Thursday and ranked Tibet among the world's least free countries with zero (0) in political and civil liberties. The report said that "In Tibet, the CCP aggressively defends its monopoly on political power, and any expression of support for self-determination is severely punished. As a result,

Tibet is one of the least free places in the world, with an aggregate score that is even lower than China's."

Freedom House, an independent organisation dedicated to promoting freedom around the world, released its annual report, "Freedom in the World 2025: The Uphill Battle to Safeguard Rights" on February 27, 2025. Tibet has been ranked the least free country in the world, with zero (0) political and civil liberties in 2024, Tibet has been ranked as the least free countries since 2015. Last year, Tibet ranked as the least free region in the world with an overall score of -2 in political rights.

The "Freedom in the World 2024" report assessed 210 countries and territories worldwide. 83 countries and regions were classified as free, 56 as partially free and 56 as not free. Free categories include countries such as Sweden, Norway, the UK, France, Spain, Australia, the USA, Canada, Brazil, Argentina, etc., while partially free countries include India, Mexico and Thailand, and not-free countries include Tibet, Hong Kong, China, Russia, Kazakhstan and many African countries.

The report of Freedom House states, "Freedom declined around the world for the 19th consecutive year in 2024. People experienced deterioration in their political rights and civil liberties in 60 countries, and secured improvements in only 34 countries. In settings where conditions worsened, key factors driving the degradation in rights and liberties included violence and the repression of political opponents during elections, ongoing armed conflicts, and the spread of authoritarian practices."

Freedom House listed 67 countries and territories designated as Not Free, Tibet was the among the worst aggregate scores for political rights and civil liberties. Tibet remained among Freedom in the World's worst-scoring countries and territories since 2005.

The report states, "In Tibet, the CCP aggressively defends its monopoly on political power, and any expression of support for self-determination is severely punished. For decades, Beijing has encouraged the settlement of Han Chinese and forced hundreds of thousands of ethnic Tibetans into reeducation, resettlement, or employment programs that are rife with political indoctrination, effectively attempting to Sinicize the region and erase Tibetan identity. As a result, Tibet is one of the least free places in the world, with an aggregate score that is even lower than China's. During 2023, approximately one million Tibetan children were separated from their families and put into state-run boarding schools where official versions of Han Chinese culture and language are forcibly inculcated."

"In Hong Kong, Tibet, and Western Sahara, the local populations could not exercise political self-determination, leaving them vulnerable to assaults on their civil liberties through the exercise of unchecked power," it added.

The Freedom House report declares, "People living in disputed territories without access to self-determination were especially vulnerable to abuses by authorities with no meaningful checks on their power. Beijing continued to clamp down on the few freedoms available to residents of Hong Kong and Tibet."

"China's authoritarian regime is also working to undermine democracy abroad by interfering in elections. Taiwan's January 2024 presidential election took place in the shadow of Beijing's "three warfares" strategy toward the island, which included efforts to influence public opinion. In late 2023, media reports indicated that the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) had convened high-level meetings on the need for effective but covert methods of influencing the Taiwanese election. During the campaign, the Chinese leadership issued messages, relied on disinformation, and used military exercises to frame the election for Taiwanese voters as a choice between war and peace, with the aim of deterring them from supporting political parties and candidates that take a harder line on cross-strait relations," the report mentioned.

Freedom House recommends to world leaders, "with each year of global decline in freedom, it has become more urgent for democracies to work together to halt and roll back the deterioration. The events of this period have demonstrated, again and again, that the harmful effects of authoritarian repression and misrule regularly spill across national borders. And just as tyranny fuels the spread of instability, armed conflict, terrorism, mass displacement, and corruption around the world, it is the protection of democratic rights and the rule of law that ultimately ensure freedom, security, and prosperity."

Who after Dalai Lama? Tibetans seek answers amid festivity

01 March 2025, [The Tribune](#), Pratibha Chauhan

As Tibetans across India today celebrated Losar, the Tibetan New Year, though on a sombre note to pledge solidarity with earthquake victims in Tibet, the Dalai Lama was missing from the celebrations at McLeodganj, the seat of the Tibetan...

As Tibetans across India today celebrated Losar, the Tibetan New Year, though on a sombre note to pledge solidarity with earthquake victims in Tibet, the Dalai Lama was missing from the celebrations at McLeodganj, the seat of the Tibetan government-in-exile. The Dalai Lama, who returned home from South India last week, shared his message with the faithful amid prayers at the monastery in McLeodganj.

Advertisement

The Tibetan leader, hailed as the reincarnation of Avalokiteswara, or the Buddha, turns 90 on July 7, and is said to be in frail health.

The question, “After Dalai Lama, who”, is at the back of the mind of every Tibetan as well as the Central Government, considering the geopolitical importance of Tibet in which China’s expanding influence plays a key role.

“The Dalai Lama has said he will leave written instructions about his reincarnation. However, till such time the next Dalai Lama is found, we will require a spiritual leader like the 17th Karmapa to prevent China from interfering in our religious affairs,” said Tenzin Tsundue, a Tibetan activist and writer.

In the past, the Dalai Lama has said his successor will be born outside Tibet and can even be a woman.

Others like Lhagyari Namgyal Dolkar, a two-time MP in the Tibetan Parliament-in-exile, feels that it is the political leadership which will have to fill the vacuum in the absence of the Dalai Lama.

“His Holiness has made the Tibetan people self-reliant but till the time of his reincarnation, people who are suffering inside Tibet and the exiled Tibetans will have to keep inspiring each other to keep the Tibetan freedom movement going as it is our identity and existence,” says Dolkar, whose parents and grandparents were political prisoners in Tibet.

The Karmapa, Ogyen Trinley Dorjee, who made a miraculous escape from his monastery in Xigaze, China, for India in 2000 when he was only 14 years old, is the head of the Karma Kagyu sect of Tibetan Buddhism and has been accepted by the Dalai Lama as such. But he has been in the middle of considerable personal upheaval in recent years, living abroad since May 2017.

He has since lived in the US, Canada and Germany, and most recently obtained the citizenship of the Caribbean nation of Dominica. Tibetan observers, speaking on condition of anonymity, believe “it will be natural” if he were to emerge as the most powerful Tibetan Buddhist leader after the Dalai Lama and become the face of the Tibetan movement-in-exile after the Dalai Lama.

On September 2, 2024, the Karmapa met the Dalai Lama at Zurich in Switzerland and later wrote that he felt sad at seeing him so physically frail. However, there is considerable uncertainty about his return to India even as efforts are being made by Tibetans to convince him to return in the interests of the Tibetan cause.

In Tibetan Buddhism, two religious heads — the Panchen Lama, who heads the Tashilhunpo monastery in Tibet, and the Karmapa — are considered the most important leaders after the Dalai Lama.

While Gedun Choekyi Nyima, who was recognised as the 11th Panchen Lama by the Dalai Lama, remains under Tibetan detention, China appointed Gyaincain

Norbu as the Panchen Lama, creating a dispute over succession.

“There is no doubt that the Karmapa is the most respected and learned religious leader after the Dalai Lama, who has earned the love and respect of the Tibetan community. India must make efforts to bring him back as he will prove to be a unifier for the Tibetans and an asset for India,” says Tibetan activist Tenzin.

There was a dispute over the rightful claimant to the title of the 17th Karmapa with two religious heads choosing separate successors to the 16th Karmapa. The recognition of the 17th Karmapa created a split with Tai Situ Rinpoche choosing Ogyen Trinley Dorjee and Shamar Rinpoche throwing his weight behind Trinley Thaye Dorjee. The Dalai Lama, however, recognised Dorjee and even nurtured him after his surprise arrival in Dharamsala in January 2000.

CHINA POLITICS

Five takeaways from Beijing's largest annual political meetings

16 March 2025, [Atlantic Council](#), Melanie Hart

This week, Beijing concluded its annual “two sessions”—the big plenary meetings of the National People’s Congress (NPC) and Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC). The NPC is China’s legislature, and the CPPCC is a larger, more representative (and largely powerless) group that provides advice to the NPC. In China’s authoritarian system, this is the annual pageantry the Chinese Communist Party goes through to claim that it governs through so-called “whole process people’s democracy” rather than strongman authoritarianism. In reality, of course, the party—and increasingly the strongman at the top—makes the real decisions, while the NPC largely serves as a performative rubber stamp. The pageantry is important, however, as it demonstrates what the party believes it needs to signal to its people and the world. Five notable signals stood out at this year’s two sessions.

1. Chinese President Xi Jinping is at the apex of his power

For all the pageantry—which, as always, included heartwarming footage of people from across China marching into plenary sessions, some in colorful indigenous costumes—this was a one-man show. The signaling was as much about paying homage to Xi as it was about presenting the NPC. Throughout the NPC—which included work reports from major government agencies—major successes were attributed primarily to Xi. In contrast, major challenges were attributed to China’s outside environment, which is often code for US actions that constrain Beijing. For example, the National Development and Reform Commission, China’s major economic agency, made sure to give Xi credit for its economic achievements in 2024, stating (in bold): “We owe these achievements to General Secretary Xi Jinping, who is at the helm charting the course . . .” Beijing sees no need to pretend that Xi himself is part of the consultative pageantry. He sits high above it.

2. There are two Chinese economies, and Beijing is betting on the stronger horse to pull the country through

At the macro level, if you look at Chinese consumer sentiment or at the Chinese industries suffering from overcapacity, the situation is dire. But, just as in any economy, there are always winners in the mix somewhere. Several high-tech companies are innovating, have access to capital, and are experiencing rapid growth. DeepSeek is one such company, and Beijing has milked that example to the max. When asked at a press conference on March 7 about DeepSeek and US efforts to hold China back in technological innovation, Chinese Foreign Minister

Wang Yi responded: “Where there is blockade, there is breakthrough; where there is suppression, there is innovation; where there is the fiercest storm, there is the platform launching China’s science and technology skyward like the Chinese mythological hero Nezha soaring into the heavens.” Beijing is betting on bright lights in the tech sector to pull its economy through its current slump.

Advancing science and technology were major themes present throughout the NPC. Chinese leaders announced the launch of a new high-tech “state venture capital guidance fund” and committed to maintain high research and development spending. But what did not appear, as my colleague Jeremy Mark noted earlier this week, was any serious, trend-bending movement toward supporting Chinese consumers and ramping up domestic spending.

3. Beijing sees US President Donald Trump’s strongman-style foreign policy as an opportunity to paint China as the kinder, better partner

Beijing is facing foreign policy headwinds. China recently became the world’s largest creditor—and an increasingly unforgiving one—at the same time as its outbound investment flows fell. That combo is painting China as an unpopular debt collector across the Global South. Chinese economic coercion is triggering a wave of de-risking. So-called “wolf warrior” diplomacy has scored multiple own goals.

Now, however, Beijing sees Trump’s style as an opportunity to wipe that slate clean. This was clear throughout the Chinese foreign minister’s press conference on March 7, where he framed China as the responsible leader “providing certainty to this uncertain world” and “safeguarding the multilateral free trade system.” In a clear dig at the United States, he stated “those with stronger arms and bigger fists should not be allowed to call the shots.” He left nothing on the shelf, calling out US rhetoric on Gaza and Latin America, stating on the latter that: “What people in [Latin American and Caribbean] countries want is to build their own home, not to become someone’s backyard; what they aspire to is independence and self-decision, not the Monroe Doctrine.”

From Washington’s perspective, it is easy to view this as empty rhetoric given the reality of Beijing’s global bullying. But this is likely what Chinese diplomats are saying behind closed doors in every capital around the world, too. It will resonate in many. Washington should take heed and avoid scoring own goals itself.

4. Combating climate change is not a priority

The NPC work report continued the trend seen since at least 2019, when Beijing began to shift from shutting down and cleaning up its coal plants to viewing coal as its primary stable source of energy. In the report, China committed to “implement a coal production reserve system, continue to increase coal production

and supply capacity, and consolidate the basic supporting role of coal.” The report treats coal production as a resource security issue, separate from China’s clean energy, environment, and climate goals.

5. Chinese leaders see no reason to change course

Throughout the two sessions, Chinese leaders applauded 2024 successes and previewed a 2025 plan that is largely a steady onward course with some modifications at the margins. To the extent they acknowledge challenges—particularly economic challenges—they did not tie those to Beijing’s own policies. Instead, they blamed the United States and other outside forces, including a sluggish global economy. That does not bode well for Chinese consumers or the overseas manufacturers struggling to compete with the outbound flow of goods China’s factories are producing at overcapacity and unable to sell at home.

The Trump administration is rolling out wave after wave of tariffs on US imports from China, ostensibly to build leverage for some type of grand bilateral bargain. Throughout the two sessions, Xi and other Chinese leaders signaled they are sticking to their state-managed economic approach and view the United States as their biggest external political risk. If anyone in Washington is still hoping China will put meaningful economic concessions on the table to buy its way out of US tariffs, those folks are not paying close attention to the signals coming out of Beijing.

‘UN Human Rights Session: Chinese delegation shares human rights developments across China with international community

15 March 2025, [CGTN](#)

China’s delegation, composed of researchers, scientists, and experts, is attending the UN Human Rights Council’s 58th session in Geneva, Switzerland. Their main purpose is to discuss human rights advancements in China and worldwide with delegations from around the globe. Julia Lyubova has more.

Researchers and experts from China are attending the 58th Session of the Human Rights Council at the UN offices in Geneva. The delegation comprises two Chinese NGOs the China Foundation for Human Rights Development and China Society for Human Rights Studies. They are attending human rights sessions on disabilities, children, terrorism and many other issues. DA LU, Associate Professor of Law, School of Human Rights, Southwest University of Political Science and Law “I think nowadays it’s very important to when we’re discussing about the human rights issues, it’s very important to let the social society, the civil society, to involving in these kinds of discussions. When decision making, it’s very important to let the

voice and from this civil society or the NGOs also to be heard."

Some of the members of the delegation spoke during main sessions addressing international audiences. They talked about the human rights developments in China, including in the regions of Xizang and Xinjiang. NILUOBAIER AIERTI, Lecturer, School of Media and Communication, Xinjiang University of Arts "For the legal system, we already established a really comprehensive legal system. And for the practical part, for example, there are more than 4,000 Women's and Children's protection centers have been established all over the Xinjiang region to give them more convenient services and for the economic part, women have equal access to the job market."

The delegation is also taking an active part in some of the discussions and attends side events. One event on advancing women's rights for an equitable and sustainable future saw speakers from China, Cuba and Switzerland. The delegation says it is a great opportunity to exchange ideas and to network with other experts. Members of the Chinese delegation to this session of the Human Rights Council say being here is an opportunity to share the human rights situations in different regions of China with the rest of the world. They're also able to observe and discuss human rights developments around the world. Julia Lyubova, CGTN, Geneva.

'Filled with arrogance': China lashes out at G7 over statements on maritime security

15 March 2025, [AP News](#), Christopher Bodeen

China has lashed out at accusations it is endangering maritime safety made by top diplomats from in a joint statement, saying the G7 members are "filled with arrogance, prejudice and malicious intentions."

Even for China's generally overheated diplomatic language, the statement issued Saturday was unusually vitriolic, although it did not threaten any retaliation.

In the Friday statement that sparked the Chinese response, the G7 said, "We condemn China's illicit, provocative, coercive and dangerous actions that seek unilaterally to alter the status quo in such a way as to risk undermining the stability of regions, including through land reclaims, and building of outposts, as well as their use for military purpose."

"We reaffirm that our basic policies on Taiwan remain unchanged and emphasize the importance of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait as indispensable to international security and prosperity," the statement said, referring to the crucial waterway separating China from the self-governing island republic it claims as its own territory.

In the response issued through its embassy in Canada, where the two-day G7 meeting was held in La Malbaie, Quebec, China said the statement "repeated the same old rhetoric, ignored facts and China's solemn position, grossly interfered in China's internal affairs, and blatantly smeared China."

"The statements are filled with arrogance, prejudice and malicious intentions to suppress and attack China. China strongly deplores and opposes this and has lodged solemn representations with the Canadian side," the statement said.

China claims virtually the entire South China Sea, through which passes around \$5 trillion in global trade. It has dismissed and occasionally clashed with other countries that claim parts of the sea, especially the Philippines, a U.S. treaty partner.

China is not a member of the G7 but closely follows all comments and references to its international status made by international organizations or in foreign countries, responding to criticism with caustic language.

China has firmly rejected a U.N.-affiliated court's ruling that invalidated most of its claims to the South China Sea and says its claim to Taiwan is non-negotiable, even if China has to use force against the island.

China routinely sends ships and warplanes into airspace and waters near Taiwan, built military bases on human-made islands in the South China Sea and recently staged surprise live-fire exercises in the Tasman Sea between Australia and New Zealand for which it gave no advance notice.

Australia's aviation authority said it learned of the drills just 30 minutes before they began, not from Beijing but from a pilot flying in the area, and 49 commercial flights were forced to alter their flight paths in response.

The G7 did not mention the drills in its statement.

"We share a growing concern at recent, unjustifiable efforts to restrict such freedom and to expand jurisdiction through use of force and other forms of coercion, including across the Taiwan Strait, and in the South China Sea, the Red Sea, and the Black Sea," the G7 said.

China has the world's largest navy, including three aircraft carriers, with a fourth on the way. It has a base in Sheikhdom of Djibouti in the Horn of Africa and consistently has expanded the range of the force.

China's No 3 Zhao Leji returns to public spotlight after missing end of 'two sessions'

12 March 2025, [SCMP](#), Enoch Wong

The chairman of the National People's Congress skipped its closing ceremony this week due to a respiratory tract infection

China's third most senior official, Zhao Leji, has reappeared in public after missing the end of the country's main political event due to ill health.

Zhao, the chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC), met state media employees in Beijing on Wednesday to thank them for their coverage of the annual legislative session.

Zhao, 68, missed Tuesday's NPC closing ceremony because of a respiratory tract infection and left his deputy, Li Hongzhong, to preside over the event instead. He also missed Monday's closing ceremony for the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC).

It was the first time in decades that the NPC closing meeting was not attended by all members of the Politburo Standing Committee, the Communist Party's top leadership group.

In footage of Wednesday's meeting aired on state broadcaster CCTV, Zhao appeared energetic, delivering speeches and interacting comfortably with participants.

He hosted a similar gathering in the previous two years. CPPCC chairman Wang Huning also held similar meetings with the media on Tuesday.

At the meeting Zhao thanked state media for helping to boost confidence and presenting a positive outlook on China's economic future, saying: "The reports reflected pragmatic and efficient democratic practices, showcasing democracy, unity, practicality and ambition."

He said journalists should continue to regard the NPC's meeting as "a rich mine of news" that could help deepen public understanding of China's political framework and "tell China's story".

In 2017, Zhao was promoted to the Politburo Standing Committee and succeeded former vice-president Wang Qishan as the secretary of the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection, the party's top anti-corruption body. He stepped aside from the post in 2022.

He was reappointed to the Politburo Standing Committee at the 20th party congress in 2022, becoming its third-ranked member. In March 2023, he was appointed the chairman of the NPC Standing Committee, succeeding Li Zhanshu.

China unveils big plan to fix its ailing economy and transform into a high-tech power

11 March 2025, [CNN Business](#), Simone McCarthy

China's leaders have spent the past week unveiling their plan to steer the world's second-largest economy through looming challenges by transforming the country into a technological powerhouse and ramping up spending to hit an ambitious growth target.

The thousands of delegates who gathered in Beijing for a week-long meeting of China's rubber-stamp legislature voted almost unanimously Tuesday to approve that plan, which was laid out across a government work report and annual budget.

The stakes are high for China's government, and Xi Jinping, the country's most powerful leader in decades, to get these initiatives right.

Beijing needs to fix a raft of domestic issues, including the fallout of a sprawling real estate crisis, high local government debt and weak consumer demand, while facing mounting economic pressure from the United States as President Donald Trump ramps up tariffs on Chinese imports and threatens expanded controls on American investment in China.

On Sunday, new data showed China's consumer prices plunged to their lowest level in 13 months in February, underscoring the persistent deflationary pressures dragging on the economy.

Chinese leaders were frank about the challenges ahead, even as they played up confidence in China's future. Premier Li Qiang said at the opening of the National People's Congress (NPC) Wednesday that the country's growth target of around 5% "underscores our resolve to meet difficulties head-on and strive hard to deliver."

The highly choreographed gathering is largely about political ceremony as true decision-making power lies with China's ruling Communist Party.

But the priorities outlined – and the signals sent by Xi and his officials during the event – give a crucial window into how Beijing aims to ensure China's continued economic growth and technological rise, especially at a time of mounting frictions and uncertainty in its relations with the US.

Here are key three takeaways:

Focus on AI and 'industries of the future'

Artificial intelligence (AI) was the hot topic at this year's gathering, with China's enthusiasm for the technology supercharged by the breakout success of tech firm DeepSeek.

The privately owned Chinese company's large language model, released in January, shocked Silicon Valley and thrilled the country. The model appeared to nearly match the capabilities of its American rivals, despite years of mounting US restrictions on Chinese access to high-power AI chips typically used to train such models.

China's economic tsars on Thursday announced a state-backed fund to support AI and other technological innovations, which they estimated would attract nearly 1 trillion yuan (\$138 billion) in capital over 20 years from local governments and the private sector.

The government's work report, a roughly 30-page document laying out Beijing's plans for the year ahead, called for the country to "foster emerging industries

and industries of the future” like biomanufacturing, quantum technology, embodied AI and 6G technology. It also stressed that China needs to build up its domestic talent and improve the country’s research and development.

That’s all part of Xi’s overarching vision: to transform China’s industries with high-tech innovation and ensure the country is technologically self-sufficient in the face of US efforts to limit Chinese access to American technologies over security concerns.

“China is sending a signal to the outside world that it’s quite independent from the US now,” said Wang Yiwei, director of the Institute of International Affairs at Renmin University in Beijing, pointing to China’s homegrown tech innovations and its ambitious economic growth target. “Now we have to do (technological innovation) ourselves ... it’s more like two circles of innovation.”

Xi also signaled he’s enlisting some new muscle for his high-tech push. Last month, the leader met with the heads of the country’s biggest tech firms in a symposium and told them it was “prime time” for private enterprises “to give full play to their capabilities.”

The gathering was a significant tone shift toward an industry still recovering from a years-long regulatory crackdown – and Xi reinforced his message during a meeting on the NPC sidelines last week, where he told delegates to “fully implement” the “spirit” of that symposium.

Boosting demand and juicing growth

Officials also announced they would back their ambitious “around 5%” growth target with more robust government spending, raising the budget deficit to around 4% of gross domestic product, the highest level in decades.

But some analysts remain skeptical about whether the measures announced in recent days will be enough to offset the expected hit to growth if a trade war with the US escalates – and to achieve a goal China this year listed as its top priority: boosting flagging consumer demand.

China would “move faster” to address inadequate domestic demand and make it the “main engine” of growth, Li, the premier, said in his address Wednesday. High youth unemployment, gaps in social benefits and welfare, stock market volatility, as well as financial instability caused by the property sector crisis, are all seen as factors causing many in China to look at their economic future with uncertainty – and prefer to save rather than spend.

The issue is now becoming more urgent for Beijing, which will need domestic consumers more than ever if exports, long an important driver of growth, take a hit from fresh American tariffs. Trump doubled additional levies on all Chinese imports to the US to 20% on March 4. China’s retaliatory tariffs, which

target a range of agricultural imports from the US to the tune of 10% and 15%, went into effect Monday.

Chinese officials in recent days outlined efforts geared to boost consumption like extending a program for trading in old appliances, and said they would create jobs, raise wages, promote free preschool education and expand elder services.

They also looked to assure the country that they were addressing persistent challenges in the real estate sector, including through announcing a mechanism to help local governments to buy back unsold homes languishing due to the property sector crisis.

“(Beijing is) trying to send a signal to local authorities that boosting consumption, either with better welfare policies or (policies such as those) getting people to buy new consumer electronics, is a priority,” said Victor Shih, director of the University of California San Diego’s 21st Century China Center.

However, this was largely a mandate that the central government was looking to local governments to fund, and most provinces would not have the money for these efforts without imposing taxes, “which will dampen consumption,” he added.

‘Fighting’ spirit

Despite the challenges – and the uncertainty of whether tech and trade frictions with the US will continue to escalate, the message from Beijing over the past week was one of confidence, no matter what happens. It’s a message apparently aimed at people both at home and in Washington.

At an annual press conference on the sidelines of the gathering, long a key opportunity for China to communicate its foreign policy to international media, Foreign Minister Wang Yi aimed to cast China as a stable global player, in contrast to the US and its “America First” policy. He also vowed that China country would continue to advance in its ambitions.

“Where there is blockade, there is breakthrough; where there is suppression, there is innovation,” he said.

The top diplomat also criticized America’s tariffs, saying: “No country should fantasize that it can suppress China on the one hand and develop good relations with China on the other.”

Earlier in the week, a foreign ministry spokesperson was blunter: “If the US insists on waging a tariff war, trade war, or any other kind of war, China will fight till the end,” he told reporters at a regular briefing.

But outside the official lines, how fully burgeoning optimism in some pockets can take hold will depend on how the rhetoric translates into action in the year ahead.

“The mood has become more optimistic starting from this year,” said Yao Yang, a professor at Peking University’s China Center for Economic Research, attributing this to China’s homegrown successes like DeepSeek.

"But it really depends on government policy for this mood to continue. If the government's moves to stimulate the economy and support private enterprise are not decisive, then that mood will go away."

'Major powers should not bully the weak', China foreign minister says

07 March 2025, [Reuters](#), Ryan Woo, Ethan Wang and Laurie Chen

Beijing will "resolutely counter" U.S. pressure on tariffs and the fentanyl issue, China's foreign minister said on Friday, adding that major powers "should not bully the weak", in a veiled swipe at the Trump administration's foreign policy.

Top diplomat Wang Yi also presented China as a reliable global power in the midst of geopolitical turmoil and U.S. President Donald Trump's withdrawal from international institutions, part of a clear appeal from Beijing to Europe and countries in the Global South.

The U.S. levied an additional 10% tariff on Chinese imports this week over the continued flow of the deadly opioid fentanyl into the country, threatening to worsen an escalatory spiral of trade actions.

"If one side blindly exerts pressure, China will resolutely counter that," Foreign Minister Wang Yi said at a press conference on the sidelines of China's annual parliamentary meeting.

The U.S. "should not repay kindness with grievances, let alone impose tariffs without reason," Wang added, referring to the "various assistance" Beijing has provided Washington on tackling the flow of fentanyl precursor drugs into the U.S.

No country can suppress China on the one hand and develop good relations with China on the other, said Wang, when asked how China would engage with the Trump administration over the next four years.

Such a "two-faced" approach is not helpful to stable ties, he said, without identifying any individual in the U.S. administration.

Wang's largely subdued remarks on the U.S., without mentioning Trump once by name, suggested Beijing wishes to keep the prospect of potential future trade talks alive, said Wen-Ti Sung, a Taiwan-based nonresident fellow at the Atlantic Council's Global China Hub.

"They want to pursue any room for de-escalation with Trump when it comes to trade," Sung said. "One way of doing it is to keep the level of rhetorical intensity down to manageable size to preserve room for manoeuvre for both sides."

UKRAINE STANCE

On resolving the Ukraine war, China wants to achieve a "fair, lasting and binding peace agreement" acceptable to all parties, Wang Yi said.

"China is willing to continue to play a constructive role in the final resolution of the crisis and the realisation of lasting peace, in accordance with the wishes of the parties concerned, together with the international community."

Western countries have urged Beijing to take a more active role in using its economic leverage over Russia to stop the war, but Beijing has so far refused to publicly criticise its strategic partner or halt its economic support of Moscow.



China-Russia relations are a "constant in a turbulent world, not a variable in geopolitical games," Wang told the press conference.

Chinese President Xi Jinping recently reaffirmed Beijing's "no limits" partnership with Moscow in a telephone call with his Russian counterpart on the third anniversary of Moscow's 2022 full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

Trump has upended U.S. policy on Ukraine after taking office last month, showing a more conciliatory stance towards Russia that has unnerved Washington's traditional allies in the West.

Secretary of State Marco Rubio said on Wednesday the Ukraine conflict is a "proxy war" between Washington and Moscow that needs to end, and has previously said that Washington wishes to "peel off" Moscow from Beijing.

Analysts say Beijing wishes to exploit the growing transatlantic rift to bolster its ties with European countries, which have been strained over Ukraine and trade tensions.

"China still has confidence in Europe, and believes Europe can still be China's trusted partner," Wang said.

GLOBAL SOUTH

Wang also urged developing countries to "continue to improve our representation and discourse power in global governance".

"If every country emphasizes its own national priorities and believes in strength and status, the world will regress to the law of the jungle, small and weak countries will bear the brunt," said Wang in a veiled reference to Washington's actions.

"Major powers ... should not be profit-driven, and they should not bully the weak."

Within the first two months of taking office, Trump has withdrawn the U.S. from several multilateral organisations and climate agreements, suspended most foreign aid, and voted against a United Nations resolution condemning Russia for the Ukraine invasion.

"At a time when the Trump administration's foreign policy is revising a lot of established expectations, China wants to present itself as preserving the status quo," said Sung, the analyst.

"When the Global South sees a retrenching, inward-looking U.S., there's a fear of a strategic vacuum - one that China intends to help fill."

China's top political advisory body concludes standing committee session

03 March 2025, [Global Times](#)



Wang Huning, a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), presides over the closing meeting of the 10th session of the Standing Committee of the 14th CPPCC National Committee and delivers a speech at the meeting in Beijing, capital of China, March 2, 2025. (Xinhua/Xie Huanchi)

The 14th National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), China's national political advisory body, closed the tenth session of its standing committee on Sunday in Beijing. Wang Huning, a member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and chairman of the CPPCC National Committee, presided over the closing meeting and delivered a speech. The CPPCC National Committee focused on the central tasks of the Party and the country to perform duties last year and made new progress in all its work, Wang noted.

He called on the political advisory body to make contributions in 2025 to advance Chinese modernization and to achieve the objectives and tasks set in the 14th Five-Year Plan with high quality. Wang also urged efforts to ensure the successful convening of the third session of the 14th CPPCC National Committee.

The meeting adopted documents including the draft agenda and the schedule of the annual session, a work report of the Standing Committee of the 14th CPPCC National Committee, and a report on how the proposals from political advisors have been handled since the second session of the 14th CPPCC National Committee.

These documents will be submitted to the third session of the 14th CPPCC National Committee for review.

PROTESTS, DETENTIONS AND OTHER NEWS FROM THE PRC

The Chinese government is cracking down on predatory law enforcement

29 March 2025, [ANI](#)

A young Uyghur rapper and singer-songwriter, has not been seen since his arrest 20 months back in China and serving a three-year sentence for writing lyrics deemed to "promote extremism", Radio Free Asia reported, citing the Chinese rights advocacy group Weiquanwan

Yashar Shohret (26), who was previously involved in the 2022 "White Paper" protests, has been missing since his arrest on August 9, 2023, in Chengdu, Sichuan province, where he was studying at university, RFA reported.

According to a recent report by the rights advocacy group Weiquanwang, Shohret had been sentenced on June 20, 2024, to three years in prison on charges of "promoting extremism" and "illegally possessing items promoting extremism." He appealed the sentence, but the court upheld the verdict during a second trial, which confirmed his imprisonment until August 8, 2026. Shohret is currently being held at the Wusu Prison in Xinjiang.

Shohret is originally from Bole city in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region of northwestern China, home to 12 million Uyghurs who experience extensive persecution and surveillance under Beijing's control.

Overseas Uyghur youth activist Aman, who prefers a pseudonym for safety reasons, highlighted that the Chinese government has shifted its approach, with high-profile arrests now giving way to more discreet detentions and the suppression of public information, making it increasingly difficult to track such cases, RFA reported.

Shohret's case is emblematic of the broader crackdown on Uyghur culture and expression, as China continues to target individuals from the ethnic minority for perceived dissent, particularly in relation to their cultural and religious practices. China's atrocities against Uyghurs involve systematic repression, including mass incarceration in so-called "re-education" camps, forced labour, and severe surveillance. Uyghurs endure religious persecution, cultural erasure, and arbitrary detention. Reports of torture, forced sterilizations, and family separations have surfaced, alongside efforts to erase their language and traditions. Beijing's policies aim to assimilate and control the Uyghur population, violating basic human rights and generating widespread international condemnation.

MILITARY AND INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

China develops military tech to advance its aggressive cause

24 March 2025, [ANI](#)

Not only is Chairman Xi Jinping constantly pushing the People's Liberation Army (PLA) towards devotee levels of loyalty to the Chinese Communist Party, but he is ensuring that China's military is equipped with all manner of weapons and gadgets to ensure dominance in both peacetime and wartime. The latest revelation concerns a deep-sea submersible-borne device that is designed to cut seabed communication cables. The news was broken by the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post newspaper, which is regularly a mouthpiece for propaganda that China wishes to announce. Undersea communication and internet cables are critical to globally connecting far-flung parts of the world. Russian and Chinese vessels have made a habit of damaging or severing such cables in places like the Baltic Sea and around Taiwan respectively. For example, Taiwan's Coast Guard Administration detained the Togolese-flagged cargo vessel Hong Tai 58 on 25 February, crewed by Chinese sailors, for allegedly damaging a submarine cable connecting Taiwan to the Penghu Islands near the Chinese coast. This shadowy Hong Tai vessel has operated under various names and registrations, and it is suspected of deliberately tampering with the cable in aid of China's "gray zone" tactics of coercing and harassing Taiwan. Lin Jian, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson, said he was "unfamiliar with the incident" and unsurprisingly he asserted that it was unrelated to Chinese actions. A similar incident had happened north of Taiwan at the hands of a Hong Kong-owned ship in January. Earlier, in 2023, Chinese vessels twice disrupted communication cables connecting Taiwan's mainland to the Matsu Islands. As a result, in the face of such deliberate provocation, Taiwan is attempting to boost the resilience of its communications network. It was of particular interest that, just a few weeks after Hong Tai was seized, the world was informed that China had developed this deep-sea tool "capable of severing the world's most fortified underwater communication or power lines," according to the South China Morning Post. It can operate underwater at depths of up to 4km, which is twice the range of current subsea communication infrastructure, and it can integrate with existing Chinese submersibles. The compact device was developed by the state-owned China Ship Scientific Research Centre and its affiliated State Key Laboratory of Deep-sea Manned Vehicles. It can cut through communication cables protected by steel, rubber and polymer sheaths. Not only is China bragging about its new invention, it has secured a trade patent for it too. The tool had first

been revealed in the Chinese-language journal *Mechanical Engineer* on 24 February, in an article entitled "Design of an Electric Cutting Device for Deep-Sea Cables".

The article said the device was designed for civilian salvage and seabed mining, but its dual-use utility is obvious. Indeed, as the Hong Kong article posited, "...Cutting cables near strategic chokepoints such as Guam, which is a linchpin of the US military's Second Island Chain, a defense strategy used to contain China, the tool could essentially destabilize global communications during a geopolitical crisis." Indeed, such devices could cripple communications worldwide and help cut off Taiwan from the rest of the world if the PLA decides to invade its peaceable neighbor. One of China's priorities in major hostilities - such as a naval blockade or a full-blown invasion - would be to isolate Taiwan from the rest of the world and to interfere with civilian and military communications.

A second new invention from some of China's sharpest military engineering minds is a family of self-propelled landing barges, or landing bridges, designed to help military vehicles and supplies move rapidly from ship to shore. Essentially a floating and movable pier system, their existence was exposed in satellite imagery dating from January 2025. Professor Andrew Erickson, Professor of Strategy at the US Naval War College, warned, "Make no mistake: China's new bridge-barges are purpose-built for a Taiwan invasion scenario. They embody the seriousness with which the PRC under Xi is pursuing control and absorption of Taiwan by any and all means possible."

Just as the Allies constructed innovative Mulberry Harbors to support their armies after the D-Day invasion of June 1944, and flummoxed German defense planners by not requiring the capture of a port city early on in the campaign, so China has come up with a new solution for getting vehicles ashore following an amphibious invasion. These under-construction bridge barges were first spotted by American analyst Tom Shugart at Guangzhou Shipyard International. Six such vessels exist, with the distinct possibility of more appearing.

The next revelation regarding these new systems came in mid-March when these bridge barges were spotted, and photographed, taking part in a PLA exercise on a beach in Zhanjiang, Guangdong Province, close to the PLA's Southern Theater Command Navy Headquarters. By combining several vessels in a line, a causeway up to 820m long can be constructed, permitting ships - whether civilian roll-on/roll-off or naval amphibious types - to dock at up to five berths and to offload vehicles that drive along the bridge straight onto the shore. Erickson explained, "The innovative Shuiqiao platform,

for which there is currently no international parallel or obvious commercial use, may represent the missing piece in the puzzle for China to be able to attempt to deploy ferry-delivered, follow-on forces in support of an amphibious assault to the most advantageous locations along Taiwan's coastline, and thereby be able to utilize commercial ships without holding a port. A single ship can extend over key obstacles and other hazards. Connecting multiple ships in end-to-end configuration, preliminary efforts at which have now been observed, could offer a lengthy bridge indeed." As Erickson observed, an advantage of the system is that the bridge can extend inland, bypassing often treacherous sand or shingle beach slopes or even seawalls. These vessels have up to eight spuds, or legs, that are jacked down into the seabed to hold the bridge in position. This kind of arrangement is more practical than the Joint Logistics Over-the-Shore (JLOTS) system used by the US military. Readers may remember that the USA set up a JLOTS in Gaza to deliver humanitarian aid, but it failed after being battered by a storm. After nearly a quarter of a century of research and development, China has apparently learned lessons from the American JLOTS solution, which has been around sometime. China's pre-built, specialist vessels are more robust, and they ensure follow-on forces can flow in rapidly after a contested beach landing has taken place. A combined-arms battalion with 150 vehicles may take anywhere from 40-60 minutes to come ashore. Erickson continued: "The Shuiqiao-185, Shuiqiao-135, Shuiqiao-110 - so named for their hull length (bridge stowed), as measured in open-source commercial imagery - are not multirole platforms like aircraft carriers, but rather a dedicated platform for landing high volumes of wheeled and tracked military vehicles on beaches. There are no other such platforms anywhere in the world, because no other country than China is preparing to try to be able to invade Taiwan." When deployed, the shortest unit is closest to the beach, and the longest one is farthest out to sea. Although the occasional commentator has posited that these amphibious assets are designed to support humanitarian aid in the wake of a disaster, Erickson was dismissive of such an idea. "There is no need to resort to such unique platforms for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, which is not opposed by hostile shore-based forces. China under Xi would not waste resources of such a specialized, dedicated system if it were not bore-sighted on taking Taiwan by threat, or use, of force." Their existence poses formidable challenges for Taiwanese defense planners. There were only ever a limited number of beaches around Taiwan - approximately a dozen - where a major amphibious landing was feasible. This is due to terrain and beach

conditions.

However, with these new devices, the PLA can expand the number of potential landing sites for an invasion. This forces Taiwan's military to increase the number of locations it must defend in force, complicating their planning and defenses. In March, the US Naval War College published a report called "Bridges over Troubled Waters: Shuiqiao Class" that examined these new inventions. Authored by the aforementioned Shugart and J. Michael Dahm, they commented, "In the context of rapidly expanding military capabilities and infrastructure across the PLA, this newest logistics capability is further evidence of the PLA's efforts to meet Chairman Xi Jinping's reported mandate to have military capabilities necessary to conduct a large-scale invasion of Taiwan by 2027." This shallow-draft landing system is not a perfect solution, however. As the report noted, "While these landing barges help address a critical PLA requirement, they may create additional problems for the PLA in terms of amphibious landing throughput. That is, the potential volume created by the barges may result in challenges moving equipment and materiel out of a landing area in highly restricted and potentially contested terrain on Taiwan." As a cautionary tale, remember the 35-mile-long traffic jam that Russia created when it invaded Ukraine, where transport ground to a halt since there were only a few viable roads leading to Kyiv. The report elaborated: "Taiwan's mountainous terrain, tunnels and bridges leave the PLA with few viable routes to Taiwan's capital, Taipei, and will potentially funnel the PLA into intersecting fields of fire from Taiwan defenders."

The first three Shuiqiao-class barge-bridges are not yet operational, as the PLA will continue to test them. Nonetheless, worryingly, the report's authors warned, "Considering these landing barges in the context of other developments related to amphibious operations suggests the PLA may have significantly advanced its timetable to have sufficient capabilities to conduct a large-scale cross-strait operation against Taiwan in accordance with Xi Jinping's 2027 centennial military building goal."

Xi is serious about conquering Taiwan, whether by gray zone tactics or outright violence. As seen with the above two examples of a deep-sea cable-cutting tool and clever barge bridges, China is putting its considerable technological expertise to use developing both weapons and supporting equipment to enable the PLA to perform nefarious missions. By capturing Taiwan, Xi would accomplish what not even the legendary Mao Zedong could do. It would leave Xi an immortal legacy, something that strongmen like Xi and Russian Vladimir Putin hanker after. More than that, it would set up China for greater expansion. By smashing the First island Chain - which

stretches from Japan to Malaysia via Taiwan - China would have free and easy access deep into the Pacific Ocean and the ability to cut off places like Japan and Australia.

What would it also say about China's and the USA's relative strengths? If China can conquer Taiwan, it would underscore how emasculated the USA has become, and that not even the American nuclear arsenal could thwart China. It would instantly alter the calculus in capitals all around Asia and beyond. The message would be that the USA is an unreliable and weak ally, and that it is utterly useless to resist China. The USA would be finished as a global power, which is exactly what China wishes to accomplish.

The road China built to invade Tibet is still one of world's most dangerous

03 March 2025. [Tibetan Review](#)

China began building the Sichuan-Tibet Highway in 1950 to effectuate its invasion and occupation rule over Tibet and it still remains one of the world's most challenging and dangerous roads. Many people are thought to have lost their lives on the highway – which connects Chengdu, capital of the Chinese province of Sichuan, to Tibet's capital Lhasa – over the years, though it's not known exactly how many, reported *express.co.uk* Mar 2, citing *DangerousRoads.org*.

The 2,416-km highway meanders through 13 snow-covered mountains over 4,000 metres high, crosses a dozen raging rivers, traverses eight world-class fault belts and countless swamps, permafrost areas, earthquake zones, landslide areas, glaciers and primeval forests, China's official *Xinhua* news agency earlier report Jun 28, 2019.

That report said, "In 1950, about 110,000 people were summoned to build the road, with high morale but crude equipment. Over 4,000 had sacrificed their lives when the road was completed in 1954, ending the history of no modern highways in Tibet."

The highway primarily consists of two routes. The more popular Southern Route is said to provide a slightly more direct route between the two cities, while The Northern Route "takes a more roundabout path to reach Lhasa and is known for its rich Tibetan culture" though both provide stunning views, the report said, citing *TibetTour.org*.

Sichuan-Tibet Highway is not easy for drivers to navigate, with its snake-like path winding through the mountainous landscape. Other challenges are stated to include notoriously difficult driving surfaces and hairpin turns.

Due to the extreme plateau climate and frequent natural disasters, the highway is plagued by snowstorms, landslides, avalanches and earthquakes

all year around, which is why it is called an “encyclopaedia of highway distress,” said the *Xinhua* report cited above.

“The Sichuan-Tibet highway serves as the artery linking the plateau region and China’s inland areas, significantly alleviating the material shortage of Tibet over the past decades,” the report said.

But that was before China completed and began operating the 1956-km Qinghai-Tibet Railway in 2006. China is currently building a Sichuan–Tibet railway, connecting Chengdu to Lhasa. It is considered the world’s most geologically challenging as well as a vital strategic defence railway project. When completed in 2030, the 1,629-km line will significantly cut travel time from Chengdu to Lhasa from 48 to 13 hours.

The railway’s entire section within China as well as that between Nyingtri and Lhasa in Tibet have already been completed and remain in operations. The final 1,011-km Ya’an–Nyingtri section, traversing the Tibet-China border, is expected to be completed in 2030. It will include 72 tunnels totalling 851 km, with some of them being more than 30-km, and the longest one being the 42.5-kilometre-long Yigong Tunnel.

Aside from passenger service, the railway will be capable of transporting 10 million tonnes of freight annually, said a *Business Insider* report Jul 18, 2021.

China in the Region

China-East Turkestan

China Focus: Xinjiang adopts regulation to protect Kirgiz epic storytelling

27 March 2025, [Xinhua](#)

The regional legislature of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region in northwest China on Wednesday adopted a regulation, which will take effect on May 1, to protect a UNESCO-listed oral epic of the Kirgiz ethnic group.

The "Manas" epic is known as one of the three heroic epics of Chinese ethnic minorities, along with "King Gesar" of the Tibetan ethnic group and "Jangar" of the Mongolian ethnic group.

The regulation, with 26 articles, stipulates the systematic protection of this Kirgiz intangible cultural heritage, including protection and inheritance measures, research, translation and publication, as well as literary and artistic creation.

"This legal basis provides Xinjiang with a solution to protect 'Manas' under the rule of law," said Li Juan, director of the legislative affairs committee of the standing committee of the regional people's congress.

"Manas" is a large-scale heroic epic with a rhyme style, handed down by Kirgiz people from generation to generation. There are eight parts and 18 volumes, with over 230,000 lines -- which is 19 times more than the number of lines contained in Homer's epic "Odyssey." In 2009, "Manas" was included on UNESCO's "Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity."

Jannur Turganbay, 58, a "Manas" storyteller, was selected among the sixth batch of representative inheritors of this national intangible cultural heritage on March 17.

"The inheritance and protection of 'Manas' is going to have a legal basis, and the future development prospects will be brighter. I hope to nurture more inheritors who love the 'Manas' epic, ensuring this masterpiece is passed down through generations," he said.

Peng Cheng, deputy director of Xinjiang's regional department of culture and tourism, said that this regulation is of great significance to promoting the creative transformation and innovative development of cultural heritage.

Manas is a legendary hero in the folklore of the Kirgiz ethnic group. The epic recounts the saga of the hero Manas and seven generations of his descendants in their relentless struggle against evil forces, embodying indomitable character and a spirit of unity, perseverance and progress.

Thai officials secretly planned to deport Uyghurs while making repeated public denials

24 March 2025, [AP](#), Dake Hang, Huizhong Wu and Jintamas Saksornchai

In late February, representatives of a Thai Muslim organization brought a reassuring message to 40 Uyghur men terrified they were going to be sent back to China: The government had no immediate plans to deport them.

Less than 72 hours later, the men were on a plane bound for China's far west Xinjiang region, where U.N. experts say they could face torture or other punishment.

Thailand decided to deport the men more than a month earlier, while denying plans to do so to the public, lawmakers and Muslim religious leaders until almost the very end, according to testimony from parliamentary inquiries, interviews, meeting notes and voice messages. That gave the detainees and their advocates no chance to make a last-ditch appeal before they were bundled off and sent back to China. Now, the Thai government is dealing with the fallout of a move that outraged human right activists and allies. The decision is at the heart of Thai parliamentary inquiries and a diplomatic rift between Thailand and its biggest military ally. The United States has imposed sanctions on multiple Thai officials while the European Union and other allies issued condemnations.

Thai officials visited Xinjiang last week to meet some of the deported Uyghurs and said they are being treated well. They have also said the men returned voluntarily, despite evidence to the contrary.

Thailand's dilemma

The Uyghurs are a Turkic, majority Muslim ethnicity native to Xinjiang. After decades of conflict over suppression of their cultural identity, Beijing launched a brutal crackdown on the Uyghurs that some Western governments deem a genocide.

The men deported last month were part of a larger group of Uyghurs detained in Thailand in 2014 after fleeing China. That left Thailand facing competing demands from Beijing and Washington.

Beijing said the Uyghurs were terrorists and wanted them sent back, but hasn't presented evidence. Uyghur activists and Western officials said the men are innocent and have urged their resettlement elsewhere.

Facing potential backlash from all sides, Thailand kept the men in detention for over a decade.

That changed when Thai Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra took office last year. Her father, former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, has close links to top Chinese officials.

Thai officials began secretly discussing plans to deport the Uyghurs as early as December, a month after

Paetongtarn met Chinese leader Xi Jinping, the AP earlier reported.

China sent a formal request to repatriate the Uyghurs on Jan. 8, according to records of a parliamentary inquiry held after the men had been sent back and lawmaker Rangsiman Rome.

The same day, the men were asked to sign deportation papers, alarming them. They made a public appeal and went on a hunger strike, giving pause to Thai officials. Nonetheless, on Jan. 17, the National Security Council decided behind closed doors to deport the Uyghur detainees at a meeting attended by the ministers of defense and justice, the council's Secretary-General Chatchai Bangchud revealed to the parliamentary investigation. Chatchai said the decision was based in part on commitments from China that the men would be treated well and that Thailand would be allowed to check on them.

Repeated denials

That's when the denials began.

Shortly after the Jan. 17 meeting, Defense Minister Phumtham Wechayachai told reporters the government had no immediate plans for deportation. In a Jan. 29 parliamentary inquiry, the Thai government again denied plans to deport the men, according to the records of the meeting and an interview with Thai lawmaker Kannavee Suebsang. Thai Senator Angkhana Neelapaijit said the justice minister told her personally there were no plans to send the men to China just a week before they were deported.

The Ministry of Justice referred the AP to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for comment. The foreign ministry declined to comment.

In a Feb. 24 meeting, representatives of Sheikhul Islam, an official Islamic organization close to the Thai authorities, told the Uyghurs the government said they wouldn't be sent to China, according to notes and recordings obtained by AP.

A detainee described what Sheikhul Islam told them in two recordings, one sent to an advocate and the other to a relative in Europe.

"They said they're in touch with the government and they cannot guarantee the government won't send us back later, but till now, they're saying we won't be sent back," the detainee said. Both recordings were provided to the AP by the advocate and are two to three minutes long. The advocate asked for anonymity for themselves and for the detainee to protect them from retribution.

The description of the meeting in the recordings was corroborated by notes taken by a participant and shared by an activist, as well as an interview with another person with direct knowledge of the situation. That person, who asked not to be named for fear of retribution, added that at least some of the Sheikhul Islam representatives believed that the men were not

about to be deported based on assurances from the government. Sheikhul Islam declined to comment.

The notes also make it clear the men did not want to go to China, contrary to the government's claims.

"The detainees asked for a prayer for them to not be deported," the notes said.

Three days later, in the early morning hours of Feb. 27, the men were put on trucks and driven away in the dead of night, black sheets drawn over the windows.

The next day, Prime Minister Paetongtarn confirmed to reporters that she had discussed deportation with Chinese officials during a visit to Beijing in February.

The Prime Minister's office referred a request for comment to the "relevant parties" without saying who those parties were. The Ministry of Defense did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The backlash

In the wake of the deportation, Kannavee, Angkhana, Rangsiman and other lawmakers expressed outrage and demanded answers. The Thai parliament's national security committee held an inquiry and called for footage of the deportation to be released.

At first, top Thai officials said there were no other countries willing to offer asylum to the Uyghurs, but the U.S. and other countries have said they made repeated offers to take the men.

In a further attempt to address the criticism, over half a dozen senior Thai officials visited Xinjiang last week at Beijing's invitation. Select Thai media were invited, but an AP request to participate was denied.

"There is no need to worry about the Uyghurs," government spokesperson Jirayu Hongsab said Thursday in a statement. "They are living happily with their families."

Press releases and instructions given to media show the trip was carefully managed: The delegation met only six of the 40 men, according to a spokesperson, while media on the trip were ordered to avoid shooting images of the Uyghurs and Chinese officials, according to notes circulating among Thai reporters seen by AP. Images released from the visit blurred out almost all faces except those of Thai officials.

Their deportation also caused a diplomatic rift between Thailand and Western countries. On March 14, the U.S. State Department announced visa sanctions on an unknown number of Thai officials for their role in the deportations, while the EU parliament passed a resolution condemning the deportation.

The officials sanctioned by the U.S. were not named. Xinjiang authorities did not respond to a faxed request for comment. During a press conference last week, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning called the U.S. sanctions "illegal."

"China ... opposes the U.S. using human rights as a pretext to manipulate Xinjiang-related issues, interfere in China's internal affairs, and disrupt normal law enforcement cooperation," Mao said.

Thailand claims deported Uyghurs are well after Xinjiang visit

21 March 2025, [Nikkei Asia](#), Francesca Regalado



Thai Deputy Prime Minister Phumtham Wechayachai, center, meets Uyghur families in Xinjiang on March 19. Thailand in February deported 40 Uyghur to China. (Photo by Government House of Thailand)

A photo of a beaming Phumtham Wechayachai, Thailand's defense minister, embracing a Uyghur family circulated this week as he led a high-level delegation to China, where the Thai government last month deported 40 men despite international condemnation.

The Thai government on Friday claimed the group were living in good conditions in Xinjiang, after cabinet ministers, including Phumtham, returned early in the morning.

"The Uyghurs confirmed that they are living a normal and happy life," Phumtham told Thai media who traveled with him to China. Thai officials used Chinese, Uyghur and Thai interpreters during the visit. "If anyone thought it was a setup, they can find an interpreter to translate. ... They are not Hollywood actors who can be told to cry."

But the trip and Phumtham's meetings with a dozen Uyghur men did not convince Thai opposition politicians, diplomats and rights groups that had lobbied Thailand to let the men remain in Bangkok.

Western governments and human rights advocates have accused the Chinese government of widespread abuses against the largely Muslim ethnic minority, including religious suppression, imprisonment and torture. Hundreds of Uyghurs have escaped China by crossing into Southeast Asia, hoping to make it to safe havens.

A total of 48 people had been in limbo, held in immigration detention in Bangkok for 10 years as Thailand weighed yearslong pressure from China -- its largest trading partner and source of foreign investment -- against its human rights obligations. Now, the decision could prove to be a miscalculation as Thailand faces tariffs from an unpredictable U.S. administration under President Donald Trump.

U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio, who as a senator advocated for the Uyghurs, imposed visa restrictions

on current or former Thai officials "responsible for, or complicit in" the forced return of the 40 men. The other eight remain in Thailand.

The Thai Foreign Ministry confirmed on Friday that it had not received a list of officials subject to the restrictions. The list could include Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra, Defense Minister Phumtham, Justice Minister Tawee Sodsong and national security chief Chatchai Bangchud, among others.

"We wish to reiterate that Thailand has always and will continue to value the longstanding alliance and partnership with the United States based on mutual respect and shared strategic interests," said Foreign Ministry spokesperson Nikordej Balankura.

Advocates for the Uyghurs questioned details of Phumtham's meetings with the returned men, publicized on Friday by the Thai government. One man said he was persuaded as a teenager to leave China for Turkey, a popular destination for Uyghur refugees, by an "extremist," but arrested in Thailand while changing planes.

According to the World Uyghur Congress, most Uyghurs escape China by land, traveling through Laos, Myanmar or Vietnam, by car, bus or train through Thailand in the hope of reaching Malaysia, where they can obtain fake Turkish passports. The 40 men deported in February were among 200 captured in 2014 in the jungles of southern Thailand as they were waiting to cross on foot to Malaysia.

Foreign envoys in Bangkok rebutted the Thai government's claim that no offers were made to resettle the Uyghurs elsewhere. Sources with knowledge of discussions told Nikkei Asia that verbal offers were declined as an option by Thai officials, citing fears of Chinese economic retaliation.

On Sunday, Thailand's vice minister of foreign affairs wrote on Facebook that the 40 Uyghurs were deported in accordance with human rights. "The Chinese Uyghurs had been imprisoned for a decade without facing any charges," Russ Jalichandra wrote.

"Their choice to return to their families, to the improved version of their own homeland, may be better than waiting in confinement without any tangible goals, and being in a society that is not actually welcoming them," Russ continued.

Advocates insist the men did not return to China voluntarily. In early January, the 40 detained in Bangkok embarked on a 20-day hunger strike after Thai officials asked them to sign voluntary return documents.

"They had 10 years to leave. No one wants to be in a prison cell if you could go back to China to live freely," said a European diplomat speaking on condition of anonymity.

Thai officials have said they will continue to monitor the 40 men's wellbeing.

Analysts view the deportation as a miscalculation by the Thai government, which expected the Trump administration to turn a blind eye to human rights issues. Aside from the visa restrictions imposed by Rubio on Thai officials, the U.S. Embassy in Bangkok issued a travel warning for Thailand immediately after the Feb. 27 deportation, alerting visitors about the possibility of retaliatory attacks.

"Most notably, in the wake of a 2015 deportation of Uyghurs from Thailand, improvised explosive devices detonated at the Erawan Shrine in Bangkok killing 20 people and injuring 125 others as this shrine is heavily visited by tourists from China," the embassy said.

The Japanese Embassy in Bangkok posted a similar security alert, casting a pall on tourism, which contributes a fifth of Thai gross domestic product. The European Parliament condemned the deportation, but a fifth round of negotiations on a trade agreement between Thailand and the European Union will proceed in Brussels next week.

Reciprocal tariffs imposed by the U.S., on the other hand, are due to take effect on April 2. Thailand has the second-highest trade surplus with the U.S. in Southeast Asia, after Vietnam.

"The ill-considered move undermined Thailand's geostrategic balancing between the two most consequential superpowers," and "compromised its autonomy vis-a-vis China," according to Thitinan Pongsudhirak, professor and senior fellow at Chulalongkorn University's Institute of Security and International Studies.

China forces Uyghurs into mass forced labour during Ramadan, restricts religious practices

21 March 2025, [ANI](#)

Chinese officials in [Xinjiang](#) are making [Uyghurs](#) labour throughout Ramadan to keep them from fasting and praying as the Islamic holy month prescribes in the northwest of China, as reported by Radio Free Asia (RFA). Last week, videos of Uyghurs engaged in mass forced labour during Ramadan went viral on social media. According to RFA, some worked in the fields, while others did cleaning. Amid China's broader, systematic persecution of Uyghurs and their culture, the RFA report noted that the action is one of several steps taken by authorities to outlaw religious rituals among the approximately 12 million Uyghurs, the most of whom are Muslims, who reside in Xinjiang.

During Ramadan, which this year takes place from February 28 to March 29, Muslims are encouraged to fast from sunrise to sunset. According to the RFA report, Muslims are free to do this in the majority of nations. However, in an effort to combat religious

fanaticism, Chinese authorities have outlawed fasting during the holy month. They even require people to provide video evidence that they are eating lunch during the day. Additionally, they have prohibited Uyghurs from celebrating other Muslim holidays and from congregating at mosques on Fridays to pray. According to an RFA report, a video depicting Hotan residents working in agricultural fields on the second day of Ramadan was uploaded to Douyin, the Chinese equivalent of TikTok. According to additional information from a video that was uploaded on the seventh day of Ramadan, all Uyghur homes were required to do communal cleaning. RFA claimed that Chinese officials in Aksu prefecture are making Uyghur citizens work during Ramadan to prevent them from fasting. The Chinese government justifies these actions as measures to combat extremism, but human rights groups describe them as crimes against humanity, including genocide. Additionally, Uyghurs are subjected to intense surveillance, forced labour, and religious repression. Their language and cultural practices are increasingly restricted, and reports of forced sterilizations and family separations have surfaced.

China restricts Thai journalists during Xinjiang visit amid Uyghur deportation

20 March 2025, [ANI](#)

Chinese authorities closely monitored Thai journalists during a carefully controlled visit to Xinjiang this week, demanding to review their photos and delete any unapproved images before they could be sent back to Thailand, according to a report by Radio Free Asia (RFA).

The visit was part of Beijing's effort to showcase the welfare of Uyghurs who had been deported from Thailand.

On February 27, Thailand deported 40 Uyghur men to Xinjiang, claiming that no third country had agreed to accept them and that China had assured their safety. However, U.S. officials later acknowledged that the United States and other nations had offered to resettle the Uyghurs. The deported individuals were among more than 300 Uyghurs who fled persecution in Xinjiang but were detained in Thailand for over a decade.

The deportation was met with strong international condemnation. The United States imposed visa restrictions on certain Thai officials involved in the process, a move criticised by Western nations and human rights organisations. In response to mounting criticism, China invited Thai Deputy Prime Minister Phumtham Wechayachai and a team of

journalists for a three-day visit to Kashgar, Xinjiang, beginning Tuesday, to highlight the welfare of the deportees and others who were forcibly returned in 2015, RFA reported.

However, journalists on the trip described heavy surveillance by Chinese security officials. "Thai journalists were escorted by security personnel, who also requested to vet the images before allowing them to be sent back to Thailand," said Pranot Vilapasuwan, news director at Thai-language daily Thairath, on Facebook, as quoted by RFA. Pranot added that reporters were instructed to avoid photographing Chinese officials or, if they took images of Uyghurs and their families, to blur their faces. He also confirmed that Thai officials had screened journalists before the trip. "This means security agencies were filtering the media," Pranot said during a program on Thairath online. Human Rights Watch senior researcher Sunai Phasuk criticised the visit, calling it a staged attempt by China to control the narrative. "Thailand is parroting China's propaganda and collaborating in the crimes against Uyghurs," Sunai said.

Militant Uyghurs in Syria threaten the Chinese government

12 March 2025, [Mint](#)

How much does China have to fear?

AS REBELS STORMED across Syria late last year, eventually toppling the country's dictator, Bashar al-Assad, some were accompanied by fighters from a foreign militant organisation—one with ambitions that extend far beyond Damascus. These men had roots in the Chinese region of Xinjiang and were members of the Turkistan Islamic Party (TIP), a group which aims to establish an Islamic state spanning Xinjiang and other parts of Central Asia.

The history of the TIP is fuzzy, including name changes, alleged ties to jihadist organisations and assertions of responsibility for attacks on Chinese targets. The group was established by Uyghur refugees from Xinjiang in Pakistan in 1997. Over the next decade it developed links to the Taliban and al-Qaeda. China and several other countries, such as Britain, view the TIP as a terrorist organisation. Leaders in Beijing have used its actions to justify their repression of the Uyghurs and other Muslim minorities in Xinjiang.

China's abuses in Xinjiang, where it is accused of arbitrary detention and forced labour, have caused tens of thousands of Uyghurs to flee the country. In the 2010s many travelled to Turkey, where they struggled. Across the border in war-torn Syria, rebels in control of the area around Idlib offered the Uyghurs a haven. It is not known exactly how many went. Most were

civilians. But in 2017 Mr Assad's ambassador to China said that between 4,000 and 5,000 Uyghurs were fighting in Syria.

Some of these Uyghur militants joined Islamic State. The majority, though, are associated with the TIP. When Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), the dominant rebel group in Syria, took Aleppo in a surprise attack on November 29th, it rolled into the city with TIP fighters. A week later, with Mr Assad about to fall, Abdul Haq al-Turkistani, the TIP's leader, released a statement. "The Chinese disbelievers will soon taste the same torment that the disbelievers in [Syria] have tasted, if God wills," it read.

The Chinese government has long expressed concern about the TIP's presence in Syria. In 2016 it began holding monthly talks with the Assad regime to share intelligence on the group's movements, reported the AP. On December 31st a Chinese foreign-ministry spokesperson called on all countries to "recognise the violent nature" of the TIP and "crack down on it".

But other countries may have little to fear from the group. Like many jihadists, the TIP used to wave a black flag with the shahada, or Muslim profession of faith, written in white. Now, though, it sports a version of the flag of East Turkestan, the Uyghur name for Xinjiang. "The TIP has no real interest in global jihad, nor gripes against the West," says Sean Roberts of George Washington University. "Their focus is the independence of their homeland." As the group has come to seem less Islamist, it has gathered support in Xinjiang, according to Uyghur activists.

How much does China have to fear from the TIP? The group has claimed attacks inside the country, and been officially blamed for many more, but it is not clear how many of these were actually its doing. And though three of its members were recently promoted to the Syrian army's upper ranks, the TIP will probably not be allowed to use Syria as a staging ground for action abroad. The country's new government, desperate for cash, will want to please China. The TIP is expected to be subject to any disarmament programme. Ahmad al-Sharaa, the leader of HTS, has made his stance towards the Uyghurs clear: "I sympathise with them, but their struggle against China is not ours."

China Constructs a Replica of Osama Bin Laden's Compound in Xinjiang

07 March 2025, [Resonant News](#)

China has reportedly built a full-scale replica of Osama Bin Laden's Abbottabad compound in Xinjiang. The original structure, located near a Pakistani military cantonment, was the site where U.S. Navy SEALs carried out the raid that led to Bin Laden's death. The purpose of this replica remains uncertain, but it is speculated to be used for military training exercises.

The facility has reportedly been in existence for over a year and is part of a Chinese Defense Force training site near Korla.

This development raises questions about China's military training strategies and potential collaboration with other nations in counterterrorism exercises. The existence of such a replica suggests a significant interest in studying high-profile military operations and urban warfare tactics.

NPC deputies from Xinjiang regional delegation refute 'forced labor' rumor

07 March 2025, [Global Times](#), Li Meng and Suo Yanqi

A group meeting of deputies from the delegation of the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region was held on Friday during the third session of the 14th National People's Congress (NPC) in Beijing. At the meeting, NPC deputy Ma Xingrui, who is also the Party chief of the region, refuted the so-called "forced labor" claims propagated by the US.

Ma said that the biggest "challenge" Xinjiang region faces currently is the false narratives imposed by the US and the West, which disregard facts and reality. Without setting foot in Xinjiang, they arbitrarily label and smear the region. "Under the guise of human rights, ethnicity, and religion, they fabricate claims and distort the truth," said Ma.

In response to sanctions imposed by some countries on Chinese enterprises under the pretext of so-called "forced labor," Ma said that such moves aim to push Xinjiang region back into poverty and underdevelopment.

Wang Mingshan, deputy director of the Standing Committee of Xinjiang Regional People's Congress, also said at the meeting that some countries have imposed sanctions on Chinese enterprises under excuses of "forced labor," but these claims are entirely inconsistent with the facts. Such actions severely undermine the legitimate rights of Xinjiang enterprises and infringe upon the employment and development rights of workers from all ethnic groups in the region. Wang introduced that the region has consistently worked to improve labor conditions, ensuring that all workers can work in an environment that is free, equal, safe, and dignified. Workers of all ethnicities in Xinjiang fully enjoy their legal rights, including equal employment and career choice, fair remuneration, rest and leave, labor safety and health protections, vocational training, social insurance and benefits, and the right to seek legal recourse in labor disputes. "Xinjiang will not allow itself to be trampled on or bullied!" said Wang.

In response to the baseless sanctions imposed by some countries on Chinese enterprises, Wang said that a resolution opposing a series of US sanctions

related to Xinjiang region and providing support for affected companies was passed at the Standing Committee of the 14th Xinjiang Regional People's Congress in August 2024. This was a decisive move for Xinjiang to use legal means to counter hegemony and power politics, said Wang.

Wang also noted that recently, some Chinese enterprises have taken legal action against organizations and institutions that have long spread lies of so-called "forced labor" in Xinjiang. The region encourages and supports more enterprises in using legal tools to defend their legitimate rights and interests.

"Come to Xinjiang, take a walk, see for yourself - you're free to look at anything you want. Experience the real Xinjiang firsthand, and don't be misled by certain countries or media outlets that deliberately smear Xinjiang," Ma said at the meeting.

From October 12 to 17, 2024, the 6th World Media Summit was held in Beijing and Xinjiang region. The event brought together over 500 representatives from 208 mainstream media outlets, government agencies, UN bodies, and international organizations across 106 countries and regions. Ma said that after visiting Xinjiang region, participants saw the reality for themselves: "Where is the 'forced labor'? Where is the 'genocide'? None of it exists!"

Former WUC President Dolkun Isa's brother sentenced to 20 years in China's Xinjiang for allegedly "inciting terrorism"

02 March 2025, [The Tribune](#)

At 63 years old, Yalkun was an educator at the Aksu Education Institute located in Aksu city, where numerous Uyghur instructors were detained in 2017 during a period characterized by mass arrests of Uyghur educators, entrepreneurs, and cultural figures under the pretext of re-education to combat what China termed terrorism and religious extremism.

Former World Uyghur Congress President Dolkun Isa's brother Yalkun Isa is facing a 20-year imprisonment in China's Xinjiang for allegedly "inciting terrorism," according to local law enforcement and security personnel at the school where he worked, Radio Free Asia (RFA) reported.

At 63 years old, Yalkun was an educator at the Aksu Education Institute located in Aksu city, where numerous Uyghur instructors were detained in 2017 during a period characterized by mass arrests of Uyghur educators, entrepreneurs, and cultural figures under the pretext of re-education to combat what China termed terrorism and religious extremism, according to RFA report.

Yalkun's brother Dolkun Isa served as the president of the Germany-based World Uyghur Congress (WUC) from 2017 to 2024. Living in exile since 1994, Dolkun has consistently faced intimidation from China due to his advocacy for Uyghurs.

A law enforcement officer confirmed Yalkun's arrest was due to his communication with individuals in foreign nations via phone but also indicated that he had accessed content from international websites, the report said.

The officer mentioned that he had seen the sentence handed to Yalkun, which stated that the educator was sentenced to 20 years for supposedly urging those around him to create an organization and engage in "terrorism," as cited in the RFA report.

Another police officer from Aksu, who chose to remain anonymous to discuss Yalkun freely, stated that the teacher was taken into custody in late 2017 as his phone records indicated he had conversed with individuals abroad, as per the report.

During a month-long interrogation, Yalkun was pressured into confessing that during his conversations with Dolkun, he was allegedly instructed to establish an organization in Aksu and carry out acts of "terrorism," according to the police officer as quoted by RFA.

According to a police officer at the Aksu Education Institute, Yalkun was handed over to state security agents for questioning. After his closed trial, he was transferred to Aksu Prison. However, political leader from Aksu's state security police said that Yalkun's case had been transferred to the Criminal Investigation Department, according to RFA report.

The plight of China's Uyghur community, mainly located in Xinjiang, has garnered considerable global attention. Reports suggest extensive human rights violations, including forced labour, arbitrary detentions in alleged "re-education" camps, and invasive surveillance.

China-Hong Kong

China tells state firms to halt deals with Li Ka-shing and his family, Bloomberg News reports

27 March 2025, [Reuters](#)

China has instructed state-owned firms to pause new deals with businesses linked to Hong Kong billionaire Li Ka-shing and his family after his plan to sell two ports in Panama to a BlackRock-led consortium, Bloomberg News reported on Thursday.

CK Hutchison, the telecoms-to-retail conglomerate (0001.HK), opens new tab owned by Li, has been caught in China's crosshairs in the highly politicised deal with the U.S. firm.

The Hong Kong-based company this month agreed to sell most of its global ports business, including assets near the strategically important Panama Canal, in a deal that would garner the firm more than \$19 billion in cash.

The directive was issued to state-owned enterprises last week at the behest of senior officials, Bloomberg reported, citing people familiar with the matter. Existing tie-ups are not affected.

The report added Chinese regulators are also reviewing what investments the family has in China and abroad in a bid to better understand the breadth of their business dealings.

Shares of CK Hutchison Holdings rose 1.2% by noon, down from a gain of as much as 3.6% earlier in the day. Shares of CK Hutchison Holdings rose 1.2% by noon, down from a gain of as much as 3.6% earlier in the day. U.S. President Donald Trump has hailed the transaction after previously calling for the Panama Canal to be removed from what he deemed to be Chinese control.

Hong Kong must capitalise on DeepSeek to lure global and Chinese funds, HSBC says

25 March 2025, [SCMP](#), Enoch Yiu and Aileen Chuang

Hong Kong's stock market has a lot of room to expand as many companies are planning IPOs, HSBC's Asia and Middle East co-CEO David Liao says

The market rally driven by the DeepSeek breakthrough has attracted massive capital inflows to Hong Kong, as both international and mainland investors bet on China's tech sector, according to a top HSBC executive. "The recent 'DeepSeek moment' in artificial intelligence (AI) technology has become a turning point for global investors to recognise the value of Chinese companies through Hong Kong's capital markets," David Liao Yi-chien, Asia and Middle East co-CEO, said in an exclusive interview with the Post ahead of the HSBC Global Investment Summit on Tuesday.

"We are seeing international money coming into the Hong Kong stock market and into China stock markets. Mainland investors are also investing in Hong Kong via the southbound Stock Connect scheme."

The rally in Hong Kong was triggered by Hangzhou-based start-up DeepSeek's release of two powerful but cost-effective large language models in January. The Hang Seng Index has risen more than 20 per cent so far this year, after advancing 18 per cent in 2024. The Hang Seng Tech Index has surged nearly 26 per cent so far in 2025.

David Liao, HSBC Asia head, highlights Hong Kong's role in global investment opportunities

For most of March, the daily stock market turnover in Hong Kong has averaged nearly HK\$300 billion

(US\$38.6 billion), more than double from a year earlier.

Liao said the rally reflected investors' confidence in Hong Kong's stock market.

"Hong Kong's capital market has a lot of room to expand, as there are a lot of great companies invested [in] by venture capital and private equity that should come through into this market [via] initial public offerings as an exit option," he said. "So that engine of private capital can reinvest into new companies, which are going to really come through in this DeepSeek moment."

Inflows from China were also rising, either for investing in Hong Kong or were being channelled through the city on the way to other international markets, he added.

The upbeat sentiment is a happy coincidence ahead of the Global Investment Summit, giving investors a chance to explore future opportunities in the city.

The summit, which runs from Tuesday to Thursday, has attracted 3,000 participants and 60 speakers, including those from the government and the business community.

Liao said China's recent annual "two sessions" parliamentary meetings had shown Beijing was keen on supporting the private sector.

"The policies set out have a lot more empathy for the private sector, including the top leadership engaging with the private sector leadership," he said, adding that the two sessions also highlighted Hong Kong's role as a bridge between global and Chinese markets.

Liao also elaborated on group CEO Georges Elhedery's plan in February to redeploy US\$1.5 billion from low-return markets to high-growth areas.

"Hong Kong is really the obvious destination, as over a third of the group's profitability comes from Hong Kong," he said, adding that most of the opportunity in the city was related to China's growth story.

The investment in Hong Kong will be used for hiring to boost the wealth management business and build a seamless digital platform to deliver wealth management and other services for customers.

"We need the right talent and people in Hong Kong," Liao said. "We need to invest and explore new technology, and how AI can optimise our global banking platform. There remains a lot to build on in terms of wholesale banking and interconnectivity."

HSBC has been undertaking a wide range of activities to celebrate its 160th anniversary in Hong Kong, including sponsoring this year's Lunar New Year fireworks and the investment summit.

"HSBC is committed to serving Hong Kong and supporting the community," Liao said. "The bank's legacy reflects its deep connection to the city and its mission to foster growth and prosperity."

China scrutinising Hong Kong firm's sale of Panama Canal ports

18 March 2025, [Aljazeera](#)

China and Hong Kong condemn 'bullying' following deal struck amid US pressure.

China is scrutinising a deal struck by a Hong Kong company to sell ports at the Panama Canal to a United States financial firm.

Beijing directed multiple agencies on Tuesday to examine the transaction, according to Bloomberg News. The deal was earlier hailed by President Donald Trump, who has accused China of seeking to control the strategic waterway.

Hong Kong's CK Hutchison said earlier this month that it had agreed to sell most of its global ports business worth \$22.8bn, including assets near the Panama Canal, to a group led by US-based investment company BlackRock.

A week after the announcement, China's Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office reposted commentaries, calling the sale a betrayal of China that neglected national interests.

The deal, which is yet to be sealed, is now being investigated for security risks and antitrust violations on the orders of senior Chinese leaders, Bloomberg reported, citing unnamed sources.

A spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Beijing said reporters should ask other Chinese authorities about the report.

Those words reflected earlier comments from Hong Kong's leader John Lee.

"[The Hong Kong] government urges foreign governments to provide a fair and just environment for enterprises," Lee told reporters. "We oppose the abusive use of coercion or bullying tactics in international economic and trade relations."

Hutchison did not immediately respond to the reports of scrutiny by Beijing. The company has previously said the deal is "purely commercial in nature and wholly unrelated to recent political news reports concerning the Panama Ports".

The firm agreed to negotiations with the BlackRock consortium on an exclusive basis for 145 days according to a statement.

While the deal has not yet been finalised, it was not immediately clear what levers, if any, China could pull to block the deal, given the business that Hutchison is selling is based outside China and Hong Kong, and it is itself based in the Cayman Islands.

Trump has previously called for the Panama Canal to be removed from "Chinese control". Numerous US politicians have criticised Hutchison's operations at the Panama Canal as a security risk.

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China- Nepal

China Is Propping Up A New Set Of Amenable Leaders To Unite Nepal's Communist Parties

29 March 2025, [Swarajya](#), Jaideep Mazumdar

☐ The two Communist parties have lost a lot of public goodwill and support, which has benefited the NC and the pro-monarchists who want to restore Nepal's constitutional monarchy and 'Hindu rashtra' status.

China has, over the last few years, made numerous efforts to reunite the two main communist parties of Nepal—the Communist Party of Nepal-Unified Marxist Leninist (CPN-UML) and the Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist Centre (CPN-MC).

However, all those efforts have failed because of the irreconcilable differences and ego battles between the chairpersons of the two parties—CPN-UML's Khadga Prasad Sharma Oli and CPN-MC's Pushpa Kamal Dahal.

Merger & breakup

The two parties had, in a deal brokered by China, announced the formation of a coalition in October 2017 on the eve of the parliamentary elections slated for November-December that year.

The two parties fought the elections together and won a majority of the seats in the lower house (the *Pratinidhi Sabha*) and in six of the seven provincial assemblies.

The two parties formally merged into a new entity—the Nepal Communist Party (NCP)—in May 2018. Oli

and Dahal were the co-chairs of the new party, while Oli also held the post of Prime Minister.

However, soon, differences—especially over power-sharing—erupted between Oli and Dahal. The two had agreed to a rotating Prime Ministership, with Oli holding office for the first half of the five-year term and making way for Dahal after that.

But Oli's refusal to honour the agreement and various other issues soured ties between the two and their followers in the newly-formed party, leading to the dissolution of the NCP in March 2021.

Beijing had tried its best to resolve differences between Oli and Dahal, and had deployed its then envoy to Kathmandu, Hou Yanqi, for the task.

Yanqi held innumerable meetings stretching over nearly ten months with not only Oli and Dahal, but also other communist leaders as well as the country's then President, Bidya Devi Bhandari (who was a CPN-UML leader before she became the country's President) in an effort to prevent a breakup of the NCP (read [this](#), [this](#) and [this](#)).

But all those efforts failed, mainly because of Oli's intransigence over sharing power with Dahal. The NCP was dissolved in March 2021 and Oli and Dahal revived their respective parties.

November 2022 parliamentary polls and political flip-flops

The CPN-UML and CPN-MC contested the parliamentary elections in November 2022 separately. The CPN-MC formed a pre-poll alliance with the Nepali Congress (NC) and some other parties.

The NC emerged as the single largest party, winning 89 seats, followed by the CPN-UML with 78 seats and the CPN-MC with 32 seats.

But the pre-poll alliance (called the Democratic Left Alliance) between the NC, CPN-MC and three other parties won 136 seats, just two short of a simple majority.

The NC-led coalition launched efforts to get the support of the smaller parties. But China spotted an opportunity here to prevent an NC-led government from coming to power.

Beijing encouraged Dahal to ask for the Prime Minister's post in the prospective government, a demand that was completely unacceptable to the NC since the CPN-MC had won far fewer seats than the NC.

When the NC refused to humour Dahal, Beijing got its proxy--Oli--to extend support to Dahal. Five other smaller parties and three Independent MPs also extended support to Dahal.

A new coalition government was formed with Dahal as the Prime Minister in December 2022. But very soon, differences once again cropped up between Dahal and Oli over suspicions that Dahal was holding secret talks with the NC.

Oli also demanded that Dahal vacate the PM's post at the end of 2.5 years (in June 2025) and make way for him (Oli) to become the PM. Dahal flatly refused. The rift between the two assumed very serious proportions and paralysed the functioning of the government by February 2023.

Oli also accused Dahal of hobnobbing with the NC and promising to support the NC candidate, Ram Chandra Poudel, for the post of President of the country.

China once again stepped in to resolve the differences between the two, but the duo, especially Dahal, remained intransigent. China realised that its efforts to bring about a rapprochement between the two would not succeed. Oli withdrew from the alliance with the CPN-MC in February 2023.

But the NC quickly stepped in and offered support to Dahal, who continued as Prime Minister. Dahal, in return, offered major portfolios to the NC.

After a few months, Oli reached out to the NC leadership and started working on the prospect of a new alliance between the CPN-UML and NC.

Both Oli and NC president Sher Bahadur Deuba (a five-time Prime Minister) found common ground—their repeated betrayals by Dahal.

Oli promised the NC that in return for being allowed to become PM, he would give major portfolios like home, foreign affairs, industry, health, law, parliamentary affairs, tourism & civil aviation, agriculture and some others to the NC.

Additionally, Oli promised that he would give the NC a major say in appointments to other Constitutional and key executive posts.

The NC, still smarting from Dahal's betrayals, agreed to Oli's proposal and withdrew support to Dahal in July 2024, paving the way for the formation of a new NC-CPN(UML) coalition government with Oli as the Prime Minister.

China's new gameplan

China has realised that with Oli and Dahal as the heads of their two respective parties, there is little chance of the communist parties of Nepal uniting.

Unless the two major communist parties unite, the NC, which Beijing views as a pro-India party, will continue to be a major player in Nepal's politics.

For China to push its sinister agenda in Nepal and make the Himalayan nation a client state, it is imperative that the communists unite and become a larger political force than the NC.

The major hurdle towards achieving this goal is the Oli-Dahal duo. As long as they head their respective parties, there is no chance of even a lasting alliance between them.

And the bad blood between Oli and Dahal is also coming in the way of getting the small communist parties, like the Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Socialist), from joining in the China-backed 'communist unity' project.

China has now initiated a **'minus two' formula** which entails easing out Oli and Dahal from the leaderships of their respective parties.

What is working in favour of this plan is the growing unpopularity of both Oli and Dahal. Both are now widely perceived as power-hungry, corrupt and high-handed, with complete intolerance of dissent and propensity to bend principles to suit their ends.

Oli's waning popularity is evident from the hostile reception he got at some recent public events. At the final of a popular football tournament organised by a youth organisation affiliated to the CPN(UML) held in Kathmandu early in March, Oli was booed and jeered when he made an appearance.

Oli has also been greeted by hostile crowds and shown black flags at many public appearances in other parts of the country over the past couple of months. Within the party, too, Oli is facing growing dissidence by powerful factional leaders who are said to be fed up with his high-handedness and unilateral moves.

Dahal, too, is facing strong opposition from within his party. He is being openly challenged by many leaders, including those who were said to have been close to him. CPN(MC) units in many provinces have revolted against Dahal and are no longer accepting his leadership. Heads of some frontal organisations of the party are also strongly opposed to Dahal.

Beijing is said to be fanning the flames of dissidence against the two leaders. A number of senior leaders of both parties who had gone to China over the past few months have returned and spoken out openly against their chairman (Oli and Dahal).

Beijing's proposed replacements for Oli & Dahal

China, senior leaders of the CPN(UML) who did not want to be named told *Swarajya*, wants former President Bidya Devi Bhandari to replace Oli.

Bhandari was a senior leader of the CPN(UML) before she became the country's President.

"She (Bhandari) has been advised to tour the country extensively and meet grassroots level workers and functionaries of the party, as well as the common people, during her travels in order to drum up support in her favour," a senior CPI(ML) leader who is also a minister told *Swarajya* over phone from Kathmandu.

Bhandari, who is expected to announce her plans to return to active politics soon, has already toured Gandaki and Koshi provinces and has just embarked on a tour to Lumbini, Sudurpaschim and Karnali provinces.

She received very good responses from party workers and leaders, as well as the general public, in Gandaki and Karnali.

In fact, a number of disgruntled leaders and functionaries of the party have gravitated towards Bhandari, who is seen as level-headed and democratic with a firm commitment to upholding principles and probity.

"Bhandari's growing popularity will hasten Oli's downfall. There could be a revolt against Oli within the party and Bhandari may be made the chairperson of the party. Oli will surely be eased out. Oli is also old and ailing," former party leader Bhim Bahadur Rawal (who was ousted from the party by Oli in January) told *Swarajya* from Kathmandu.

As for CPN(MC), it is learnt that Beijing would like to see Nepal's former Vice-President Nanda Bahadur Pun (also known as Nanda Kishor Pun) take over the leadership from Dahal.

Pun succeeded Dahal as the chief commander of the People's Liberation Army of Nepal (PLAN), the armed wing of the Maoists, after Dahal resigned from the post, joined mainstream politics and became the Prime Minister in August 2008.

The PLAN, under Dahal, had waged a bloody insurgency between 1996 and 2006 that claimed more than 18,000 lives. Pun was the PLAN chief till April 2012, when the outfit started disintegrating.

He became a member of the CPN(MC) central committee and then the second Vice-President of Nepal in October 2015. He remained in office till March 2023.

Pun returned to active politics in December last year and participated in the CPN(MC)'s central committee meeting in January this year.

Pun is said to be close to Beijing, and also enjoys the goodwill of a number of senior leaders as well as almost all the mid-ranking leaders and cadres of the party.

He is well-respected, and as Vice President, he remained non-controversial. He is also known to be honest and upright and is amiable in nature. A strict disciplinarian, Pun is said to be against personality cults and leads a simple lifestyle.

"Nanda Bahadur Pun is humble, down-to-earth, honest and abhors sycophancy. He is also very intelligent and leads by consensus," CPN(MC) deputy general secretary Haribol Gajurel told *Swarajya*.

What Gajurel left unsaid is that Pun is the exact opposite of Dahal who is arrogant, has a flashy lifestyle, takes unilateral decisions, encourages sycophancy and is power-hungry.

Also, Pun and Bhandari, whose tenures as Vice President and President were coterminous (October 2015 to March 2023), have worked together amicably and have great regard for each other.

"Both (Bhandari and Pun) share the same temperament and have a good working relationship. Bhandari and Pun will make a great team," said Gajurel, who was once a close advisor to Dahal but had a fallout with him.

Bhandari publicly praised Pun while on a tour of Koshi province in January this year. "He (Pun) is experienced and still in working age. We worked together for seven years, and I am happy that he has rejoined politics. I

extend my best wishes to him," Bhandari had said at a press conference that time.

If Beijing's plan to replace Oli and Dahal with Bhandari and Pun succeeds, the Bhandari-Pun duo will be amenable to execute the larger plan of merging their two parties and working together in a new party.

But as with all such ambitious plans, there are many hitches. Primary among them are the ambitions of many senior leaders of the two communist parties who will challenge Bhandari's and Pun's rise.

Also, the fact that both Oli and Dahal, who are still well entrenched within their parties and control the purse strings of their respective parties, will not give up power and posts so easily.

The rot that has set in within the two parties has cost both a lot of public goodwill and support. And that has benefited the NC and also the pro-monarchists who want to restore Nepal's constitutional monarchy and 'Hindu rashtra' status.

The two main communist parties of Nepal have lost a lot of support and are pale shadows of their earlier selves. Even if a merger may not make the communists the powerful political force they once were in Nepal.

Beijing's ambitious plan, thus, may not succeed. Just as its earlier plans met with ignominious failures, this too may fall into the deep political crevices of the mountainous country.

'Nepal should learn lessons from China for prosperity'

21 March 2025, [The Annapurna Express](#)

Experts and politicians have said that Nepal should learn lessons for the country's economic growth and physical prosperity from China's development initiatives.

At a program organized by Friends of Silk Road Club-Nepal on 'China's Two Sessions 2025: Lessons, Opportunities, and Implications for Nepal' on Thursday, they stated that Nepal can learn lessons and benefit from China's economic rise made in the last four decades.

Standing Committee Member of the CPN-UML and former Industry Minister Karna Bahadur Thapa said we should expand Nepal-China relations and take maximum benefits through partnership for the implementation of sustainable development policies. "For this, we should deepen our diplomatic ties through political level," Thapa added.

Likewise, CPN (Maoist Center) central committee member and Bagmati Province Assembly Member Yubraj Chaulagain called for intensive collaboration on economic issues between Nepal and China adding that rising economic power of China could be beneficial for Nepal's development efforts.

Similarly, Nepali Congress central committee member Madhu Acharya argued that Nepal could advance ahead by taking technical expertise from China adding that China's stride in technological advancement was impressive.

Also speaking at the programme, Executive Director of CEDA of Tribhuvan University (TU) Prof Dr Arjun Kumar Baral and foreign affairs expert Gopal Khanal said that China's strategies on economic growth, industrialization, modernization, good-governance and reforms are the key areas that Nepal should learn from Chinese experiences.

General Secretary of Club Dr Kalyan Raj Sharma stressed the need of investment partnership with China adding that Nepal can bring in a huge amount of FDI from China by further deepening our ties.

Nepali lawmakers demand to investigate attempt to smuggle foreign currencies into China

19 March 2025, [ANI](#)

Nepali lawmakers from both ruling and opposition parties have demanded the formation of a high-level committee to investigate an attempt to smuggle foreign currencies to China.

Addressing Wednesday's parliamentary session, lawmakers from the ruling Nepali Congress and CPN-UML, along with opposition CPN-Maoist Center and RPP lawmakers, called for serious government action on the matter.

"Such a massive smuggling operation is not possible without high-level connections. Therefore, we demand the formation of a committee to investigate and probe the matter. This incident has brought to light a picture of the level at which organised crime and smuggling networks are growing at an organised manner. Only drivers and mules are caught in this. It becomes big news for a while, and after a certain time, it fades away," Madhav Sapkota, a lawmaker from CPN-Maoist Center, said, referring to the smuggling attempt late Monday night. On Tuesday, the Kathmandu Valley Crime Investigation Office announced the seizure of thousands of US dollars and euros that were being smuggled to China. Police confirmed that foreign currency worth approximately NPR 250 million was confiscated from a freight truck bound for China. The operation took place late Monday night (March 17, 2025), when a team from the Kathmandu Valley Crime Investigation Office recovered the amount from a vehicle bearing number Na 7 Kha 1652. The driver was immediately detained. Raising concerns over the pattern of only arresting low-level operatives, Nepali Congress lawmaker Ramhari Khatiwada also demanded a thorough investigation.

"In these kinds of incidents, timely, be it gold smuggle or dollar smuggle, only the carriers have been arrested, and the one who owned that item are always kept on the safe side. I would demand the government's action to end this tendency," Khatiwada said on Wednesday.

Ruling party CPN-UML lawmaker Raghuji Pant and opposition RPP lawmaker Roshan Karki also stressed the need for a thorough probe into such cases, stating that smuggling attempts had become a recurring issue.

The arrested individual has been identified as Kushang Lama from Bhotekoshi Rural Municipality-1. He had previously served five years in prison for gold smuggling. According to the police, two individuals had instructed him to transport the money from Kerung. Acting on intelligence, authorities intercepted the operation and launched an immediate investigation.

The confiscated foreign currency included 3,119 banknotes of US dollar denominations of one hundred, 179 banknotes of fifty, 11 banknotes of five hundred euros, 480 banknotes of two hundred euros, 4,148 banknotes of one hundred euros, and 17,177 banknotes of fifty euros. The incident highlights the rising use of Nepal as a transit hub for cross-border crimes by Chinese criminal networks. Smugglers are shifting their methods and routes, making it increasingly challenging for law enforcement agencies. These activities have not only created a significant challenge for Nepal Police but have also raised concerns that Nepal could become a fertile ground for foreign criminals to orchestrate large-scale illicit operations.

Authorities suspect that the smuggled foreign currency was intended to finance gold smuggling into Nepal. Chinese criminal groups previously used the Tatopani border to import gold illegally, but after the 2015 earthquake, they shifted their operations. The primary smuggling route now passes through Rasuwa's Kerung border crossing, and in some cases, smugglers attempt to move contraband through Tribhuvan International Airport. Despite a surge in smuggling-related crimes and growing Chinese involvement in illicit activities, Nepal has yet to take decisive action at a higher policy level. Law enforcement agencies continue to crack down on individual operators, but lawmakers argue that unless key figures behind these networks are exposed and punished, such incidents will continue to occur. With Nepal increasingly being used as a transit point for cross-border financial crimes, there is mounting pressure on the government to strengthen border controls, tighten enforcement, and enhance

cooperation with international agencies to dismantle these well-organised smuggling networks. (ANI)

Speaker Ghimire calls for boosting Nepal-China collaboration for mutual interests

16 March 2025, [The Annapurna Express](#)

Speaker Devraj Ghimire has pointed out the need to further strengthen our cooperation with India for Nepal's sustainable development with a focus on an investment increase for promotion of mutual interests.

In his address to the Kasthamandap Dialogue organised by the Foundation for Peace, Development and Socialism, here today, the Speaker stressed this. In the Dialogue centered on Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and Nepal-China cooperation, the Speaker called for identifying new potential areas for Nepal-China cooperation and include them as projects under the BRI.

As a close neighbor and good friend of China, Nepal takes pride in China's remarkable progress and aims to benefit from its extraordinary development through a broader economic partnership, Ghimire remarked. "We highly appreciate China's support and cooperation in Nepal's developmental endeavors," he added, expressing hope for significant assistance from the northern neighbor as Nepal moves towards graduating from the category of Least Developed Country (LDC) to a middle-income country by 2026 and also for the sustainability of this status.

Ghimire further highlighted that Nepal's historic relationship with China, based on mutual trust, understanding, and friendship, has been strengthened through the BRI. "This initiative is not just about infrastructure for Nepal; it should be viewed as an opportunity for Nepal to explore new avenues for economic growth," he said.

He also suggested that Nepal, leveraging its geographical position, has the potential to be developed into a 'transit hub.' To realize this, Ghimire stressed the need for enhancing bilateral collaboration on physical infrastructure, including roadways, railways, information technology, and trade relations. Reflecting on the longstanding diplomatic ties between Nepal and China, which have flourished over the past seven decades, Ghimire affirmed that Nepal's policies are guided by the five principles (Panchasheel) of peaceful coexistence. "We are always ready to take steps to deepen the cordial relations between our two nations," he added. He also reiterated Nepal's commitment to the 'One China Policy' and described China as a reliable and significant development partner for Nepal.

Former Prime Minister and senior CPN (Unified Socialist) leader Jhala Nath Khanal, who also spoke at

the event, highlighted the BRI as a global development project that offers abundant opportunities for infrastructure development and expanding connectivity. "It is a boon for many countries around the world," he said, urging Nepal to ensure it capitalizes on the potential benefits.

China's Ambassador to Nepal, Chen Song, shared about China's achievements in infrastructure development, information technology, industrialization, innovation, and research. He reiterated China's strong support for Nepal's developmental goals.

During the Dialogue, business communities and academics from Nepal and China are scheduled to exchange views on the implementation of the BRI in Nepal, its opportunities, and challenges.

China-Pakistan

Pakistan repays \$1 billion loan to Industrial and Commercial Bank of China in March

28 March 2025, [Profit](#)

Another \$300 million Chinese loan due next month as Pakistan seeks refinancing amid shrinking reserves Pakistan has repaid a \$1 billion commercial loan to the Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC) in two equal installments in March 2025. This loan was taken two years ago at a floating interest rate of approximately 7.5%, according to a news report.

A \$300 million loan tranche from ICBC is due next month. The government is also hoping that ICBC will refinance this loan, though discussions on the interest rates are still ongoing.

The repayment of \$1 billion Chinese loans has led to a temporary drop in the country's foreign exchange reserves, bringing them to a six-month low of \$10.6 billion. The central bank's reserves fell after the second \$500 million tranche of the loan was paid in mid-March. The first installment was settled in early March.

Despite these repayments, the central bank managed to partly cover the gap through foreign inflows and market purchases of dollars. Pakistan's central bank governor previously stated that the institution had purchased \$9 billion in 2024 to support the reserves, which would otherwise have been just around \$2 billion without the IMF program.

The government remains heavily reliant on Chinese financing, with Beijing rolling over \$4 billion in cash deposits, \$6.5 billion in commercial loans, and \$4.3 billion in trade financing.

Another \$2.7 billion in Chinese loans is set to mature between April and June, including a \$2.1 billion

syndicate financing loan and a \$300 million loan from the Bank of China, both maturing in June.

While the IMF's staff-level agreement for the first review of Pakistan's Extended Fund Facility (EFF) program this week could unlock an additional \$1 billion in financing, the timing of the IMF board's approval remains uncertain. The board meeting may occur in May or June, contingent on the fiscal year 2025-26 budget discussions, with some key issues still unresolved, including taxes on real estate and the beverage and tobacco sectors.

Last month, Pakistan requested the Export-Import Bank of China to reschedule \$3.4 billion in debt from October 2024 to September 2027. The status of that request has not been officially disclosed by the Ministry of Finance.

Pakistan is also working to secure financing to address a \$5 billion external financing gap for the three-year IMF program period.

Although the IMF said that Pakistan's external sector has stabilised, it has warned that vulnerabilities remain and must be managed through tight fiscal and monetary policies, along with exchange rate flexibility.

Pakistan, China in talks about security for Chinese nationals

26 March 2025, [Reuters](#), Binbin Huang and Liz Lee

Pakistan and China's discussions about security measures to protect Chinese nationals working in the South Asian country are a work in progress, Islamabad's ambassador to Beijing said on Wednesday.

Chinese nationals have been in the crosshairs of separatist militants who believe Beijing is helping Pakistan exploit minerals in the underdeveloped southwestern province of Balochistan, where China has a strategic port and mining interests.

It is Pakistan's "national responsibility" and the country is "doing everything possible", Ambassador Khalil Hashmi told reporters at the sidelines of the Boao Forum in China's Hainan province.

"I think our two countries work very closely in terms of information sharing, in terms of developing the standard operating procedures" to ensure Chinese nationals working in Pakistan are safe, he said.

"We keep our Chinese friends informed of the steps that we are taking, so it's a work in progress."

Beijing has been [pushing](#) Pakistan to allow its own security staff to provide protection to thousands of Chinese citizens working there, frustrated by the string of attacks on its citizens.

The push came after a bombing at the Karachi airport last October killed two Chinese engineers who were returning there to work at a power plant.

Hashmi said those talks are ongoing, with a high degree of trust between both countries.

"It's a complex security environment," he said, "We have the capability to resolve, to counter and combat and defeat these terrorist forces."

China reaffirms support for Pakistan's uplift, counterterrorism efforts

24 March 2025, [The News](#), Muhammad Saleh Zaafir

Chinese ambassador recalled that Pakistan was first Islamic country to recognise People's Republic of China. China has pledged firm support to Pakistan in safeguarding its sovereignty and territorial integrity, pursuing a development path suited to its national conditions, combating terrorism and playing a greater role in international and regional affairs.

Announcing this commitment, Chinese Ambassador Jiang Zaidong, while speaking at the inauguration ceremony of "Esthetic Bridge" exhibition at the Silkroad Culture Centre on Sunday, reaffirmed China's unwavering support to Pakistan.

Speaking about promoting exchange and mutual learning between Chinese and Islamic civilisations, the Chinese envoy said, "let them shine in each other's light."

The Chinese ambassador recalled that Pakistan was the first Islamic country to recognise the People's Republic of China, and that China helped Pakistan build Karakoram Highway, hailed as the "Eighth Wonder of the World".

He reminded that during the 2008 Wenchuan earthquake, China witnessed the touching story of Pakistan's all-out assistance with tents; in 2010 and 2022, Pakistan received full support from all sectors of Chinese society in fighting floods.

He emphasized that the traditional friendship between Pakistan and China has continuously consolidated and elevated as "we move forward together". This ironclad friendship, "higher than the mountains, deeper than the sea, and sweeter than honey" has taken root, flourished, and will surely be passed down through generations and remain steady and enduring, he added. He said, "We stand firmly together, committed to creating miracles of development."

The Chinese ambassador said currently, the Pakistan government is advancing its reform agenda in full force, stabilising and improving economy, achieving growth in both exports and investments, reaching new highs in foreign reserves and remittances, with an expected GDP growth of more than 3 per cent.

Over the past 11 years, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has made significant contributions to strengthening Pakistan's development foundation and improving the well-being of Pakistani people.

"For 85 years, the brotherly people of Pakistan have proactively pursued the great dream of building a strong and prosperous nation," Zaidong said.

He assured, "As Chinese modernisation advances comprehensively and the concept of a community with a shared future for mankind gains widespread support, we are ready to continue providing new opportunities for the development of our ironclad friend Pakistan through the new achievements of Chinese modernisation."

"We will not forget that Pakistan was not only the first Islamic country to establish diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China but also stood up and supported China at critical moments such as the restoration of China's lawful seat in the United Nations.

"Similarly, when Pakistan is in need, China has always been a strong backing for Pakistan. Faced with the current turbulent international and regional situation, we will, as always, enhance solidarity and collaboration with Pakistan to safeguard the fundamental interests of both countries and international fairness and justice, and jointly promote an equal and orderly multi-polar world and a universally beneficial and inclusive economic globalisation. We stand firmly together, hand in hand, to create a brighter tomorrow," the Chinese ambassador said.

He said that since the establishment of the current Pakistani government a year ago, "we have maintained close high-level exchanges". Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif visited China in last June; Premier Li Qiang visited Pakistan in last October; President Zardari visited China this February. "All these visits fully demonstrated the closeness of our ironclad friendship and the high level of all-weather strategic cooperation."

The ambassador expressed contentment that under the care and promotion of the leaders of both countries, the CPEC has entered a new phase of building an "upgraded version", providing new opportunities for high-quality development of practical cooperation between the two countries.

"Let us join hands and shoulders, while guided by the important consensus reached between our national leaders, to focus on building an even closer Pakistan-China community with a shared future in the new era, and continuously consolidate, deepen and expand the all-weather strategic cooperation between Pakistan and China, to jointly creating a brighter future for China-Pakistan friendship."

China offers aid to Pakistan for treating injured after train attack in Balochistan

20 March 2025, [Xinhua](#)

The handover ceremony of emergency cash aid from the Red Cross Society of China to the Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) was held here on Wednesday. Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Jiang Zaidong, on behalf of the Red Cross Society of China, presented the cash aid to the Pakistani side, stating that China firmly opposes all forms of terrorism and strongly condemns the attack on a passenger train in Balochistan province.

Twenty-one passengers were killed after heavily armed terrorists attacked the passenger train on March 11 in the country's southwestern Balochistan province, according to a statement released by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the media wing of the Pakistan Army.

The Chinese government also expresses deep condolences to the victims and their families and wishes the injured a quick recovery, said the ambassador.

In order to support the Pakistani side in carrying out medical treatment and aftermath of the injured, the Red Cross Society of China has decided to provide emergency cash aid, the Chinese envoy added.

Pakistan's foreign secretary, Amna Baloch, and PRCS chairperson, Farzana Naek, received aid representing Pakistan and expressed gratitude to China for its assistance.

At this special moment, China's firm support has deeply moved the Pakistani side and fully reflects the brother-like iron-clad friendship between the two countries, said the Pakistani officials.

China, Pakistan to launch joint scientific expeditions in Karakoram region

14 March 2025, [Pakistan Today](#)

Northwest University (NWU) of China and Karakoram International University (KIU) of Pakistan are set to launch joint scientific expeditions in the Pamir-Hindu Kush-Karakoram region.

The initiative will be supported by the China-Pakistan Joint Research Center on Earth Sciences (CPJRC).

Under a newly signed cooperation agreement, both universities will collaborate on joint research, talent development, and teacher training, focusing on geological disaster prevention, control, and cultural heritage conservation, according to a report by China Economic Net on Friday.

The partnership also aims to create more opportunities for Pakistani students to pursue academic degrees and postdoctoral studies at NWU.

"Due to complex geological conditions, frequent disasters, and unique cultural heritage in the region where KIU is located, there is a strong need for external cooperation in geological disaster management and cultural heritage preservation," said KIU Vice Chancellor Engr. Prof. Dr. Attaullah Shah.

NWU President Sun Qingwei noted that his university's expertise in natural disaster prevention, ecological protection, and environmental sciences complements KIU's strengths. He emphasized that earth science cooperation between China and Pakistan is steadily expanding.

Earlier in February, CPJRC and KIU signed a Declaration of Understanding (DoU) to jointly establish the Karakoram Observation and Research Station (KORS) on Natural Hazards.

Pakistan seeks deeper cooperation with China in economy, technology

11 March 2025, [APP News](#)

Pakistan's Ambassador to China, Khalil Hashmi, highlighted the key takeaways from China's annual Two Sessions, emphasizing economic confidence, technological innovation, and Pakistan-China cooperation under CPEC Phase II.

Speaking with China Economic Net about the Chinese government's work report, Ambassador Hashmi pointed out that China's sustained 5% economic growth is a remarkable feat. He noted that China's focus on "new quality productive forces," green technology, and digitalization will drive future development.

"I think of two words: economy and technology. China is a major power, and its domestic policies have global implications. China has a very generous approach toward the Global South and developing countries," the ambassador stated.

Pakistan aims to strengthen collaboration in AI, blockchain, and next-generation communication technologies. With China leading in patent filings and breakthroughs in renewable energy, electric vehicles, and AI, there is immense potential for joint research and application-based initiatives.

"Under CPEC Phase II, Pakistan is prioritizing government-to-government (G2G) and business-to-business (B2B) cooperation. Sectors such as agriculture, IT, and manufacturing are being actively developed, with 45 new MOUs worth over \$600 million signed in recent months," he added.

Ambassador Hashmi highlighted efforts to enhance education and technical training, linking research with commercial implementation. With Pakistan's first astronauts set to join a Chinese space mission, space collaboration is another promising area.

"China's high-level opening-up policy presents opportunities for Pakistan in trade, tourism, and investment. Streamlining visa procedures remains a priority to boost travel and people-to-people exchanges," he added.

The ambassador said that with a strategic focus on eight key sectors this year, Pakistan is committed to mobilizing investment from China, further solidifying the ironclad friendship between the two nations.

Experts believe that greater cooperation between the two countries under CPEC Phase II offers outstanding advantages for China. It provides China with strategic access to South Asian markets and facilitates diversification of trade routes.

They further stated that collaborative efforts in agriculture and manufacturing can enable Chinese enterprises to expand their global footprint. Joint initiatives and ventures in fields such as IT, artificial intelligence, robotics, and blockchain are expected to foster innovative advancements through shared research and development. This cooperation further strengthens China's position as a key partner in driving development across the Global South, enhancing its regional influence and economic connectivity.

China rolls over \$2 billion loan to Pakistan

08 March 2025, [Reuters](#)

China rolled over a \$2 billion loan to Pakistan, the adviser to the finance minister of Pakistan, Khurram Schehzad, told Reuters in a text message on Saturday. Pakistan is working to strengthen its finances after securing a \$7 billion International Monetary Fund bailout in September 2024. The first installment of the loan is currently under review, and if successful, Pakistan will receive an additional \$1 billion.

Securing external financing has previously been a key condition for the IMF to approve bail-out deals for the cash-strapped nation.

The South Asian nation needs to repay over \$22 billion in external debt in fiscal year 2025, including nearly \$13 billion in bilateral deposits, Fitch said.

Pakistan congratulates China on two sessions

07 March 2025, [China Daily](#), Xu Wei

Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has extended warm congratulations to President Xi Jinping, Premier Li Qiang and the Chinese people on a successful convening of the two sessions in Beijing, saying that China is making remarkable progress in achieving its national development goals.

"We are particularly impressed by China's modernization under President Xi's visionary leadership," Sharif wrote on his X account.

"As 'iron brothers' and all weather strategic cooperative partners, Pakistan and China will continue to work together closely to further strengthen our cooperation to realize the shared objectives of peace and development."

Baloch armed groups team up to target Pakistan, Chinese interests

04 March 2025, [The Economic Times](#), Dipanjan Roy Chaudhury

Baloch Raji Aajoi Sangar (BRAS), an alliance of "pro-independence" armed groups, has announced a major restructuring of its military and diplomatic strategy, declaring that it will unify its forces under a centralised command and intensify operations against Pakistan and China in **Balochistan**.

The move may have serious implications for the **China Pakistan Economic Corridor** (CPEC) that passes through Balochistan. This Pakistan province also houses the **Gwadar Port**, the entry point for CPEC. Baloch groups have been targeting CPEC for the past few years arguing that China is colonising the province. In a statement released on Sunday, BRAS spokesperson Baloch Khan said a high-level meeting was held with senior delegates from the **Baloch Liberation Army**, Balochistan Liberation Front, Baloch Republican Guards, and Sindhudesh Revolutionary Army. The meeting lasted three days, during which "important decisions were made to enter the Baloch national movement into a decisive phase".

China-Taiwan

Taiwan jails four soldiers, including three who worked in presidential office, for spying for China

27 March 2025, [The Guardian](#), Helen Davidson

Soldiers had worked for 'extremely sensitive and important units' and 'their acts betrayed the country', Taipei court says

A Taiwan court has sentenced four soldiers, including three who worked in the president's security team, to jail for up to seven years on charges of spying for China.

The men were convicted of violating the national security law by passing "internal military information that should be kept confidential to Chinese intelligence agents for several months" between 2022 and 2024, the Taipei district court said on Wednesday. Three of the four convicted were members of a military unit in charge of security for the Presidential Office, while the fourth was a soldier in the defence ministry's information and telecommunications

command. Three of the soldiers were discharged from the military before an investigation was launched in August last year after a tip-off to the defence ministry, and the fourth was suspended.

According to the court, the four received payments from around NT\$260,000 to NT\$660,000 (\$7,850-\$20,000) in return for taking photographs of information with their mobile phones.

The defendants had worked for “extremely sensitive and important units but violated their duties to accept bribes, and stole secrets by photographing”, the court said in a statement.

“Their acts betrayed the country and endangered national security.”

The four received jail terms ranging from five years and 10 months to seven years.

The number of people prosecuted in Taiwan for allegedly spying for China has risen sharply in recent years as the military and civilian investigative bodies crack down on infiltration and espionage. Many of those prosecuted have been current or retired members of Taiwan’s military, recruited by Beijing or its agents in Taiwan.

Beijing has vowed to annex Taiwan, which it claims is Chinese territory. It has not ruled out using force to do so, but in the meantime runs multifaceted pressure campaigns including greyzone acts of military intimidation, cyberwarfare, disinformation and espionage.

Earlier this month Taiwan’s president, Lai Ching-te, designated China as a “foreign hostile power” and announced a swathe of new measures to counter its efforts. The measures include plans to reinstate military courts to hear cases of espionage and other offences involving military personnel.

Last week Taiwan’s government also announced increases to the base pay rates of Taiwan military personnel.

The relatively small payments disclosed in some cases had drawn attention to the conditions and benefits offered to Taiwan’s serving military. Last year Dr Shen Ming-Shih, a research fellow at the Taiwan government-linked thinktank the Institute for National Defense and Security Research, said some recruited spies were lured by financial and sexual incentives, while others were driven by bitterness over their treatment or lack of advancement during their career. Both sides of the Taiwan Strait have been spying on each other for decades. But analysts have warned that espionage is a bigger problem for Taiwan, which faces the existential threat of a Chinese invasion.

Taiwan’s intelligence agency previously reported that 64 people were prosecuted for Chinese espionage in 2024, compared with 48 in 2023 and 10 in 2022. In 2017 Taiwan’s government estimated there were more than 5,000 spies working for China in Taiwan.

Cases have included soldiers filming themselves declaring they will surrender as soon as China’s military invades, or making written pledges of loyalty to the Chinese Communist party. Some retired officers have allegedly been paid to recruit active soldiers.

Taiwan accuses China of 60 incursions into restricted waters

24 March 2025, [RFAv](#), Hsai Hsiao-hua

China’s coast guard said to engage in ‘grey zone’ harassment in seas close to the Taiwan-held Kinmen islands

Chinese coast guard vessels intruded more than 60 times in the past year in waters near Taiwan-held Kinmen islands, which lie close to mainland China, Taiwan’s coast guard says.

The spate of incursions follows a February 2024 incident when a Chinese speedboat capsized after evading inspection by Taiwan’s coast guard. Two Chinese men died. The incident raised tensions between Taiwan and China.

Since then, China’s coast guard has mounted what it describes as “law enforcement” operations, but which Taiwan calls “grey zone” activities intended to undermine its control.

Last Thursday, four Chinese coast guard ships encroached into waters south of Kinmen and were driven away, only to return the following day, the Taiwanese coast guard said in a statement Friday. It added that there had been 63 incursions since the February 2024 incident.

A Taiwanese analyst described that as an effort to undermine Taiwanese sovereignty of the islands, which are home to about 200,000 people.

“The deployment of coast guard ships denies the legitimacy of local law enforcement and denies Taiwan’s jurisdiction and sovereignty,” said Lee Jyun-yi, an associate researcher at the National Defense Security Research Institute, a think tank under Taiwan’s defense ministry.

“It intends to regard the waters of Taiwan’s outlying islands such as Dongsha and Kinmen as Chinese waters, so it has these jurisdictions. This is coercion against us,” Lee added.

Dongsha, also known as Pratas, refers to a Taiwanese-held atoll southwest of Taiwan.

China has yet to comment publicly on the Taiwanese allegations. Beijing considers Taiwan a breakaway province which it threatens to seize by force if necessary. Self-ruled Taiwan, which has a democratically elected government, views itself as a sovereign state.

Kinmen is an archipelago that lies less than 10 kilometers (6 miles) from China’s Fujian province but more than 180 kilometers (110 miles) from Taiwan’s

main island. Its residents have family and history on both sides of the Taiwan Strait, and shuttle regularly by ferry back and forth to the Chinese city of Xiamen. Taiwan describes as “prohibited waters” the territorial waters around Kinmen that extend about halfway to the Chinese coast, or roughly 4 kilometers (2.5 miles) to the north and northwest. “Restricted waters” extend a little further, about 8 kilometers (5 miles), to the south.

But Chinese officials have said they will not recognize those restrictions. Locals on Kinmen have told RFA that even before the February 2024 incident, Chinese fishing boats were helping themselves to fish that were once the preserve of Kinmen’s fishing community.

Taiwan’s annual military drills to simulate 2027 as year of Chinese invasion

21 March 2025, [RFA](#), Alan Lu

The island’s leader also promised an increase in defense spending.



Soldiers exit AAV7 amphibious assault vehicles and run up a beach during an amphibious landing drill as part of the Han Kuang military exercise in Pingtung, Taiwan, July 28, 2022. (Ann Wang/Reuters)

Taiwan’s annual military exercises have set 2027 as the potential year of a Chinese invasion – the first time it has specified a particular date for the imagined offensive – as the island’s leader promised to increase its defense spending amid U.S. pressure.

Taiwan holds the Han Kuang Exercise annually to test its military readiness against potential Chinese invasion. The exercise, planned for July 9-18, will involve joint operations among the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps, featuring live-fire drills, amphibious landings, and simulated missile strikes. In this year’s drills, the island plans to focus on simulating the defense of the island with scenarios based on a potential offensive in 2027, according to Taiwan’s defense ministry.

“The Han Kuang exercise has always been designed to simulate scenarios that could occur within the next one to two years,” the island’s defense minister

Wellington Koo said in a press conference on Wednesday.

“With the acquisition of new weapon systems, our training must continuously undergo validation to ensure combat effectiveness,” Koo said.

China considers Taiwan a breakaway province and has ramped up military pressure through drills and incursions. Taiwan, however, sees itself as a sovereign state and continues to bolster its defenses.

Taiwan’s announcement came after U.S. Strategic Command Commander Anthony J. Cotton warned at a defense conference on Tuesday that as China accelerates its military expansion, the Chinese People’s Liberation Army, or PLA, could “seize Taiwan by 2027.”

In February, Taiwan’s defense ministry proposed to double the duration of the drills to 10 from five days, while deploying more reserve brigades as part of the efforts to scale up its defensive strength.

Defense budget increase

Separately, Taiwan’s President Lai Ching-te announced on Thursday that the island would increase its defense budget to more than 3% of gross domestic product, or GDP.

Its current defense budget is approximately 2.4%.

In a speech to the American Chamber of Commerce on Thursday, Lai emphasized his administration’s commitment to ensuring the defense budget surpasses 3% of GDP while “continuing national defense reforms.”

Lai’s remarks were the most recent attempt to reassure both U.S. and domestic critics who argue that Taiwan is not investing enough in its own defense.

U.S. President Donald Trump has called on Taiwan to raise defense spending to as much as 10% of GDP – significantly higher than what the U.S. or its key allies allocate – in an effort to deter China.

Since Lai took office in May 2024, China has intensified pressure on Taiwan through heightened military activity, including large-scale joint air and sea exercises and frequent deployments of warplanes and naval vessels near the island.

It has also introduced new military equipment, such as landing barges designed for amphibious operations, and increased cyber and influence operations to sway public opinion in Taiwan.

Beijing announced in early March that it was increasing its 2025 defense budget by 7.2% to US\$246 billion, marking the fourth consecutive year of more than 7% growth in defense spending.

“Taiwan plans to advance our cooperation with the U.S. and other democracies in upholding regional stability and prosperity,” Lai said.

Taiwan reveals timeline for potential full-scale China invasion

20 March 2025, [Independent](#), Shweta Sharma

Taiwan likely to double duration of annual mega drills

Taiwan has identified 2027 as a potential timeframe for a full-scale Chinese invasion in its largest annual defence drills amid worsening tensions in cross-strait ties.

Taiwan claims the timeline aligns with the modernisation goals set by Chinese president Xi Jinping, who has repeatedly vowed to achieve "reunification" with Taiwan, by force if necessary.

The warning of a potential Chinese invasion in the next two years came amid Taiwan's ongoing five-day "rapid response exercise" and its start coincided with China dispatching 59 military planes and other warships to areas near Taiwan.

China dubbed the surprise exercise as a "punishment" for Taiwanese president Lai Ching-te's continued promotion of "separatism".

The Taiwanese defence ministry unveiled the timeline in documents released on Tuesday when lawmakers and officials were briefed on the upcoming largest war games simulating an attack by the Chinese military on the annual calendar of Taiwanese forces.

The Han Kuang exercise conducted every summer to practice defence against Chinese invasion has been doubled in length to 10 days, highlighting increased military preparedness this year.

The 2025 exercises will be held from 9-10 July.

Submitting a report to parliament on Wednesday, the ministry said this year's scenarios would focus on grey-zone harassment designed to test and exhaust Taiwan's armed forces or any "possible actions of the Chinese Communist military's invasion of Taiwan in 2027".

"For the People's Liberation Army, turning drills into an attack doesn't take as much time as we imagined in the past," defence minister Wellington Koo told parliament in answer to lawmakers' questions.

"(We) must be able to gather crucial signs of alerts and prepare for the worst from the enemy."

The ministry's rapid-response exercise would be based on its intelligence and threat assessments, Mr Koo added.

Taiwan held a five-day "rapid response exercise" from Monday which the defence ministry said was to boost "readiness and response capabilities".

This drill will be held twice a year at "unscheduled" times based on their assessment of "the intensity" of China's military exercises, Mr Koo told parliament.

"This is part of realistic combat training, sharpening commanders' decision-making and unit capabilities," Mr Koo said.

Beijing on Monday warned Taiwan against "its own destruction" as 54 Chinese military planes and drones were spotted near the island.

Taiwan's security officials said Beijing is attempting to normalise drills near Taiwan as it has been carrying out such patrols near the island every 7-10 days on average.

It came after President Lai labelled China a "foreign hostile force" and said Taipei had "no choice but to take even more proactive measures".

He then announced a series of new national security measures, including the reinstatement of a military court system and stricter residency criteria for individuals from China, Hong Kong, and Macau.

Mr Lai said Taiwan would restore the military court system to "allow military judges to return to the frontline... to handle criminal cases involving active-duty military personnel" in a bid to stop China from attacking the island.

Chinese authorities responded by calling Mr Lai a "destroyer of cross-straits peace" and a "creator of crisis".

Taiwan practices to mobilise troops fast if China drills turn into attack

19 March 2025, [Reuters](#)

Taiwan is strengthening its ability to move troops swiftly in case China suddenly turns one of its frequent drills around the island into an attack, Defence Minister Wellington Koo said on Wednesday, amid a heightened military threat from Beijing.

A five-day "rapid response exercise" began on Monday to train the forces of democratically-governed Taiwan to quickly mobilise against any attack by China or grey-zone harassment designed to test and exhaust Taiwan's armed forces.

The start of the exercise coincided with China's dispatch of 59 military planes and other warships to areas near Taiwan on the grounds that it was "punishment" for Taiwan President Lai Ching-te's continued promotion of "separatism".

"For the People's Liberation Army, turning drills into an attack doesn't take as much time as we imagined in the past," Koo told parliament in answer to lawmakers' questions.

"(We) must be able to gather crucial signs of alerts and prepare for the worst from the enemy."

The ministry's rapid-response exercise would be based on its intelligence and threat assessments, Koo added.

"Without such vigilance, if something really happens, (we) will not be ready for combat."

In the drills, troops set up anti-landing barriers near a key port just outside Taiwan's capital of Taipei, and deployed surface-to-air missile systems at strategic sites, video from the defence ministry showed.

Taiwan's security officials have said China was trying to normalise drills near Taiwan, carrying out what it calls "joint combat readiness patrols" using warplanes and navy vessels every seven to 10 days on average.

China, which claims Taiwan as its own territory and has never renounced the use of force to bring the island under its control, has stepped up military and political pressure on Taiwan in recent years.

Taiwan strongly objects to China's sovereignty claims, saying only its people can decide their future.

Taiwan Looks to Crack Down on China's Influence and Espionage Activities

17 March 2025, [The Diplomat](#), Brian Hioe

From military espionage to pro-China Taiwanese influencers to local government officials, the Lai Ching-te government is seeking to curb infiltration by Beijing.

On March 13, Taiwanese President Lai Ching-te held a surprise national press conference to announce new measures to curb Beijing's infiltration and influence. Lai particularly mentioned the military, press, businesspeople, influencers, religious groups, politicians, and entertainers as groups China had sought to co-opt or recruit.

Taiwan frequently sees cases involving active duty or retired members of the Taiwanese military who are implicated in Chinese spying. In the most recent case, a retired Air Force major, Shih Chun-cheng, persuaded former Air Intercept Controller Hsu Chan-cheng to leak information on Taiwan's response to Chinese air incursions in exchange for payment. Shih himself is thought to have leaked classified files from 2021 to August 2024, when authorities raided his home.

Espionage cases involving members of the military have been a recurring theme in past years. But as brought up by Lai in his speech, the number of arrests for such spying cases is on the rise.

The type of spying cases has also diversified. For example, in January, a retired lieutenant general, Kao An-kuo, was detained along with other former military personnel over receiving Chinese funding and instructions to form a paramilitary cell that would seek to act as a fifth-column in wartime. It is relatively new to hear of arrests over attempts to form sleeper cells that become active in wartime, rather than simply espionage cases.

These espionage cases point to the identity issues that Taiwan continues to face. For example, at 80 years old, Kao is among the last generation of military personnel who were born in China before the KMT fled to Taiwan after the Chinese Civil War.

Yet the past year has seen not just spying cases, but increased concern about Chinese influence on the entertainment industry. For one, it has long been an

established phenomenon that Taiwanese entertainers working in the Chinese market repost statements by Chinese state-run media that emphasize territorial claims over Taiwan. As of late, the Lai administration has hit out at these entertainers, with the Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) criticizing them for denigrating Taiwan's sovereignty.

But there has been increased concern in Taiwan in past months about the issue of Taiwanese influencers being paid by China to produce pro-China content intended to win over the public. The issue exploded into the public attention with a viral video produced by anti-CCP YouTuber Pa Chiung that showed the process by which Chinese United Front organizations subsidize and pay for Taiwanese entertainers to produce content intended to depict China in a positive light. The video attracted 2.4 million views in approximately one week.

The video featured rapper Chen Po-yuan, who previously was himself a pro-CCP influencer but had since changed political stances, going through the production process for travel content aimed at showing the economic opportunities that Taiwanese young people can have in China. After the video, there has also been controversy about the number of Taiwanese who hold Chinese national IDs, as the video showed the process for Taiwanese to obtain Chinese national IDs was very easy.

The Lai administration has since mandated that public servants and members of the military cannot hold Chinese national IDs. Current laws stipulate that Taiwanese who hold Chinese national IDs invalidate their nationality. At least one member of the navy later self-reported having a Chinese national ID, which their Chinese mother applied for without their knowledge. The government has emphasized that this individual will not lose their Taiwanese nationality. The MAC has stated it will investigate Taiwanese entertainers residing in China who express support for Chinese claims over Taiwan to determine whether they hold Chinese national IDs. If they do, per current laws, they will lose their Taiwanese nationality.

Most of the measures that Lai announced in his press conference had previously been floated. Lai touted funding for Taiwanese young people, particularly cultural creators, to provide business opportunities that do not involve needing to travel to China. It is unclear how the Lai administration would pay for such measures, however, given the extensive budget cuts pushed for by the KMT-controlled legislature at present.

But the key measures announced by Lai were mostly security-focused. Given rising concern about Chinese infiltrators, who may pose as originating from Hong Kong or Macau, the government will increase the time required for individuals of Hong Kong or Macau origin to obtain permanent residency in Taiwan, while

curbing some of the paths that currently exist for them to acquire Taiwanese citizenship. Although the government claims that it will consult with Hong Kong civil society groups in Taiwan before rolling out these measures, it is unclear what the effect will be on Hong Kongers seeking refuge in Taiwan.

Lai's announcement took place shortly after the National Immigration Agency announced that it would be invalidating the residency of a Chinese woman living in Taiwan who is married to a Taiwanese national. The woman is an influencer on the video platform Douyin and has produced videos that expressed support for China to annex Taiwan using military force. Since the incident, several other Chinese influencers may also have their residency permits canceled. In Beijing, Taiwan Affairs Office spokesperson Chen Binhua argued that the move showed Taiwan's repression of political freedoms.

Lai also stated that Chinese groups linked to the United Front will be blocked from traveling to Taiwan. This suggests that the Lai administration will block some of the Chinese government officials who travel to Taiwan as part of diplomatic delegations to meet with KMT officials, such as the city-based cross-strait exchanges held annually between Taipei and Shanghai. During the most recent exchange event, which was held in December as a single-day event, the MAC blocked the applications of 10 people in the 103-member delegation that traveled from Shanghai to Taipei.

Likewise, a new mechanism for government officials – whether public servants, borough chiefs, or legislators – to report travel to China will be rolled out.

There have been longstanding concerns about borough chiefs – the lowest level of elected political office in Taiwan at the neighborhood level – taking their constituents to China as part of subsidized tour groups, in which the participants are given tours intended to promote and strengthen pro-unification sentiment. It was only during the 2024 election cycle that Taiwan's government moved to crack down on the practice, with borough chiefs summoned for questioning over participating and organizing these tours. The practice is widespread, with 30 percent of borough chiefs in Taipei found to have joined tours partially subsidized by the Chinese government.

But as of late, there has also been more focus on travel to Hong Kong or China by KMT politicians such as KMT caucus leader Fu Kun-chi. The new mechanism is probably intended to pressure the KMT into compliance.

Fu has spearheaded ongoing efforts by the KMT to drastically cut the national budget, as well as freeze the Constitutional Court. Fu has been accused by Lai's Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) of launching new efforts intended to stymie the operations of government after returning from trips to China.

Fu's most recent trip to Hong Kong was in February, to attend the Hong Kong International Travel Expo. But this trip drew criticism in particular because Fu sought to hide that he had traveled to Hong Kong, instead posting on Facebook that he was absent from cross-party negotiations in the legislature due to illness. Unusually, Fu was outed as having traveled to China by Legislative Yuan President Han Kuo-yu, who also belongs to the KMT.

It later emerged that a member of Fu's delegation was arrested while entering Hong Kong over money laundering charges from several decades back. Fu was criticized by the DPP for not assisting this member of his delegation, nor reporting the detention of this individual to the MAC. The MAC pointed to cases in past years of Taiwanese held by Chinese authorities on arbitrary charges.

KMT politicians have also been accused of receiving funding from the Chinese government during trips to China. This includes Fu. Police searched his offices last week over campaign goods that may have been provided by the Chinese government, seeing as they did not appear to have been paid for. The new mechanism probably will further scrutinize whether KMT politicians receive cash or other material gifts during trips to China.

Yet perhaps the most discussed of Lai's new measures was the announcement that military courts will be reintroduced to deal with espionage cases. The idea of military courts began to be floated earlier this year, with the suggestion that civilian courts were inadequate to deal with such cases due to civilian judges not knowing enough about espionage cases.

In Taiwan, espionage cases often receive light punishments or are thrown out. Some have alleged that such rulings occur at the hand of "dinosaur judges" appointed during the KMT's one-party rule, who make rulings to defend those they politically align with. But, ironically, the idea of military courts – which were only abolished in Taiwan in 2013 – is one that harkens back to Taiwan's authoritarian period.

It proves a strange twist of history, then, that the KMT has taken a strong stance against the notion of military courts. The KMT suggested that it may organize a national referendum against military courts, while also claiming that Lai's suggestion is an affront to the dignity of the military.

The KMT's framing would be to invoke the history of martial law. The suggested text for the referendum question would read: "Given that President Lai has designated China a foreign hostile force, placing cross-strait relations in a quasi-war state, do you support following Ukraine's example by implementing martial law and reinstating military tribunals?"

Although the reference is to Ukraine in this question, the implicit comparison may be to President Yoon Suk-yeol's abortive declaration of martial law in South

Korea. Controversy ensued in Taiwan after a social media post by the DPP that initially expressed support for the declaration of martial law. The post was quickly deleted and replaced with a statement that condemned martial law, emphasized that it was the KMT who maintained martial law in Taiwan for decades, and that stated the DPP was against the authoritarian past returning in Taiwan today. Yet the damage had been done, with the social media post providing ammunition for KMT claims that the DPP is seeking to impose authoritarianism on Taiwan.

The KMT can broadly be expected to take a strong stance against the Lai administration's measures. The party is likely to attack the expulsion of Chinese nationals married to Taiwanese as infringing on the rights of Chinese spouses of Taiwanese, a voter demographic that the KMT has traditionally framed itself as defending. More generally, attempts to crack down on United Front efforts will be framed as the Lai administration seeking to squash dissenting political views. The KMT has accused the DPP of being engaged in a "Green Terror" since the Tsai administration and this accusation is likely to continue.

The KMT will have to decide how far it will lean into defending pro-unification groups or individuals. In November 2024, the Ministry of the Interior (MOI) called for the dissolution of the China Unification Promotion Party (CUPP). The CUPP, which is led by ex-gangster Chang An-lo, retains links to organized crime and has been implicated in violent attacks on student demonstrators, as well as Hong Kong activist Joshua Wong during his past trips to Taiwan. The MOI accused the CUPP of crimes including accepting Chinese funding, interfering in elections, violating laws on foreign interference, murder, and human trafficking.

Though the Lai administration was likely hoping to test the waters by going after a low-hanging fruit, the proposal met resistance from KMT politicians as legislator Weng Hsiao-ling. Weng, a firebrand who has also courted controversy over comments that Taiwanese are Chinese, suggested that the government should instead seek to dissolve pro-independence political parties such as the Taiwan Statebuilding Party. Weng is also known for introducing legislation that would allow members of the military and public servants to salute the Chinese flag or sing the Chinese national anthem without punishment.

Yet some KMT politicians, such as party chair Eric Chu, have warned that the party faces backlash over comments by Weng and other outspoken legislators. It remains to be seen, then, how the KMT frames its response to the Lai administration's latest actions.

Also in question is how the public will react to the measures announced by Lai. Taiwanese are sensitive to actions by political parties that recall Taiwan's past

authoritarianism. Indeed, Lai holding a national press conference on his new measures was likely to give the KMT political ammunition; he might have been better served simply rolling the changes out quietly. But with a wave of ongoing recall campaigns targeting all KMT legislators over the KMT's actions to cut the budget and freeze the Constitutional Court, it is probable that Lai had electoral considerations in mind with his press conference. He may be seeking to rally DPP supporters by emphasizing the threats that Taiwan faces from China – and forcing the KMT into the awkward position of opposing measures to defend Taiwan.

China sends more than 50 war planes near Taiwan as 'punishment' to separatism

17 March 2025, [ABC News](#)



President Lai Ching-te holds a press conference in Taipei, Taiwan in February. (Reuters: Ann Wang)

Beijing has warned Taiwan it would bring about "its own destruction" as China sent more than 50 warplanes in a military exercise to areas surrounding the self-governed island on Monday.

The military drill was "punishment" for Taiwanese President Lai Ching-te's continued promotion of "separatism", a spokesperson from China's Taiwan Affairs Office (TAO) said.

The statement follows an escalation in Beijing's military activities around Taiwan, which China views as its territory.

Taiwanese air and naval forces were dispatched to keep watch after 54 Chinese military planes and drones flew near the island on Monday, Taiwan's defence ministry said.

If the Lai administration "dares to provoke and play with fire, it will only bring about its own destruction," a TAO spokesperson said.

Taiwan's defence ministry said China had carried out two patrols with 42 planes crossing the Taiwan Strait median line, which acts as the unofficial buffer between the two sides.

Taiwan's security officials have said China was trying to normalise drills near Taiwan, carrying out such patrols near the island every 7-10 days on average, but China's government rarely comments.

Taiwan's Mainland Affairs Council said Beijing had continued to threaten the island militarily, raising tensions in the Taiwan Strait and destabilising regional peace and stability.

The council labelled the Chinese Communist Party as a "troublemaker", and urged ally countries to stop China's military expansion.

President Lai said last week China had deepened its influence campaigns and infiltration against the island, pledging measures to tackle Beijing's efforts to "absorb" Taiwan.

Taiwan's National Immigration Agency revoked a Chinese influencer's visa last week for posting videos supporting the idea of China taking the island by force, local media reported.

It was reported the influencer, identified by authorities with her surname Liu but known online as 'Yaya', had relocated from mainland China to Taiwan after marrying a Taiwanese man.

Chinese 'military unification' influencer sent deportation order

16 March 2025, [Focus Taiwan](#)



National Immigration Agency Deputy Director-General Chen Chen-cheng (陳建威, right) speaks to media reporters on Sunday. Chen said that a Chinese woman surnamed Liu who advocated for China's annexation of Taiwan using military power will face "forcible deportation" if she overstays a limit set by her deportation order. CNA photo March 16, 2025

The National Immigration Agency (NIA) confirmed on Sunday that a Chinese national who advocated for China's annexation of Taiwan using military power will face "forcible deportation" if she overstays a limit set by her deportation order.

The NIA said in a news statement on Saturday that it already revoked the residence permit of the woman, identified by her surname Liu (劉), and sent her a deportation order.

However, when asked by CNA for clarification, the NIA declined to say when Liu's residence was revoked, nor specify before which date Liu must exit the country.

The woman could be forcibly removed from Taiwan unless she exits the country within 10 days of receiving the deportation order, according to the Act Governing Relations between the People of the Taiwan Area and the Mainland Area.

The NIA also told CNA on Sunday that it never agreed to allow the Chinese national to stay in Taiwan for six months to accompany her children -- a claim made by Liu on her public social media account "Yaya in Taiwan" (亞亞在台灣) on Saturday.

The Chinese woman, whose residence in Taiwan was based on her marriage to a Taiwanese citizen, drew public scorn over comments she made on Chinese social media platform Douyin advocating for China's "unification" with Taiwan using military force.

According to the NIA, Liu's statements on her social media account, which has nearly 400,000 followers, violated regulations governing Chinese residents living in Taiwan.

The Act Governing Relations between the People of the Taiwan Area and the Mainland Area states that a Chinese national "may be deported, or ordered to depart within ten days" under circumstances including "being considered threat [sic] to the national or social stability based on sufficient facts."

The NIA also said that Liu would be banned from applying for family-based residency in Taiwan for five years.

According to the NIA's statement on Saturday, Liu's remarks "advocated the elimination of our country's sovereignty" and are "not tolerated by [Taiwanese] society."

China's massive naval ships that experts say could be used for possible Taiwan invasion spotted in new photos

14 March 2025, [The New York Post](#), Shane Galvin

Photos emerged Friday that apparently show China's newly constructed and behemoth naval vessels that experts have reportedly suggested would fit right into a strategy for an invasion of the coveted island of Taiwan.

Naval News first reported months ago that China was building at least five unique, massive barges outfitted with a long road-bridge extending 393-feet from their bow that could be used to land tanks on a shore.

The pictures circulating on social media show vessels fitting that description in Guangzhou Shipyard in southern China upriver of the coastal Hong Kong.



Images from social media show the massive extended arm from the bow of the mobile barge that will transport tanks to the shore.

“Any invasion of Taiwan from the mainland would require a large number of ships to transport personnel and equipment across the Strait quickly, particularly land assets like armored vehicles,” Dr. Emma Salisbury, Sea Power Research Fellow at the Council of Geostrategy, told Naval News.

This extended reach capability of the ships means that China could choose from a wider range of targets for landing their ships than previously considered and would no longer be reliant on Taiwanese ports for landing military vehicles, according to Naval News. Underneath the massive ship are eight “jack-up” pillars which can be dropped to stabilize the platform as military vehicles pass over like a makeshift highway, according to diagrams included in the report. On the back of the ships is a self-supporting ramp that allows for the docking of other boats.

The barges are designed specifically to work with China’s roll-on/roll-off ferries, which are required to meet military specifications, though they are mainly used for commercial purposes.

Those RO-RO ferries are built to carry military vehicles including heavy battle tanks and would latch directly onto the backs of the barge, according to images circulated in the report.

“China is constructing a huge fleet of dual-use ships — commercial vessels that could be easily requisitioned for military use when needed,” Dr. Salisbury told the outlet.

“These include in particular roll-on/roll-off ships that would be perfect for transporting military vehicles — and have indeed been built with military specs in mind,” she said.

Other civilian vessels have received similar modifications as part of a People’s Liberation Army initiative, according to Maritime Executive.

China rolls over \$2 billion loan to Pakistan for one year, confirms official

09 March 2025, [Arab News](#)

China has rolled over a \$2 billion loan to Pakistan for one year, the adviser to the finance minister of Pakistan confirmed on Saturday amid Islamabad attempts to strengthen its financial reserves.

The development takes place as an International Monetary Fund (IMF) delegation is in Islamabad to

conduct its first review of the \$7 billion loan agreement reached between the two sides last year. The IMF delegation will assess the government’s performance in meeting key conditions of the loan. A successful review would secure the release of an additional \$1 billion for Pakistan.

Debt rollover commitments from Pakistan’s allies and regional partners China, Saudi Arabia and UAE were instrumental in helping Islamabad secure the bailout program last year to keep its fragile economy afloat.

“Yes, it is confirmed that China has made this rollover,” Khurram Schehzad, the adviser to the finance minister, told Arab News on the phone. He confirmed the amount of the rollover was \$2 billion and it had been extended for one year.

Pakistan needs to repay over \$22 billion in external debt in fiscal year 2025, including nearly \$13 billion in bilateral deposits, Fitch said.

Pakistan’s Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb has repeatedly said the country aims to escape its prolonged macroeconomic crisis by boosting exports, undertaking long-term financial reforms and ensuring economic growth led by the private sector.

As per its deal with the IMF, Pakistan has agreed to undertake reforms in its energy sector, widen the tax net and privatize loss-making state-owned enterprises.

Pakistan was able to build some trust with the IMF by completing a short-term nine-month program last year. Previous loan programs in Pakistan ended prematurely or saw delays after the governments at the time faltered when it came to meeting key conditions.

China military vows to tighten 'noose' around Taiwan if separatism escalates

09 March 2025, [CNA](#)

China's military said Sunday (Mar 9) it would tighten its "noose" around Taiwan if separatism over the island escalated, warning proponents to step back from the "edge of the cliff" or face a "dead end", state media reported.

Beijing considers the democratically ruled island of Taiwan to be part of its territory and has not ruled out using military force to claim it.

China has increased pressure on Taiwan's authorities in recent years with military drills and frequent dispatches of fighter jets and naval vessels around the island.

"The more rampant 'Taiwan independence' separatists become, the tighter the noose around their necks and the sharper the sword hanging over their heads will be," military spokesman Wu Qian said, Xinhua news agency reported.

"The PLA (People's Liberation Army) is a force of action in countering separatism and promoting reunification," said Wu.

"You've ridden your steed to the edge of the cliff. If you persist in taking the wrong course, you will meet a dead end," he warned.

The comments, made during China's "Two Sessions" annual political gathering, come days after Beijing announced a 7.2 percent increase to its defence budget in 2025.

It is above the government's annual GDP growth target of around five percent.

Calling the increase "limited... reasonable and stable", Wu said the extra cash would be used to develop "combat forces in new fields and with new qualities", and to enhance reconnaissance, joint strike and battlefield support capabilities.

The country has the world's second-largest defence budget, but lags well behind the United States, its primary strategic rival.

Beijing's 1.78-trillion-yuan (US\$245.7-billion) budget for this year is still less than a third of Washington's.

Military spending last year made up 1.6 per cent of its GDP, far less than the United States or Russia, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute.

But its defence expansion is viewed with suspicion by Washington, as well as other powers in the region.

China has increasingly flexed its muscles in the region, including in the South China Sea, which it claims almost entirely despite an international arbitration ruling that declared its stance baseless.

China describes its military stance as "defensive" and aimed at preserving its sovereignty.

China faces "one of the most complex neighbouring security situations in the world", army spokesman Wu said, adding that it had to deal with "severe challenges" in defending its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

But its sweeping territorial claims over areas controlled by other governments have raised fears of a regional clash.

Taiwan is a potential flashpoint for a war between China and the United States, which is the island's most important backer and biggest arms supplier.

On Friday, China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi told a press conference that Taiwan coming under China's control was the "shared hope of all Chinese people, the general trend of the time, and a righteous cause". "Using Taiwan to control China is just like trying to stop a car with the arm of a mantis," he said.

Last month, Taiwan's Ministry of Defence condemned China for holding "live-fire" exercises to the island's south. Beijing defended the drills as "routine".

ANALYSIS/Experts warn of China's 'subtle' actions, omitting 'peace' in Taiwan report

06 March 2025, [Focus Taiwan](#)

Following a Chinese government work report presented during the "Two Sessions" on Wednesday, experts said China is likely to take more "subtle" actions against Taiwan independence in 2025, while also pointing to the omission of the word "peace" from a key policy report.

One day after China's Premier Li Qiang (李强) delivered the government work report during the "Two Sessions," cross-strait and defense experts on Thursday gathered at a seminar held in Taipei by the Institute for National Policy Research (INPR) to discuss their observations on the annual meetings and the implications for Taiwan.

Running until March 11, the "Two Sessions" consists of the National People's Congress, which held its opening meeting on Wednesday with Li presenting the report, and the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, which opened a day earlier.

In the 32-page report, a 128-Chinese character section on Taiwan included declarations to "resolutely oppose separatist activities aimed at 'Taiwan independence' and external interference" and "improve institutions and policies for promoting economic and cultural exchanges and cooperation across the Taiwan Strait."

'Subtle' actions against independence

"Although some experts said that more than 90 percent of the [Taiwan-related] content in this report is almost identical to previous ones, I still think there are some differences," INPR Director Wang Hung-jen (王宏仁) said.

He added said that while Taiwanese are "tired of hearing about" China's rhetoric on "anti-independence and pro-reunification," the mention of "anti-independence" in the report does not just highlight a stance but also sends a signal that it will play a more central role in China's policy toward Taiwan.

Wang recalled that in 2024, China took "a proactive approach" to suppressing Taiwan independence, such as undermining the island country's efforts to build its own narrative on the global stage and limiting its participation in international organizations.

"We thought that after Trump took office, China's actions against Taiwan on the international stage had quieted down, but that's not actually the case," said Wang, who also serves as a professor in the Department of Political Science at National Cheng Kung University.

China aims to create "a new strategic environment" for "anti-independence" in 2025, Wang said, noting that its actions are becoming more "subtle" and "refined."

The examples he cited included a February report by The Economist on China secretly securing support from over 70 countries for a potential invasion of Taiwan, as well as a warning by the think tank Pacific Economics about China's use of transnational crime groups in Palau, which could undermine Taiwan's diplomatic ties with the Western Pacific nation.

"It has shifted from being out in the open to happening behind the scenes," Wang said.

Missing 'peace'

Ma Chun-wei (馬準威), an assistant professor at Tamkang University's Graduate Institute of International Affairs and Strategic Studies, said it is also worth noting the choice of words in the two reports related to the "Two Sessions" and the annual work conference on Taiwan affairs.

Following the work conference -- held before the "Two Sessions" on Feb. 25-26 and attended by senior Chinese Communist Party (CCP) officials -- a report on the meeting was published on Feb. 27, which notably did not include the word "peace," Ma said.

The absence of "peace" marks the first time in the past decade that the word has been omitted from such a key policy report and is an "exceptionally rare" occurrence in CCP official documents on Taiwan-related issues, Ma added.

"I don't think this is a coincidence -- they are deliberately trying to convey a message," Ma said, adding that the highest-ranking CCP official who attended the work conference was Wang Huning (王滬寧), chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference.

"He [Wang] has served under three generations of CCP leadership [Jiang Zemin (江澤民), Hu Jintao (胡錦濤), and Xi Jinping (習近平)], primarily assisting leaders in drafting speeches," Ma said.

He noted that Wang is "highly meticulous" when it comes to word choice and would certainly understand the significance of removing the word "peace" from the report.

"Fortunately, it [the word 'peace'] was back in the 'Two Sessions,'" Ma said, adding that it is worth paying attention to why it was removed from the work conference's report but remained in the report presented during the "Two Sessions."

Asked by CNA after the seminar about the difference in the use of the word "peace" between the two reports, Ma said it might be due to Taiwan's suspected participation in the multinational Joint Exercise Cobra Gold, which was co-sponsored by Thailand and the United States and kicked off in the Southeast Asian country on Feb. 25.

The Cobra Gold Combined Joint Information Bureau (CJIB) said on Feb. 26 that Taiwan's listing as a participant in the exercises was a "transcription error" that has since been corrected. The statement came

after Taiwanese media reported a day earlier about a CJIB Facebook post that listed Taiwan as a participant in the annual joint exercise.

"Since these events [the exercise and the work conference] happened at the same time, including the word 'peace' in the report might have been difficult for CCP officials to justify internally," Ma said.

The work report delivered at the "Two Sessions" might have been finalized long before the meeting, with the word "peace" already included, which could explain the difference, he added.

"If its [the word "peace"] presence becomes inconsistent, we should be cautious," Ma said, noting that it could indicate growing dissatisfaction among CCP officials over Taiwan-related issues, potentially reaching a critical point.

China will work to firmly advance 'reunification' with Taiwan, premier says

05 March 2025, [CNA](#)

Chinese Premier Li Qiang said on Wednesday (Mar 5) China would "firmly advance" the push for "reunification" with Taiwan while opposing external interference, and strive to work with regular Taiwanese to realise the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

China claims Taiwan as its own territory, despite the objection of the government in Taipei, and has ramped up its military pressure against the island in recent years, including holding several rounds of major war games.

"We will firmly advance the cause of China's reunification and work with our fellow Chinese in Taiwan to realise the glorious cause of the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation," Li wrote in his annual work report to China's parliament.

In his work report last year, Li reiterated a call for "reunification" with Taiwan, but added emphasis that it wants to "be firm" in doing so and dropped the descriptor "peaceful", which had been used in previous reports. He did likewise in his report this year. Beijing has consistently pushed for reunification with Taiwan, and again said it would "resolutely oppose" separatist activities pushing for Taiwan independence.

But while its appeal to work with "fellow Chinese in Taiwan" to help rejuvenate the Chinese nation wasn't mentioned in the work report last year, Li added the phrase this year.

Taiwan President Lai Ching-te says only Taiwan's people can decide their future. He has repeatedly offered talks with China, which has rebuffed him, saying he is a "separatist".

China has never renounced the use of force to bring Taiwan under its control.

Amid geopolitical tensions between China and the US and as President Donald Trump ratchets up pressure on Beijing including through tariffs, China said it opposed "external interference" on the Taiwan issue. It said it was committed to a foreign policy of peace to "oppose hegemonism and power politics, oppose unilateralism and protectionism in all forms".

Taiwan's top China policy-making Mainland Affairs Council was not immediately available to comment.

A senior Taiwan official familiar with the government's China policy said Beijing's tone on Taiwan hadn't changed much, signalling Taiwan wasn't at the top of its political agenda which had prioritised the economy and relations with the US

"They want to reiterate their agenda of the 'big exchange across the strait'," the official said, pointing out the paragraph on Taiwanese people as a sign of possible ramping up of China's tactics to bolster Beijing's reach abroad including co-opting Taiwanese through various exchanges including culture and religion.

"But they only allow cross-strait exchanges that serve their political agenda and block those who don't. It's obvious that those exchanges are just political means." March marks the 20th anniversary of China's "anti-secession" law, which gives Beijing the legal authority to use force on Taiwan if it secedes or if the "possibilities for a peaceful reunification should be completely exhausted", but the law is vague and does not give details.

CHINA- US

China swoops in to replace Asian USAID projects axed by Trump

26 March 2025, [Fortune](#), Iain Marlow, Philip J. Heijmans and Bloomberg

The U.S. canceled two aid projects in Cambodia in late February—one to encourage child literacy and another to improve nutrition and development for kids under five. A week later, China's aid agency announced funding for programs to achieve almost identical goals.

"Children are the future of the country and the nation," China's ambassador to Cambodia Wang Wenbin said at the event, standing next to the country's health minister and a UNICEF official. "We should care for the healthy growth of children together."

While China's announcement didn't include a dollar figure, the Chinese money essentially funds the same types of initiatives and development goals as efforts terminated as part of the Trump administration's dismantling of USAID, according to two people with knowledge of the U.S. projects, who weren't authorized to speak publicly.

Both focused on "inclusive education" and the "most vulnerable children," according to news releases and procurement documents. They both provided school supplies, offering hand-washing materials and improving outcomes for "vulnerable" families and households, newborns and children with disabilities, according to the people.

The price tag for the U.S. programs—\$40 million—was small compared with the \$27.7 billion in savings the Trump administration said this week it saved by axing thousands of aid contracts. But for Cambodia, whose national GDP is roughly equivalent to that Vermont, it was a big sum, and replacing lost foreign funds has been a priority.

The State Department, which oversees USAID and may now absorb the agency entirely, said in a statement that the U.S. was funding aid programs that make Americans wealthier and more secure. At the same time, it said the U.S. had achieved "significant progress" by investing in Cambodia's development over the past 30 years, "partnering closely" with the government.

"Despite changes in the U.S. approach to foreign assistance, we hope to see our relationship with Cambodia productively mature as we make America safer, stronger, and more prosperous," the department added in the statement.

The contracts were terminated on Feb. 26 after President Donald Trump and adviser Elon Musk launched a sweeping overhaul of U.S. foreign

assistance, which included dismantling the U.S. Agency for International Development.

Although it's only one example, it appears to confirm fears voiced by Democratic and some Republican lawmakers, aid advocates and former U.S. officials: By slashing foreign aid, Trump is giving China an easy opportunity to fill a vacuum and gain a soft-power advantage in countries where the global adversaries compete for influence.

That's especially urgent in Cambodia, where the U.S. has spent roughly \$1 billion since the 1990s. Washington has long waged an uphill battle with China in Southeast Asia, and Cambodia in particular. The Biden administration raised concerns about Chinese military influence at the country's Ream Naval Base over the last four years.

But more recently, the U.S. has moved to strengthen defense ties with the government in Phnom Penh, which granted an American warship access to Ream for the first time late last year.

'Diplomatic gift'

"It's a diplomatic gift" to China, said Charles Kenny, a senior fellow at the Center for Global Development. "In every country where there's a serious USAID cut, if they put a small amount of money into a health and education project and say, 'Look, we're ramping up,' that does seem to be a bit of a publicity gift for them. And I'm sure they're smart enough to take it."

Since the Trump administration moved to shut down USAID, terminate most of its foreign aid contracts, and furlough or place on leave most of its employees, U.S. lawmakers, development experts and national security professionals have highlighted the geopolitical risks of curtailing U.S. foreign aid in the developing world.

Many of those lawmakers and experts have warned that China could move in, gaining further influence over developing nations after wooing officials in Africa, Asia and South America for years with tens of billions in loans focused mostly on infrastructure through Beijing's Belt and Road Initiative.

And it certainly has. China already announced funding for a Cambodian de-mining initiative that was dropped, and later restored, by the U.S. In mid-March, Beijing also announced an early childhood development project in Rwanda, where USAID recently curtailed contracts. And Chinese officials have reportedly offered to make up for funding gaps in Nepal, nestled between India and China.

Will Parks, the Cambodia representative for the United Nations Children's Fund, said in a statement that the organization and Cambodia signed a partnership with China in 2024, based on a proposal from 2022. It was launched earlier this month and "complements" funding from other nations, Parks said.

"Cambodia has made tremendous progress for children over the past decade," he said. "But further

reductions of aid budgets could jeopardize these hard-won achievements."

Cambodia's government was explicit about drawing a link.

"The Cambodian government works with many partners, and we never rely on any one partner exclusively," government spokesman Pen Bona said via text message in response to questions. "So if one partner withdraws support, we seek to find another partner to replace it."

China "will continue to provide assistance to economic and social development" in Cambodia "under the framework of South-South cooperation," the Chinese Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

"China's aid policy remains consistent and clear," the Foreign Ministry continued. "China's principles of non-interference, not attaching any political strings, not giving empty promises remain unchanged."

In a closed-door hearing on Capitol Hill this month, Trump appointee Pete Marocco, who led the assault on USAID, was asked about the Cambodia projects and the timing of China's swift announcement, according to one person familiar with the session. Marocco brushed off concerns about China increasing its influence, this person said.

Marocco did not respond to a request for comment.

While Trump's team have said the canceled projects brought no benefits to Americans, Diana Putman, who retired as USAID's acting assistant administrator for Africa, said the agency's billions in foreign assistance helped give U.S. ambassadors a crucial advantage.

"Their leverage and ability to make a difference in terms of foreign policy in that country is backed up by the money that they bring, and in the Global South that money is primarily the money that USAID has," Putman said.

U.S. report names China as top military threat, notes pressure on Taiwan

26 March 2025, [Focus Taiwan](#)



U.S. Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard (right) and Federal Bureau of Investigation Director Kash Patel release a global threat assessment report during a Senate hearing on Tuesday. CNA photo March 25, 2025

China remains the top military and cyber threat to the United States and continues to make progress on capabilities to seize Taiwan, a report by U.S. intelligence agencies said Tuesday.

In its Annual Threat Assessment, the agencies divided threats facing the U.S. into two broad categories, "nonstate transnational criminals and terrorists" and "major state actors," which included China, Russia, Iran and North Korea.

Of those countries, China stands out as the one "most capable of threatening U.S. interests globally," though it is also more cautious about risking its economic and diplomatic image, the report said.

"China's military is fielding advanced capabilities, including hypersonic weapons, stealthy aircraft, advanced submarines, stronger space and cyber warfare assets, and a larger arsenal of nuclear weapons," U.S. Director of National Intelligence Tulsi Gabbard said, in testimony about the report to the Senate Intelligence Committee.

While China would like to maintain positive ties with the U.S., it is also building up its military capability, in part "to gain advantage in the event of a military conflict with the United States" over China's efforts toward unification with Taiwan, Gabbard said.

The report warned that a conflict between China and Taiwan would disrupt U.S. access to trade and semiconductor technology critical to the global economy.

"Even without U.S. involvement in such a conflict, there would likely be significant and costly consequences to U.S. and global economic and security interests," it said.

China is likely making "steady but uneven" progress on capabilities it would use to seize Taiwan and deter or defeat U.S. military intervention, the report said.

Beijing will continue to pressure Taiwan with "economic coercion" and will probably increase it if it sees Taiwan taking steps toward formal independence, the report said.

Among possible moves by China to strengthen coercion cited by the report were suspending preferential tariff terms, selectively banning Taiwan imports to China and arbitrarily enforcing regulations. Despite its growing capabilities, China also faces "daunting" challenges, including corruption, demographic imbalances, and fiscal and economic struggles, which will impair its leaders' strategic and political achievements, the report said.

'Discarded like a dirty rag': Chinese media cheers Trump's 'Voice of America' cuts

26 March 2025, [Times of India](#)

China's state-controlled media is celebrating US President Donald Trump's recent decision to slash

funding for Voice of America (VOA) and other US federal government-funded news outlets, calling the move a victory against "Western propaganda." In an editorial this week, the Global Times, a Chinese Communist Party-affiliated newspaper, mocked the sudden cuts, describing VOA as a "so-called beacon of freedom" that had been "discarded by its own government like a dirty rag." The editorial framed Trump's decision as proof of the diminishing influence of US government-funded media, long viewed by Beijing as a tool to undermine its global narrative. The cuts, which placed nearly all VOA staff on leave and halted grants to Radio Free Asia and other outlets, have sparked alarm among press freedom advocates. These outlets have historically provided independent reporting on sensitive topics, including human rights abuses in Xinjiang and Tibet—issues the Chinese government consistently denies. While Chinese officials refrained from directly endorsing Trump's move, they wasted no time criticizing the affected media. "I do not comment on US domestic policy changes," said Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning when asked about the funding cuts, as reported by NewsWeek magazine. "But as for the media you mentioned, their bad records in reporting on China are not a secret." The decision to defund the US Agency for Global Media, which oversees these outlets, also drew applause from other authoritarian figures. Cambodia's former Prime Minister Hun Sen, who ruled for nearly four decades, praised the cuts as a blow to "fake news" and "disinformation." In a written statement, he called Trump's move "a major contribution" to silencing the "propaganda machine" that had long criticized his regime.

Critics of the cuts argue they weaken the United States' ability to counter China's information dominance. Clayton Weimers, US executive director of Reporters Without Borders, warned that authoritarian regimes like China would be the "biggest winners" from the decision. "Many of them are looking forward to filling the gap left by American leadership in media freedom with their own propaganda," Weimers said. In Washington, concern is mounting over the long-term strategic impact of the cuts. Rep. Raja Krishnamoorthi, the top Democrat on the House Select Committee on the Strategic Competition with the Chinese Communist Party, called the move a severe blow to US efforts to challenge Beijing's global messaging. "These media outlets provide real reporting to millions living under authoritarian regimes," Krishnamoorthi said, adding that they play a critical role in countering Chinese propaganda and offering alternative narratives. China, which ranks 172 out of 180 on the Reporters Without Borders press freedom index, tightly controls domestic media and has expanded its influence

globally through state-backed outlets like China Global Television Network (CGTN). With US media presence diminished, observers warn that Beijing may seize the opportunity to further shape international discourse to align with its interests. For now, China's state media is reveling in what it sees as a symbolic defeat for its ideological rival. As the Global Times put it, "The era of American media shaping global opinion is fading, and no one will mourn the loss."

Chinese premier meets Trump ally and calls for 'dialogue over confrontation'

23 March 2025, [The Guardian](#)

Meeting with Senator Steve Daines comes as China hopes to reach a deal to avert further US tariff pressure

Republican senator Steve Daines, a staunch supporter of Donald Trump, met the Chinese premier, Li Qiang, in Beijing on Sunday, as China hopes to reach a deal to avert further tariff pressure from Washington.

The meeting marks the first time a US politician has visited China since Trump took office in January. Earlier this month, China's ministry of foreign affairs promised that China will "fight to the end" with the US in a "tariff war, trade war or any other war".

Daines, a Montana Republican, met Li with a group of seven American executives on Sunday, following an annual business summit in the Chinese capital attended by top foreign CEOs.

Daines was accompanied by the Qualcomm CEO, Cristiano Amon, Pfizer CEO Albert Bourla, Cargill CEO Brian Sikes, Boeing global senior vice-president Brendan Nelson and other executives at Beijing's Great Hall of the People, according to a foreign media pool report.

Daines, a member of the Senate foreign relations committee, was heavily involved in negotiations over US-China trade during Trump's first term, and has made multiple trips to China as a senator. He lived in Guangzhou and Hong Kong in the 1990s while working as an executive for Proctor & Gamble.

Beijing has been trying to attract foreign investment to offset US tariff pressure and its slowing domestic economy.

Relations between China and the US have come under new strain after Trump slapped additional tariffs on Chinese goods, accusing Beijing of not doing enough to stem the flow of fentanyl into the United States.

In early April, Trump is expected to unleash a round of tariffs on all countries that tax US imports, potentially including China. A US review of whether China has fulfilled promises made during the "phase one" trade deal from Trump's first administration is set to conclude on 1 April. "Currently, US-China relations

have come to an important juncture," Li told Daines in their meeting, stressing the need to choose dialogue over confrontation.

"Our two sides need to choose dialogue over confrontation, win-win cooperation over zero-sum competition," Li said.

The US executives were granted an audience with Li Qiang, who will not meet separately with other foreign CEOs at the China Development Forum for the second year in a row.

The annual closed-door meeting with the premier was traditionally viewed as a summit highlight by foreign CEOs, who saw it as an opportunity to air their concerns.

Other Chinese officials present at the meeting with Daines and the US executives included the commerce minister, Wang Wentao, executive vice-foreign Minister Ma Zhaoxu and the director of China's state planner, Zheng Shanjie.

Daines met Vice-Premier He Lifeng in Beijing on Saturday. He discussed the need for China to stop the flow of fentanyl precursors and "expressed hope that further high-level talks between the US and China will take place in the near future," according to a post he put on the social media platform X.

Pentagon Set Up Briefing for Musk on Potential War With China

20 March 2025, [The New York Times](#), Eric Schmitt, Eric Lipton, Julian E. Barnes, Ryan Mac and Maggie Haberman

The access would be a major expansion of Elon Musk's government role and highlight his conflicts of interest. The Pentagon was scheduled on Friday to brief Elon Musk on the U.S. military's plan for any war that might break out with China, two U.S. officials said on Thursday.

Another official said the briefing would be China focused, without providing additional details. A fourth official confirmed Mr. Musk was to be at the Pentagon on Friday, but offered no details.

Hours after news of the planned meeting was published by The New York Times, Pentagon officials and President Trump denied that the session would be about military plans involving China. "China will not even be mentioned or discussed," Mr. Trump said in a late-night social media post.

It was not clear if the briefing for Mr. Musk would go ahead as originally planned. But providing Mr. Musk access to some of the nation's most closely guarded military secrets would be a dramatic expansion of his already extensive role as an adviser to Mr. Trump and leader of his effort to slash spending and purge the government of people and policies they oppose.

It would also bring into sharp relief the questions about Mr. Musk's conflicts of interest as he ranges widely across the federal bureaucracy while continuing to run businesses that are major government contractors. In this case, Mr. Musk, the billionaire chief executive of both SpaceX and Tesla, is a leading supplier to the Pentagon and has extensive financial interests in China.

Pentagon war plans, known in military jargon as O-plans or operational plans, are among the military's most closely guarded secrets. If a foreign country were to learn how the United States planned to fight a war against them, it could reinforce its defenses and address its weaknesses, making the plans far less likely to succeed.

The top-secret briefing that exists for the China war plan has about 20 to 30 slides that lay out how the United States would fight such a conflict. It covers the plan beginning with the indications and warning of a threat from China to various options on what Chinese targets to hit, over what time period, that would be presented to Mr. Trump for decisions, according to officials with knowledge of the plan.

A White House spokesman did not respond to an email seeking comment about the purpose of the visit, how it came about, whether Mr. Trump was aware of it, and whether the visit raises questions of conflicts of interest. The White House has not said whether Mr. Trump signed a conflicts of interest waiver for Mr. Musk.

The chief Pentagon spokesman, Sean Parnell, initially did not respond to a similar email seeking comment about why Mr. Musk was to receive a briefing on the China war plan. Soon after The Times published this article on Thursday evening, Mr. Parnell gave a short statement: "The Defense Department is excited to welcome Elon Musk to the Pentagon on Friday. He was invited by Secretary Hegseth and is just visiting."

About an hour later, Mr. Parnell posted a message on his X account: "This is 100% Fake News. Just brazenly & maliciously wrong. Elon Musk is a patriot. We are proud to have him at the Pentagon."

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth also commented on X late on Thursday, saying: "This is NOT a meeting about 'top secret China war plans.' It's an informal meeting about innovation, efficiencies & smarter production. Gonna be great!"

Roughly 30 minutes after that social media post, The Wall Street Journal confirmed that Mr. Musk had been scheduled to be briefed on the war planning for China. In his own post on social media early Friday, Mr. Musk said he looked forward to "the prosecutions of those at the Pentagon who are leaking maliciously false information to NYT."

Whatever the meeting will now be about, the planning reflected the extraordinary dual role played by Mr.

Musk, who is both the world's wealthiest man and has been given broad authority by Mr. Trump.

Mr. Musk has a security clearance, and Mr. Hegseth can determine who has a need to know about the plan.

Mr. Hegseth; Adm. Christopher W. Grady, the acting chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; and Adm. Samuel J. Paparo, the head of the military's Indo-Pacific Command, were set to present Mr. Musk with details on the U.S. plan to counter China in the event of military conflict between the two countries, the officials said.

The meeting had been set to be held not in Mr. Hegseth's office — where an informal discussion about innovation would most likely take place — but in the Tank, a secure conference room in the Pentagon, typically used for high-level meetings of members of the Joint Chiefs, their senior staff and visiting combatant commanders.

Operational plans for major contingencies, like a war with China, are extremely difficult for people without extensive military planning experience to understand. The technical nature is why presidents are typically presented with the broad contours of a plan, rather than the actual details of documents. How many details Mr. Musk had wanted or expected to hear was unclear.

Mr. Hegseth received part of the China war plan briefing last week and another part on Wednesday, according to officials familiar with the plan.

It was unclear what the impetus was for providing Mr. Musk such a sensitive briefing. He is not in the military chain of command, nor is he an official adviser to Mr. Trump on military matters involving China.

But there is a possible reason Mr. Musk might have needed to know aspects of the war plan. If Mr. Musk and his team of cost cutters from the Department of Government Efficiency, or DOGE, want to trim the Pentagon budget in a responsible way, they may need to know what weapons systems the Pentagon plans to use in a fight with China.

Take aircraft carriers, for example. Cutting back on future aircraft carriers would save billions of dollars, money that could be spent on drones or other weaponry. But if the U.S. war strategy relies on using aircraft carriers in innovative ways that would surprise China, mothballing existing ships or stopping production on future ships could cripple that plan.

Planning for a war with China has dominated Pentagon thinking for decades, well before a possible confrontation with Beijing became more conventional wisdom on Capitol Hill. The United States has built its Air Forces, Navy and Space Forces — and even more recently its Marines and Army forces — with a possible fight against China in mind.

Critics have said the military has invested too much in big expensive systems like fighter jets or aircraft

carriers and too little in midrange drones and coastal defenses. But for Mr. Musk to evaluate how to reorient Pentagon spending, he would want to know what the military intends to use and for what purpose.

Mr. Musk has already called for the Pentagon to stop buying certain high-priced items like F-35 fighter jets, manufactured by one of his space-launch competitors, Lockheed Martin, in a program that costs the Pentagon more than \$12 billion a year.

Yet Mr. Musk's extensive business interests make any access to strategic secrets about China a serious problem in the view of ethics experts. Officials have said revisions to the war plans against China have focused on upgrading the plans for defending against space warfare. China has developed a suite of weapons that can attack U.S. satellites.

Mr. Musk's constellations of low-earth orbit Starlink satellites, which provide data and communications services from space, are considered more resilient than traditional satellites. But he could have an interest in learning about whether or not the United States could defend his satellites in a war with China. Participating in a classified briefing on the China threat with some of the most senior Pentagon and U.S. military officials would be a tremendously valuable opportunity for any defense contractor seeking to sell services to the military.

Mr. Musk could gain insight into new tools that the Pentagon might need and that SpaceX, where he remains the chief executive, could sell.

Contractors working on relevant Pentagon projects generally do have access to certain limited war planning documents, but only once war plans are approved, said Todd Harrison, a senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, where he focuses on defense strategy. Individual executives rarely if ever get exclusive access to top Pentagon officials for such a sensitive briefing, Mr. Harrison said.

"Musk at a war-planning briefing?" he said. "Giving the CEO of one defense company unique access seems like this could be grounds for a contract protest and is a real conflict of interest."

Mr. Musk's SpaceX is already being paid billions of dollars by the Pentagon and federal spy agencies to help the United States build new military satellite networks to try to confront rising military threats from China. SpaceX launches most of these military satellites for the Pentagon on its Falcon 9 rockets, which take off from launchpads SpaceX has set up at military bases in Florida and California.

The company separately has been paid hundreds of millions of dollars by the Pentagon that now relies heavily on SpaceX's Starlink satellite communications network for military personnel to transmit data worldwide.

In 2024, SpaceX was granted about \$1.6 billion in Air Force contracts. That does not include classified

spending with SpaceX by the National Reconnaissance Office, which has hired the company to build it a new constellation of low-earth orbit satellites to spy on China, Russia and other threats.

Mr. Trump has already proposed that the United States build a new system the military is calling Golden Dome, a space-based missile defense system that recalls what President Ronald Reagan tried to deliver. (The so-called Star Wars system Mr. Reagan had in mind was never fully developed.)

Perceived missile threats from China — be it nuclear weapons or hypersonic missiles or cruise missiles — are a major factor that led Mr. Trump to sign an executive order recently instructing the Pentagon to start work on Golden Dome.

Image

Even starting to plan and build the first components of the system will cost tens of billions of dollars, according to Pentagon officials, and most likely create large business opportunities for SpaceX, which already provides rocket launches, satellite structures, and space-based data communications systems, all of which will be required for Golden Dome.

Separately, Mr. Musk has been the focus of an investigation by the Pentagon's inspector general over questions about his compliance with his top-secret security clearance.

The investigations started last year after some SpaceX employees complained to government agencies that Mr. Musk and others at SpaceX were not properly reporting contacts or conversations with foreign leaders.

Air Force officials, before the end of the Biden administration, started their own review, after Senate Democrats asked questions about Mr. Musk and asserted that he was not complying with security clearance requirements.

The Air Force, in fact, had denied a request by Mr. Musk for an even higher level of security clearance, known as Special Access Program, which is reserved for extremely sensitive classified programs, citing potential security risks associated with the billionaire. In fact, SpaceX has become so valuable to the Pentagon that the Chinese government has said it considers the company to be an extension of the U.S. military.

"Starlink Militarization and Its Impact on Global Strategic Stability" was the headline of one publication released last year from China's National University of Defense Technology, according to a translation of the paper prepared by the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

Mr. Musk and Tesla, an electric vehicle company he controls, are heavily reliant on China, which houses one of the auto maker's flagship factories in Shanghai. Unveiled in 2019, the state-of-the-art facility was built with special permission from the Chinese government,

and now accounts for more than half of Tesla's global deliveries. Last year, the company said in financial filings that it had a \$2.8 billion loan agreement with lenders in China for production expenditures.

In public, Mr. Musk has avoided criticizing Beijing and signaled his willingness to work with the Chinese Communist Party. In 2022, he wrote a column for the magazine of the Cyberspace Administration of China, the country's censorship agency, trumpeting his companies and their missions of improving humanity. That same year, the billionaire told The Financial Times that China should be given some control over Taiwan by making a "special administrative zone for Taiwan that is reasonably palatable," an assertion that angered politicians of the independent island. In that same interview, he also noted that Beijing sought assurances that he would not sell Starlink in China.

The following year at a tech conference, Mr. Musk called the democratic island "an integral part of China that is arbitrarily not part of China," and compared the Taiwan-China situation to Hawaii and the United States.

On X, the social platform he owns, Mr. Musk has long used his account to praise China. He has said the country is "by far" the world leader in electric vehicles and solar power, and has commended its space program for being "far more advanced than people realize." He has encouraged more people to visit the country, and posited openly about an "inevitable" Russia-China alliance.

Trump's cuts to Voice of America may be welcomed by China's government

19 March 2025, [AP](#)

The recent move by U.S. President Donald Trump to make cuts at Voice of America and other U.S. government-run media may be welcome news for China's ruling Communist Party.

A Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson refrained from commenting on Trump's decision Tuesday but took the opportunity to criticize the outlets.

"I do not comment on U.S. domestic policy changes," Mao Ning said when asked about it. "But as for the media you mentioned, their bad records in reporting on China are not a secret."

The Trump's administration put almost the entire staff of Voice of America on leave last weekend and ended grants to Radio Free Asia and other media with similar news programming.

Radio Free Asia has an extensive Chinese-language service and frequently reports on human rights issues, including the detention of activists and repression of ethnic groups in Xinjiang and Tibet. The government refutes allegations of abuse.

Voice of America, also known as VOA, has a Chinese-language website that often publishes stories not covered by Chinese media, which is state-controlled. China ranks 172 out of 180 in the Reporters Without Borders press freedom index.

The Global Times, a state-owned tabloid, criticized Voice of America at length in an editorial this week.

"The so-called beacon of freedom, VOA, has now been discarded by its own government like a dirty rag," it said.

Beyond China, Cambodia's former Prime Minister Hun Sen, who ruled his country for near four decades as an autocrat, welcomed Trump's move.

"This is a major contribution to eliminating fake news, disinformation, lies, distortions, incitement, and chaos around the world coming from the propaganda machine that President Trump has stopped funding," he said Monday in a written statement.

Clayton Weimers, USA executive director of the press advocacy group Reporters Without Borders, said that authoritarian regimes are "the biggest winners" from Trump's gutting of the U.S. Agency for Global Media.

"Many of them, like China, are looking forward to filling the gap left by American leadership in media freedom with their own propaganda," Weimers said.

In Washington, Rep. Raja Krishnamoorthi, the top Democrat on the House Select Committee on the Strategic Competition with the Chinese Communist Party, said the moves against VOA and other broadcasters would "severely weaken our ability to compete" with China's ruling party and "ultimately make us less safe."

The media outlets "provide real reporting to millions living under authoritarian regimes, countering CCP distortion," and allowing Chinese people to "question the CCP's propaganda and aggression toward the U.S. and our allies and partners," Krishnamoorthi said.

US hands over Tibetan Buddhism relics to China

19 March 2025, [The Christian Century](#), Tenzin Pema and Tenzin Norzom

The recent transfer of cultural artifacts, including several Tibetan Buddhist relics, from the US to China may help advance the Chinese government's efforts to distort Tibet's history and appropriate its religion and culture, Tibetan scholars and other critics of the transfer say.

On March 3, the Manhattan district attorney's anti-trafficking unit handed over to officials from China 41 "illegally exported" cultural artifacts, including a bronze money tree, pottery, jade pieces, Buddha statues, and Tibetan Buddhist cultural relics, Chinese state-run media reports said.



Some of the 41 cultural artifacts, including Tibetan Buddhist relics, that the Manhattan district attorney's office handed over to China on March 3. (China's National Cultural Heritage Administration via Xinhua)

The transfer was conducted as part of an agreement between the two countries to protect cultural heritage and identity and prevent Chinese cultural relics from illegally entering the US. Since the pact was first agreed to on January 14, 2009, the US has sent 594 pieces or sets of cultural relics and artworks to China. The transfers have come as greater focus is paid to artifacts and other cultural items in Western museums and private collections obtained during colonization or other periods when the countries of origin were too weak to prevent the widespread pilfering of cultural items.

But sending Tibetan artifacts to China has raised concern that Beijing will use them to justify its rule in Tibet, which the country annexed in 1950.

"The Chinese government will certainly misuse these returned artifacts, and will use them to further promote their false historical narrative that Tibet has always been a part of China," Vijay Kranti, director of the Center for Himalayan Asia Studies and Engagement, based in New Delhi, said.

In January, Li Qun, the director of China's National Administration of Cultural Heritage, said the country will work toward advancing "the return of key cultural relics to the motherland" and to use archaeology to "better explain Chinese civilization."

Critics say China has already misused ancient finds to back territorial claims over both Tibet and Xinjiang, a western region that is home to Uyghurs and other Muslim communities seeking greater autonomy from Beijing.

"It is an outrageous act to return Tibetan objects in the diaspora to the People's Republic of China, which is deliberately destroying Tibetan cultural heritage," said Kate Fitz Gibbon, executive director of the Committee for Cultural Policy, a US think tank that was established in 2011 to strengthen the public dialogue on arts policy.

"Since China occupied Tibet, U.S. authorities have accepted that Tibetan artifacts belong to the Tibetan people, not China's government," Fitz Gibbon said in an email. "The turnover by the Manhattan District Attorney's Antiquities Trafficking Unit directly challenges that policy."

An event that included Chinese and US officials was held March 3 in New York to mark the latest handover. Chinese state-run media said the items were seized in November 2024. China's National Administration of Cultural Heritage and the Chinese Consulate General in New York verified that the artworks were Chinese in origin.

The Manhattan district attorney's antiquities trafficking unit previously handed over 38 antiquities—the majority of them identified as Buddhist religious objects from Tibet—during a ceremony at the Chinese Consulate General in New York on April 17, 2024.

But there's little information about the transfers on the antiquities unit's website, which does publicize materials that have been transferred to other countries.

The antiquities unit did not respond to at least three separate requests for comments. The US State Department and its Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs Department also did not immediately respond. According to China's National Administration of Cultural Heritage, the latest 41 cultural artifacts include relics and artworks from the Neolithic Age (around 10,000 BC—1,700 BC) to the Qing dynasty (1644-1911).

China had signed agreements similar to the one with the US with governments of 25 other countries to promote the return of what it considers to be stolen property.

Tibetans have expressed their disappointment over the US's handover of Tibetan artifacts and relics to China.

Such handovers take away the chance for Tibetans to tell their own stories, said Dawa Tsering, director of the Tibet Policy Institute in Dharamsala, home to Tibet's exile government.

"With every Tibetan Buddhism relic that goes to the hands of Communist China in such handovers, we Tibetans lose the opportunity to present the truth of our identity and our country to the world," Dawa Tsering said. —Radio Free Asia

China calls media outlets facing Trump funding axe 'notorious'

18 March 2025, [France 24](#)

Beijing (AFP) – Beijing on Tuesday said media outlets facing the axe by US President Donald Trump had a "notorious" history of reporting on China, as

Cambodia's autocratic former leader hailed the move for "combating fake news".

Trump signed an order last week freezing Voice of America (VOA), Radio Free Asia (RFA), Radio Free Europe and other outlets as part of his sweeping cuts to federal government spending.

RFA was created to provide reporting to China, North Korea and other countries in the region with heavily restricted press.

It has reported extensively in recent years on issues highly sensitive to Beijing authorities and other autocratic leaders in Asia.

Asked about Trump's decision during a daily news briefing, China's foreign ministry said it did not comment on domestic policies of the US government. But, said spokeswoman Mao Ning: "I think it is no secret that some of the US media you mentioned have a notorious track record in reporting on China."

In an editorial, state-backed nationalist tabloid Global Times went further -- describing Voice of America as a "lie factory".

"The so-called beacon of freedom, VOA, has now been discarded by its own government like a dirty rag," it said.

"The demonising narratives propagated by VOA will ultimately become a laughingstock of the times," it added.

China has frequently criticised Western media reporting on the country as "biased" and it heavily restricts the operations of domestic news outlets.

Thorny topics covered by RFA and its fellow outlets included China's alleged large-scale human rights abuses against ethnic minorities in the regions of Xinjiang and Tibet, as well as the crackdown on democratic activists in Hong Kong.

Notably, Radio Free Asia's reporting is published in a wide range of languages spoken in China, including Tibetan and Uyghur as well as Mandarin and Cantonese.

Related news stories are heavily censored in China's domestic media environment -- and foreign reports on the subjects are blocked online.

The outlets had also long been critical of the influential former leader of Cambodia Hun Sen.

He welcomed the move to cut their funding, praising Trump for "his courage to lead the world in combating fake news, starting with news outlets funded by the US government".

Hun Sen, who ruled Cambodia with an iron fist for nearly four decades and shut down multiple independent media outlets, has been the subject of critical reporting by VOA and Radio Free Asia.

In 2020, Beijing ordered several US media outlets -- including VOA -- to declare in writing their staff, finances, operations and real estate in China.

The decree was part of a media row between Washington and Beijing that saw more than a dozen journalists working for US media expelled from China.

US judge holds China liable for Covid 19 cover-up and 'hoarding PPE', slaps \$24 billion penalty

09 March 2025, Times of India

A Missouri federal judge has held the Chinese government accountable for covering up the origins of the COVID-19 pandemic and stockpiling protective equipment (PPE), issuing a judgment of over \$24 billion.

"This is a landmark victory for Missouri and the United States in the fight to hold China accountable for unleashing COVID-19 on the world," the Missouri Attorney General Andrew Bailey said, as reported by the New York Post. The Missouri attorney general's office initiated legal proceedings in April 2020, during the pandemic's initial phase, claiming the Chinese government suppressed information about the virus's presence and transmission whilst restricting global access to personal protective equipment (PPE). Chinese authorities remained unresponsive to the court proceedings, and their embassy representatives in Washington offered no immediate comment on Friday.

Judge Stephen N. Limbaugh Jr. of the US District Court for the Eastern District of Missouri stated that "China was misleading the world about the dangers and scope of the COVID-19 pandemic" and had "engaged in monopolistic actions to hoard PPE." These actions, he noted, impeded America's initial pandemic response and prevented adequate equipment acquisition for medical staff treating virus patients.

According to *The New York Times*, Judge Limbaugh issued the judgment against China, its ruling Communist Party, local governments, a health agency, and a laboratory within the country. Attorney General Andrew Bailey stated, "China refused to show up to court, but that doesn't mean they get away with causing untold suffering and economic devastation."

"We intend to collect every penny by seizing Chinese-owned assets, including Missouri farmland," he added.

Earlier in 2020, following the lawsuit's filing, Chinese officials contested its validity. Foreign ministry spokesperson Geng Shuang described the lawsuit as "very absurd" and "has no factual and legal basis at all."

However, Limbaugh concluded that Missouri's legal team demonstrated China's prior knowledge of the virus's spread and human-to-human transmission before sharing this information globally.

The judge additionally found that Missouri proved China's nationalisation of American factories in China for protective equipment production, which restricted export supplies and increased costs in regions like Missouri. He highlighted that COVID-19 ranked as Missouri's third-leading cause of death in 2020 and 2021.

China has a message for Trump: the US won't stop its rise

08 March 2025, [CNN World](#), Simone McCarthy

As US President Donald Trump ratcheted up economic pressure on China over the past week, Beijing sent back its own message: Its rise won't be interrupted. A major political meeting taking place in the capital was the ideal backdrop for Beijing to respond. The "two sessions" gathering of China's rubber-stamp legislature and its top political advisory body is where the government reveals its plans and sets the tone for the year ahead.

The top item on its priority list? Boosting consumer demand to ensure China doesn't need to rely on exports to power its vast but slowing economy. And the next: driving forward leader Xi Jinping's bid to transform the country into a technological superpower, by ramping up investment and enlisting the private sector.

Beijing is making these moves as it prepares for what could be a protracted economic showdown with the United States. Trump doubled additional tariffs on all Chinese imports to 20% on Tuesday and has threatened more to come – as well as tighter controls on American investment in China.

"We can prevail over any difficulty in pursuing development," China's No. 2 official Li Qiang told thousands of delegates seated in Beijing's Great Hall of the People at the opening meeting of the National People's Congress Wednesday. The "giant ship of China's economy" will "sail steadily toward the future," he said.

A foreign ministry spokesperson was more direct when asked about trade frictions on Tuesday: "If the US insists on waging a tariff war, trade war, or any other kind of war, China will fight till the end," he told reporters.

And while Beijing's priorities – and rhetoric – may echo those of years past, this time they are coming from a country that is starting to regain its swagger after being battered by its own Covid restrictions, a property sector crisis and by a tech war with the US.

"Confidence" has been an unofficial buzzword of the weeklong event, which ends Tuesday. It was used nearly a dozen times during a press conference held by China's economic tsars on Thursday, splashed across state media coverage and included in a pointed

reminder – that "confidence builds strength" – during the closing lines of Li's nationally broadcast speech.

That optimism might be more aspiration than reality. Many in China are looking to the future with uncertainty. They're more willing to save than spend, while young people are struggling to find jobs and feeling unsure whether their lives will be better than those of their parents.

But unlike last year, the country is entering 2025 buoyed by the market-moving successes of Chinese firms and technology. And while Trump's return has Beijing concerned about economic risks, it's also eyeing opportunity for its own rise.

"By the end of Trump's second term, America's global standing and credibility image will have gone down," People's Liberation Army Sen. Col. (ret) Zhou Bo, a senior fellow at Tsinghua University's Center for International Security and Strategy in Beijing, told CNN. "And as American strength declines, China, of course, will look more important."

Confidence boost

This mood isn't just percolating in the halls of power. On the streets of the capital, gleaming homegrown electric vehicles weave through traffic, including those from carmaker BYD, which now goes toe-to-toe with Elon Musk's Tesla for global sales – a reminder of China's successful push to become a leader in green tech.

Then there's the box office record-smashing animation "Ne Zha 2" and the breakout success of privately owned Chinese AI firm DeepSeek. Its large language model shocked Silicon Valley and upended Western assumptions about the costs associated with AI.

In Beijing this week, "you can ask DeepSeek" has been a playful and proud punchline in casual conversation. "Last year, people may have been impacted by the US narrative that China is declining, that China has peaked," said Wang Yiwei, director of the Institute of International Affairs at Renmin University in Beijing. "We still have many difficulties. We still have many problems, of course, but it's not that we've reached peak China."

Even Trump's focus on economic rivalry with Beijing as he rolls out tariffs on US trade partners appears to some as a mark of how far China has come. On a recent weekday afternoon in downtown Beijing, some passersby interviewed by CNN pointed to competition with the US as a sign of their country's growing strength.

"China is developing quickly now and that's attracted international attention, especially from the United States," but that may not be a bad thing, said a medical graduate student surnamed Xia. "Trump's increase on tariffs is competition ... (and) if there's no competition maybe China's independent development is not sustainable."

High stakes rivalry

But even as Chinese officials seek to project confidence, international observers say the economic stimulus measures announced this week show Beijing is girding itself for major challenges to come.

Premier Li alluded to that in his opening address. “The external environment is becoming more complex and severe, which may have a greater impact on the country’s trade, science and technology and other fields,” he said.

China doesn’t want to deal with that volatility while also grappling with a weak economy at home. That’s one reason why it’s trying to boost consumption and spur growth, setting an ambitious expansion target of “around 5%” this year. Beijing is also aware that trade frictions mean the economy needs to rely less on exports.

“It is likely that Beijing has thought through the scenarios of Trade War 2.0, but whatever happens, it is clear that China’s growth will have to rely more on domestic demand,” said Bert Hofman, a professor at the East Asian Institute at the National University Singapore and former World Bank country director for China, in a note.

Still, some analysts say Beijing’s initiatives are short on details and much less aggressive than needed to rev up the economy and boost consumer confidence.

“It adds up to a sense by the leadership that they want to refocus on growth and development, but still a desire to do only as much as necessary in terms of stimulus to get there,” said Michael Hirson, a fellow at the Asia Society Policy Institute’s Center for China Analysis.

Xi may also be balancing this goal with another concern: a need to save some firepower to support the economy if China faces “a nasty four years dealing with Donald Trump,” he said.

Beijing also wants to direct resources toward the high-tech transformation of its economy and industries. That’s another key part of the government’s 2025 agenda – and a long-term objective of Xi, who unlike US presidents is not subject to term limits on his leadership.

Beijing is pushing for innovations in AI, robotics, 6G and quantum computing, announcing a state-backed fund to support tech innovation and even welcoming foreign enterprises – in a significant tone shift for Xi – to play a role.

China is still smarting from the first Trump administration’s campaign to keep its tech champion Huawei out of global mobile networks and from the Biden administration’s efforts to convince allies to join it in cutting Chinese access to advanced semiconductors.

Last month, Washington said it was considering expanding restrictions on US investment in sensitive technologies in China.

But Beijing this week has also touted its confidence in advancing no matter the barriers.

“Be it space science or chip making, unjustified external suppression has never stopped,” Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi told reporters Friday. “But where there is blockade, there is breakthrough; where there is suppression, there is innovation.”

“We are witnessing an ever-expanding horizon for China to become a science and technology powerhouse,” he said.

The Trump threat?

How much Trump’s policies will challenge China remains an open and urgent question for Beijing.

The US president has refrained so far from slapping Chinese imports with the blanket 60% or more tariffs that he had threatened on the campaign trail.

He’s been focused elsewhere, including on unleashing sweeping changes to US global leadership by decimating US foreign assistance, threatening to take control of other countries’ sovereign territory, and upending US alliances in Europe, while pulling closer to Russia at the expense of Ukraine.

There are potential risks for Beijing in that shake-up. For example, if a Washington-Moscow rapprochement pulls Xi away from Russian President Vladimir Putin, his closest ally, or if an American dial-down of security in Europe allows it to ramp up attention on Asia.

But Chinese diplomats have also been taking advantage of the changes to play up their country as a responsible and stable global leader, despite criticisms of Beijing’s own aggressive behavior in Asia. “A big country should honor its international obligations and fulfill its due responsibilities. It should not put selfish interests before principles, still less should it wield the power to bully the weak,” Wang, the foreign minister, said on Friday in response to a question from CNN on Trump’s “America First” policy. China “resolutely opposes power politics and hegemony,” he added.

When it comes to tariffs, observers say Beijing is trying to moderate its response, holding out for a potential meeting between Xi and Trump or perhaps even a deal that could avert an escalating trade war.

While China immediately retaliated against two sets of US tariffs this year, including with levies on US energy and key agricultural goods, it has remained measured in its reprisals.

The country’s deficit with the US means it will have less room to hit back if a trade war escalates, but Beijing is expected to be calculating other measures like export controls that it could use for leverage.

And the view from some parts is that even if tariffs cause the Chinese economy short-term pain, it will be the US which loses in the long run. China is still an indispensable part of global supply chains. It’s also better prepared to weather this trade war than the last

one, because it's sending goods to more markets globally now, data show.

"If you play (imposing tariffs) with a peer competitor, it actually would not work that well compared to if you're doing this with small countries or medium powers," said Zhou in Beijing, who is also the author of the forthcoming book "Should the World Fear China?".

China, he said, wants cooperation not friction.

"But since the US is still the stronger side in this relationship, (it will) decide which kind of relationship this is ... so China has to say 'OK – if this has to be to be one of competition, then we must dare to fight,'" he said.

'If war is what US wants, be it tariff, trade we're ready to fight': China

05 March 2025, [Business Standard](#)

Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Lin Jian said that it is America and not anyone else responsible for the Fentanyl crisis in the country

China said that the US is using fentanyl as a "flimsy excuse" to raise tariffs on Chinese imports and "if war is what the US wants," be it tariff or trade war, Beijing is ready to "fight till the end."

The statement by Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Lin Jian came as a reaction to the question posed by the New York Times on Tuesday, asking for reactions to the further increase of tariffs to 10 per cent by the US on most goods from China.

In his remarks, he said, "The fentanyl issue is a flimsy excuse to raise US tariffs on Chinese imports. Our countermeasures to defend our rights and interests are fully legitimate and necessary."

He further added that it is America and not anyone else responsible for the Fentanyl crisis in the country.

Lin Jian said, "In the spirit of humanity and goodwill towards the American people, we have taken robust steps to assist the US in dealing with the issue. Instead of recognizing our efforts, the US has sought to smear and shift blame to China, and is seeking to pressure and blackmail China with tariff hikes. They've been PUNISHING us for helping them. This is not going to solve the U.S.'s problem and will undermine our counternarcotics dialogue and cooperation."

The Chinese spokesperson further said, "Intimidation does not scare us. Bullying does not work on us. Pressuring, coercion or threats are not the right way of dealing with China. Anyone using maximum pressure on China is picking the wrong guy and miscalculating. If the US truly wants to solve the fentanyl issue, then the right thing to do is to consult with China by treating each other as equals."

He concluded his remarks stating, "If war is what the US wants, be it a tariff war, a trade war or any other type of war, we're ready to fight till the end."

The remarks by the Chinese spokesperson comes after the Trump administration doubled the tariff on all Chinese imports to 20 per cent from 10 per cent, as per a report by CNN.

China retaliated on Tuesday by announcing 15 per cent tariffs on chicken, wheat, corn, and cotton imports from the US, according to a statement from the State Council Tariff Commission. Additionally, a 10 per cent tariff on "sorghum, soybeans, pork, beef, aquatic products, fruits, vegetables, and dairy products," was also imposed, it said.

Separately, China's Ministry of Commerce said it added 15 American companies, including drone maker Skydio, to its export control list, which would bar Chinese companies from exporting dual-use equipment to them, as per CNN.

China's retaliatory tariffs followed a "restrained, targeted approach aimed at causing pain to those industries that matter the most to the supporters of the Trump administration," said Alfredo Montufar-Helu, head of the China Center for the Conference Board.

He noted China's tariffs give it room for negotiations to potentially avoid even more damaging tariffs down the road.

US offered to resettle Uyghurs that Thailand deported to China, sources say

05 March 2025, [The Guardian](#)

Canada and the US offered to resettle 48 ethnic Uyghurs held in detention in Thailand over the past decade, sources have said, but Bangkok took no action for fear of upsetting China, where most of them were covertly deported last week.

Thailand has defended the deportation, which came despite calls from United Nations human rights experts, saying that it acted in accordance with laws and human rights obligations.

Human rights groups accuse China of widespread abuses of Uyghurs, a mainly Muslim ethnic minority numbering about 10 million in its north-western region of Xinjiang. Beijing denies any abuses.

The Thai deputy prime minister Phumtham Wechayachai said on Monday that no country made any concrete offer to resettle the 48 Uyghurs.

"We waited for more than 10 years, and I have spoken to many major countries, but no one told me for certain," he told reporters.

Phumtham was out of government from 2006 until mid-2023.

The US offered to resettle the 48 Uyghurs, an official from the US state department said.

"The United States has worked with Thailand for years to avoid this situation, including by consistently and repeatedly offering to resettle the Uyghurs in other

countries, including, at one point, the United States," the US official said, asking not to be named.

Canada also offered asylum to the detained Uyghurs, said four sources, including diplomats and people with direct knowledge. Two of these sources said another offer came from Australia.

These proposals, which the sources said were not taken forward by Thailand over fears of a falling-out with China, have not been previously reported.

All the sources declined to be named because of the sensitivity of the matter. Thailand's foreign ministry did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

China's foreign ministry said that the repatriation was carried out in accordance with Chinese, Thai and international law. "The repatriated were Chinese nationals who are illegal migrants," it said. "The legitimate rights of the relevant people are fully protected."

A spokesperson for Canada's immigration ministry said they would not comment on individual cases.

The Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade referred to a statement by the foreign minister, Penny Wong, who said on Friday the country "strongly disagrees" with Thailand's decision.

Besides the 40 Uyghurs deported last week, five are in a Thai prison due to a continuing criminal case, according to local officials. Reuters could not immediately confirm the whereabouts of the other three people.

Pisan Manawapat, a Thai ambassador to Canada and the US between 2013 and 2017 and a senator before he retired in 2024, said that at least three countries had approached Thailand with proposals to resettle the Uyghurs, but declined to name them.

"We didn't want to upset China," Pisan said, without providing further details. "So we did not make the decision at the political level to go through with this." China is Thailand's biggest trade partner and the two countries have close business ties.

Phumtham said Thailand made the decision to deport the group to China last week after reassurances from Beijing that Thai officials would be allowed to monitor the Uyghurs' wellbeing in the country following their return.

UN human rights experts had said the group would be at risk of torture, ill-treatment and "irreparable harm" if returned to China, and their deportation has drawn widespread condemnation.

Following the deportation, the UN's refugee agency said in a statement that it was repeatedly denied access to the group by Thai authorities.

A source said the UN refugee agency's lack of access to the Uyghurs meant they could not be processed as asylum seekers, stalling their potential resettlement and leaving them stuck in detention.

China tells its AI leaders to avoid US travel over security concerns, WSJ reports

01 March 2025, [Reuters](#)

Chinese authorities are instructing the country's top artificial intelligence entrepreneurs and researchers to avoid travel to the United States, the Wall Street Journal reported on Friday, citing people familiar with the matter.

The authorities are concerned that Chinese AI experts traveling abroad could divulge confidential information about the nation's progress, the newspaper said.

Authorities also fear that executives could be detained and used as a bargaining chip in U.S.-China negotiations, the Journal said, drawing parallels to the detention of a Huawei executive in Canada at Washington's request during the first Trump administration.

The U.S. and China are locked in a global AI race, with Chinese startup DeepSeek recently launching AI models that it claims rival or surpass U.S. industry leaders such as OpenAI and Alphabet Inc's (GOOGL.O), opens new tab Google, at significantly lower cost.

The White House and China's State Council Information Office, which handles media enquiries on behalf of the government, did not immediately respond to requests from Reuters for comment.

Chinese President Xi Jinping told a meeting of top Communist Party officials on Friday to improve China's overall security, including in the realms of cybersecurity and artificial intelligence, China's state broadcaster reported on Saturday.

"We should give top priority to defending the country's political security," Xi was quoted as having told other members of the governing Politburo.

Last month, the Chinese leader held a rare meeting with some of the biggest names in the world's second-largest economy's technology sector, urging them to "show their talent" and be confident in the power of China's model and market.

Chinese executives who choose to travel are instructed to report their plans before leaving and, upon returning, to brief authorities on what they did and whom they met, the Journal report said.

DeepSeek founder Liang Wenfeng declined an invitation to attend an AI summit in Paris in February, according to the report. Another founder of a major Chinese AI startup cancelled a planned U.S. trip last year following instructions from Beijing, the Journal added.

SINO-INDIAN RELATIONS

India seen as easing relations with China in the face of Trump tariffs even as some issues remain unresolved

27 March 2025, [Tibetan Review](#)

As officials from the two countries met in Beijing on Mar 26, India's External affairs minister S Jaishankar has said in South Korea that the two sides were working to rebuild ties damaged by the Galwan valley clashes of 2020, while noting that some issues remained unresolved.

The meeting in Beijing was held between Mr Gourangalal Das, Joint Secretary (East Asia) from India's Ministry of External Affairs, and Liu Jinsong, Director General of the Department of Asian Affairs at China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Jaishankar, who spoke on the same day at an event hosted by the Asia Society, South Korea, has stressed that a tense relationship benefits neither country.

In Beijing, the two sides discussed resuming dialogue mechanisms between the two nations "in a step-by-step manner," focusing on "each other's priority areas of interest and concern," reported *ddnews.gov.in* Mar 27, citing a statement from India's Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).

Jaishankar has explained why normalizing ties between the two sides remains an arduous, step-by-step journey. "It wasn't just the bloodshed, it was the disregard of written agreements... The departure from the terms of what was agreed to was very sharp and very substantial," the report quoted him as saying during a session moderated by Kyung-wha Kang, President and CEO of the Asia Society and a former foreign minister of South Korea.

Jaishankar has acknowledged that while the relationship has improved since October last year, certain challenges persisted. "We're still dealing with some parts of this, it is not that the issue has completely gone away."

He has noted that efforts were ongoing to address the damage from the 2020 clashes, adding, "We genuinely, sincerely think that this is in our mutual interest."

Jaishankar has highlighted the importance of managing differences to prevent them from turning into disputes. "We do compete on many issues. But because we compete, it doesn't mean that there should be a conflict between us. We are very realistic about it."

Meanwhile, during the meeting in Beijing, the two sides reviewed the measures undertaken to implement the strategic decisions agreed upon during the Jan 2025 meeting between India's Foreign Secretary, Vikram Misri, and China's Vice Foreign Minister, Hua Chunying.

Key areas of discussion were stated to have included enhancing people-to-people exchanges, resuming

direct flights, increasing media and think tank collaboration, and commemorating the 75th anniversary of diplomatic ties between India and China. They were also stated to have made progress toward resuming the Kailash Manasarovar Yatra pilgrimage in 2025.

On the outcome of the meeting's discussions, China's official *chinadaily.com.cn* said Mar 27 that the two sides will accelerate efforts to resume direct flights, facilitate personnel exchanges, and enable the reciprocal dispatch of reporters, while effectively addressing disputes and sensitive issues.

Meanwhile, with US tariffs looming overhead, Indian policy makers are now more open to upgrading bilateral economic relationships with China, noted China's official *globaltimes.cn* Mar 26, citing *the Indian Express*.

The latter was stated to have cited sources familiar with the development as saying that discussions were on between departments "to dilute or neutralize" some of the restrictions on trade and investments that were put in place five years ago after clashes between Chinese and Indian soldiers in Galwan in 2020.

The *globaltimes.cn* report also cited the *Times of India* as saying the latest round of diplomatic talks between the two countries came as "India and China look to reboot ties, building upon a spell of relative calm in the border areas."

The report also cited Chinese Consul General in Kolkata Xu Wei as saying "the spring of China-India relations is arriving".

The report cited Hu Zhiyong, a professor from Zhejiang International Studies University and also research fellow at the Institute of International Relations at the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences, as saying India is now truly experiencing Trump administration's "equal treatment" in tariff imposition and that the US has a clear understanding of its national strength, which drives it toward easing relations with China.

India imposes anti-dumping duty on 4 Chinese products

23 March 2025, [The Economic Times](#)

India has imposed anti-dumping duty on five Chinese goods, including vacuum flasks and aluminium foil, during the month so far to guard domestic players from cheap imports from the neighbouring country. These duties were imposed as these products -- Soft Ferrite Cores, certain thickness of vacuum insulated flask, aluminium foil, Trichloro Isocyanuric Acid, and Poly Vinyl Chloride Paste Resin -- were exported to India from China at below normal prices.

The government has imposed the duty in the range of USD 276 per tonne to USD 986 per tonne on imports

of the acid (a water treatment chemical) from China and Japan.

On imports of Soft Ferrite Cores (used in electric vehicles, chargers, and telecom devices), up to 35 per cent duty was imposed on CIF (cost, insurance freight) value.

Similarly on vacuum insulated flask, USD 1,732 per tonne anti-dumping duty was levied. The levy, which ranges from USD 89 per tonne to USD 707 per tonne, on Poly Vinyl Chloride Paste Resin was slapped on the imports from China, Korea RP, Malaysia, Norway, Taiwan and Thailand for five years. These duties are imposed after recommendations for the same were made by the commerce ministry's investigation arm DGTR (director general of trade remedies).

Anti-dumping probes are conducted by countries to determine whether domestic industries have been hurt because of a surge in cheap imports.

As a countermeasure, they impose these duties under the multilateral regime of Geneva-based World Trade Organization (WTO). The duty is aimed at ensuring fair trading practices and creating a level-playing field for domestic producers vis-a-vis foreign producers and exporters.

India has earlier already imposed anti-dumping duty on several products to tackle cheap imports from various countries, including China.

India and China both are members of the WTO. China is the second largest trading partner of India. The country has time and again flagged serious concerns over the widening trade deficit with the neighbouring country, which stood at USD 85 billion in 2023-24.

Hundreds throng Beijing's Vasant Mela as India, China look to normalise ties

22 March 2025, [Deccan Herald](#), PTI

This year's Mela had shades of India-China bonhomie as Liu Jinsong, Director General of Asia and India's point man in the Chinese Foreign Ministry took part in the event.

Beijing: The diplomatic enclave of the Chinese capital came alive on Saturday as over 4,000 Chinese people thronged the third edition of Vasant Mela marking a "new beginning" in Sino-India ties as the two countries sought to normalise the ties breaking the four-year chill.

Organised by the Indian Embassy here, the gathering soaked in the Indian cultural festival filled with a variety of Indian dances performed mostly by Chinese enthusiasts specialising in India's art forms, and ethnic cuisine.

This year's Mela had shades of India-China bonhomie as Liu Jinsong, Director General of Asia and India's point man in the Chinese Foreign Ministry took part in the event.

Welcoming Liu and the vast Chinese crowd, Indian Ambassador to China Pradeep Kumar Rawat said spring is a time for "new beginnings, strengthening of bonds and opportunity to experience the essence of India." This year's Mela has taken place in the backdrop of India and China ending their over four-year freeze in relations over the eastern Ladakh standoff beginning with the meeting of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping at Kazan in Russia on the sidelines of the BRICS summit last October.

The meeting was followed by a host of high level talks at various levels holding the promise of a new beginning in the troubled relations between the giant neighbours.

At the Saturday's event, Rawat, accompanied by his wife Shruti Rawat along with Deputy Ambassador Abhishek Shukla and senior Indian diplomats, greeted the visitors and interacted with them.

The cultural events included five types of classical Indian dances, including Bharatanatyam and Kathak, which were largely performed by the Chinese artists specialising in these art forms besides Hindi film numbers.

The Chinese holiday crowd was treated with a vast variety of Indian cuisine by 35 stalls set up by Beijing-based Indian restaurants and families of Indian professionals based in the city.

Also, shops displaying Indian handicrafts, artificial jewellery and garments were a centre of attraction.

Never accepted illegal occupation: Centre on China's 'new counties' in Ladakh

22 March 2025, [India Today](#), Manisha Pandey

In a written response to a query in Lok Sabha, Minister of State for External Affairs Kirti Vardhan Singh said that India never accepted the "illegal Chinese occupation of the Indian Territory".

The government on Friday said that India is aware of China establishing two new counties, parts of which fall in Ladakh, and has registered a "solemn" protest through diplomatic channels.

In a written response to a query in Lok Sabha, Minister of State for External Affairs Kirti Vardhan Singh said that India never accepted the "illegal Chinese occupation of the Indian Territory in this area".

"The Government of India has never accepted the illegal Chinese occupation of the Indian Territory in this area. Creation of new counties will neither have a bearing on India's long-standing and consistent position regarding India's sovereignty over the area,

nor lend legitimacy to China's illegal and forcible occupation of the same," the minister said.

He added that the government has registered its "solemn protest over these developments through diplomatic channels".

The ministry was asked whether the government is aware of "China's establishment of two new counties in the Hotan prefecture, incorporating Indian territory in Ladakh", if so, the strategic and diplomatic measures undertaken by the government to address this issue.

Replying to this query, the minister said, "Government of India is aware of the announcement by the Chinese side pertaining to the establishment of so-called two new counties in Hotan prefecture of China. Parts of the jurisdiction of these so-called counties fall in India's Union Territory of Ladakh".

The query also sought details of protests lodged by India against the "creation of these counties" along with the responses received from the Chinese government, if any.

"Government gives careful and special attention to improvement of infrastructure for the development of border areas, in order to facilitate the economic development of these areas, as also to meet India's strategic and security requirements," the MoS said.

The government continues to keep a constant watch on all developments having a bearing on India's security and takes all the necessary measures to safeguard its sovereignty and territorial integrity, the minister highlighted.

China applauds Narendra Modi's remarks on Sino-Indian ties

18 March 2025, [Connected to India](#)

China on Monday, March 17, appreciated Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "positive" remarks on the Sino-Indian ties favouring dialogue over discord and said that a cooperative "dance between the elephant and dragon" contributing to mutual success is the only choice for both sides.

Beijing noted Modi's recent positive statement on China-India relations and appreciate it, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning told a media briefing in the mainland while responding to a question on the Indian prime minister's remarks in conversation with American podcaster Lex Fridman.

Mao said the successful meeting between Prime Minister Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping in Kazan, Russia, in October 2024 provided strategic guidance for the improvement and development of bilateral ties.

Both sides have earnestly followed through on the important common understandings, strengthened exchanges and achieved positive outcomes.

"Let me stress that in the 2000 plus years' history of interactions, the two countries have maintained friendly exchanges" and both the countries learned from each other contributing to civilisational achievements and human progress, she said.

As the two largest developing countries, China and India have shared the task of accelerating their development and revitalisation and understand and support each other's successes, she said.

This serves the fundamental interests of over 2.8 billion people, meets the common aspiration of regional countries, and follows the historical trend of the Global South growing stronger and conducive to world peace, she said.

The two countries should be partners that contribute to each other's success and a "cooperative pas de deux", a ballet between dragon and elephant, is the "only choice for both sides", she said, reiterating the recent comments by Foreign Minister Wang Yi on the development of bilateral ties.

China stands ready to work with India to implement the important common understandings between the two leaders, take the 75th anniversary of the diplomatic relations as an opportunity and advance bilateral ties on the track of stable and sound development, she said.

Modi said normalcy has returned to the India-China border after his recent talks with President Xi to defuse tensions ignited by the 2020 clashes between the two armies in eastern Ladakh.

Sounding optimistic about the ties between the world's two most populous countries, he said differences between neighbours are natural and emphasised the ancient cultural ties between them when the two civilizations learnt from each other and had little conflict.

Asserting that their efforts are aimed at ensuring that their differences do not turn into disputes and preferring dialogue over discord, he said the two countries once contributed over 50 per cent of the global GDP.

"Our cooperation is not only (mutually) beneficial but also essential for global peace and prosperity," he said.

Congress MP demands ban on Chinese AI app DeepSeek

11 March 2025, [Hindustan Times](#), Shemin Joy

Raising the issue during Zero Hour, Padavi urged the Ministry of External Affairs to issue notice to China while insisting that India should not use American or Chinese technology.

Chinese AI app DeepSeek should be banned in India for hurting people's sentiments by refusing to acknowledge Arunachal Pradesh as an integral part of India, Congress Gowaal K Padavi said in Lok Sabha on Monday while demanding that the country should develop its own Artificial Intelligence technology.

Raising the issue during Zero Hour, Padavi urged the Ministry of External Affairs to issue notice to China while insisting that India should not use American or Chinese technology. DeepSeek, which is a Chinese AI company that develops large language models (LLMs), is based in Hangzhou in Zhejiang.

He said he had a query on Tibet and it answered that the region has always been under the control of China and when he asked about Uttar Pradesh and then Andhra Pradesh, 'DeepSeek' gave a detailed answer.

However, when asked about Arunachal Pradesh, "DeepSeek refused to give any specific answer and said sorry it is beyond my current scope, let's talk about something else."

Padavi said the answer came as there is a Sino-India border dispute and the Chinese ambassador had earlier insisted that the whole of Arunachal is part of China. The app refuses to accept Arunachal as an integral part of India, he said adding, it "seems very odd" as India recognises the north-eastern part as its integral part.

"This is shocking, a lack of respect for India...These kinds of answers by foreign technology have no place in India and should be banned," he said, adding the MEA should issue a notice to China for hurting the sentiments of Indians.

The Union government has last month instructed its officials not to download or use AI tools and apps such as ChatGPT and DeepSeek in office computers and devices, as it poses confidentiality risks to data and documents.

Seminar on 'Arunachal Pradesh-India Centric Geospace' | Army cautions about China dam impacts

08 March 2025, [Arunachal Observer](#), Pradeep Kumar

China has multiple mega-dam projects, including the Three Gorges Dam on the Yangtze River and approved world's tallest dam on the Yarlung Zangbo River in Tibet, known as Siang in Arunachal Pradesh and Brahmaputra in Assam and Meghna in Bangladesh.

After Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and his Arunachal counterpart Pema Khandu warned against the far reaching consequences for downstream NE India and Bangladesh, if China uses the dam as a 'water bomb', Indian Army is engaged in spreading mass awareness for all stakeholders to remain prepared in case such a situation occurs.

Arunachal Pradesh which boasts of 58,000 MW of hydropower potentials, about 40% of India's total hydropower potentials of about 1,45,320 MW (for projects with a capacity above 25 MW) to be named as 'Future Power House of India' has greatest responsibility to tackle any catastrophe created by China's so called 'water bomb'.

A **Dibrugarh** report adds The Indian Army hosted a two-day seminar titled 'Arunachal Pradesh -India Centric Geospace' which concluded at Dinjan Military Station in eastern Assam here on Thursday.

Senior military officials, distinguished policymakers and scholars, while participating in the seminar gave valuable insights into the geopolitical, economic and developmental aspects of the region.

"Its very important to understand our rivers and the system and equally important to understand what Chinese are doing. Chinese would do what they want to do. But we have to build our own capabilities and capacity on the rivers, but we have to do it in a scientific way and in a human centric approach. Our projects should be resilient and people friendly manner," said Dr Uttam Kumar Sinha, leading scholar-cum-commentator on trans-boundary rivers, climate change and the Arctic.

"We have to build our capabilities and capacities in a sustainable manner and people friendly taking consideration while building dams. We should not be reactive what Chinese are doing because the dams are being build on the Chinese side. We need to build infrastructure but infrastructure which are resilient and sustainable and bring state and people together," he said.

"In 2023, a MoU was signed with Arunachal Pradesh Govt for executing 13 hydel power project and NEEPCO would execute five of them in the state with a total install capacity of 2626 megawatt," North Eastern Electric Power Corporation Ltd. (NEEPCO) Executive Director Samiran Goswami said.

The topics discussed in the seminar, included ecological and economic impact of China's exploitation of Tibetan resources and its implications for India, cultural and historical ties of NE India, Arunachal Pradesh in particular, with Indian heartland and developmental dynamics of Arunachal Pradesh, focusing on infrastructure and policy frameworks.

It may be recalled here that the Union Cabinet, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on 25.11.24 had approved two hydropower projects of 426 MW entailing an investment of Rs 3,689 crore in Arunachal Pradesh.

The two hydropower projects approved were 186 MW Tato-I Hydro Electric Project worth Rs 1,750 crore and 240 MW Heo Hydro Electric Project worth Rs 1,939 crore in Shi Yomi district to be executed as joint venture companies between NEEPCO) and the GoAP.

But these two projects are only a part of the larger plan of the GoI to make Arunachal Pradesh the country's hydropower hub with a total investment of about Rs 1 lakh crore. On an immediate basis, it aims to make 12,500 MW of hydropower projects operational in the next two years. These projects are being undertaken by central public sector undertakings (CPSUs), like NHPC, NEEPCO, THDC and SJVN.

According to state Deputy Chief Minister Chowna Mein, five projects would start soon with three each slated for 2026 and 2027.

Hindi-Chini bhai bhai 2.0? 'Dragon and elephant must dance together', says China FM, pushing for stronger Sino-India ties

07 March 2025, [The Economic Times](#)

China and India are making notable progress in strengthening their diplomatic relationship, with leaders from both nations emphasising the need for cooperation over conflict. According to a Global Times report, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi stated, "China has always believed that being mutually supportive partners and achieving the 'Dragon and Elephant Dance' is the only correct choice for both sides."

Over the past year, relations between the two countries have seen positive developments. A key moment was the October 2024 meeting in Kazan, Russia, where Chinese President Xi Jinping and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi held talks that provided strategic direction for improving ties. "China-India relations have made positive strides over the past year," Wang said. Both sides have since actively followed through on their commitments, strengthening diplomatic engagement and practical cooperation at multiple levels. Border Tensions and Resolution

One of the most significant breakthroughs was the resolution of the prolonged military standoff in eastern Ladakh. Late last year, India and China finalised an agreement to withdraw troops from Depsang and Demchok, the last two points of friction in the region, ending a four-year impasse.

Following this, Modi and Xi held further discussions in Kazan on October 23, where they decided to revive existing dialogue mechanisms. In December, National Security Advisor Ajit Doval and Wang Yi met for the 23rd Special Representatives dialogue in Beijing. A month later, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri travelled to China for talks with his counterpart Sun Weidong under the 'Foreign Secretary-Vice Minister' framework.

Despite past tensions, Wang emphasised that border issues should not define the overall relationship. "As

two ancient civilisations, we have enough wisdom and capability to maintain peace and tranquillity in the border areas pending a fair and reasonable solution," he said.

A Shared Vision for the Future

Wang reiterated that China and India, as the world's largest neighbours and leading developing economies, should be partners in each other's success. "There is every reason for us to support each other rather than undermine each other or undercut each other," he stated, highlighting the broader benefits of cooperation.

He also addressed global power dynamics, stating that both nations have a responsibility to counter external hegemonic influence. "As important members of the Global South, we have the responsibility to take the lead in opposing hegemonism and power politics," he said.

By working together, he suggested, India and China could strengthen the Global South's influence and push for greater democratisation in international affairs. "If China and India join hands, the prospect of greater democracy in international affairs and the stronger Global South will improve greatly," he said.

Marking 75 Years of Diplomatic Relations

The year 2025 marks the 75th anniversary of diplomatic relations between India and China. Wang stated that China is keen to collaborate with India to build on past experiences and open up new possibilities for future engagement. "China stands ready to work with India to sum up past experience and forge a fast forward and advance China-India relations on the track of sound and stable development," he said.

While challenges remain, recent diplomatic engagements signal a shift towards a more pragmatic approach. Both countries appear committed to dialogue, reducing tensions, and shaping a future where they can coexist as strong, cooperative partners.

India wants stability with China but seeks 'respect' for its interests: EAM S Jaishankar

06 March 2025, [The Economic Times](#)

India wants a stable relationship with China but expects its interests to be "respected" and its "sensitivities recognised," External Affairs Minister **S. Jaishankar** said during a discussion at **Chatham House**, a British policy institute. He acknowledged that the relationship has been shaped by decades of ups and downs, but the real challenge is managing the balance as both nations rise.

Reflecting on the last 40 years, Jaishankar noted that peace along the border was seen as essential for better ties. However, the situation changed

dramatically in 2020 when Chinese forces clashed with Indian troops in the Galwan Valley, leading to the deaths of around 20 Indian soldiers and multiple Chinese casualties. It was the most serious border confrontation in 45 years.

Disengagement and Diplomatic Efforts

Jaishankar pointed out that, despite the tensions, progress has been made. "In October 2024, we were able to resolve many of the urgent issues, the pending issues, pertaining to what we call the **disengagement of troops** who had been deployed up front," he said. This paved the way for high-level meetings, including one between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping in Kazan, Russia, during the BRICS Summit. Jaishankar himself met with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, while National Security Advisor Ajit Doval and Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri visited China.

Steps Towards Normalisation

While troop disengagement was a major breakthrough, Jaishankar noted that other key issues are still being discussed. "So, the resumption of pilgrimage to Mount Kailash, the direct flights between the two countries, the journalists' issues—all these are being discussed, but there are some other issues," he said. He pointed to the stalled mechanism for **trans-border river cooperation**, which had stopped after 2020. "We are looking at this package... it's hard. You know, obviously, we would like to see it done sooner rather than later. And then we will see what happens."

A Complex Relationship Between Giants

Jaishankar described India-China relations as "very unique," given their shared history and sheer size. "First, we are the only two countries in the world with over a billion people. Both of us have a long history, with ups and downs over time. Today, both countries are on an upward trajectory; here is the challenge, and we are also direct neighbours. The challenge is that as any country rises, its balance with the world and its neighbours changes. When two countries of this size, history, complexity, and this consequence rise in parallel, they interplay with each other," he said.

Strengthening Ties Beyond China

Jaishankar is in the UK and Ireland from March 4 to 9, aiming to reinforce India's **diplomatic partnerships**. His visit focuses on strengthening the India-UK Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, which covers trade, defence, security, health, education, and cultural ties.

As discussions with China continue, India remains firm on ensuring its national interests are safeguarded while seeking a more predictable and constructive relationship.

India and China likely to start direct flights from May

05 March 2025, [Money Control](#)

The first flights will be to and from Lhasa to facilitate Kailash Mansarovar Yatra. Later in the year, flights from India to Beijing, Shanghai and other Chinese cities are likely to be restarted

India and China are discussing the resumption of direct flights between the two countries from May ahead of the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra this summer, government officials told *Moneycontrol*.

In January, the two sides agreed to resume direct flights and the pilgrimage after five years, looking to build on the thaw in ties following the disengagement in Eastern Ladakh after a four-year standoff in the border area.

"The two governments are looking to restart direct flights from Delhi and Lucknow and Kolkata to Lhasa from May 2025 and final approvals from both sides are expected by the end of March," a government official said.

The two governments are in the process of finalising a bilateral agreement for flight operations but discussions are on with IndiGo, Air India and Tibet Airlines for flights from India to Lhasa Gonggar Airport, the official said.

Once a bilateral agreement is signed, airlines from both countries would be asked to add flights and plan their operations.

The two sides are also discussing resuming flights from India to Beijing, Guangzhou, Shanghai, Chengdu and Kunming but this would be done in the second half of the year, another official said.

Emailed queries to external affairs and civil aviation ministries and IndiGo and Air India remained unanswered till the time of publishing.

The thaw

In January 2025, the neighbours agreed to resume direct commercial flights after five years following a meeting between after India's foreign secretary Vikram Misri and China's foreign minister Wang Yi in Beijing.

The two countries had reached a consensus "in principle to resume direct air services," with officials expected to hammer out details "at an early date", the external affairs ministry said after the meeting.

It also said China had permitted the resumption of the pilgrimage to Kailash Mansarovar, a popular shrine to the Hindu god Shiv, which was halted since 2020 following the coronavirus outbreak.

May, June and October are the busiest times for Kailash Mansarovar pilgrims as the weather is pleasant, visibility high and temperatures comfortable, officials said.

Mount Kailash is in the Ngari Prefecture of the Tibet Autonomous Region of China.

India and China operated more than 500 direct flights in a month before the operations were halted in January 2020 following COVID.

Most flights were operated by Chinese airlines such as Air China, China Eastern and China Southern. IndiGo and Air India also flew to China directly.

Before the pandemic, Air China operated five flights a week to Delhi from Beijing and four to Mumbai from Beijing.

China Southern Airlines operated double daily flights to Delhi from Guangzhou, China Eastern Airlines operated eight times in a week to Kolkata from Kunming and a daily flight to Delhi from Shanghai. Shandong Airlines operated four flights a week between Delhi and Kunming, data shared by Cirium, an aviation analytics company, shows.

From the Indian side, IndiGo operated a daily flight between Kolkata and Guangzhou and Delhi to Chengdu, while Air India operated five times a week to Shanghai from Delhi.

In October, after several rounds of talks, India and China agreed to troop disengagement and patrolling along the Line of Actual Control in Eastern Ladakh.

Misri announced the agreement on October 21 and said would lead to a resolution of the issues that arose in 2020.

On October 23, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping endorsed the agreement on patrolling and disengagement along the LAC during a bilateral meeting on the sidelines of the BRICS Summit in Kazan in Russia.

China honours Galwan valley clash commander even as it seeks better India ties

05 March 2025, [Tibetan Review](#)

Both China and India present each other as the aggressor in the Galwan valley clash in mid-June 2020 which claimed the lives of 20 Indian troops and at least four from the Chinese side. Hence, any playing up of that incident to honour the "heroism" of the involved soldiers is bound to be provocative to the other side. It would certainly raise a question mark on the level of genuineness of the interest of the concerned side to normalize ties with the other side.

But China has done just that.

"Qi Fabao, a PLA regiment commander who sustained a head injury while fighting bravely in the Galwan Valley border skirmish with India on Jun 15, 2020, was honoured among 33 individuals for their outstanding performance as Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) members," reported China's official *globaltimes.cn* Mar 3.

Citing *CPPCC Daily*, the report said that at the award ceremony for the 2024 Outstanding Performance Award for CPPCC Members held in Beijing on Mar 2

afternoon, the CPPCC Chairperson's Council meeting decided to commend committee members with exceptional performance, granting the award to 33 individuals. Qi was among these individuals.

The report then narrates the "heroism" displayed by Qi during the Galwan Valley clash, saying: "In 2020, Qi, then a regiment commander in a border defense unit, fought courageously and stood his ground, leading his troops in resolutely countering the violent actions of foreign forces."

It noted that Qi was awarded by the Central Military Commission with the title of "Hero Regimental Commander for Defending the Border" and honoured with the Jul 1 Medal in 2021 by the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee.

The report continued that in Jan 2023, Qi was invited as a special guest and became a CPPCC member following the announcement of the list of members of the 14th National Committee of the CPPCC. So, he was not even a member of the CPPCC when the Galwan Valley clash took place.

Citing *CCTV Military*, the military channel of *China Central Television (CCTV)*, the report even cited a video footage from the 2024 "two sessions" as showing that the scar on Qi's head was clearly visible, As if that speaks for itself.

Citing a *CCTV* report in Feb 2021, the report then blamed India for that clash, claiming, "In Jun 2020, the Indian military violated the previous consensus and trespassed the Line of Actual Control and built tents. Out of respect to previous agreements and rituals, Qi, regimental commander of the Chinese military, went to negotiate with a few soldiers. However, the Indian military showed no sincerity and had already deployed more soldiers in an attempt to force the Chinese soldiers to concede."

The report continued that when facing more Indian soldiers appearing from nearby mountains, Qi reproached the Indian military for destroying the agreement and organized Chinese soldiers to move into combat formations to engage in any confrontation.

The report then claimed that the Indian military then started to attack the Chinese soldiers by using steel tubes and cudgels and throwing stones. Qi was under heavy attack and sustained a serious head injury, it said.

The Indian version of the conflict is the exact opposite, saying the Chinese launched the attack on the Indian side in Ladakh in the dead of night, armed with deadly improvised weapons such as nail studded clubs and metallic rods.

China lacked political will to resolve Tibet issue: Dalai Lama in his book

31 March 2025, [The Hindustan Times](#), Dar Ovais

The exiled spiritual leader's latest book, "Voice for the Voiceless", was released earlier this month. In the book, he says that despite two series of dialogues (1979-1989 and 2002-2010), Beijing did not move beyond the five points presented by Hu Yaobang (former general secretary of the Chinese Communist Party), all pertaining to the Dalai Lama's status

Tibetan spiritual leader the 14th Dalai Lama has said in his new book that the Chinese leadership 'lacked courage and political will' to resolve the Tibet issue.

The exiled spiritual leader's latest book, "Voice for the Voiceless", was released earlier this month. In the book, he says that despite two series of dialogues (1979-1989 and 2002-2010), Beijing did not move beyond the five points presented by Hu Yaobang (former general secretary of the Chinese Communist Party), all pertaining to the Dalai Lama's status.

The Dalai Lama says that it is unfortunate that Beijing did not seize on the opportunity he offered to resolve the Tibet issue in a manner that was mutually beneficial.

"Although there might have been, at one point, a genuine wish and desire to resolve the issue of Tibet through negotiation, there was neither the courage nor the necessary political will to do so on the part of Chinese leadership," reads an excerpt from the book. The last round of dialogue between Chinese officials and envoys of the Dalai Lama took place in China in January 2010. The talks have not resumed since.

"My stance on how best to resolve the issue of Tibet has been consistent since the discussions with Beijing began in 1979. I have called this the Middle Way Approach. At the core of this approach was the search for a robust framework that would offer the ability for the Tibetans to continue to survive as a distinct people with dignity, with their unique language, culture, ecology and Buddhist faith," the Dalai Lama said in the book.

The Dalai Lama, who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1989 for keeping alive the Tibetan cause, adds that ever since the direct conversations began, he has used all his moral authority and leverage with the Tibetan people, persuading them to seek a realistic solution... but he remains disappointed that Beijing has chosen not to acknowledge this accommodation on part of the Tibetans.

If no resolution is found while I am alive, the Tibetan people, especially those in Tibet, will blame the Chinese leadership and the Communist party for its failures to reach a settlement. Many Chinese too, especially Buddhists, will be disappointed with their government for its failure to solve a problem whose

COMMENTARIES

solution has been staring at them for so long, the Dalai Lama writes.

At 23, the Dalai Lama fled to India with thousands of Tibetans in 1959, after a failed uprising against the rule of Mao Zedong's Communists, which gained control of Tibet in 1950. Since then, the Dalai Lama has been living in exile at Dharamshala in the Himalayan state of Himachal Pradesh.

The Dalai Lama's succession: A Hobson's choice for India

31 March 2025, [The Week](#), Major General Gajinder Singh (Retd)

India faces the tough choice of either supporting the Dalai Lama in his call for choosing a leader 'born in the free world' or siding with China

Tibet remains a major impediment to the improvement of India-China relations, as the Tibetan government-in-exile, led by the Dalai Lama, is based in Dharamshala. China perceives that India provides tacit support to Tibetan dissidents, thereby undermining its national interests. As a result, it hardens its stance on the border issue and adopts a more belligerent posture towards India in international forums.

The 14th Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, is the symbol of the Tibetan struggle for autonomy and the preservation of its religion and unique culture. He remains the most prominent face of Tibet, respected worldwide, and continues to singlehandedly challenge the legitimacy of China's occupation of Tibet.

The Dalai Lama, who escaped to India in 1959 at the young age of 23, will turn 90 this July, thereby reigniting speculation about his succession. In Tibetan tradition, major spiritual leaders such as the Dalai Lama, Panchen Lama, Karmapa, and others—known as tulkus—are believed to be reincarnations, with their successors identified through a unique process of spiritual recognition. According to Buddhist scholars, this process of spiritual recognition of the Dalai Lama is the responsibility of the high lamas of the Gelugpa tradition and the Tibetan government, following the death of the incumbent. The selection process can be lengthy; it took four years to identify the current Dalai Lama.

In this context through a recent statement, the Dalai Lama indicated that his successor as the spiritual leader of Tibetan Buddhism will be born in the "free world," suggesting areas outside of China. He stated: "Since the purpose of a reincarnation is to carry out the work of the predecessor, the new Dalai Lama will be born in the free world so that the traditional mission of the Dalai Lama – that is, to be the voice for universal compassion, the spiritual leader of Tibetan Buddhism—will continue."

He urged his followers to reject any successor chosen by Beijing. This declaration is part of his latest book, 'Voice for the Voiceless', released in the US and the UK recently, in which he emphasizes the continuation of the fight for Tibetan freedom, regardless of his passing.

The Chinese spokesperson of the foreign ministry was quick to retort and through an official release stated that "Dalai Lama has no right to represent the people of Tibet." She added that the reincarnation of Dalai Lama's successor will be managed by the Chinese government as per the procedure which has been specified by the State Administration for Religious Affairs (SARA).

It is thus evident that this battle for succession will be intensely contested by China, as was the case with the 11th Panchen Lama—the second-highest spiritual leader in the Tibetan religious hierarchy. When the tormented and controversial 10th Panchen Lama passed away in 1990, his successor, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, was identified by the Dalai Lama in 1995. However, the Chinese government placed him under house arrest, and he has not been seen since. Instead, they appointed Gyaincain Norbu as the Panchen Lama of their own choosing. While he has not been accepted by the Tibetan people as the rightful Panchen Lama, the fact remains that a revered institution has been effectively marginalised by the Chinese.

Nevertheless, as the officially endorsed Panchen Lama, Gyaincain Norbu is likely to play a significant role in the spiritual recognition process of the next Dalai Lama. So, we may have two Dalai Lamas after the passing of Tenzin Gyatso—a situation that is not in the long-term interest of the Tibetan people. This would effectively create two Tibets: one under the control and confines of China, and another outside its borders, with the chasm between the two continuing to widen. It is quite possible that the Dalai Lama of the free world may emerge as the more powerful voice of the Tibetan people. However, the battle for succession will inevitably take its toll and weaken the Tibetan cause. This, in turn, will accelerate the process of Sinicization—eroding Tibet's identity as a nation, and diluting its religion and culture.

Other than Tibet and China, the controversy surrounding the Dalai Lama has significant implications primarily for India—especially if the Dalai Lama's reincarnation is found in India. It faces a Hobson's choice between supporting the Dalai Lama or siding with the Chinese. The first option will cast a continuing shadow on India-China relations, with the possibility of further deterioration; the second offers no visible benefits, only the prospect of a stronger and more assertive China.

Indian policymakers thus need to take a pragmatic view of the situation and explore all viable possibilities, including efforts toward a possible

reconciliation between the Dalai Lama and the Chinese. It is quite possible that the next Dalai Lama's presence in Lhasa may serve India's interests better than his continued presence in Dharamshala.

US inaction gives China a free hand in Asia

30 March 2025, [The Sunday Guardian](#), Kheedroob Thondup

To counter China's rise, Washington must adopt a more consistent and proactive approach.

In the intricate chessboard of geopolitics, Asia has emerged as a critical arena where the United States and China vie for influence. However, recent years have seen a noticeable shift: while the US appears to falter in its commitments and strategies, China has adeptly filled the void, leveraging its economic, diplomatic, and military tools to consolidate its position as the dominant power in the region. The United States, historically a key player in Asia, has seen its influence wane due to inconsistent policies and a lack of sustained engagement. Initiatives like the "Pivot to Asia" under the Obama administration promised a renewed focus on the region but were often undermined by competing global priorities. Subsequent administrations have oscillated between aggressive rhetoric and disengagement, leaving allies and partners uncertain about Washington's long-term intentions.

This perceived inaction has been most evident in areas like infrastructure investment and trade. While the US remains a significant investor in Asia, its contributions to critical infrastructure projects pale in comparison to China's ambitious Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). The BRI has not only enhanced regional connectivity but also deepened economic dependencies on Beijing. China's strategy in Asia is multifaceted and deliberate. Economically, it has positioned itself as the region's largest trading partner, forging bilateral agreements and investing heavily in infrastructure. Projects like high-speed railways in Southeast Asia and ports in South Asia exemplify its commitment to embedding itself in the region's economic fabric. Diplomatically, China has capitalized on US disengagement to strengthen its ties with regional powers. Through mechanisms like the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), Beijing has presented itself as a reliable partner for development and trade.

Militarily, China's assertiveness in the South China Sea and its growing naval capabilities underscore its ambition to dominate the region. While the US conducts freedom of navigation operations, these efforts often lack the consistency and broader strategy

needed to counter China's expansive claims. China's ascendancy in Asia is not without challenges. Many countries remain wary of Beijing's intentions, particularly regarding sovereignty and debt dependencies. However, in the absence of a coherent US strategy, these nations often find themselves with limited alternatives.

For the US, the stakes are high. Asia is not just a battleground for influence but a region critical to global trade, security, and innovation. To counter China's rise, Washington must adopt a more consistent and proactive approach, emphasizing partnerships, economic engagement, and a commitment to the region's stability.

In conclusion, China's ability to exploit US inaction in Asia is a testament to its strategic foresight and adaptability. For the United States, the challenge lies not just in countering China's moves but in reclaiming its role as a trusted and indispensable partner in the region. The future of Asia—and the global order—may well hinge on how Washington chooses to respond.

American policies have unintentionally fueled China's rise

30 March 2025, [The Hill](#), Brahma Chellaney

A succession of American presidents since Richard Nixon aided China's rise, inadvertently spawning the greatest strategic adversary the U.S. has ever faced. It was President Trump who, in his first term, reversed the 45-year U.S. rapprochement with Beijing by identifying China in his national security strategy as an adversary and initiating a trade war with it by imposing tariffs on Chinese goods. This marked a significant shift towards a more confrontational approach.

But does Trump now risk playing into China's hands by freezing much of U.S. foreign aid and upending decades-old alliances?

Trump's critics argue that his assertive unilateralism on trade and foreign policy erodes American influence while potentially opening the door for Beijing to strengthen ties with nations traditionally in Washington's orbit. The White House's tariff plans against key trading partners, possibly raising duties to levels unseen in decades, could also weaken crucial alliances. Additionally, Trump's freeze on foreign aid creates a vacuum for China to expand its international footprint, particularly in Africa.

At the same time, Trump's policies are increasingly focused on countering China. The new rounds of tariffs imposed since February reflect this shift, as does the president's emphasis on ending the Ukraine war to shift U.S. strategic focus from Europe to the Indo-Pacific.

Over the years, various U.S. policies that aided China's rise were initially driven by strategic interests but ultimately produced unintended consequences. By

coopting China in an informal anti-Soviet alliance during the latter half of the Cold War, Washington created a two-against-one competition that contributed to Soviet imperial overstretch and ultimately to the USSR's collapse.

But in breaking China's isolation and granting it access to Western markets and technology, often by outsourcing manufacturing, Washington also facilitated China's rise as an economic and military powerhouse.

Instead of spurring political liberalization, as many American policymakers had hoped, China's integration into the global economy spawned a more repressive state system. The Chinese Communist Party used economic growth to tighten political control and expand its military capabilities, turning economic strength into strategic leverage.

Since the 1990s, U.S. sanctions against other countries have frequently played into China's hands, as Beijing has adeptly exploited opportunities arising from the isolation of sanctioned states. American-led sanctions, for instance, have pushed resource-rich Myanmar and Iran into China's arms. China has become the almost exclusive buyer of Iranian oil at steep discounts, while also emerging as Iran's top investor and security partner, and U.S. sanctions are compelling Myanmar to deepen ties with Beijing.

The Biden presidency illustrated how overuse of sanctions can accelerate China's global expansion. Unprecedented American-led Western sanctions against Moscow after the invasion of Ukraine, including the weaponization of international finance, have turned Beijing into Russia's de facto banker. China has capitalized on this shift by expanding the international use of the yuan, with Russia generating much of its export earnings in Chinese currency and keeping the proceeds largely within China.

By forcing Russia to pivot to China, Biden's sanctions inadvertently helped solidify a strategic Sino-Russian alliance against America. Trade between China and Russia surged from \$108 billion in 2020 to \$245 billion last year. In return for giving Russia an economic lifeline, Beijing has gained access to some of Moscow's most advanced military technologies, previously sold only to India.

American policymakers now face the urgent task of driving a wedge between China and Russia, whose historically complex relationship has oscillated between cooperation and conflict.

More broadly, the global order is undergoing a profound transition, shifting away from the post-World War II, U.S.-led system toward an uncertain new reality. Japanese Foreign Minister Takeshi Iwaya recently described the current period as a "turning point in history" while hosting trilateral discussions with his Chinese and South Korean counterparts. The very fact that two close U.S. allies — Japan and South

Korea — are engaging in strategic dialogues with China underscores how nations are adopting hedging strategies amid geopolitical uncertainty.

Against this backdrop, the unintended consequences of the Trump administration's policies — particularly its war on multilateralism — risk strengthening China's hand. China's ability to act as the world's largest and most unforgiving government lender, combined with its aggressive "carrots and sticks" diplomacy, continues to expand its global influence.

To counter China's accumulation of power, the Trump administration must adopt a multifaceted approach that blends economic, diplomatic, military and technological strategies.

Leveraging tariffs and trade policies to disrupt China's export-driven economy could compel Beijing to negotiate on fairer terms or risk shrinking market access. The administration could also incentivize American companies to reshore manufacturing through tax breaks or subsidies, further weakening China's role as the world's factory.

Tightening controls on technology and capital flows to China could hinder Beijing's ability to innovate in key industries. Increased scrutiny of Chinese investments in U.S. technology sectors would limit its access to American intellectual property.

Strengthening alliances in the Indo-Pacific — particularly through closer ties with democracies such as Japan, India and Australia (key players in "the Quad") — would create a formidable counterbalance to Chinese expansion through geopolitical encirclement. Furthermore, expanded deployment of U.S. troops and advanced weaponry in the Indo-Pacific would strengthen deterrence against China. The recent American deployment of the 1,200-mile, land-based Typhon missile system in the northern Philippines exemplifies this approach by putting key Chinese military and commercial centers within striking range.

The administration must ensure that short-term dealmaking does not undermine long-term American objectives. A coherent, sustained strategy — rather than erratic policy shifts — is critical to slowing China's rise without triggering a major conflict. Trump must resist transactional diplomacy and instead prioritize long-term strategic goals so that the U.S. can more effectively counterbalance China's growing influence while reinforcing its own global preeminence.

Refusing to believe this is the end of VOA, RFA Tibetan services

30 March 2025, [Tibetan Review](#)

Shongka, a Tibetan living in exile, recalls how listening to the Tibetan services of VOA and RFA during his childhood in Tibet reigned the day, connected Tibetans*

with the outside world, and sustained hopes for freedom, no matter how distant, for a people long deprived of their most basic human rights.

(TibetanReview.net, Mar30'25) – Growing up in Tibet in the 1990s, my nights were filled with the quiet hum of my grandfather's old wooden radio. As the sun disappeared behind the mountains and the streets of Lhasa settled into silence, he would begin his nightly ritual. With careful hands, he would close the windows, latch the doors, and take his seat beside the radio, its edges worn smooth from years of use.

With a few turns of the dial, static would fill the air—a restless, crackling sound that seemed to stretch across vast distances. And then, suddenly, the voices would emerge. Faint at first, fragile but determined, breaking through the interference like a light in the dark. *Voice of America* (VOA) and *Radio Free Asia* (RFA) carried messages from a world beyond our reach, their words sending a spark through my grandfather's eyes.

He listened with a focus that made everything else fade away. Every pause, every shift in tone held meaning. News of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, whispers about life in exile, the possibility—distant but never forgotten—of a free Tibet. For him, the radio was more than just an object; it was a bridge to something larger, a reminder that we were not alone. By morning, those voices from the night before would become the heartbeat of our breakfast conversations. Over steaming bowls of Tsampa, my grandfather would share what he had heard—where His Holiness had spoken, what new changes were unfolding beyond our borders, what hope still remained for Tibet. He would always tell us, “The sun of happiness rising in Tibet” རྒྱལ་ཁབ་ཀྱི་ཕ་མེས་ཀྱི་ཕྱིན་པ་ will happen soon. And in many ways, those moments were just that—a flicker of light in uncertain times.

But it wasn't just news that filled those nights. My grandfather also spoke of faith and caution. He warned my parents to stay true to their beliefs, to resist the pull of Shugden, to remain steadfast in the teachings of the Gyalwa Yishin Norbu. And always, his voice would soften as he whispered *Om Mani Padme Hum*, his eyes shining with something too deep for words. He spoke, too, of our responsibility—to preserve our culture, to shield our fragile environment, to protect the endangered species. In those moments, our home felt like more than just walls and a roof—it was a sanctuary of history, a place where generations of faith, resilience, and quiet resistance lived on.

Beyond our small room, the night stretched on, restless. The wind carried the howls of stray dogs and the faint murmur of other radios, hidden behind closed doors, tuning into the same forbidden frequencies. The city slept, but somewhere in the darkness, hope flickered—fragile, persistent, and alive.

Those radio nights were more than just a ritual. They were a connection to something greater, a way for Tibetans like us to hear the voices that had been silenced, to hold onto hope even in the face of uncertainty. They amplified the voices of the voiceless, offered hope to the hopeless, reminded us that we were not alone in our struggle for freedom and self-determination.

Now, years later, I still think about those nights. When I heard that VOA and RFA's Tibetan services had gone silent, it felt like losing a part of my childhood, like watching a distant star fade from the sky. Those broadcasts weren't just news; they were a pulse, a thread connecting exiled voices to those who remained.

And yet, even in the quiet, I refuse to believe the signal is gone. Some things—hope, longing, the promise of return—continue to hum beneath the surface, waiting for someone to tune in once again.

May Happiness Dawn Upon Tibet!

* The write uses a penname to protect his family in Tibet.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama Expresses Deep Sadness Over Myanmar Earthquake

29 March 2025, [CTA](#)

His Holiness the Dalai Lama has expressed His sadness about the devastating earthquake that has struck Myanmar leading to the loss of so many precious lives while many others have been injured.

“I offer my condolences to the families of those who have lost loved ones and pray for all those in Myanmar and neighbouring countries such as Thailand who have been affected by this tragedy,” he wrote.

“Meanwhile, it is heartening to know that in addition to UN agencies, countries, such as India are, sending humanitarian aid to help the relief efforts in the quake zones.

“As a token of my solidarity with the people of Myanmar I have asked the Gaden Phodrang Foundation of the Dalai Lama to offer a donation through appropriate channels towards the rescue and relief efforts.”

His Holiness's message concluded with His prayers.

White Paper vs. Reality: China's Disputed Narrative on Tibet

29 March 2025, [The Tibet Express](#)

China has made sweeping claims in its latest white paper on Tibet, declaring that “all-round and historic progress” has been made in human rights in Tibet, accusing the West of “misunderstandings” and “prejudices” about human rights conditions in Tibet.

Despite Tibet's overall score of 0 out of 100 in Freedom Houses' "Freedom in the World 2025" report released on 27 February 2025, China's latest white paper on human rights in Tibet claims Beijing has "implemented effective measures to develop the economy, improve living standards and people's wellbeing, promote ethnic unity and progress, and protect the basic rights of all the people in the region" the Chinese state-run *Global Times* reported, declaring "all-round and historic progress" has been made in human rights in Tibet.

"Today, Tibet enjoys political stability, ethnic unity, economic development, social harmony, and amity among different religions. Its environment is sound, and local people are content with their work and daily lives. This progress represents a remarkable achievement in protecting human rights on the snowy plateau," the paper claimed.

As China released the document on Friday, which it observed as "the 66th anniversary of the democratic reform" that it claimed "ended feudal serfdom in Tibet" before its occupation, it declared that life in Tibet "is like Gesang flowers in full bloom in the New Era."

In contrast to these assertions, human rights organisations and experts have raised alarms over China's transnational boarding schools in Tibet, where approximately 1 million Tibetan children, which accounts for 78% of Tibetan schoolchildren aged six and older, represent a significant aspect of the government's strategy to assimilate Tibetan children into Han Chinese culture, effectively erasing their unique cultural identity. Yet Beijing has dismissed it with a bizarre claim: "Students and parents can choose to board at schools, and students can go home during weekends and holidays," and that Tibet led China in providing 15 years of publicly-funded education from kindergarten to senior high school, and that boarding schools are necessary due to geographical challenges. Further, it accused the Western media outlets of tarnishing Tibet's development by raising concerns over issues such as the use of boarding schools in the region.

While Tibet remains heavily regulated, the 2024 World Press Freedom Index (WPFI), published by Reporters Without Borders (RSF), exposed China's severe restrictions on press freedom in Tibet, declared China as the world's largest jailer of journalists, spoke of significant difficulties encountered by foreign journalists when attempting to report from Tibet, yet Xu Zhitao, the Vice Chairman of the so-called Tibet Autonomous Region, has said, as the State Council Information Office released the paper in Lhasa that Tibet "is open to the world, and the region welcomes foreign friends to visit and travel and foreign journalists to conduct interviews."

Dismissing China's misinformation, falsification and fallacy, Tenzin Lekshey, the Spokesperson of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), has said in a post on X that "China's so-called 'white paper' on Tibet overlooks vital components of fundamental human rights within Tibet, such as freedom of expression, movement, and religious practice. China's gross human rights violations in Tibet cannot be concealed behind the Iron Curtain."

Tibetan govt-in-exile has a Russian headache

29 March 2025, [Times of India](#), Sanjay Versain

As the churn in international geopolitics continues, the Tibetan govt-in-exile has its own tightrope to walk. More specifically, the Russia-Ukraine war has put the Tibetan govt-in-exile, officially known as the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), in a tight spot. The CTA's representative for Russia has been declared a 'foreign agent' by Russia, while it struggles to find a replacement.

Though the Tibetan govt-in-exile does not maintain formal diplomatic relations with any country in the conventional sense, it engages in informal interactions with various countries and has offices across the world. Its representative for Russia, Mongolia and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS countries), Telo Tulku Rinpoche, was designated as a 'foreign agent' by Russia in Jan 2023 after he spoke about Ukraine's right to defend itself against Russia's invasion.

During the ongoing parliamentary session, lawmakers debated continuing the services of Telo Tulku Rinpoche. Speaking in the House, MP Juchen Kunchok Chodon suggested that he should resign to allow for the appointment of a new representative as his continuous absence might be creating distance between devotees and the Dalai Lama. In response, minister for the department of information and international relations Norzin Dolma informed the house that the department was facing challenges in finding a suitable replacement and that Telo Tulku Rinpoche's tenure had been extended by one year rather than the customary two-year extension granted to representatives. He is currently working virtually from Mongolia and faces potential imprisonment in Russia.

On earlier occasions, the Dalai Lama, as well as CTA political head Penpa Tsering have condemned the Russian invasion of Ukraine, comparing it with the invasion of Tibet by China. When contacted, MP Juchen Kunchok Chodon did not wish to speak about the matter. 'Reincarnation' of Indian saint Telo Tulku Rinpoche was born in the US in 1972 to a Kalmyk immigrant family from Russia and was recognised by the Dalai Lama as a reincarnation of

Telopa, a revered Indian Buddhist tantric mahasiddha who lived in the 10th-11th century of the Common Era. He studied Buddhism in India for 13 years at Drepung Gomang Monastery and was elected as the head lama of Kalmykia Buddhists in 1992 before resigning from the post in January 2023 after being declared a 'foreign agent' by Russia. Kalmyk is the only Buddhist-dominated province in Europe. He was appointed as the new honorary representative of the Dalai Lama to Russia, Mongolia and CIS countries at the Tibet Culture & Information Centre (Office of Tibet) in Moscow in 2014.

The Dalai Lama's reincarnation

29 March 2025, [Taipei Times](#), Khedroob Thondup

The reincarnation of the Dalai Lama has become one of the most crucial levers for China's control over Tibet. To understand why, it is essential to examine the deep religious, cultural and political significance of that institution within Tibetan society and how Beijing perceives its connection to broader governance goals. The Dalai Lama is not just a religious leader, but a unifying figure for Tibetans worldwide. For centuries, the Dalai Lama has embodied spiritual guidance and political leadership, deeply intertwined with Tibetan national identity. The 14th Dalai Lama's international stature has enabled him to advocate for Tibetan autonomy and cultural preservation on the global stage — often in ways that conflict with Beijing's vision of Tibet as an inseparable part of China.

China views the Dalai Lama's influence, particularly among Tibetans, as a challenge to its authority. Beijing's strategy of controlling the selection of the next Dalai Lama is thus not only a way to manage internal dissent, but also a means to ensure Tibet's integration into China.

China has framed its involvement in the reincarnation process as a continuation of historical traditions, citing Qing Dynasty practices. While the narrative of historical legitimacy is debatable, what is clear is that controlling that process enables Beijing to shape the spiritual leadership of Tibetan Buddhism. By managing who the next Dalai Lama is, the Chinese government could neutralize the figure's potential to challenge state authority.

That control extends to shaping perceptions. A state-backed Dalai Lama could become a figure who promotes Beijing's narrative, aligning Tibetan Buddhism with Chinese Communist Party (CCP) policies and priorities. In turn, that could weaken the influence of Tibetan exile communities and movements advocating for autonomy or independence.

Beyond Tibet, the Dalai Lama's international role complicates China's foreign relations. Many nations,

particularly Western democracies, view the Dalai Lama as a symbol of peaceful resistance and human rights. His continued global presence underscores the ongoing issue of Tibet's status. By controlling reincarnation, China can signal to the world that it has resolved the Tibetan question, making the Dalai Lama a less contentious figure in diplomacy.

That strategy fits into China's broader approach to managing religion. Whether it is appointing CCP-aligned bishops in Catholic communities or influencing other religious institutions, Beijing seeks to ensure that spiritual leadership aligns with state ideology. The reincarnation process is a continuation of that policy — designed to harmonize Tibetan Buddhism with what it calls "socialist values."

While Beijing's logic might seem clear, it is not without risks. Tibetan communities might reject a state-appointed Dalai Lama, leading to greater divisions and potentially intensifying resistance. A splintering of Tibetan Buddhism, with one Dalai Lama in exile and another in Tibet, could undermine the institution itself, creating unintended consequences for Beijing. Controlling the reincarnation of the Dalai Lama is a cornerstone in Beijing's strategy to assert dominance over Tibet. By leveraging the process, it aims to solidify its political control, align Tibetan Buddhism with state interests and reduce the global influence of the Tibetan cause. However, such a move is fraught with complexity, as it challenges deeply held beliefs and risks further alienating the people it seeks to govern. Whether the strategy would succeed in the long term remains an open question, but its implications for Tibet and global geopolitics are undeniably significant.

For exiled Tibetans, U.S. funding was always about more than just aid

28 March 2025, [The Washington Post](#), Karishma Mehrotra

Growing up, Namgyal Yemphel knew little of the world beyond his Tibetan settlement in southern India. But he recognized the USAID stamps on the sacks of flour that his family cherished for its sweetness, and on the tin barrels of oil, sturdy enough to keep for storing grain.

Decades later, the logo is still with him — on the laptop in his office at a Tibetan school, where the U.S. Agency for International Development has supplied computers, printers and projectors, as well as fruit, eggs and meat for student meals. Down the road, a hospital relies on USAID-provided blood-testing machines and X-ray equipment.



At a monastery in Mundgod, monks call for the public and other monks to arrive and begin a day of special prayers and chanting Monday. MUST CREDIT: Karishma Mehrotra/The Washington Post

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Lopsang Thampa works at a cafe serving the Tibetan community in Mundgod. MUST CREDIT: Karishma Mehrotra/The Washington Post

For decades, U.S. funding has helped tens of thousands of Tibetan refugees from China, with their thriving community across the border in India representing a small but symbolic counterweight to Beijing's rising power. The future of that support is now in doubt after sweeping foreign aid cuts by President Donald Trump.

More than 80 percent of USAID programs have been slashed, Secretary of State Marco Rubio said this month, concluding that tens of billions of dollars had been spent "in ways that did not serve, (and in some

cases even harmed), the core national interests of the United States."

Anna Kelly, the White House deputy press secretary, said Trump was "eliminating foreign aid that failed to put America First, and the Department of State is still reviewing all foreign aid programs at his direction."

Funding to the exiled Tibetan government has been cut by a third, freezing projects worth \$12 million annually, according to Penpa Tsering, the leader of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA).

For many Tibetans, the loss is harder to quantify.

"I don't have any hard feelings for any country that decides to put its people first," said Yemphel, 52, sitting in his sunlit principal's office in the southern state of Karnataka. "But while you may save some money, you will lose moral authority."

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A 'critical stage'

Chinese troops invaded Tibet in 1949, killing thousands of people and eventually annexing the Himalayan nation. After a failed revolt a decade later, the Dalai Lama – the spiritual leader of Tibetan Buddhists – and 80,000 of his followers fled to the Indian city of Dharamshala, where the CTA is headquartered today.

When India's first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, urged state governments to provide land to the new refugees, Karnataka granted more than 3,000 acres of forest. Southern India is now home to the largest number of Tibetans in exile, and Mundgod is their largest settlement.

In autonomous communities like this one, Tibetans say, they have been able to pursue new economic opportunities while holding fast to their cultural identity. Inside gilded monasteries, rows of monks practice the guttural art of throat singing. On their days off, the robed men scroll Instagram in cafes and restaurants; Indian workers converse in Hindi with Tibetans drinking milkshakes and mojitos.

Nearly every compound – from a women's cooperative that stitches school uniforms to a home for the elderly – bears the name of international benefactors: German Aid, the Dolma Fund from Nepal, and others. From the start, American aid has been most pivotal. While the Central Intelligence Agency once trained Tibetan guerrilla fighters, current U.S. programs impart far different skills.

"We were using rope weapons and the CIA trained us in arms," said Jigme Tsultrim, the CTA's chief representative in the region. "Now, the U.S. is teaching us health information systems."

The CTA has become a fully formed government in exile, with a parliament, auditors, a public service branch and an election commission. Tsering said the Trump administration's cuts have now come at "a very critical stage in our history and our struggle."

At 89 years old, the Dalai Lama is less able to travel and appeal for international support. Beijing has intensified efforts to control his succession and, since 2010, has refused to engage in direct talks.

The U.S. recognizes Tibet as a part of China. The State Department says American officials have “pressed Chinese authorities ... to allow Tibetans to preserve, practice, teach, and develop their religious traditions and language without interference.”

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‘Music to China’s ears’

Washington initially froze four projects for the Tibetan community in exile, but after lobbying from Tsering, he said, \$2 million in funding was reinstated.

Three other projects remain stalled, including \$7 million for strengthening Tibetan health, education and cultural institutions; \$2 million annually for digitizing Tibetan Buddhist scriptures; and \$3 million per year for a program to modernize local governance. Tsering, known as the Sikyong, said the programs weren’t charity, but strategic investments.

“This will be music to China’s ears,” Tsering said in the CTA’s New Delhi office. For the U.S. to counter Beijing, he added, “we can’t think only about programs that inflict pain, but also programs like ours.”

Kelly, the White House official, said “no one has been tougher on China than President Trump.”

U.S. backing for the CTA has historically had broad support in Washington: President George W. Bush oversaw the passage of the Tibetan Policy Act of 2002; nearly two decades later, in 2020, Trump signed a bill protecting the right of Tibetans to choose the next Dalai Lama – the only law of its kind in the world.

Critics have long contended that America’s foreign aid system has failed to generate economic growth in recipient nations, and in some places has created a culture of dependency. But Tsultrim said the programs suspended here were designed to teach self-sufficiency.

“The U.S. did not hand us the fish,” he said, sitting in the Mundgod settlement office, which oversees almost 17,000 people across 4,000 acres. USAID, he said, had encouraged the community to pursue business development services and market cooperatives.

Tsering said the CTA had enough funds to cover the first three months of frozen aid and was committed to preserving essential programs, including student scholarships, support for new refugees and public health programs.

Yemphel said his school is scaling back training for teachers and fending off contractors looking to be paid for construction work. He hopes that cuts to student meals aren’t imminent.

“We will be relentless in our efforts to reach out to the State Department,” Tsering said.

People in Mundgod also expressed concern about Trump’s recent dismantling of Voice of America, which he has accused of “leftist bias,” saying it remained a critical source of information for Tibetans still in China. Tenzin Lodoe, a secretary in the Mundgod settlement office who fled to India when he was 11, recalled listening to VOA on his shortwave radio as a small child, hungry for news about the Dalai Lama and crackdowns by Chinese troops. His sisters and brothers back home – whom he hasn’t been able to speak to for more than eight years – were likely to still be “getting real information” from the broadcast, he said.

The freeze on aid has also endangered the work of groups that document Chinese political repression and human rights abuses, including the China Dissent Monitor at Freedom House.

“As far as China is concerned, the wholesale dismantling of USAID is the gift that keeps on giving,” said Milan Vaishnav, director of the South Asia program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

Tibet’s exile community has already been squeezed by Beijing’s global ascension. Nepal, once a haven, has increasingly cracked down on Tibetan protests. And while India has remained a refuge for the CTA, it has also sought to avoid confrontation with China, at times limiting Tibetans’ political activism.

The community here has shrunk from over 100,000 in the 1990s to 70,000 today, as China cracked down on escape routes and more Tibetans migrated to the West, according to CTA officials.

For all their challenges, “Tibetans are not starving to death,” said Yemphel, as his middle and high school students painted signs representing the independence movement. The aid cuts, he said, were not existential, but could have a generational impact.

“In the innocent minds of the children, this shakes the core belief that America stands behind Tibet,” he said.

Opinion | How China Is Exploiting 'Failed' Projects In India's Neighbourhood

28 March 2025, [NDTV](#), Gunjan Singh

From Pakistan to Nepal to Myanmar, a growing number of Chinese-financed projects in India's neighbourhood are giving a strategic edge to Beijing.

It is a known fact that in the last few years, China has made major inroads in the South Asian region, especially through infrastructure and connectivity projects. This has intensified under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which was started in 2013. The grand projects have helped China gain major strategic footholds in the region. Here are some key ports and airports in India's neighbourhood that provide China with a strong vantage position in the region—both

through land and ocean—and challenge New Delhi's security position.

Two Dead Projects In Sri Lanka

The Sri Lankan government had looked to Beijing for a loan to build its ambitious Hambantota port. China spent around \$1.3 billion in total towards this. The China Export Import Bank extended the first half of the loan (\$306 million) at the rate of 6.3%, while the second half (\$757 million) was at 2%. The construction of the port began in 2007, and the first phase was completed in 2010. However, in 2012, only about 34 ships docked at Hambantota. As the port was not financially viable and the Sri Lankan government continued to falter on debt repayment in 2017, the port, along with about 15,000 acres of land near it, was leased out to China. Such a development aggravates New Delhi's security concerns in the Indian Ocean region, a strategically and geopolitically critical area. It also complements China's ambitions in the region.

Separately, the Mattala Rajapaksa International Airport in Hambantota, opened in 2013, was also built with a Chinese loan of \$206 million. However, after being termed one of the emptiest airports in the world, it has proved to be a major challenge for the Sri Lankan government. A number of airlines, even after signing agreements, have stopped operating flights here. As a result, in 2024, the day-to-day operations of the airport were awarded to a joint venture between Indian and Russian firms.

The Gwadar Developments In Pakistan

The all-weather friendship between Pakistan and China has been a major security concern for New Delhi since the 1960s. China has played an important role in helping Islamabad financially and militarily, as well as in the form of technology transfer. In recent years, China, under the aegis of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), has invested in building a deep-sea port at Gwadar, which was completed in 2007. However, at its peak, the port saw only 22 ships. Pakistan owes Beijing about \$10 billion in debt for it now. No surprises then that in 2017, Islamabad leased Gwadar to Beijing for 40 years. The China Overseas Port Holding Company (COPHC) is to take care of development and day-to-day operations there. This could be strategically very challenging for India as it allows China to use the port for monitoring Indian movements in the region.

Notably though, the most recent non-viable infrastructure constructed by China in South Asia is Pakistan's Gwadar Airport. Opened in October last year, Beijing has invested around \$240 million in the project. The airport can handle about 4 lakh passengers and was inaugurated virtually given the security concerns. What complicates the matter here is that Balochistan has been increasingly facing rising violent attacks, most of them targeted towards

Chinese investments and nationals. Due to these security challenges, the airport has witnessed no flights and has catered to no passengers even after months of being operational. Only, it adds to the debt woes of Islamabad while providing Beijing with another crucial asset.

Maldives' Chinese Tilt

The Chinese investments in Maldives have been gaining momentum since the Muizzu government has taken office. Since Mohammed Muizzu's explosive 'India Out' campaign, the Maldives has seen a clear tilt towards Beijing. However, one cannot ignore the fact that in 2016, the island nation had leased out Feydhoo Finolhu to China for a period of 50 years for \$4 million. China is Maldives' single largest lender, and it owes Beijing around \$1.3 billion.

China has undertaken a number of infrastructure investments in the Maldives and both countries have even adopted a defence cooperation deal, the latest flagship project being the China-Maldives friendship bridge, towards which Beijing has invested around \$200 million. No surprises that Xiang Yang Hong 3, the Chinese spy vessel, docked for 'refuelling' in Male in February last year.

Elsewhere In Bangladesh And Myanmar

China has invested heavily in port projects in Bangladesh too—according to reports, a whopping \$7 billion. But notably here, though Beijing did invest in the development of Chittagong and Payra ports, India enjoys access to them. In 2016, Chinese companies had even agreed to extend around \$600 million for the development of the main infrastructure of the Payra port.

However, the recent political changes in Bangladesh and the ouster of the Sheikh Hasina government have put a question mark on India-Bangladesh relations. The existing interim government has shown its keenness to be closer to Beijing. It wasn't too shocking when after years, a Chinese naval ship docked in Bangladesh's Chittagong port in October last year. In addition, Beijing has also announced that it is keen to extend a loan of \$335 million for the completion of the Mongla Port, a project that was supposed to be undertaken by New Delhi. The Chinese access to these ports will create a challenge for India's security.

Apart from these, China was also looking to be involved in the development of Myanmar's Kyaukphyu Deep-Sea Port and the Special Economic Zone under the BRI. However, the ongoing turmoil in Myanmar has derailed this project. But in an effort to restart the project, executives from Chinese state-owned firm CITIC Ltd recently met with junta officials.

Nepal Is In A Pickle, Too

The Pokhara airport in Nepal was built with Chinese loans amounting to \$215 million. The airport is closely linked to Nepalese aspirations to develop tourism around Pokhara. There have been reports about its

allegedly substandard construction which have also led to challenges with functioning.

Nepal has been hoping to convert these loans to aid, but to no avail. In addition, reports suggest that the loan is being serviced at a rate of 5% and not 2%, as was publicly claimed by China. Also, given that the airport is close to the Indian border, New Delhi has been reluctant to grant rights to use its airspace, adding to Nepal's operational difficulties. The airport was started on January 1 in 2023, and has not witnessed more than a few flights, making it financially unviable. This, in turn, has only increased Nepal's dependence on China: tourism entrepreneurs of Pokhara and Chengdu city of Sichuan Province met recently on March 20 to conclude an agreement for more collaboration.

Exploiting Aspirations?

What emerges is a clear pattern—of how these smaller nations have had to rely on China to fulfil their aspirations for economic and infrastructural growth and prosperity, only to end up in a strategically vulnerable position. Most of the airports mentioned above were built with a vision to enhance tourism in their respective countries, and, thus, boost the domestic economies. But given their current state, it won't be wrong to argue that China might have exploited these nations with the help of its own deep pockets, under the garb of the “win-win” BRI.

The high rate of interest that China charges makes it impossible for many of these countries to repay their debts in time, thus getting trapped in a debt cycle, which ultimately endangers their sovereignty. China, in turn, has only benefited from this strategically: most of these projects were destined for doom, and thus provided China with an opportunity to gain an edge in the region. True, as of now, Beijing doesn't have any direct military or strategic presence at most of these sites. But its naval ships have made regular forays into the Indian Ocean region, with these visits having only grown in number in the last few years. India will have to be careful, and on alert.

China's military build-up indicates it is serious about taking Taiwan

28 March 2025, [Chatham House](#)

The more the US dithers in its response, the more the strategic balance shifts in China's favour.

There is a storm brewing across the Taiwan Strait. China has increased its military activity around Taiwan and deployed new landing barges in the South China Sea, while the counter-influence policies of Taiwanese President Lai Ching-te and shifts in US rhetoric are viewed as provocations by Beijing – fuelling a vicious circle of tensions.

Beijing has long hoped for the ‘peaceful reunification’ of Taiwan with mainland China, but has repeatedly stated that it will not renounce the use of force to achieve unification if necessary. While Beijing's ideal long-term strategy is to pressure Taiwan to unify without the need for conflict, the emerging pattern of its actions suggests that it increasingly believes that forceful intervention could be necessary.

Perceived provocation by Taiwan and the US

Beijing has made clear that it considers Taiwan a red line in the context of China–US relations – ‘the core of China's core interests’. Beijing also set out several conditions under which a red line would be crossed over Taiwan in its 2005 Anti-Secession Law.

Given the importance Beijing attaches to reunification and how explicit it has been about its red lines, failure to act would be a major blow to China's credibility.

A formal declaration of independence is unlikely – Taiwan is *de facto* independent and this would bring little material gain. The real risk is that Beijing sees peaceful reunification as no longer possible due to a decisive shift in political sentiment in Taiwan, or if the US takes pre-emptive actions which would make future unification challenging, militarily or politically. Given the importance Beijing attaches to reunification and how explicit it has been about its red lines, failure to act would be a major blow to China's credibility. It should therefore be assumed that China is willing to use force if it believes a red line has been crossed.

From Beijing's perspective, the actions of President Lai of the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) are moving towards those red lines, if not yet crossing them. While Beijing has long viewed the DPP as separatist, it views Lai with particular hostility due to his outspoken criticism of China and perceived ‘pro-independence’ agenda. Lai's efforts to crack down on Chinese infiltration and influence operations, including his labelling of China as a ‘hostile foreign force’, has been met with condemnation, warnings and heightened Chinese military activity around the island.

This is compounded by recent shifts in US language which have similarly angered Beijing. The US State Department removed language stating that it does not support Taiwanese independence from its website, and a recent G7 statement omitted the typical iteration of support for a ‘one China policy’, a diplomatic acknowledgment of Beijing's position that Taiwan is not an independent country.

These shifts could contribute to a perception in Beijing that the US is moving away from its policy of ‘strategic ambiguity’ – not committing explicitly to the island's defence in the hope of containing both Chinese aggression and Taiwanese pursuit of formal independence. The apparent lack of consensus on Taiwan within the Trump administration presents a

risk – if Beijing thinks decisive US commitment to Taiwan is on the cards, but not yet explicit, it may perceive a limited window in which it can act before the US adopts a clear policy.

Chinese military preparations

Beijing has long sought the capacity to conquer Taiwan militarily if necessary; the guiding principle of People's Liberation Army (PLA) modernization has been to be able to fight and win a war over Taiwan involving the United States.

China's development of material capabilities such as the new D-Day-style landing barges, and the PLA's focus on interoperability between the navy, air force and rocket force, are part of this modernization – although they do not in themselves indicate that war is imminent.

What is concerning is the frequency and intensity of PLA actions in the context of a shift in Taiwanese political opinion and a US position of ambiguity which is of diminishing strategic value. Perceived provocations by Lai and the US are now routinely met with actions such as exercises, unannounced live fire drills and undersea cable cutting.

China is normalizing PLA activity around the island, including joint combat patrols designed to improve coordination between the different armed services. While this forms part of Beijing's greyzone strategy, their increasing frequency puts pressure on Taiwan to respond, which in turn prompts a stronger Chinese response. In this context, the risk of escalation to actual conflict is heightened.

The role of the US remains the decisive challenge for Beijing

Beijing's preparations indicate that it still takes the possibility of US involvement in a conflict seriously. The new barges expand the range of plausible sites for an amphibious landing, complicating Taiwanese and US defence planning. New cable-cutting technology would enhance Beijing's ability to cut communications to and from the island. Meanwhile, the trend towards continuous Chinese air and naval activity around the island means the PLA is in a position to rapidly switch from greyzone actions to a genuine blockade or preparations for an invasion.

The flawed notion of indigeneity based on origin

28 March 2025, [Arunachal Times](#)

The concept of indigeneity is often wielded as a tool to distinguish between communities, granting certain groups exclusive rights while marginalising others. However, if we define indigeneity strictly by tracing the origin of a people, then the very foundation of such classifications becomes questionable. A case in point is Arunachal Pradesh, where the indigenous status of various ethnic communities is

often emphasised. Yet, historical and anthropological evidence suggests that their origins can be traced beyond the present territorial boundaries, primarily to Mongolia, Tibet, and Southeast Asia.

The historical perspective

Most of the ethnic groups residing in Arunachal, including the Tani, Monpa, Mishmi, Khamti, Singpho, Nocte, Wancho, and others, migrated over centuries from regions beyond present-day India. Studies in anthropology and genetics confirm that these tribes share ancestry with Mongoloid groups from Tibet, China, Thailand and Myanmar. Our spoken languages, classified under the Sino-Tibetan family, further reinforce our historical ties to regions outside the modern Indian state.

If we take this historical migration as a basis, then technically, none of us is 'indigenous' in the absolute sense. We all arrived from elsewhere, settled, adapted, and became the earliest known inhabitants of the region. However, denying our indigenous status on this basis would be absurd because indigeneity is not about an eternal, unbroken link to a land but about cultural continuity, historical presence, and self-identification.

The hypocrisy in selective indigeneity

If the Arunachal government or any authority seeks to define 'indigenous' status by tracing origins, it must apply the same standard universally. If Christians or any other community are deemed 'non-indigenous' because of external influences, then by the same logic, the state's dominant ethnic groups cannot claim to be indigenous either, because everyone's ancestors migrated from elsewhere. However, if indigeneity is understood as the deep-rooted presence of a community in a region over generations, contributing to its culture, language, and society, then exclusionary definitions become illogical. Arunachal has been home to diverse communities, including those who embraced Christianity, Buddhism, or Hinduism, for decades and even centuries. Denying them equal status in the name of 'indigenous' identity is nothing but an attempt to enforce an exclusionary and politically motivated agenda. The debate over who is indigenous cannot be settled through arbitrary historical cut-off points. Every community has a migration history. The real measure of belonging should not be a distant origin but the shared history, culture, and contributions of a people to a land. Policies based on selective indigeneity serve only to divide and discriminate. If Arunachal truly values its indigenous heritage, it must recognise all its people – regardless of their ancestry or faith – as rightful stakeholders in its future. For peace, harmony and a healthy coexistence, the authorities must intervene, stop and eradicate all laws and activities that create division, mistrust and hatred

in the society which has been acknowledged as the most peaceful in our country.

OPINION: Why Radio Free Asia and Voice of America Tibetan service matter

27 March 2025, [The Week](#), Dhundup Gyalpo

Tibetans rely on RFA and VOA for uncensored news, but funding cuts threaten these broadcasts, aiding China's control over Tibet's language, culture and struggle for freedom

In remote Tibet, people climb mountains or rooftops to tune into Tibetan-language broadcasts from Radio Free Asia (RFA) and Voice of America (VOA)— their only sources of accurate information about Tibet, the Tibetan people, and events both inside and outside the country. This daily ritual sustains the hope of many living under authoritarian regimes, desperate for uncensored news and information in their native tongues—languages like Tibetan, which are increasingly at risk of Sinicization and extinction. However, the recent gutting of RFA and VOA operations could end this decades-long tradition for countries without a free press, effectively granting the Chinese Communist Party a carte blanche in controlling the flow of information both in and out. According to the Freedom House report, even North Korea is more accessible to foreign journalists than Tibet, particularly the so-called Tibet Autonomous Region.

On March 15, federal grants supporting RFA were abruptly terminated, and Voice of America employees were placed on administrative leave after an executive order to gut the US Agency for Global Media (USAGM), which oversees the two media outlets. This forced RFA to furlough over two-thirds of its Washington, D.C. staff and hundreds more freelancers and contributors. For the six million Tibetans living under Chinese rule, the potential loss of RFA and VOA's Tibetan language services is particularly devastating. Beijing's systematic efforts to eliminate Tibetan language, culture, and religion have made these broadcasts the sole source of news in Tibetan, connecting an isolated population to the outside world and the exile diaspora. Since 1996, Radio Free Asia has reported news from one of the world's most restricted media environments, providing Tibetans with coverage of issues censored by Beijing, such as self-immolations, forced relocation, monastery destruction, and language suppression.

For nearly three decades, RFA has been a trusted source of vital inside information about Tibet. In February 2024, RFA's Tibetan service broke the news of China's plans to build a hydropower dam in Dege, Kham, threatening to submerge monasteries and villages. This highlights RFA's unique network of

sources in a region Beijing has sought to isolate. The threat of silencing RFA and VOA, including their Tibetan-language services, will undermine the long-term sustenance of the non-violent Tibetan struggle for freedom and dignity. Under President Xi Jinping, China has escalated efforts to Sinicize Tibet through cultural assimilation and surveillance. This includes the Sinicization of Tibetan Buddhism with "Chinese characteristics."

Tuning into these broadcasts carries significant risks, including imprisonment for accessing these services. Yet, listeners persist, understanding the vital role these broadcasts play in their lives. At the very least, hearing even a few words of the Dalai Lama's teachings provides a flicker of hope, even in their darkest hours of despair.

The US Tibetan Policy and Support Act of 2020 (TPSA) also addresses countering China's disinformation campaign related to Tibet. It emphasises the importance of promoting independent Tibetan-language media as an alternative to Chinese-controlled narratives, ensuring accurate reporting about Tibet and the actions of the Chinese government.

At a time when Tibetans are facing a Chinese propaganda blitzkrieg aimed at distorting Tibet's language, history, culture, and religion—particularly concerning the issue of the Dalai Lama's reincarnation—any downscaling or, worse, closure of critical independent Tibetan news outlets like VOA and RFA would send a profoundly discouraging message to the Tibetan people, especially those living on the "occupied" side of the Himalayas.

China, India should look at each other with new eyes, open minds: Indian scholar

27 March 2025, [Global Times](#)

As China and India celebrate the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations in 2025, both nations have demonstrated a renewed commitment to enhancing bilateral ties. Recent interactions and remarks between Chinese and Indian officials indicate a growing momentum to foster cooperation and understanding. Against this backdrop, Indian scholar Sudheendra Kulkarni (**Kulkarni**), a close aide to former Indian prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and the founder of the Forum for a New South Asia, shared his insights into strengthening cooperation and mutual trust between the two countries in a recent interview with Global Times (**GT**) reporters Xia Wenxin, Bai Yunyi and Xu Jiatong.

GT: In November 2024, you spoke with us and shared an interesting metaphor regarding the development of India-China relations, describing it as the "process

of cultivating a plant." What stage are we currently at in this process, and what can we expect in the near future?

Kulkarni: The interview you mentioned took place in November 2024, at a time of significant breakthroughs in our relations. Just weeks earlier, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping had met in Kazan, Russia, on the sidelines of the BRICS Summit. That meeting led to an important shift in our bilateral relations.

Over the last four months, we've witnessed several positive developments - signs that the seeds of friendship sown in the fertile soil by both sides are beginning to sprout. We can already see some very hopeful green leaves. In time, these will grow and we are going to see fruits. However, this process must be accelerated.

Some important agreements were reached when Indian Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri visited Beijing earlier this year and met with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi and other officials. We can expect even more promising agreements in the days to come.

GT: You mentioned recent positive signals from both sides. One notable statement came from Foreign Minister Wang Yi, who said that "a cooperative pas de deux of the dragon and the elephant is the only right choice for both sides." What are your thoughts on his remarks? Do you believe this "dance" will endure?

Kulkarni: His statement is absolutely correct. India and China are two large Asian nations and the only two in the world with populations of more than a billion. We cannot be confrontational with each other. Certainly, we are not enemies; we are not threats to each other. The only option we have is to partner with each other and help in each other's development. Besides, we have a responsibility to the world to create a new world order that is equitable, fair, and just for all. That is why I fully support Minister Wang's statement.

GT: This year marks the 75th anniversary of our diplomatic relations. Looking back, what lessons can we draw from the last 75 years to guide our future?

Kulkarni: In 1950, India became the first non-socialist country to establish diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China. Even during the anti-imperialist war, India supported China in its fight against Japanese aggression. If we examine history, we see that we have supported you and vice versa. China has also shown its support for our struggle against British imperialism.

In these 75 years, there have been some ups and downs. We have encountered some problems that have been inherited from the past, from British imperialism. It has been difficult to solve these problems, but these are not problems that we cannot surmount.

But overall, we are moving ahead, and the era of extreme tension between India and China is behind us. It is not going to come back. I am absolutely sure that India and China are not going to repeat that painful period in our recent history.

GT: Why are you so certain that tensions between our two countries belong to the past and will not resurface?

Kulkarni: I would like to draw your attention to a very important interview that Prime Minister Modi gave recently. In a long podcast, he was asked about India-China relations, and he said "If we look back centuries, there's no real history of conflict between us... Our relationship should remain just as strong in the future." He made a second important point that "even within a family, not everything is always perfect." Please pay attention to his choice of words - he said "within a family," which implies that India and China are like family. The third point he made is that everybody regards the 21st century as "Asia's century," and this can only be realized with India-China cooperation.

So my optimism about the future is that we have very wise leaders when it comes to India-China relations. Prime Minister Modi and President Xi have met nearly 20 times and know each other well. As for the people, in India, where much of the misinformation comes from the Western media, the common people are beginning to admire China more and more. That is why I am absolutely optimistic that the future is not one of conflict. The future is one of cordiality.

GT: In our previous interview, you mentioned that we should "identify maximum points of commonness and convergence between the Chinese Dream and the Indian Dream." In your opinion, what are the greatest areas of commonality between our two nations? And how can they drive closer bilateral cooperation?

Kulkarni: The common points of the Chinese Dream and the Indian Dream are obvious: To ensure that our people live well and all their basic needs are taken care of. Both governments have a responsibility to eliminate hunger and poverty, ensure access to good education and healthcare, and preserve a clean environment. Now in some respects, China has done better, and we should learn from each other. A prosperous and strong China is something that we admire. We greatly admire the fact that China has come up so fast and become a leader in technology today. In India, I can tell you that more and more people, especially young people, are beginning to admire China's achievements in technological developments, from DeepSeek to BYD. They are also paying close attention to China's achievements in many other areas.

Overall, we should begin to look at each other with new eyes and open minds, fostering stronger bonds of

cooperation. By doing so, we can contribute to the realization of both the Indian Dream and the Chinese Dream.

That said, there is one urgent issue between India and China that needs to be addressed: the trade deficit. China is India's largest trading partner, yet the trade deficit has reached more than \$85 billion and continues to grow. For a stable relationship, such a large deficit is unsustainable and undesirable. When there is less of a trade deficit, it will also reduce the trust deficit. Ultimately, the most important thing between India and China is that we should reduce the mistrust and contribute to greater trust.

GT: Let's discuss the evolving global landscape. Both India and China face tariff threats from the new US administration, whose "America First" doctrine has raised concerns about the future of global stability. How do you view the US administration's impact on China, India, and our bilateral relations?

Kulkarni: Every country wants to become great, but the time has come when we should talk about making humanity and the world great. We need leaders in the world who speak for the welfare and progress of all the countries in the world, especially small and underdeveloped ones. That is the only yardstick of greatness.

If the world becomes more and more fragmented, with coercion and threats from major powers, smaller nations will understandably get worried. Against this backdrop, it becomes even more important for India and China to come closer. India and China have a huge responsibility to add to the stability and peace of the world and ensure progress. We are required to work together to chart a new path for the world. President Xi's vision of "building a community with a shared future for mankind" aligns with this responsibility. Similarly, Prime Minister Modi draws from an ancient Sanskrit philosophy, "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam," which means "the whole world is one family." These are the teachings of Indian and Chinese civilizations.

Expansive land grabbing made China's diplomatic ties complex

26 March 2025, [Arunachal Observer](#), Pradeep Kumar

The image highlights countries in yellow that have border disputes with China, which has ongoing territorial disputes with several neighboring nations. To the north, China has had disagreements with Russia and Mongolia over certain border demarcations, though most have been resolved. To the west, China has historical border tensions with Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, largely settled through treaties.

However, significant disputes remain with India over Aksai Chin and Arunachal Pradesh, leading to military standoffs. In the south, China claims parts of Bhutan and has disagreements with Nepal over border pillars. Further south, disputes extend to the South China Sea, where China claims territories overlapping with Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei and Indonesia. Taiwan remains a contentious issue, as China considers it a breakaway province.

The above map illustrates how China's geopolitical tensions span multiple regions, reflecting its expansive territorial claims and complex diplomatic relations, as reported by *endless knowledge* and doing rounds in Instagram.

If one recalls history, British India annexed Assam in NE India in 1826 by Treaty of Yangdabo at end of 1st Anglo-Burmese War (1824-26), annexed entire Burma after subsequent Anglo-Burmese Wars with a border close to Yunnan province of China.

In 1913-14, Great Britain, China, and Tibet representatives during Simla conference agreed on Tibet's status and borders. The McMahon Line (painted in red), a proposed boundary between Tibet and India for eastern sector, was drawn by British negotiator Henry McMahon on a map attached to the agreement. All three representatives initiated the agreement, but Beijing soon objected to proposed Sino-Tibet boundary and refused to sign the final.

After approving a note which said that China could not enjoy rights under the agreement unless she ratified it, the British and Tibetan negotiators signed Simla Convention and more detailed map as a bilateral accord. Neville Maxwell says states that McMahon was instructed not to sign bilaterally with Tibetans if China refused, but he did so without the Chinese representative present and then kept the declaration secret.

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Because of doubts concerning legal status of the accord, the British did not put McMahon Line on their maps until 1937, nor did they publish the Simla Convention in the treaty record until 1938. Rejecting Tibet's 1913 declaration of independence, China argued that the Simla Convention and McMahon Line were illegal and that Tibetan Govt was merely a local Govt without treaty-making powers.

The British records show that Tibetan Govt's acceptance of new border in 1914 was conditional on China accepting the Simla Convention. Since the British were not able to get China's acceptance, Tibetans considered McMahon line invalid. Tibetan officials continued to administer Tawang and refused to concede territory during negotiations in 1938.

Assam governor had asserted that Tawang was "undoubtedly British" but noted that it was "controlled by Tibet, and none of its inhabitants have any idea that they are not Tibetan." During World War II when India's east was threatened by Japanese troops and simultaneous Chinese expansionism, British troops secured Tawang for extra defence.

China's claim on areas south of McMahon Line in NEFA were based on traditional boundaries and India believes that the boundaries China proposed in Ladakh and Arunachal Pradesh have no written basis and no documentation of acceptance by anyone apart from China. Indian Govt has argued that China claims the territory on the basis that it was under Chinese imperial control in the past and argues that India claims the territory on the basis that it was under control of British imperial.

The last Qing emperor's 1912 edict of abdication authorized its succeeding republican Govts to form a union of "five peoples, namely Manchus, Han Chinese, Mongols, Muslims and Tibetans together with their territory in its integrity." However, the practice that India does not place a claim to the regions which previously had the presence of Mayuryan Empire & Chola Dynasty, which were heavily influenced by Indian culture, further complicating the issue.

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The western sector of India's dispute involves Aksai Chin, a region historically linked to princely state of Jammu & Kashmir. But, in late 50's China controlled it up until Macartney-Macdonald Line but after 1962 War, China controlled it up till the LAC. Lack of mutually recognized boundary agreements has led to ongoing tensions and occasional military clashes.

The Aksai Chin, administered by China and claimed by India; is mostly uninhabited high-altitude wasteland but with some significant pasture lands at the margins. It lies at the intersection of Kashmir, Tibet and Xinjiang and crossed by China's Xinjiang-Tibet Highway.

The 1962 War was fought in both disputed areas. Chinese troops attacked Indian border posts in Ladakh in the west and crossed the McMahon line in the east. There was a brief border clash in 1967 in Sikkim region despite having an agreed border in that region. In 1987 and in 2013, potential conflicts over the LAC were successfully de-escalated. A conflict involving a Bhutanese-controlled area along Bhutan-China border was also de-escalated in 2017 following injuries to both Indian and Chinese troops. Skirmishes have been continuing since then, including dozens of deaths in June 2020.

Agreements signed pending the ultimate resolution were concluded in 1993 and 1996, including "confidence-building measures" and the LAC. To address the boundary question formalised groups were created such as the JWG on the boundary question. It was to be assisted by the Diplomatic and Military Expert Group followed creating special representative mechanism in 203 while Working Mechanism for Constitution and Coordination was framed in 2012.

The territorial disputes between the two countries result from the historical consequences of colonialism in Asia and the lack of clear historical boundary demarcations. The last aggressive melee, face-offs and skirmishes had begun on 05.05.20 between both troops near disputed Pangong Lake in Ladakh and Tibet along the LAC.

The Lhasa Massacre: A Testament to Tibetan Resilience Against Chinese Oppression

26 March 2025, [The Dispatch](#)

On 10th Mar, 1959, the Tibetan uprising began as a response to fears that the Chinese authorities planned to abduct the 14th Dalai Lama, Tibet's spiritual leader. Tens of thousands of Tibetans gathered around the Norbulingka Palace to protect him, defying the presence of the People's Liberation Army (PLA). Initially peaceful, the protests escalated into armed clashes with Chinese forces. By March 17, with artillery aimed at the palace, the Dalai Lama fled to India, embarking on a perilous journey across the Himalayas. The PLA launched a full assault on Lhasa on March 19, 1959, leading to intense fighting over the next few days. Estimates of casualties vary widely due to restricted access to data and China's control over information. The Tibetan Government-in-Exile claims that 87,000 Tibetans perished during the uprising and its immediate aftermath, while historian Warren W. Smith suggests that between 10,000 to 15,000 Tibetans were killed in Lhasa alone. Chinese sources report a far lower toll, claiming only 2,000 rebels died, a figure widely disputed as an underestimation.

On 25 March 1959, Chinese forces entered Lhasa and violently suppressed the Tibetan uprising, resulting in significant casualties with thousands killed, injured, or imprisoned. Despite the brutal crackdown, the uprising became a powerful symbol of Tibetan resistance against Chinese rule, representing the struggle for independence and the preservation of Tibetan culture. March 25 is now marked as a day of remembrance, calling for global support for Tibet's ongoing fight for autonomy and human rights.

Atrocities and Repression

The atrocities that followed the crackdown were severe. The PLA executed the Dalai Lama's bodyguard unit in public, machine-gunning them as a warning to dissenters. House-to-house searches targeted suspected rebels, with residents harboring arms summarily shot. The International Commission of Jurists documented these acts in its 1959 report, labeling them as systematic efforts to crush Tibetan resistance and culture.

The Lhasa Uprising has become a powerful symbol of Tibetan resistance against Chinese rule, representing the struggle for independence and the preservation of Tibetan culture. March 10 is observed by exiled Tibetans as Tibetan Uprising Day, while March 25 is marked as a day of remembrance, calling for global support for Tibet's ongoing fight for autonomy and human rights.

Today, Tibet remains under tight Chinese control, with severe restrictions on freedoms of speech, press, and

political expression. Tibetans are subjected to disappearances, torture, and arbitrary detention. The Chinese government has also implemented policies aimed at erasing Tibetan culture through Sinicization, leading to allegations of cultural genocide.

Legacy of the Lhasa Massacre

The Lhasa Uprising of 1959 stands as a testament to the resilience of the Tibetan people in the face of oppression. The brutal crackdown by Chinese forces resulted in significant casualties and human rights abuses, which continue to shape the political and cultural landscape of Tibet today. As the world marks the anniversary of this pivotal event, it is crucial to remember the sacrifices made by Tibetans and to support their ongoing struggle for autonomy and human rights.

The Lhasa Massacre serves as a powerful reminder of the importance of protecting human rights and cultural identity. The international community must remain vigilant about the situation in Tibet and press for greater transparency and accountability from China regarding its actions in the region.

Expansive land grabbing made China's diplomatic ties complex

26 March 2025, [Arunachal Observer](#), Pradeep Kumar

The image highlights countries in yellow that have border disputes with China, which has ongoing territorial disputes with several neighboring nations. To the north, China has had disagreements with Russia and Mongolia over certain border demarcations, though most have been resolved. To the west, China has historical border tensions with Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, largely settled through treaties.

However, significant disputes remain with India over Aksai Chin and Arunachal Pradesh, leading to military standoffs. In the south, China claims parts of Bhutan and has disagreements with Nepal over border pillars. Further south, disputes extend to the South China Sea, where China claims territories overlapping with Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei and Indonesia. Taiwan remains a contentious issue, as China considers it a breakaway province.

The above map illustrates how China's geopolitical tensions span multiple regions, reflecting its expansive territorial claims and complex diplomatic relations, as reported by *endless knowledge* and doing rounds in Instagram.

If one recollects history, British India annexed Assam in NE India in 1826 by Treaty of Yangdabo at end of 1st Anglo-Burmese War (1824-26), annexed entire Burma after subsequent Anglo-Burmese Wars with a border close to Yunnan province of China.

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OPINION: Tibetans' voices will be silenced if RFA, VOA are shut down

25 March 2025, [RFA](#), Tsering Woesser

The services have been a lifeline to Tibetans stuck behind China's 'Great Firewall.'

The U.S. government's plans to cut funding to international broadcasters Radio Free Asia and Voice of America have dealt a heavy blow to the hearts of countless Tibetans.

For decades, the Tibetan language services of RFA and VOA have been lifelines for Tibetans behind China's "Great Firewall" of censorship, connecting them to outside world.

These two services have provided windows into the truth about Tibet for Tibetans in Tibet and in exile, while also offering critical resources to the international community.



A studio clock is seen at RFA Tibetan service's production headquarters in Washington, March 24, 2025. (Charlie Dharapak/RFA)

Over the years, their reporting has served as an indispensable source for the United Nations Human Rights Council, environmental organizations, human rights groups and Tibet experts around the world.

Now, with the potential shutdown of these services, Tibet risks further marginalization in global conversations and the international community's attention to the Tibetan people's plight is likely to decline further.

Suffocating restrictions

Access to information in Tibetan regions has long been highly restricted.

In 2000, the Chinese government launched the "Western Development Broadcasting Project" to saturate the region with official propaganda. It also constructed numerous high-powered jamming stations across the plateau to block international Tibetan-language broadcasts, including those from RFA and VOA — stations that are still in use today.

By the 2020s, nationwide surveillance projects like "Skynet" and "Sharp Eyes" had deployed vast networks of cameras, facial recognition systems and AI-powered monitoring technologies to reinforce control over society — with Tibetan regions under particular scrutiny.

By 2023, China had installed more than 500 million surveillance cameras nationwide. That same year, a Tibetan school in Lithang, Kham, was shut down after a teacher contacted relatives abroad via WeChat and used RFA Tibetan programming as classroom material. Even under this suffocating control, many Tibetans still risked everything to access forbidden broadcasts.

Some climbed mountaintops in search of a clearer signal. Others listened alone, late at night, in monastery corners. Some were summoned, detained, or even sentenced — simply for trying to hear the truth about Tibet, or to receive rare updates from His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

And still, countless brave individuals find ways to get vital information out.

In February 2024, China's plan to build a hydropower dam in Dege, Kham, threatened to submerge six

monasteries and surrounding villages. Local Tibetans protested and were met with arrests and beatings. It was RFA's Tibetan service that first broke the news. The story drew international attention, and so far the project hasn't proceeded.



Tibetan monks and residents in Dege, Sichuan province, appeal to Chinese officials to stop a planned dam construction in these images from Feb. 20-22, 2024. (Citizen video)

Meanwhile, the Chinese government is rapidly expanding its global media influence.

China Global Television Network, or CGTN, has established bureaus across North America, Europe and Africa to produce multilingual content and “tell China’s story well.”

The *China Daily* collaborates with U.S. media outlets to publish full-page sponsored inserts. CGTN and Xinhua now release YouTube videos to counter international criticism of China’s record in Tibet and Xinjiang.

In September 2024, China also launched a new “Tibet International Communication Center.” Its mission? To serve as “a global communication window for Tibet... in line with national strategic goals... building a more effective international media system related to Tibet,” and to “guide public opinion and conduct international public opinion struggles” on Tibet-related issues.

This aggressive global information offensive — while Tibet remains sealed off domestically — shows a stark contrast between external expansion and internal suppression.

Chinese media celebrates

Yet at this critical moment, the United States has chosen to gut RFA and VOA, including their Tibetan-language services. This decision is deeply regrettable and will undermine the Tibetan cause.

Hu Xijin, former editor-in-chief of China’s state-run *Global Times*, celebrated the news: “Voice of America is paralyzed! And the equally poisonous RFA is gone too. This is a great day... I hope this development is irreversible.”

Hu’s reaction underscores how crucial these Tibetan voices are. While the United States claims to defend global information freedom, it has now ceded key ground in the contest of soft power and public diplomacy.

The Tibetan services of RFA and VOA were among the most important elements of the United States’ global

broadcasting system. Shutting them down has not only deprived Tibetans of a vital information source — it has weakened the U.S. presence on the global stage.



Beijing-based Tibetan writer and poet Tsering Woesser poses for a photo in Beijing in 2010. (Tsering Woesser)

Since 2006, I have written more than 900 articles for RFA’s Tibetan service. With the help of RFA’s senior broadcaster and translator Dolkar, whose accurate translations and eloquent Tibetan narration brought my words to life, my writing reached the ears and hearts of Tibetan listeners. Weekly broadcasts sustained not only my writing but also my reflections on Tibet’s fate.

This commitment culminated in four books: “Hearing Tibet,” “These Years in Tibet” (co-authored with Wang Lixiong), “Behind the Blessed Land,” and “Tibet in the Year of the Pandemic.” These works trace Tibet’s past, present, and future — and they serve as a heartfelt response to the silence surrounding the people, their monasteries, their towns, and their history.

Now, with fears of a potential closure of RFA’s Tibetan service, I feel a deep sorrow. I still believe that its voice will not vanish, and its influence will not disappear. It was once a bridge between Tibetans inside and outside the country, and it will continue to live on in memory.

Tibetans need more access to the outside world. More truth. More diversity. More clarity.

The Tibetan services of RFA and VOA were not just media — they were a cultural flame, a guardian of language, a lighthouse of thought.

Even under the weight of surveillance, Tibetans inside Tibet still listen: To remember their past, to understand their present, and to imagine a future that’s their own.

Shutting down these services is to sever the Tibetan people from their resonance, their reflection, and their hope.

We must ask:

When Tibetan children grow up hearing only a single narrative,

When villagers and nomads can no longer receive truthful messages from afar,

When monks are trapped in a web of data and ever-watching cameras—

Who will tell them that their world is not only the one written by the Chinese government?

Therefore, I appeal:

Please do not silence Tibet.

Please protect the last information channels for the Tibetan people.

Let truth continue to reach the plateau.

Let hope continue to cross borders.

Tibetan voices must not be buried. Let all people of conscience stand together and keep the light of truth shining across the snowland.

Tibetans have already lost too much — please, do not take away our last remaining voice.

Tibet and the Earthquake China Doesn't Want You to See

25 March 2025, [Fair Observer](#), Steve Shaw

An earthquake struck Tibet in early January, but strict government controls prevented international media from reporting on the disaster firsthand. The Chinese state media presented the rescue effort as swift and unified, downplaying the damage and restricting Tibetan aid efforts. Rights groups and exiled Tibetans have challenged Beijing's claims, casting doubt on the official death toll, the scale of destruction and the safety of China's hydropower dams.

Chinese aid workers in bright red jumpsuits and helmets sifted through the rubble of homes and ancient Tibetan monasteries in freezing temperatures after the earthquake that occurred on January 7. Chinese state media described the rescue efforts as "fast and orderly" and framed them as a demonstration of "ethnic unity."

Authorities quickly announced the final toll: 126 dead, 337 injured and more than 3,600 homes in ruins. However, amid the devastation, a different reality emerged, one that exposed the harsh controls imposed on Tibet, where the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) strictly manages information, even in the aftermath of a natural disaster.

Controlling the narrative

Two days after the earthquake, *Global Times*, a Chinese tabloid known for promoting CCP propaganda, published an extensive report on the aid response. This account never referred to the Himalayan nation as "Tibet" but instead used "Xizang," a name the CCP introduced in 2023. Critics see this change as a deliberate attempt to erase the country from the map.

According to *Global Times*, rescue teams reached the epicenter within 30 minutes. The report claimed that, within days, affected residents had warm shelter and received three hot meals a day. It goes on to paint the picture of a unified response, where countless aid workers and volunteers provided relief without ethnic

divisions. It declared, "While a natural disaster has torn a wound into the snowy plateau, the entire nation is working tirelessly to heal it," calling the effort "the best interpretation of human rights."

However, what this portrayal failed to mention was Tibet's extreme restrictions. The Chinese government bans international media from entering the region, and Freedom House, a US-based advocacy group, ranks Tibet alongside North Korea as one of the most repressive places in the world. In Tibet, sharing politically sensitive information online or communicating with someone abroad without permission can result in lengthy prison sentences. In the days following the earthquake, Tibetans posting on Douyin (the Chinese version of TikTok) reported strict censorship. One user refused to discuss the disaster, citing a Tibetan proverb: "If one does not control the long tongue, one's round head will be in trouble."

With the Chinese government controlling all official information, *Global Times* and similar outlets had total dominance of the narrative. Yet, in the weeks since the earthquake, Tibetan rights organizations and refugees leaked information contradicting the official reports. These sources revealed that the CCP carefully managed details of aid distribution and even the reported death toll.

Despite *Global Times'* claims of "ethnic unity," Chinese authorities restricted Tibetans' movements within 24 hours of the quake. The International Campaign for Tibet (ICT), a US-based advocacy group, documented new security checkpoints that limited access to the disaster zone, preventing Tibetans from delivering aid.

One day after the quake, officials in Dingri, where the epicenter lay, posted a notice suspending relief donated by Tibetans. ICT suggested that authorities wanted to maintain control over the official narrative. The notice stated: "At present, Dingri County has sufficient reserves of various disaster relief supplies. After having discussions, it has been decided to stop accepting donations of disaster relief supplies from all walks of life from now on." The Tibetan government-in-exile, based in India, responded with an open letter urging the CCP to allow more aid to be distributed, especially medical assistance.

On dangerous ground

The Tibetan leadership also raised concerns about China's regional development policies. The letter directly challenged *Global Times'* claim that China had modernized Tibet, instead blaming "excessive" dam construction and mining for increased seismic activity. In 2008, a devastating earthquake in Tibet killed nearly 70,000 people. Experts later suggested that a massive Chinese-built dam may have triggered the disaster, making it the deadliest earthquake linked to human activity.

China's hydropower projects have drawn criticism for their environmental and geopolitical consequences. These dams disrupt major rivers flowing into India, Bangladesh and other parts of Southeast Asia. Concerns about their safety have persisted for years. In the days following the quake, Chinese officials initially claimed that none of their dams sustained damage. However, they later admitted that five of the 14 dams in the affected area had developed structural problems. One of them had suffered such severe damage that its walls tilted, forcing the evacuation of 1,500 people living downstream.

The CCP's lack of transparency has also cast doubt on the official death toll. Authorities reported 126 deaths within 48 hours of the quake and never revised. The tremors were strong enough to be felt more than 200 miles away, yet ICT research showed that officials based their count on just 27 villages within a 12-mile radius of the epicenter. *Radio Free Asia*, a US-government-funded news outlet, questioned the death toll two days after its release. Reports from local Tibetans suggested that at least 100 had died in a single township. On January 11th, *Radio Free Asia's* Tibetan Service cited morgue staff who estimated the actual death toll exceeded 400. Given Tibet's severe repression and isolation, the true number of casualties may never be known.

The next recovery phase will focus on reconstruction, but many Tibetans fear that Beijing will seize control of the process without consulting local communities. ICT cited a government whistleblower who revealed that after a 2010 earthquake killed 3,000 people, officials diverted emergency funds for personal gain, depriving many survivors of housing assistance. "China had painted a picture of remarkable recovery," ICT stated. "However, reality is far from what the Chinese government claims." If history repeats itself, the victims of this disaster may find themselves abandoned, while officials exploit the tragedy to strengthen their grip over Tibet.

Himalayan Buddhists defy China's meddling and assert sole authority over Dalai Lama's reincarnation

24 March 2025, [The Border Lens](#), Bidhayak Das

Buddhists in the Himalayas reaffirm that only the Dalai Lama holds authority over his reincarnation, rejecting external interference in a historic resolution.

In a resounding message to China, Buddhists from across the Himalayas have declared that no external agency, individual, or government will be allowed to interfere in the reincarnation of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama. "This is tradition, and it will remain so," has been the unwavering stance echoed by Buddhists worldwide.

This resolve was powerfully reaffirmed during the first General Assembly of the Indian Himalayan Council of the Nalanda Buddhist Tradition (IHCNBT) in New Delhi on March 21–22, 2025. The Assembly passed a historic resolution stating that if any government or organisation, for political motives, attempts to appoint a candidate as the next Dalai Lama, the people of the Himalayas will reject such an imposition, refuse to offer devotional obeisance, and publicly denounce any such move.

The meeting resulted in two significant resolutions. The first affirmed that the recognition of reincarnated spiritual leaders in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition is a deeply religious and cultural process, followed with great sanctity in Nalanda Tibetan Buddhism. It underscored that this system, rooted in the principle of life after death, is an intrinsic part of Nalanda Buddhist philosophy.

The resolution left no room for ambiguity—no government or individual has the right to interfere in this sacred tradition. It further asserted that the responsibility for overseeing this process rests solely with His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the institution of 'Gaden Phodang,' which holds the exclusive authority over the reincarnation process. Any external interference, it warned, would be a direct assault on religious freedom.

China has long sought to manipulate Buddhist communities—both within its borders and beyond—by attempting to impose its own version of the reincarnation process. However, this resolution serves as an unyielding declaration that Buddhists across the world are determined to follow their sacred traditions and will not succumb to Beijing's political agenda.

The global backing for the traditional reincarnation process is evident. In 2022 and 2023, two leading Japanese Buddhist organisations issued statements reaffirming their commitment to the authentic process of recognising reincarnations, reinforcing the pan-Asian and worldwide support for the cause. With this latest resolution, a wave of similar declarations is expected from Buddhist communities across different nations, making it clear that the sole authority over the Dalai Lama's reincarnation belongs to the 14th Dalai Lama himself.

Significantly, the Dalai Lama has previously stated that when he turns 90, he will provide further clarity on his reincarnation. On July 6 this year, he will reach this milestone, making his upcoming statement one of great spiritual and political significance.

The IHCNBT's resolution also highlighted the centuries-old spiritual and cultural bond between the institution of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Himalayan Buddhist community. It underscored the Dalai Lama's extraordinary contributions in preserving, promoting, and strengthening the religious-cultural heritage of the region. The Council reiterated

that the continuation of the Dalai Lama's institution and the reincarnation process is a deeply cherished aspiration of all Himalayan Buddhists.

"In the Himalayas, we pray for His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama's long and healthy life and for the endurance of the Dalai Lama institution for centuries to come," the Council declared. General Secretary Maling Gombu emphasised the historic nature of this gathering, which was attended by leading Buddhist organisations.

The resolution also drew upon the Dalai Lama's own words. His newly published book, *Voice for the Voiceless: Over Seven Decades of Struggle with China for My Land and My People*, released on March 10, 2025, reaffirms Tibet's deep-rooted spiritual and historical ties with India. The book details how, since the seventh century—when Buddhist texts were first translated from Sanskrit into Tibetan—Tibetans have regarded India as "the land of the noble ones" (Aryavarta). It highlights that Tibetan Buddhist traditions, including philosophy, psychology, logic, and cosmology, trace their origins to India's Nalanda school. The Tibetan script itself was modelled on the Indian Devanagari script, while Tibetan medical sciences, astrology, and calendar systems have been profoundly shaped by Indian traditions, including Ayurveda and the Kalachakra Tantra.

The resolution reaffirmed that His Holiness the Dalai Lama has always considered India his second home. The people of the Indian Himalayan region, from Arunachal Pradesh to Ladakh, share a deep historical and spiritual connection with His Holiness the Dalai Lama and his institution. Acknowledging his unparalleled contributions—not only in safeguarding the religio-cultural fabric of the region but also through his four principal commitments of promoting human values, fostering religious harmony, preserving Tibetan culture and environment, and reviving the ancient Nalanda tradition—the IHCNBT's General Assembly unanimously appealed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi to confer the Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian honour, upon His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama.

In a powerful display of unity and conviction, the General Assembly concluded with a congregation of Buddhist leaders singing the Indian national anthem, a symbolic reaffirmation of the deep civilisational ties between India, Tibet, and the broader Himalayan Buddhist world.

Why March is a sensitive month for Tibetans

24 March 2025, [Newsgram](#)

For decades now, March has been a politically sensitive month for Tibetans, when Chinese authorities ramp up restrictions and security measures.

For decades now, March has been a politically sensitive month for Tibetans, when Chinese authorities ramp up restrictions and security measures.

That's because a series of important events and acts of Tibetan resistance have happened during this month over the years, starting with the March 10, 1959, uprising against Chinese rule.

This year, too, Beijing has intensified security and surveillance measures across Tibet, conducting inspections and holding provincial, county and township level meetings to issue strict directives to take action to "win the stability battle" in March.

Additional police and military forces have been deployed in the capital of Lhasa, including religious sites such as the Jokhang Temple and Sera Monastery, according to two sources in the region. Security personnel have been patrolling neighborhoods even at 3 a.m., they said.

Social media censorship and internet shutdowns prevent Tibetans from sharing information with the outside world.

What happened on March 10, 1959?

On that day 66 years ago, tens of thousands of Tibetans in Lhasa rose up against Chinese rule, which had begun when Mao Zedong's Communists invaded and forcibly annexed Tibet in 1950.

The revolt was in direct response to growing Chinese repression and fears for the safety of the Dalai Lama. As Chinese forces rose to crush the rebellion, thousands of Tibetans died.

That prompted the Dalai Lama, 23 years old at the time, to flee to northern India with thousands of other Tibetans, where he and a large community of Tibetans live to this day in Dharamsala.

Ever since, March 10 has been marked as the anniversary of Tibetan National Uprising Day, with marches and protests in various locations around the world. Tibetans have used the day to honor the courage of those who rebelled, press China to stop its repression of Tibetans and voice their hope for a homeland where they can live freely.

March 12: Women's Uprising Day

On March 12, 1959, two days after the uprising, thousands of Tibetan women went into the streets of Lhasa to protest the violent crackdown and demand Tibet's freedom. Many were arrested, tortured, or killed.

This movement remains a powerful symbol of Tibetan resistance and female-led activism. Today, Tibetans and their supporters organize marches and gatherings worldwide to honor the courage of these women.

This year, in cities and towns globally, including in India, North America, and in Europe, the Tibetan Women's Association organized marches that included students, Buddhist nuns and activists who amplified

the voices of past Tibetan women patriots and assert the role of Tibetan women living in exile.

March 14: Lhasa protest and crackdown

Many years later, on March 14, 2008, large-scale protests erupted in Lhasa against Chinese rule and religious repression, erosion of Tibetan culture and economic marginalization.

What began as a peaceful protest quickly escalated into the biggest uprisings in Tibet since 1959, triggering a violent crackdown, resulting in hundreds of arrests, disappearances and deaths.

March 16: Killing of unarmed protesters in Ngaba

Two days later, at least 10 Tibetans, including 16-year-old schoolgirl Lhundup Tso, were killed when police opened fire on unarmed protesters following a morning prayer session at Kirti Monastery, which is in the Ngaba region in Sichuan province.

Many Buddhist monks and laypeople were subsequently imprisoned and tortured. During police raids at Kirti, images of the Dalai Lama and other senior religious figures were destroyed. In June of that year, troops raided the Sey Monastery, where they shattered portraits of the Dalai Lama and harassed monks who were on retreat.

Ngaba remains one of the most heavily militarized Tibetan regions. Around March every year, the Kirti Monastery faces severe restrictions, with security forces closely monitoring monks and local residents.

March 2012: 11 Tibetans self-immolated.

A wave of self-immolations by Tibetans in Tibet began in 2011 and intensified in 2012. Desperate to show their opposition to China's repressive policies, a total of 11 Tibetans set fire to themselves during March 2012, the highest number of such cases recorded in a single month.

They ranged in age from 18 to 44 years, and seven were from Ngaba. Many appeared to have done this during March because of its significance.

March 28: China declares 'Serfs' Emancipation Day'

In 2009, China declared March 28 as "Serfs' Emancipation Day" to celebrate what Beijing said marks the 'liberation' in 1959 from Tibet's "feudal system."

The Communist Party claims this day marks Tibet's progress under Chinese rule, but Tibetans reject it as state propaganda justifying Chinese occupation.

Chinese authorities organize parades and other events and alternative narratives are suppressed.

What does the Dalai Lama say about the future of Tibet?

Beijing believes the Dalai Lama wants to split off the Tibet Autonomous Region and other Tibetan areas in Sichuan, Qinghai, Gansu, and Yunnan provinces from the rest of the country.

However, the Dalai Lama does not advocate for independence but rather a "Middle Way" that accepts

Tibet's status as a part of China and urges greater cultural and religious freedoms, including strengthened language rights that are guaranteed for ethnic minorities under China's constitution.

Do Tibetans living in exile protest in March?

Yes. Every March 10, Tibetans and their supporters around the world organize protests and solidarity events marking the anniversary of the 1959 Tibetan National Uprising.

These protests serve as a powerful reminder of Tibet's ongoing struggle for freedom and human rights. RFA/SP

China's Capture Of Lhasa In 1959: A Turning Point Of Repression And Transformation – Analysis

24 March 2025, [Eurasia Review](#), Aritra Banerjee



Tsarong Dazang Dramdul and several Tibetan monks captured by China's PLA in March 1959. Photo Credit: Author unknown, Wikipedia Commons

In March 1959, the city of Lhasa, the spiritual and political heart of Tibet, fell to the People's Liberation Army (PLA) of the People's Republic of China (PRC), marking a pivotal moment in the Tibetan struggle against Chinese domination. This event, known as the 1959 Tibetan Uprising or Lhasa Uprising, was the culmination of years of growing tension following China's annexation of Tibet in 1950-51. The capture of Lhasa not only crushed a desperate rebellion but also set the stage for decades of repression, demographic shifts, and cultural erasure that continue to shape Tibet today.

The uprising began on March 10, 1959, sparked by fears that the Chinese authorities planned to abduct the 14th Dalai Lama, Tibet's spiritual leader. Thousands of Tibetans gathered around the Norbulingka Palace to protect him, defying the PLA's presence. Initially peaceful, the protests escalated as demonstrators armed themselves and clashed with Chinese forces. By March 17, with artillery aimed at the palace, the Dalai Lama fled to India, disguised as a soldier, embarking on a perilous two-week journey across the Himalayas. Two days later, on March 19, the PLA launched a full assault on Lhasa.

The fighting was brutal and one-sided. Though poorly equipped with outdated weapons, Tibetan rebels

faced a modern, well-armed PLA force. On March 21, the Chinese shelled the Norbulinka, unleashing 800 artillery rounds that reduced parts of the palace to rubble. Estimates of casualties vary widely due to restricted access to data and China's control over information. The Tibetan Government-in-Exile claims that 87,000 Tibetans perished during the uprising and its immediate aftermath, though this figure includes deaths from subsequent repression and guerrilla warfare.

Historian Warren W. Smith suggests the number killed in Lhasa alone could range from 10,000 to 15,000 over three days of intense combat. In contrast, Chinese sources report a far lower toll, claiming only 2,000 rebels died. Independent verification remains elusive, but the scale of destruction, evidenced by the slaughter of civilians camped outside the palace, points to a devastating loss of life.

The atrocities that followed were staggering. After seizing Lhasa, the PLA executed the Dalai Lama's 200-strong bodyguard unit in public, machine-gunning them as a warning to dissenters. House-to-house searches targeted suspected rebels, with residents harbouring arms summarily shot. The International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) documented these acts in its 1959 report, labelling them as systematic efforts to crush Tibetan resistance and culture.

With Lhasa under control, the PRC dissolved the Tibetan government on March 28, installing the Panchen Lama as a figurehead under Beijing's watch. This marked the beginning of a broader campaign to reshape Tibet through "Han-isation"—the influx of ethnic Han Chinese and cultural suppression. The demographic transformation of Tibet, particularly in Lhasa, has been profound. China's demographic invasion of Tibet has become increasingly evident through deliberate population shifts and resettlement policies. Between 2020 and 2023, official Chinese census data highlighted that the total population across Tibet's traditional regions reached approximately 13.27 million, with Tibetans marginally holding a slight majority at 50.3%.

However, this fragile demographic balance masks the aggressive settlement policies implemented by Beijing, with the non-Tibetan, predominantly Han Chinese, population constituting nearly half of Tibet's inhabitants. Alarmingly, in regions like Siling (Xining) City, Tsoshar (Haidong), and Tsonub (Haixi) within Qinghai Province, Tibetans have been significantly outnumbered, sometimes by ratios as stark as 10 to 20 times, by Han Chinese and other non-Tibetan groups. These demographic shifts represent not just an urban phenomenon but a systematic attempt by China to consolidate its political authority and strategic dominance through demographic engineering, critically threatening Tibetan cultural identity and autonomy. This demographic shift is a cornerstone of

what critics, including the Dalai Lama, call "cultural genocide."

The PRC has systematically dismantled Tibetan identity through policies targeting religion, language, and traditional livelihoods. Between 1959 and 1961, over 6,000 monasteries were destroyed, a process that intensified during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). The 10th Panchen Lama, in a 1962 petition to Mao Zedong, described atrocities in Qinghai Province, where entire families were massacred, and survivors were forced to dance on the corpses of their kin. Though exact figures are contested, Tibetan exiles estimate that 430,000 died during the uprising and the ensuing 15 years of conflict.

Language suppression has been equally aggressive. Since the 1950s, the PRC has pushed Mandarin education, marginalising Tibetans. In 2010, protests erupted in Qinghai when authorities mandated Mandarin as the primary language in schools by 2015, reducing Tibetan to a secondary subject. By 2020, classroom instruction in Ngaba, Sichuan, shifted entirely to Mandarin, with Tibetan relegated to a few hours weekly. A 2023 UN report highlighted the forced placement of 1 million Tibetan children in state-run boarding schools, where they are immersed in Han culture and language, severing ties to their heritage.

The Han-isation of Tibet extends to economic control. Urban redevelopment favours Han businesses, while nomadic Tibetans are forcibly resettled into concrete housing and stripped of their grazing lands. Inter-marriage between Han and Tibetans is encouraged, further diluting ethnic identity. The Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR), established in 1965, remains under tight PRC control, with policies requiring government workers to denounce the Dalai Lama and embrace Communist ideology.

Six decades after Lhasa's fall, the scars of 1959 endure. The uprising's casualties—whether 10,000 or 87,000, pale beside the slow erasure of a civilisation. China's refusal to allow independent probes into these events, coupled with its ongoing censorship, leaves the world reliant on exile accounts and fragmented data. Yet the evidence of demographic overhaul, cultural suppression, and linguistic assimilation is undeniable, painting a stark picture of a Tibet reshaped by force and silence.

No surprises, but strategic circumstance weighs heavily on China's 'Two Sessions'

23 March 2025, [East Asia Forum](#), Kerry Brown

China's 2025 'Two Sessions' emphasised stability and strategic focus, avoiding major surprises despite the volatile global landscape. Premier Li Qiang presented familiar economic challenges and policy remedies, with a focus on innovation, particularly in the non-

state sector. China is positioning itself as a leader in high-quality growth, with an emphasis on technology and education, as well as a clear shift away from reliance on foreign technology. Amid growing international uncertainty, China's measured approach at the National People's Congress reflects its readiness for a more self-reliant future.

For decades, the annual convening of the National People's Congress (NPC) — held alongside a meeting of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) to make the 'Two Sessions' — has been a matter of highly orchestrated theatre. There were moments in the 1990s, including when a third of NPC delegates voted against the Three Gorges Dam project. But those days of public displays of differences in opinion are long gone.

But, given the chaos in the outside world, particularly the United States under Trump 2.0, there is something deeply significant about the 2025 NPC remaining free of major surprises.

The NPC is, after all, the highest organ of power in China — unlike the CPPCC, which is purely a consultative body. The tone and content of its deliberations merit attention, especially now that Chinese politics domestically is so opaque, even if the outcomes do not seem administratively consequential.

That the Two Sessions were so low key and almost workmanlike this year, despite chaos reigning in much of the rest of the world, is striking.

The meeting dutifully stated a target annual economic growth rate of 5 per cent — an undramatic and unsurprising goal — and listed a widely acknowledged set of domestic problems, including local government debt, youth unemployment and the housing market. Premier Li Qiang's Government Work Report was heavy on rhetorical expressions of aspiration and light on hard data, with only a few specific goals for technology and job creation.

Yet the traditional mention of 'complex' international conditions for once this year felt more than just formulaic.

This wider international context gave extra bite to the mention Premier Li made to 'changes not seen in a hundred years'. These are words that President Xi Jinping himself has used a lot, most notably when bidding farewell to Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow in 2023.

With the United States retreating into isolationism, the meaning is crystal clear — China is being pushed into action. The last time the United States pulled up the drawbridge in this way was nearly a century ago, before the Second World War. These are indeed interesting and very troubling times.

Beyond the geopolitical context, the main focus of the 2025 Two Sessions was not so much on any grand policy or economic announcements. Rather, the focus

was on innovation, with an emphasis on the non-state sector and its role. In preparation for this, Xi met with key entrepreneurs in Beijing on 17 February 2025.

This was likely prompted by the dramatic launch of the free artificial intelligence app, DeepSeek. A 200-strong company linked to Zhejiang University developed the app, reportedly spending only a fraction of the development costs of its US competitors. Its launch in late January wiped US\$1 trillion off their US stock exchange valuation. Liang Wenfeng, the founder of the company, attended the meeting with Xi, where the President extolled the virtues of the private sector and promised greater financial, legal and administrative support.

At the NPC, Chairman Zhao Leji, in his report on the legislative aims for the coming year, assured progress on a draft law containing these protections. Li Qiang recognised the sector's contributions to employment, tax and, above all, the creation of innovative new technology.

As part of the attempt to push back against the United States and its waging of trade wars, with tariffs already imposed on some Chinese goods, the accelerated weaning off US and other foreign technology is now a national priority. While in the past, a deal of scepticism was permissible when hearing Chinese politicians' rhetoric on this, today their claims need to be listened to more carefully.

As Li Qiang alluded to, the shift towards 'high-quality' growth means China is evolving from a source of cheap labour to a hub of highly educated human capital. The country produced more STEM subject graduates than anywhere else in 2024, with India coming second. Many young people educated in the United States have now returned to China, finding the environment in other countries uncondusive.

Funding for research and development, either through the government or companies like Huawei, now places the country second only to the United States. Whether the metric is peer-reviewed papers authored by Chinese scholars or rankings for Chinese universities, China is advancing rapidly.

The focus on building a knowledge economy and trying to produce high quality growth is commonsensical rather than headline grabbing.

In the current context, the fact that the world's second-largest power is being prudent and predictable passes as good news. The bewildering, daily news coming from Washington, including the United States turning on traditional allies like Canada and its perpetually mutating approach to Russia's war on Ukraine, means that under Trump 2.0, China has been offered an unusual opportunity.

While China might not be liked because of political differences, its predictability is widely welcomed. In these turbulent times, it is a relief that the 2025 NPC meeting was free of surprises.

How better India-China ties are a greater necessity than a choice

23 March 2025, [First Post](#), Vimal Harsh

If the Xi-Modi meeting in Kazan may have showcased options to the sermonising US-led West, recent 'elephant-dragon ballet' shows careful navigation of choppy waters of world order under Trump 2.0, but beyond all these – 'geography remains destiny' for the Asian giants

After Beijing's ['appreciation'](#) of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's statement emphasising historic ties and contributions of India and China, putting it as *pas de deux* (delicate dance) of the elephant and the dragon, Sino-Indian relations have taken a step forward from the frosty aftermath of the 2020 Galwan clash.

These statements echo the spirit of Kazan, where Chinese President Xi Jinping and PM Modi met in Russia during the BRICS summit last October, following the landmark announcement of a patrolling agreement between India and China in Depsang and Demchok along the Line of Actual Control.

The same spirit was reflected when, in February, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi met with Indian External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar in Johannesburg, South Africa, on the sidelines of a G20 meeting. Before that, India's economic survey for 2023-24, released in July last year, had made a strong case for seeking foreign direct investments (FDI) from China to boost local manufacturing and tap the export market.

However, the impact of all these are yet to hit ground zero. Like in January, the two countries agreed to resume direct flights and facilitate personnel exchanges and mutual dispatch of journalists between the two countries, but the same is yet to materialise. In February, the Defence Ministry cancelled a contract for 400 drones, citing concerns over the use of Chinese components. Also, despite the talks of allowing Chinese investments going around the policy circles, tangible outcomes are yet to be delivered.

China seeks to keep boundary questions separate from trade and people-to-people exchanges. However, India was rightly adamant that bilateral relations cannot be compartmentalised and that the boundary question is integral to the larger metrics of Sino-Indian ties. Perhaps this facilitated the reaching of the aforementioned patrolling agreement.

Also, the time lag in implementing the talks on the ground is justified on the Indian side, considering past experiences, such as the *Hindi-Chini Bhai Bhai* of the 1950s or the Wuhan spirit (2018) that only culminated in the Galwan clash of 2020.

Even this time, India has strongly objected to China's creation of two new counties in the Hotan prefecture of Xinjiang, which include areas within India's union territory of Ladakh. Minister of State for External

Affairs, Kirti Vardhan Singh in a written response to parliament on Friday, stated: "The government of India has never accepted the illegal Chinese occupation of Indian territory in this area."

Once again, the familiar pattern repeats itself: talks are followed by China's incremental encroachment on Indian territories, suggesting that Beijing seeks to have it both ways. Such incidents are likely to derail the efforts for thaw in India-China relations, as New Delhi rightly insists that mutual respect of territorial sovereignty is integral to bilateral cooperation.

India cannot compromise its interests in the name of 'Asian solidarity', especially when China continues to employ its salami-slicing tactics, despite diplomatic overtures. This is why India is cautious about advancing trade and people-to-people exchanges with China. If Beijing wants to tap into India's lucrative markets, it needs to make more meaningful gestures, particularly in light of the 'China plus one' strategy gaining traction in the West and the looming threat of US tariffs.

But for both the Asian giants, despite India's legitimate concerns, good ties are more a necessity than a choice. Whether it may be countering the hegemony of West-dominated global financial institutions, questions of global commons and climate change, the West's sermons or commentary on domestic policies, or the outlook towards multipolarity, leading the Global South – India and China have much ground to cooperate rather than contradict.

Albeit, the debates of including China, the second-largest economy and technological and manufacturing great power with superpower aspirations, in the Global South are quite valid, yet Beijing's footprint and the support from the countries of the Global South are too heavy to write off.

Beyond this, the adage 'Geography is destiny' holds true. Contrary to the Chinese narrative, India and China were not historically direct neighbours. It was only after China's annexation of Tibet (1950-51) that the two civilisations found themselves in such close geographical proximity. Now, as neighbours, India and China must coexist, and given the high stakes, finding a harmonious balance is crucial.

If the Kazan meeting may have showcased options to the sermonising US-led West, recent 'elephant-dragon ballet' shows careful navigation of choppy waters of changing world order under Trump 2.0.

While Trump's tariff threats may haunt India and, to an even greater extent, China, there's a growing realisation that under Donald Trump's presidency, the US will adopt a more transactional approach than ever before, even since World War II. This shift is expected to redefine not only transatlantic ties but also Indo-Pacific relationships, emphasising strict transactional relevance.

If Trump has made a reset with Russia, many experts relate it to the Trump administration's will to counter China, but unlike his predecessor Joe Biden, who called Xi Jinping a 'dictator', Trump considers the Chinese president a 'very-good friend'. Recent statements from Trump suggest we can expect Xi in Washington soon; only Friday, the news came that direct talks between the two presidents can be held soon.

Although Trump's claim of a 'trillion-dollar deficit' with China is exaggerated, as [quoted by CNN](#), the official federal figures show the 2024 deficit with China in goods and services trade was \$263.3 billion. But still, Trump wants to abridge this gap as much as possible and gain a competitive edge over China in innovation and trade balances. Beyond this, Trump has not made clear the same ideological or human rights orientations which his Democrat predecessor had while dealing with China.

Recently, regarding the question of whether the US would ever allow China to take control of Taiwan by force, Trump [refused to answer](#), stating that he will 'never comment' on that. Later his Secretary of State Marco Rubio indeed clarified the president's statement, [stating](#) Trump is opposed to any change to Taiwan's "status quo" by force or extortion. Rubio's statement is quite assuring, yet the incident says many things about the priorities of the American president. In these times, when the global order is becoming increasingly transactional, a middle power like India that aspires for growth and peace is well playing a delicate dance of diplomacy, which is neither completely confirming nor overtly confrontational to the interests of any great power, whether that may be Washington, China or Moscow. India's interests and policies are well embedded in national interests, due to which New Delhi treads carefully where fools rush. India's diplomatic approach is reminiscent of the wise words of Kabir, the mediaeval Indian devotional mystic poet and saint, who said:

कबीरा खड़ा बाज़ार में, मांगे सबकी खैर,
ना काहू से दोस्ती, न काहू से बैर।

Kabir, standing in the marketplace, wishes well-being for all; he cultivates no excessive attachments for anyone, nor has he any animosity for someone.

China trying to align Tibetan Buddhism with CCP

23 March 2025, [The Sunday Guardian](#), Khedroob Thondup

Controlling the process of reincarnation enables Beijing to shape the spiritual leadership of Tibetan Buddhism.

The reincarnation of the Dalai Lama has become one of the most crucial levers for China's control over Tibet. To understand why, it's essential to examine the

deep religious, cultural, and political significance of this institution within Tibetan society and how Beijing perceives its connection to broader governance goals. The Dalai Lama is not just a religious leader but also a unifying figure for Tibetans worldwide. For centuries, the Dalai Lama has embodied both spiritual guidance and political leadership, deeply intertwined with the Tibetan national identity. The current 14th Dalai Lama's international stature has enabled him to advocate for Tibetan autonomy and cultural preservation on the global stage—often in ways that conflict with Beijing's vision of Tibet as an inseparable part of China.

China views the Dalai Lama's influence, particularly among Tibetans in the diaspora and within Tibet, as a challenge to its authority. Beijing's strategy to control the selection of the next Dalai Lama is thus not only a way to manage internal dissent but also a means to ensure Tibet's integration into the Chinese state.

China has framed its involvement in the reincarnation process as a continuation of historical precedent, citing Qing Dynasty practices. While the narrative of historical legitimacy is debatable, what is clear is that controlling this process enables Beijing to shape the spiritual leadership of Tibetan Buddhism. By managing who becomes the next Dalai Lama, the Chinese government could, in theory, neutralize the figure's potential to challenge state authority.

This control also extends to shaping perceptions. A state-backed Dalai Lama could become a figure who promotes Beijing's narrative, aligning Tibetan Buddhism with Chinese Communist Party (CCP) policies and priorities. In turn, this could weaken the influence of Tibetan exile communities and dissident movements advocating for autonomy or independence.

Beyond Tibet, the Dalai Lama's international role complicates China's foreign relations. Many nations, particularly Western democracies, view the Dalai Lama as a symbol of peaceful resistance and human rights. His continued global presence underscores the ongoing issue of Tibet's status. By controlling the reincarnation, China can signal to the world that it has decisively resolved the Tibetan question, making the Dalai Lama a less contentious figure in international diplomacy.

Moreover, this strategy fits into China's broader approach to managing religion. Whether it's appointing CCP-aligned bishops in Catholic communities or influencing other religious institutions, the CCP seeks to ensure that spiritual leadership aligns with state ideology. The reincarnation process is a continuation of this policy—designed to harmonize Tibetan Buddhism with what Beijing calls "socialist values."

While Beijing's logic in controlling the reincarnation process may seem clear, it is not without risks. Tibetan

communities might reject a state-appointed Dalai Lama, leading to greater divisions and potentially intensifying resistance. A splintering of Tibetan Buddhism, with one Dalai Lama in exile and another in Tibet, could undermine the institution itself, creating unintended consequences for Beijing's plans.

For China, controlling the reincarnation of the Dalai Lama is a cornerstone in its strategy to assert dominance over Tibet. By leveraging the process, Beijing aims to solidify its political control, align Tibetan Buddhism with state interests, and reduce the international influence of the Tibetan cause. However, such a move is fraught with complexity, as it challenges deeply held Tibetan beliefs and risks further alienating the people it seeks to govern. Whether this strategy will succeed in the long term remains an open question, but its implications for Tibet and global geopolitics are undeniably significant.

Voice for the Voiceless (2025): The Dalai Lama's Definitive Report on the Sino-Tibetan Conflict Resolution**

23 March 2025, [Tibetan Review](#), Tenzin Dorjee

His Holiness the Dalai Lama will be 90 years old on July 6, 2025. Since the age of 19, and until he fully devolved his centuries-old political authority to a democratically elected political leader, the Kalon Tripa – which has since evolved into Sikyong (Political leader a.k.a. President) of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) located in Dharamshala, India – he dealt with a succession of Communist China's leaderships, directly as well as through his envoys. His most recent book – *Voice for the Voiceless* (2025) published by HarperCollins, NY – succinctly, truthfully, and substantively describes over seven decades of Tibet's struggle with the People's Republic of China (PRC), and the outcomes of his consistent efforts to resolve the Tibet issues.

In a nutshell, His Holiness and the Tibetan people did everything they could, but the PRC demonstrated lack of any genuine interest for substantive discussions to resolve the Tibet issues. Instead, it turned the Tibet issues into the personal interest of the return of the Dalai Lama (not to Tibet but to Beijing) and his privileges. At the same time, it has demonized the Dalai Lama as "a wolf in monk's robes," falsely accusing him of being a splittist who allegedly calls for Tibet's complete or semi-independence.

The Dalai Lama concludes, "...there was neither the courage nor the necessary political will to do so (resolve Tibet issue through substance negotiation) on the part of Chinese leadership." Still, he hopes the PRC will come to a sense and genuinely resolve Tibet issues for the mutual benefits of the two sides, as clearly outlined in the Memorandum on Genuine Autonomy

for the Tibetan People (MGATP) and the Note on the Memorandum and in personal communications (NMGATP) presented by his envoys in November 2008 to the Chinese side.

I am an intergroup and intercultural communication scholar with published articles and book chapters addressing identity negotiation, social justice, peace, and conflict issues, especially the Sino-Tibetan issues. Intractable conflicts such as the Tibet issues persist mostly due to lack of inclusivity, conflict resolution competencies, and mutually beneficial solutions. Across the peace and conflict resolution research literatures, I have not come across such farsighted, inclusive, and mutually beneficial solutions as the Middle Way and Nonviolent Approach and Solution (MWANVAS) proposed by the Dalai Lama and the Tibetans.

My late parents smuggled me out as an infant when they escaped to India in the 1960's following His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Like most Tibetan exiles, I grew up in India as a refugee and learned about how India struggled and gained independence from the British empire. In the early days of exile, Tibetans also had independence as our goal.

Ideally and justifiably, it makes perfect sense for occupied and oppressed people anywhere to sacrifice themselves to gain their independence even if it takes generations. I do not know of any occupied country that forwent independence and instead worked on mutually beneficial goals of both the oppressor and the oppressed. Notably, Tibetans, despite their genocidal experiences and continued nightmare suffering under the PRC, did that under the enlightened leadership of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Tibet proposed MWANVAS most courageously and altruistically and stopped asking for independence.

Surely, not all Tibetans are happy about this changed goal; many continue to fight for Tibet's independence, as did the late Taktser Rinpoche (alias Professor Thupten Jigme Norbu), and as the Tibetan Youth Congress, the largest non-profit Tibetan organization, continues to do. I respect and admire them, for historically Tibet was an independent country and the USA Congress has recognized her as an occupied country. Indeed, Professor Hon-Shiang Lau has researched pre-1949 imperial Chinese records and published his findings in a book saying that Tibet was never a part of China.

Personally, thinking hard on it, I have supported the MWANVAS and even argued in a book chapter (2013) that it could be a model for resolving intractable conflicts in other parts of the world. For me, the question is not if Tibetans want independence because that's a rhetorical question. It is our birth right. For me, the question is about the survival of Tibet and Tibetans; therefore, doing what we can,

realistically speaking, to save Tibet is the need of the hour.

His Holiness succinctly, truthfully, and substantively describes in the sixteen chapters of *Voice for the Voiceless* what is also as stated in the MGATP and NMGATP – that Tibet must survive with its distinctive people, identity, culture, environment, and religion. A genuine autonomy for all of Tibet within the federation of China can enable the survival of the Tibetan civilization. The PRC wants to keep Tibet and a genuine autonomy for the Tibetan people can ensure their wish, national security, and restoration of dignity. Unfortunately, China miscalculates that time is on their side and they can control Tibet for good. In their efforts to erase Tibet, they have begun calling it “Xizang” in all its news reports and publications. Never did the PRC respond positively to the Dalai Lama and Tibetans’ most conciliatory gesture and solution embedded in the power of compassion, inclusivity, and mutual concerns. China equates Tibet issue with the Dalai Lama’s personal issues. Given that His Holiness is in advanced age, they think that once he is gone, Tibet will become a nonissue. It is hard to fathom the ignorance of the Chinese leaderships across the decades.

A prominent Chinese Tibetologist in Beijing visited me a couple of times on my campus for conversations and in my personal capacity, I told him that China should seriously talk with His Holiness because if the Tibet issues remain unsolved, His Holiness will reincarnate in a free country to continue the work of his predecessor. I told him that was what I could recall His Holiness saying when I served as his translator on many occasions before. Predictably, two Dalai Lamas will happen, as has happened with the Panchen Lama; but the Tibetan issue will continue.

His Holiness clearly states the same in his book: “...Now, since the purpose of a reincarnation is to carry on the work of the predecessor, the new Dalai Lama will be born in the free world so that the traditional mission of the Dalai Lama – that is, to be the voice for universal compassion, the spiritual leader of Tibetan Buddhism, and the symbol of Tibet embodying the aspirations of the Tibetan people – will continue.”

I am optimistic. Hope sustains human life, struggle, and success. Never Give Up! is my belief. To the Chinese leaderships, I would say: You can heed my conclusions. Time is not on your side. The Dalai Lama will outlive you. If the Tibet issue remains, His Holiness will reincarnate to lead us to resolve Tibet issues. I too pray daily that upon death, I will be reborn as a Tibetan in a free country so that I could continue Tibet’s struggle under His Holiness’ leadership. Mao was very right when he reacted to His Holiness’ escape to India by saying, “We have lost!” Indeed, you lost and Tibet issues remain alive despite your misleading and misinformation propaganda efforts.

His Holiness agrees, “Mao probably realized that with me gone out of Tibet, China would struggle with the question of legitimacy both of their authority and their presence in Tibet. He was right. This question of legitimacy remains at the very heart of China’s presence in Tibet, even after seven decades of occupation.”

As His Holiness says, he and Tibetans have done everything they could; now the ball is in the Chinese leadership’s court. The PRC should wake up from their egocentric bias and stupor and seriously address the Tibetan issues for their own benefits too. Tibet cannot be erased as you wish.

His Holiness has meticulously planned and systematically implemented plans and actions to save Tibet. He knows that the democratically elected Tibetan political leadership, the Gaden Phodrang, spiritual heads of the Bon and the Tibetan Buddhist Traditions, the Tibetan public, and peace-loving leaders and friends of Tibet across the globe will keep the Tibet issues alive during his absence. And he can guide us all again with his new reincarnation.

In my view, *Voice for the Voiceless* is as vital as the Thirteenth Dalai Lama’s Testament of 1932 (Tibetan: *Chu-Tre Zhal Dham*). All literate Tibetans should read it carefully and follow His Holiness’ advice to resolve the Tibet issues. Tibet will live, for truth prevails eventually. Impermanence is the law of nature and geopolitical situations including Tibet’s current situation will change. The Dalai Lama will live 113 years plus and the reincarnated Dalai Lama will outlive China’s communist leadership.

Rediscovering Lohit Valley and absurdity of Chinese claims on Arunachal

22 March 2025, [FirstPost](#), Claude Arpi

Whether China likes it or not, the Red Line remains the Indo-Tibet border today, but it should perhaps be called the ‘McMahon-Shatra Line’, since both the British and Tibetan plenipotentiaries signed and put their seal on the map

Lohit Valley is one of the most enchanting areas of the North-East.

Travelling along the green river surrounded on both sides by lush forests is an experience in itself, but some historical reminiscences add to one’s excitement.

Of course, one is the famous Walong Battle, during which the Indian Army gave a tough response to the advancing Chinese troops in October/November 1962, but there is more.

A text found in the National Archives of India states that near Walong lay the ‘limits of the Chinese Empire’. Xi Jinping’s China has completely and conveniently forgotten this fact; today Beijing claims that its

territory extends till the foothills, more than 100 km south.

The historical note says, "Chao Erh-feng's campaigns in Kham between 1905 and 1911 carried the Chinese into the Pomei [today Bome], Sangang and Zayul areas lying immediately north of the present McMahon line. In 1910-12, Zhao Erfeng (also written Chao Erh-feng) was the Viceroy of Sichuan province (and Commissioner of Tibet for a couple of years); in 1905-06, he had already led military campaigns throughout Eastern Tibet (Kham) and earned the nickname of 'Butcher Zhao' for mercilessly crushing the Tibetans.

Pomei is today known as Bome, and Zayul is the area in the Lohit Valley, north of the McMahon Line.

The archive note continues: "In Pomei, which claimed to be independent of Lhasa, the Chinese killed every one of importance or authority. In the Tibetan district of Zayul the Chinese, after advancing on Rima, issued an order to the Chief of the Mijir Mishmis to cut a track from Tibet to [United] Assam."

Rima was (and still is) the first town north of the Indo-Tibet border.

Zhao also sent an expedition to plant a 'dragon banner' at Menilkrai with the inscription "The Southern Frontier of Zayul on the Borders of Szechuan [Sichuan] Province of the Chinese Empire."

When I recently visited the Lohit Valley, I tried to locate Menilkrai; with the help of locals, I found the nondescript place situated on the banks of the Lohit, 4 km south of Walong, in today's Anjaw District.

In 1912, the Chinese troops were eventually thrown out of Pomei, and soon after, news was received of the annihilation of the Chinese garrison in Zayul.

The fact remains that despite the military adventures of Zhao Erfeng in the early years of the 20th century, China never ventured to or claimed any territory south of Menilkrai; the 'border banner' was, however, one of the main issues which triggered Delhi to explore the possibility of a tighter British administration in this rather inaccessible region; it resulted in fixing the Indo-Tibet border in March in Simla (Shimla now).

On November 19, 1913, the Secretary of State sanctioned a new 'promenade' (expedition) under TPM O'Callaghan, the Assistant Political Officer (APO) in Sadiya; accompanied by an escort of the 1/8th Gurkha Rifles, the British officer visited Rima at the invitation of the Tibetan authorities; cordial relations were established. It is probably at that time that the APO found the Chinese markers at Menilkrai (one dating from 1910 and the other one of 1912); he took it upon himself to remove and reposition them upstream, near Kahao, just south of what would become the McMahon Line a year later.

At the end of his 'promenade', O'Callaghan noted that a post needed to be established at Walong: "I am more than ever convinced of the necessity of the finishing of the road to our frontier and the opening of a post as

near our frontier as soon as possible. From Walong to Rima, there is no difficulty in road making, and the Lohit Valley road [is already] open up to Mankum; only required continuation to Manglor flat, a distance of less than 30 miles, to make the opening and rationing of the post a practicable scheme."

The APO knew of 'the immense cost of rationing the post', but after some enquiries, he became "satisfied that within a few years the majority of the rice and other items required for the supplies can be procured locally, either grown or purchased".

This was, however, not enough to convince Delhi. More was needed to convince the British government to grant the necessary funds and personnel to open a permanent post near the Red Line. It took more than a hundred years (and a war in 1962) for the Indian government to seriously realise the importance of this axis.

At the time of Independence

It is worth mentioning another interesting development, just before India's independence.

In late 1946, a 'note' from the Foreign Affairs Department discussed a complaint from the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs protesting against some British 'intrusions' in the Walong Sector.

Tellingly, the Chinese never complained about the Tawang area, but they objected to the British visits in the Lohit Valley. According to the note dated August 21, 1946: "The Chinese have made representations to the British Embassy at Nanking regarding the Government of India's action in the McMahon Line area. ...the note appears to relate solely to the Lohit area. Probably the Chinese are basing themselves on the customary frontier between China and India prior to the 1914 Convention which ran through Menilkrai, south of Walong."

London thought of two courses of action: (1) to deny that the Chinese have any right to concern themselves about what goes on the Indo-Tibetan frontier; (2) to point to the agreed frontier in the 1914 Convention.

Noting that there was not a very great difference between the two, London decided to refer the matter to the Government of India since after the Cabinet Mission's visit to India in May 1946, a plan had provided for an Interim Government of India.

The Chinese complaint was apparently linked to a proposed Indian road in the area. The British note said: "At some stage since the 1914 Convention [China] created two new provinces – Qinghai and Xikang, bordering on what they conceive to be the Sino-Tibetan Frontier. According to the 1914 Convention, however, these so-called provinces incorporate large tracts of territory belonging to Tibet. What is worse from our point of view is that they also incorporate most of the Assam Tribal Areas, [and] part of Northern Burma."

To make things worse, the Chinese had printed maps showing their claimed boundary and sent them to London. The irredentism of the Chinese position did not surprise the authorities in Delhi; unfortunately, it continues today with Beijing trying to grab large portions of Indian territory in Arunachal Pradesh and Ladakh.

The telegram to Delhi observed: "I do not think that we should engage in any argument with the Chinese over the exact location of India's Northern Frontier, and of our right to assert our authority up to it. I would suggest that our reply to the Chinese should be that the North-Eastern Frontier of India and the Eastern Frontier of Tibet are defined in the 1914 Convention." The India Office in London proposed to inform the Government of India accordingly.

EP Donaldson, another official in the Foreign Office, noted: "The Chinese note is a protest, based on wholly unsupported assertions against alleged acts of aggression said to have been committed by Military Officers acting under orders of the Government of India against 'Chinese territorial sovereignty'".

It is interesting to note that after Independence, the Government of India was rather more decisive than the British administration.

The fact remains that a pillar in Meiktila does not make China the owner of the entire Arunachal; in fact, apart from Meiktila in 1910-12, the Chinese never visited any areas claimed today by them in Arunachal Pradesh.

Communist China knew this and even admitted it. On April 22, 1957, in a letter from Jawaharlal Nehru to U Nu, his Burmese counterpart, the Indian PM noted: "I am writing to you immediately so as to inform you of one particular development which took place here when Chou En-lai (Zhou Enlai) came to India. In your letter you say that while Premier Chou En-lai was prepared to accept the McMahon Line in the north (of Burma), he objected to the use of the name 'McMahon Line', as this may produce 'complications vis-à-vis India', and therefore, he preferred to use the term 'traditional line'."

Nehru continued: "[Zhou] made it clear that he accepted the McMahon Line between India and China, chiefly because of his desire to settle outstanding matters with a friendly country like India and also because of usage, etc. I think, he added he did not like the name 'McMahon Line'."

Whether China likes it or not, the Red Line remains the Indo-Tibet border today, but it should perhaps be called the 'McMahon-Shatra Line', since both the British and Tibetan plenipotentiaries signed and put their seal on the map.

A visit to these places (and the site where the heroic Walong Battle took place during the Sino-Indian War of 1962) makes one concretely realise the absurdity of Chinese claims in Arunachal Pradesh.

The 'Reverse Kissinger' Strategy Is Based on Bad History

21 March 2025, [The Diplomat](#), David Brostoff

The idea relies on a historical fallacy: Kissinger didn't create the Sino-Soviet split. He merely took advantage of it.

Washington is making unexpected overtures to Moscow. In February, the United States opposed a United Nations resolution that condemned the Russian invasion of Ukraine and reaffirmed Ukraine's territorial integrity. Just one week later, Washington halted the delivery of all military aid to Kyiv. This seven-day gap between the U.N. vote and the halt in aid marked a dramatic pivot in U.S. foreign policy – one that seems to signal a transition from containment of Russia to rapprochement with Russia. At the heart of this shift is a calculated effort to drive a wedge between two of Washington's greatest geopolitical adversaries: Beijing and Moscow. The belief that the United States can fracture – or "un-unite" – the deepening China-Russia partnership is rooted in memories of the Cold War, leading policymakers to craft a "reverse Kissinger" strategy. Nevertheless, the "reverse Kissinger" is a bad case of applied history, which fails to grapple with different geopolitical contexts.

U.S. analysts and policymakers fear deepening ties between China and Russia. Whether they charge the relationship an "axis of autocracies," an "axis of upheaval," or even an "axis of losers," analysts and policymakers note that Beijing and Moscow share a common desire to challenge U.S. interests and overhaul world order. This phenomenon was underscored by their declaration of a "friendship" with "no limits" in early February 2022. Shortly thereafter, Kremlin forces invaded Ukraine and China began to provide a steady supply of dual-use technologies to furnish Russia's war machine. As Ambassador Robert D. Blackwill and Richard Fontaine argued, "Given Russian and Chinese power, ambition, and collaboration, rising to the challenge they pose to the existing international system poses a generational task for U.S. policymakers."

To tip the balance of power in the United States' favor, strategists have looked to history – specifically the Richard Nixon administration – for guidance. In 1971, National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger secretly traveled to Beijing and met with Chairman Mao Zedong, signaling the beginning of rapprochement. With a strong NATO alliance on Russia's western flank and a hostile China to its east, the Kremlin drained financial and military resources to secure itself, placing the United States in a favorable position.

The idea of a "reverse Kissinger" urges U.S. officials to seek rapprochement with Moscow to weaken Beijing's position. As China constitutes "the most potent and

dangerous near-peer adversary this nation has ever confronted,” this strategy calls on U.S. officials to channel their inner Kissinger and forge cordial relations with the Kremlin. This would – so the argument goes – drive a wedge between Beijing and Moscow, subsequently creating a favorable balance of power for the United States.

Historical metaphors are captivating tools that enable policymakers to think through the challenges they face and the policy choices at their disposal. But bad history can produce bad policy, and as such, it is essential to re-explore the Sino-Soviet split.

In 1950, China and the Soviet Union appeared to forge a permanent brotherhood with the signing of their Treaty of Friendship, Alliance, and Mutual Assistance. But Soviet Premier Joseph Stalin’s death reshaped the relationship. His successor, Nikita Khrushchev, began his de-Stalinization campaign in 1956. Historian Sergey Radchenko observed that Mao was driven by a desire for dominance and subsequently challenged Soviet leadership of the Communist world. Just two years later, Mao claimed China would overtake the Soviet economy with the Great Leap Forward and attempted to prove himself the superior strategist during the Taiwan Strait Crisis.

In 1959, tensions flared over the Sino-Indian border clash, and in 1962, the Chinese publicly criticized the Soviets for standing down during the Cuban Missile Crisis. For the remainder of the decade Beijing and Moscow jockeyed for influence over Vietnam. Sino-Soviet animosity erupted in 1969, when Chinese and Soviet soldiers exchanged gunfire along their border. The folly of the “reverse Kissinger” is that it misremembers Kissinger’s role. The former U.S. national security adviser did not split China and the Soviet Union by initiating rapprochement with Mao. Frictions in the alliance – notably, a shared drive for domination and the competition for leadership – ripped the fellow travelers apart; it was not the result of a carefully crafted wedge strategy in Washington. By the time Kissinger secretly met with Mao in 1971, the split had already occurred. Kissinger’s virtue was thus his opportunism: his ability to recognize the split and to use it to advance the U.S. national interest.

Grab a sheet of paper and draw a line down the center of the page, Richard Neustadt and Ernest May counseled anyone reasoning by historical metaphor. On one side, write all the “likenesses”; on the other, all the “differences.” Neustadt and May’s exercise illuminates the limitations or failures of a chosen metaphor.

The differences from the 1971 case are stark. Moscow has not publicly challenged Beijing for dominance; they are not virulently struggling for leadership of an anti-U.S. coalition; and they have not fought a bloody border conflict.

This is not to say that China and Russia will not split again in the future. In fact, they remain highly ambitious and Moscow’s growing dependence on Beijing may foster resentment. But until China and Russia compete for dominance and leadership, the U.S. desire to wedge the revolutionary powers remains a delusion.

Commentary: China's anger over Panama ports sale is a wake-up call for Hong Kong tycoons

21 March 2025, [CNA](#), Wang Xiangwei

Hong Kong billionaire Li Ka-shing’s family once enjoyed the highest level of access to China’s leadership. With the planned sale of Panama Canal port operations, it now finds itself in a difficult position, says former SCMP editor-in-chief Wang Xiangwei.

The controversy surrounding the deal by CK Hutchison, founded by Hong Kong billionaire Li Ka-shing, to sell its ports operations on both ends of the Panama Canal to American investment giant BlackRock keeps growing.

Interest was piqued after Beijing-controlled Hong Kong newspaper Ta Kung Pao published three scathing commentaries condemning the planned deal, accusing the conglomerate of being unpatriotic and “selling out all Chinese people”.

Beijing’s displeasure is evident, as reflected in the acerbic tone of the first two commentaries. To eliminate any doubt about whether these pieces represented official views, the Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office, China’s ministry overseeing the city, and the Central Government Liaison Office in Hong Kong reposted the articles on their official websites.

This has raised concerns in Hong Kong and beyond about the politicisation of business in a city long known for its freewheeling capitalism and minimal regulatory constraints on mergers and acquisitions.

WILL BEIJING OR HONG KONG INTERVENE?

Speculation is mounting about whether Beijing or Hong Kong will intervene to halt the deal – expected to be signed by Apr 2 – with reports suggesting that Beijing has ordered an investigation.

On Tuesday (Mar 18), Hong Kong leader John Lee remarked that concerns over the planned port deal deserved “serious attention”. He stated: “Any transaction must comply with the legal and regulatory requirements,” adding that his government would handle the case “in accordance with laws and regulations”.

It remains unclear what actions Hong Kong or Beijing can take, as there is no precedent for requiring regulatory approvals for such business transactions in the city. Unlike the mainland where authorities have not hesitated to intervene in business deals, Hong

Kong operates differently under the “one country two systems” frame.

A notable example from the mainland was in 2020, when Beijing halted the initial public offering of Ant Group, controlled by Jack Ma, just days before what would have been the world’s largest share sale that year.

International media focus is currently on how Beijing’s angry response could undermine business confidence in Hong Kong, and even more so if further actions are taken. However, less attention has been paid to Beijing’s perspective.

To understand this unfolding story, it’s essential to comprehend why Beijing is upset and why the Li family, which once enjoyed the highest level of access to China’s leadership, now finds itself in a difficult position.

WHY PANAMA DEAL HAS UPSET CHINA

All signs suggest that China’s leadership was blindsided by the deal’s announcement.

CK Hutchison announced the deal on Mar 4, coinciding with the start of China’s Two Sessions – the annual meetings of the legislative National People’s Congress and the advisory Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC).

Mr Victor Li, chairman of CK Hutchison and Mr Li Ka-shing’s eldest son, is a member of CPPCC. Hong Kong media speculated that a senior Chinese leader met with Victor about the deal behind closed doors in Beijing. Whether such a meeting occurred is unclear, but what is evident is Beijing’s anger over not being informed in advance.

From Beijing’s perspective, there are reasons for concern. China could potentially lose a bargaining chip in its dealings with the US, as Presidents Donald Trump and Xi Jinping are reportedly set to meet in the coming months.

More importantly, Beijing’s displeasure is understandable, given Mr Trump’s expansionist ambitions since his second term began. Besides his desires to annex Canada as the 51st US state and buy Greenland, he has been especially vocal about “reclaiming” the Panama Canal to free it from Chinese control.

About 21 per cent of China’s cargo transits through the waterway that connects the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, making it the second-largest user after the United States.

To put this into context, let’s consider the reverse scenario. Say BlackRock decided to sell 43 ports, including those in the Panama Canal and others in 23 countries, valued at US\$22.8 billion, to CK Hutchison in Hong Kong.

It’s easy to envision Mr Trump immediately condemning the deal on his preferred social media platform, Truth Social, citing national security concerns. US lawmakers would likely raise objections

and launch congressional investigations to block the deal.

THE POLITICISATION OF BUSINESS

When announcing the deal, CK Hutchison’s co-managing director Frank Sixt stated that it was “purely commercial in nature and wholly unrelated to recent political news reports concerning the Panama Ports”. However, subsequent events have shown that the deal is far more than purely commercial.

US media reports suggest that Mr Larry Fink, BlackRock’s chairman and CEO, contacted Mr Trump to pitch the Panama Canal deal. This raises questions about the Li family’s evolving relationship with Chinese leadership.

Mr Li Ka-shing, dubbed “Superman” by Hong Kong media for his business acumen and connections, previously secured exclusive meetings with China’s leaders, including Deng Xiaoping and Jiang Zemin, during the first 20 years of reform and opening up. However, over the past two decades, his family’s relations with Beijing have cooled.

While Mr Fink has direct access to Mr Trump, the Li family may not enjoy the same privilege with Zhongnanhai, the compound where China’s top leaders live and work that is considered the equivalent of the White House.

Perhaps the Li family genuinely believes the deal is purely commercial or they believe informing Beijing would complicate the deal. Either way, the ensuing controversy should serve as a wake-up call for them and other tycoons in Hong Kong.

It pains me to say that the politicisation of business, especially in multibillion transnational deals in strategic industries, will become the new normal not only in the US, China and Hong Kong, but worldwide.

Escape From Lhasa: How The Dalai Lama Exposed China’s Cultural Genocide – Analysis

20 March 2025, [Eurasia Review](#), Ashu Mann



The 14th Dalai Lama being interviewed by Voice of America journalist Lillard Hill in 1959. Photo Credit: VOA, Wikimedia Commons

On the night of March 17, 1959, under the cover of darkness and amidst mounting tension, the 14th Dalai Lama, then just 23 years old, fled his sacred home in

Lhasa. Disguised as a common soldier, he embarked on a perilous two-week journey through the Himalayas to escape advancing Chinese forces determined to crush the Tibetan uprising. His dramatic exile to India marked not just the flight of a spiritual leader but the beginning of decades-long exposure of China's brutal oppression in Tibet, a chapter that continues to unfold today. The Dalai Lama's escape was a direct response to China's increasingly aggressive presence in Lhasa, which culminated in the bloody crackdown of the 1959 Tibetan uprising, leaving an estimated 87,000 Tibetans dead. His subsequent arrival in India and establishment of the Tibetan government-in-exile in Dharamshala highlighted China's violent occupation and triggered global recognition of Tibet's struggle.

Cultural Erasure: China's Strategy in Tibet

Since the Dalai Lama's escape, Beijing has consistently employed systematic methods to erase Tibetan culture. Monasteries, once spiritual and cultural hubs like Ganden, Drepung, and Sera, are now closely monitored and regulated. Chinese authorities enforce ideological re-education programs, restrict religious ceremonies, and compel monks to denounce the Dalai Lama publicly, replacing traditional religious symbolism with portraits of Chinese Communist Party (CCP) leaders.

China introduced updated regulations in December 2024, significantly increasing state control over Tibetan Buddhist temples by integrating political directives. These measures legally mandate political loyalty, reinforcing Communist Party ideology within religious institutions. This move undermines constitutional rights to religious freedom and advances China's broader policy of assimilating Tibetan culture into Han Chinese identity. Tibetans now face intensified coercive control, highlighting China's decade-long escalation in religious repression.

Sinicisation of Tibet: Rewriting History

A crucial element of China's occupation strategy has been the deliberate "Sinicisation" of Tibetan geography and identity. Tibetan place names are being systematically replaced with Mandarin terms as part of Beijing's policy to erase indigenous identity. Historic cities, sacred mountains, rivers, and pilgrimage sites are rapidly losing their original Tibetan names, replaced by state-mandated Chinese labels.

The objective is clear: rewriting Tibet's historical narrative to erase centuries-old cultural and spiritual ties to the land. Beijing has been systematically altering Tibetan place names to Mandarin equivalents, effectively marginalising traditional nomenclature with deep historical and spiritual significance. For instance, the Tibetan name "Gyalthang" has been changed to "Shangri-La". Similarly, the ancient city of "Dartsedo" is now officially referred to as "Kangding". These deliberate renaming efforts are part of a broader strategy to assimilate Tibetan culture into the

dominant Han Chinese framework, effectively eradicating collective memory and consolidating state authority over Tibetan regions.

Surveillance State: Everyday Life Under Watch

Today, Lhasa stands as one of the most intensively monitored cities globally, emblematic of China's extensive surveillance system across Tibet. Tibetans endure pervasive monitoring through sophisticated facial recognition technology, mandatory biometric data collection, and advanced artificial intelligence-driven tracking systems that scrutinize their daily activities.

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) notes that residents regularly face intrusive checkpoints, unannounced home searches, and constant digital surveillance, resulting in a climate of perpetual anxiety and self-censorship. Additionally, Tibetans have been imprisoned or forcibly disappeared for minor actions, such as possessing Tibetan flags or displaying photos of the Dalai Lama in their homes. This widespread and severe repression effectively ensures that cultural expression and political dissent are rapidly identified and harshly punished.

Tibetan Voices: Defiance Amid Despair

Despite decades of repression, Tibetans persistently challenge Chinese domination through peaceful resistance and preserving their cultural identity. Testimonies from refugees who recently fled Tibet to Dharamshala narrate harrowing stories of imprisonment, torture, and forced ideological indoctrination.

Namkyi, a 24-year-old Tibetan refugee now living in Dharamshala, endured imprisonment and solitary confinement by Chinese authorities at just 15 for peacefully protesting religious oppression. During detention, she was physically abused, forced into military training, indoctrinated with Chinese constitutional studies, and compelled into labour camps manufacturing copper wires and watches. After a perilous journey to India in June 2023, she met the Dalai Lama, gaining renewed strength to raise global awareness about Tibet's human rights abuses. Despite fears for her family's safety, Namkyi remains determined to advocate for justice.

Global Significance: The Dalai Lama's Enduring Legacy

The Dalai Lama, now approaching his 90th birthday in 2025, remains a global icon of peace, resilience, and non-violent resistance. His exile not only exposed China's violent occupation but also ensured Tibet's cause remained globally relevant. His advocacy continues to attract international attention, which is evident from the ongoing diplomatic engagement and increasing global condemnation of China's Tibet policies. India's longstanding hospitality to the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan exile community signifies solidarity against oppression and underscores the

moral responsibility of democratic states. Dharamshala's very existence as a seat of exile governance remains an enduring symbol of resistance, liberty, and Tibetan identity.

The Dalai Lama's flight from Lhasa to India was more than a personal journey, it was a cry for justice against China's oppressive policies. Over six decades later, China's ongoing cultural genocide, forced assimilation, and brutal surveillance continue to dismantle Tibetan society. The international community must maintain scrutiny and action, recognising that Tibet's plight is not merely historical but a contemporary humanitarian crisis. Tibet's story is one the world cannot afford to ignore, for its fate reflects our collective commitment to freedom and justice.

China's Dark Legacy in Lhasa: Decades of Suppression and Cultural Genocide | Opinion

19 March 2025, [Asia Net](#), Ashu Maan

The city of Lhasa, once the heart of Tibetan civilisation and the spiritual seat of the Dalai Lama, has been systematically transformed into a militarised outpost of state control.

The city of Lhasa, once the heart of Tibetan civilisation and the spiritual seat of the Dalai Lama, has been systematically transformed into a militarised outpost of state control. For over six decades, Beijing has imposed an iron-fisted administrative and ideological grip on Tibet, aimed not only at political integration but at the deeper objective of cultural erasure. Under layers of infrastructural modernisation and security expansion lies a brutal reality: suppression of Tibetan religion, language, and identity. Lhasa today is a heavily surveilled environment where expressions of cultural authenticity are interpreted as threats to national unity. The state narrative may speak of development and stability, but the everyday reality is one of religious censorship, linguistic marginalisation, and population engineering.

Religious Institutions Subverted, Monastic Life Disbanded

The targeting of Tibetan Buddhism remains at the core of China's regional strategy. Monasteries such as Sera, Ganden, and Drepung, once centres of spiritual and philosophical learning, have been converted into state-monitored institutions. Religious leaders are vetted by party authorities, and religious teachings are subject to political scrutiny. Inside temples and monastic complexes, the traditional thangka paintings now hang alongside mandatory portraits of Chinese leaders.

Monks and nuns undergo periodic "patriotic education," a euphemism for ideological reconditioning, where loyalty to the Communist Party is drilled into clergy alongside the tenets of Buddhism.

Recitation of religious texts is closely monitored, and many monastic libraries have been subjected to content vetting or outright confiscation.

The Language Offensive: Mandarin as the New Cultural Anchor

Language, the conduit of cultural transmission, has not been spared. Tibetans are gradually being sidelined in education and public life through a systematic Mandarinisation of the school curriculum. From early education onwards, children in urban areas, including Lhasa, are taught primarily in Mandarin. Boarding schools, designed to separate Tibetan children from their cultural roots under the pretext of improving access to education, have seen exponential growth. These institutions not only impose Mandarin as the medium of instruction but also systematically dilute indigenous culture, religion, and community ties. Parents are left with little choice. Refusing state schooling for their children is considered subversive.

Renaming the Land: Sinicisation of Tibetan Geography

Alongside linguistic and religious suppression, the renaming of Tibetan geographical and cultural sites represents a symbolic yet powerful instrument of cultural erasure. Ancient Tibetan place names are increasingly being replaced or superseded by Mandarin names designed to reflect a homogenised Chinese identity. For example, many traditional place names in and around Lhasa have been substituted with administrative Mandarin nomenclature. Sacred pilgrimage sites, historic villages, and monasteries are rebranded with names that bear no connection to their Tibetan origins. These new names are used exclusively in state maps and official publications, effectively overwriting the cultural memory embedded in local geography.

Demographic Alteration: The Quiet Reengineering of Identity

Demographic transformation has been one of the most effective tools in altering the character of Lhasa and other key Tibetan regions. Over the past three decades, incentivised migration policies have brought a steady influx of Han Chinese settlers into Tibet. These settlers are often provided housing, employment, and social benefits unavailable to native Tibetans. The demographic composition of Lhasa has undergone a stark transformation. Han settlers dominate the retail, construction, and service sectors, while Tibetans remain underrepresented in administrative and skilled employment. Urban development projects are centred around Han-majority zones, pushing traditional Tibetan neighbourhoods to the periphery, both spatially and economically.

Surveillance as Suppression: Living Under Constant Watch

The scale and density of surveillance infrastructure in Lhasa rivals that of any major metropolitan city in China. Security checkpoints are ubiquitous, with facial recognition systems integrated into public transport, marketplaces, and even monastery gates. Biometric data collection is routine, and social credit mechanisms are being extended to monitor behaviour aligned with political loyalty. The digital tracking of religious activities, association patterns, and online communication has created a climate of fear where cultural expression is policed as a security threat. Dissent, even in passive forms such as possessing banned religious images or Tibetan literature, is met with detention or re-education. The use of artificial intelligence and big data analytics to preempt unrest has turned Lhasa into a laboratory of state surveillance. In this city, the act of preserving one's cultural identity can attract punitive consequences.

International Attention, Limited Accountability

While international institutions and parliaments continue to pass resolutions condemning China's actions in Tibet, tangible political pressure remains inconsistent. Diplomatic engagement with China often subordinates human rights concerns to economic considerations. Multilateral forums frequently treat the Tibetan issue as peripheral despite it reflecting broader trends of authoritarian cultural repression. Countries like India remain key stakeholders for geographical proximity and their enduring role as hosts to the Tibetan exile community. Yet the global response remains sporadic, often limited to symbolic gestures rather than a coordinated pushback against cultural genocide.

The transformation of Lhasa over the last six decades is not merely a story of urbanisation. It is a chronicle of methodical cultural destruction. Religion has been censored, language diluted, place names rewritten, and a proud civilisation rendered invisible beneath layers of concrete and surveillance grids. Cultural genocide does not always take the form of violent annihilation.

It often unfolds through bureaucratic policies, demographic engineering, linguistic erasure, and ideological indoctrination. What is happening in Lhasa is precisely such a slow-motion destruction, designed not to draw headlines but to ensure that the next generation of Tibetans may not remember who they are. This legacy must be confronted in seminars or reports, as well as sustained global awareness and policy action. The identity of a people is not negotiable, and Tibet's erasure must not be the price of diplomatic convenience.

Dalai Lama's Reincarnation And The Politics Of Religion By China

18 March 2025, [StratNews Global](#), Dhundup Gyalpo

The Dalai Lama's reincarnation, according to Tibetan Buddhism, is supposed to be a purely religious matter. There should be no room for any external interference, more so by the Chinese state that's supposedly atheist. Only, it isn't. This article is in response to the social media post by the spokesperson of the Chinese embassy in New Delhi.

What else can we expect from an atheist, authoritarian regime fixated on sabotaging the sacred Tibetan Buddhist process of recognising the Dalai Lama's reincarnation for its own political ends? The Chinese Communist Party has reduced this inviolable spiritual system to nothing more than a state-controlled lottery.

Beijing's propaganda machine relentlessly promotes the so-called "lot-drawing from the Golden Urn" as the definitive method for selecting the Dalai Lama's reincarnation. But let's break this down in simple terms.

Spiritual Exercise Or Lottery?

This so-called 'lot-drawing' is a distorted version of the traditional Tibetan dough-ball divination method, historically used when doubts arose or multiple candidates emerged. In this traditional method, names are written on slips of paper, sealed inside identical dough balls and rolled in a flat bowl before a sacred deity. The ball that falls out determines the chosen one. However, if there are clear written instructions, signs or visions pointing to a specific candidate, divination isn't necessary at all.

China is attempting to hijack this process by elevating a mere fallback method into the ultimate deciding factor—an effort to impose its colonial-style authority on purely religious matters.

The idea of so-called "Golden Urn" traces back to the Tibet-Gurkha conflict (1791–93), when Tibet sought Manchu military support. After expelling the Gurkhas, Manchu officials proposed several suggestions to enhance Tibetan governance, including the use of Golden Urn to select the Dalai Lama's reincarnation. Although drawing lots from the Golden Urn bore some resemblance to the traditional dough-ball divination method, it was never widely adopted. It was used only once—likely as a symbolic gesture—in the selection of the 11th Dalai Lama.

The State Has No Role

China played no role whatsoever in the search or recognition of the 14th Dalai Lama. In fact, its representatives had to apply for visas through British India just to attend his enthronement ceremony—merely as foreign guests, like everyone else.

The late Ngabo Ngawang Jigme confirmed this in a speech at the Tibet Autonomous Region's People's

Congress in 1989: “In reality, there was no incident of any kind whereby it could be said that Wu Zhongxin presided over the ceremony for the enthronement of the 14th Dalai Lama... It is impossible for anyone to write such a thing unless he knows absolutely nothing about Tibetan customs... What reason is there for us communists to follow the footsteps of the Guomindang, to continue telling lies on this matter just like they did?”

Unrefuted lies, when repeated often, become accepted as facts. Given China’s global disinformation campaign regarding the Dalai Lama’s reincarnation, let me attempt to explain the entire issue in very basic layman’s terms.

Religious Belief And Reincarnation

The concept of reincarnation, or rebirth, is rooted in Buddhist religious beliefs. In Buddhism, all sentient beings are caught in the continuous cycle of death and rebirth across various realms of samsara, which includes heaven, human existence and hell. This cycle is influenced by karma—the actions we take in this and past lives.

For ordinary humans, rebirth is not something they can control; it is entirely determined by their good or bad karmic actions. The only way to break free from this cycle is by attaining nirvana, a state of enlightenment.

However, certain highly realised spiritual beings, such as the Dalai Lama, are believed to have control over their death and rebirth. They can choose when, where and to whom they are reborn. These beings often leave clear written instructions to guide the process. Bodhisattvas, like the Dalai Lama, have intentionally delayed their own nirvana to help guide and liberate other sentient beings.

Now, here’s the critical question: How can an authoritarian atheist regime, such as the Chinese Communist Party impose laws or regulations on a deeply spiritual process like reincarnation, which is beyond human control?

They can, of course, appoint anyone as the reincarnation of anyone—even Mao! But without the people’s faith, it’s utterly meaningless. And of all people, they know this best.

Unlocking the potential of Urai pass

18 March 2025, [The Annapurna Express](#), Prem Raj Joshi

In the middle of the stunning trans-Himalayan terrain, in the Urai pass, there is a less-known but potentially vibrant route that offers a fresh perspective on the relationship between Nepal, China and India. The U-shaped edge in the northwestern corner visible in the map of Nepal, precisely in Bajhang district, above the 4,000 meters, is not so widely known and thus has

become a neglected route. This ancient route near Kailash Mansarovar is rightly positioned to connect the holy sites in China and India. Its importance can be gauged by the fact that Urai pass is strategically placed to connect and rejuvenate religious-cultural significance, much deeper than the often talked-about economic integration in the region that is fragile and geopolitically sensitive.

In his book *Spy on the Roof of the World*, Sydney Wignall has elaborated deeply on the use of Urai pass for a very long time by explorers, pilgrims and traders. He has also described Urai pass as a geostrategic location, given the prospect of connectivity it possesses. Even today, for those seeking spiritual visits to holy sites like Mount Kailash and Mansarovar Lake, it is considered a potential gateway that could alter how regional trade and religious tourism operate. A similar understanding has been shared by Hanna Rauber in her work *Life and Trade of the Bhote Khampa in Far West Nepal*, who has particularly stressed the business and livelihood aspect.

If revisited and reopened, the Urai pass could soon provide millions of people access to spiritual, cultural and financial possibilities. It will link the Tibetan highlands and beyond with the largely populated plains of northern India, home to tens of millions of Hindus, Buddhists and Bon followers.

Shiva Raj Malla Shrestha, in his academic article *Ancient Nepal* (2001), published by the Department of Archaeology, has stated that ancient works, such as *Skanda Puran*, also clearly depict the importance of Urai Pass, then known as *Uru Parvat*. It is believed that the *Urus* and other pre-Vedic clans took this route to facilitate interaction between humans, ideas and commodities in the Himalayas. It was formerly employed by pilgrims as well as merchants; hence, it was crucial in connecting Tibet with northern India and Western Nepal. Urai pass therefore occupies a strategic position in the Himalayas and has potential for trans-Himalayan linkages and promoting religious-cultural, and economic interactions.

Moreover, the business prospect can be gauged from the fact that *Fürer-Haimendorf*, in his work *Himalayan Traders: Life in Highland Nepal* (1975), has portrayed Urai pass as a critical corridor in the trans-Himalayan trade network, linking the remote Bajhang district with Tibet. It facilitated the exchange of goods such as salt, wool, grains and spices between Tibet and Nepal. Mount Kailash and Mansarovar Lake have been religiously and spiritually significant for many years, especially for Hindus, Buddhists, Jains and Bon followers. People have long endured rugged terrains and severe weather since they feel the gods reside in these holy sites. Moreover, it is widely believed that not just the destination but also the path taken by holy spirits is known to be divine and pure, thus further amplifying the value of this route. Hence, mapping this

route in itself holds a greater significance. For this, all the major points in this route should be studied and the route needs to be made adventurous yet safe for pilgrims and tourists from across the globe.

Thought to be the earthly forms of Mount Meru, a sacred mountain in Hindu, Jain and Buddhist views, many religious people visit Mount Kailash and Mansarovar.

The Urai pass might provide Indian pilgrims—especially those from the states of Delhi and Uttar Pradesh—with a fresh approach to reach these holy sites. Long ago, visits to Kailash and Mansarovar were connected with the dull and time-consuming paths through Nepal and Uttarakhand. Utilizing the Urai pass and other infrastructure enhancements, the distance could be shortened, and pilgrim access to these holy sites would be safer and more accessible.

The populous northern Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, home to more than 200m people, can reap benefits with the opening of this pass. The state is near the Urai Pass, which might result in a direct trade route between Tibet and the northern plains opening itself. This could lead to more business and religious travels. The turnaround of people on a large scale during Mahakumbh in Uttar Pradesh shows the unlimited possibility Urai pass might unlock for Nepal, China and India.

For an extended period, remote Himalayan villages have been cut off from the economic centers of India and its northern neighbors. Using this pass could have more than one motive. Opening this path would mark the beginning of a fresh era of pilgrimage, and reaching their spiritual goals would be simpler and safer for people.

Opening this pass would open more opportunities for people in South Asia and beyond to collaborate and connect.

For this, Nepal needs to take diplomatic steps to bring China and India together, excavate the route from anthropological and historical perspective, and work toward developing it as a top cultural-religious tourist destination.

Tibetan Struggle Will Outlive Xi Jinping And The Communist Party of China, Says Tibet Expert

18 March 2022, [StratNews Global](#), Tripti Nath

Noted Tibetologist Vijay Kranti is sure that the Tibetan struggle will outlive Chinese President Xi Jinping and the Communist Party of China

Noted Tibetologist Vijay Kranti is convinced that the Tibetan struggle steered by the Dalai Lama will outlive Chinese President Xi Jinping and the Communist Party of China.

While discussing the Dalai Lama's recently released book 'Voice for the Voiceless' on *The Gist* the Delhi

based journalist and photographer who has traveled to Tibet three times, says he is inclined to believe that Xi Jinping and the Communist Party of China will vanish very soon and the Tibetan struggle will outlive them.

In his book focused on the theme 'over seven decades of struggle with China for my land and my people', the Dalai Lama has asserted that he has no doubt that the Tibetan struggle for freedom will go on and that totalitarianism definitely does not have time on its side.

Interpreting this observation, Vijay said that this shows strength of the Dalai Lama's own faith in non violence and persistence. "When he came to India, he was only 25 years old and had no experience of world politics. People with were not even prepared for earning the next day meal. And still he has reached a place where he gets the Nobel prize. The Tibetans have reached a stage where they have influence right from the streets of Germany to the Parliament of America or European Union. They have so many friends. It is Dalai Lama's leadership and determination of the Tibetans which gives them hope and the Dalai Lama has expressed it here."

Vijay said that The Dalai Lama is a great monk statesman who has used non- violence as the most effective weapon in his fight against the most powerful enemy- from a position where he is least powerful.

Notably, in this much sought after book published by Harper Collins and available exclusively in the Indian subcontinent, the Dalai Lama has urged the Tibetans to guard against hatred towards the Chinese.

"The strength of Dalai Lama is his faith in non-violence. He is utilizing the power of being cool and non violent against one of the strongest forces of the world today. So, he is telling his people not to hate the Chinese but just understand them and fight back," explained Vijay who has known the Dalai Lama for 53 years.

Asked whether the Dalai Lama will be able to return to his homeland in his lifetime, he said that when the Dalai Lama says that he will live up to 113 years, he is actually throwing challenge to the Chinese. "There was a time when Mao told Nehru that he could keep Dalai Lama in India for 100 years. In ten years, the Dalai Lama is going to be hundred years. The way Xi Jinping goes practically mad while talking about Dalai Lama shows they are feeling very helpless before this monk statesman who has no gun and does not even shout at them. This statement in a way confronts China."

To a question on whether the third generation of Tibetans living in exile in India, are as passionate about the struggle as their parents and grand-parents, he said that this generation of Tibetans is differently abled.

Having known Tibetan refugees who came to India with the Dalai Lama in 1959, Vijay says that the

present generation of Tibetans has the resources to see what China is doing inside Tibet. "They have done remarkable work. I don't see fatigue. The mode of expression is different but the determination is prevelant."

Vijay said that the timing of the Dalai Lama's recently released book is well calculated.

The book comes close to the Tibetan Uprising Day on March 10, the anniversary of his escape from the Norbulingka Palace on March 17, 1959 and not far from his 90th birthday on July 6.

Sharing his thoughts, the noted photographer said that Dalai Lama's assertion in the book about the new Dalai Lama makes some things very clear.

On the issue of reincarnation, the Tibetan spiritual leader has said that since the purpose of the Dalai Lama is to carry on the work of his predecessor, the new Dalai Lama will be born in the free world.

The Delhi based journalist who has documented the social, political and economic life of the Tibetans inside Tibet and also those living in exile, says the Dalai Lama's tone is now different and this statement makes a few things more clear than they were. "He is very decisive and smart. Many people think that he is just a monk. He is a great monk statesman and his timing of announcements, making statements, taking decisions, is remarkable. There have been occasions in the last few decades when his supporters got a bit confused when he said that he is really not to ask for independence for Tibet and he is ready to negotiate with China provided they give genuine autonomy to the Tibetan people."

He pointed out that many supporters of the Dalai Lama were unhappy that he suddenly looked like giving up the cause of free, independent Tibet but now it seems that he has already tried with China. "He gave them enough time by offering that he was ready to accept genuine autonomy. I see that now his tone is different and he is more decisive and assertive because he has now realized that perhaps his offer made no impact on the Chinese who were rather going far ahead in what he was fearing in destruction of Tibetan identity, cultural genocide and denial of human rights to the Tibetans."

He said that many people are expecting Tibet to cross a milestone on July 6 when the Dalai Lama will make a specific announcement on reincarnation on his 90th birthday.

Asked to comment on the Chinese spokesperson statement regarding reincarnation of the Dalai Lama, "This statement of Chinese government and their party leaders talking of a system that governs reincarnation, is laughable.... They don't believe in religion. Marxism outrightly rejects the idea of past life or next life. Can you believe that the Communist Party of China came out in 2007 with a law. It was titled 'Order number 5 which says that no incarnate Lama

including the Dalai Lama has any right to take birth without the permission of Communist Party of China and that too permission according to the law they made. A lama who has to reincarnate must have in advance a certified stamped paper, permission of the Communist Party of China before taking birth."

Dismissing the Chinese embassy spokesperson's claim on the reincarnation system and that the recognition and approval of the 14th Dalai Lama by the then central government, Kranti said this is propaganda and an attempt at rewriting history. "When the Dalai Lama was acknowledged as Dalai Lama, he was five years old and there was a ceremony in Lhasa which was attended by hundreds of diplomats and photographers from around the world. The Chinese representative was there among so many guests. To now claim that the Chinese representative who presided over the function and it was the Beijing government which certified the 14th Dalai Lama's enthronement shows that the Chinese are miserable." In response to the Dalai Lama's observation that it is really for the Tibetans to decide whether they want the institution of the Dalai Lama to continue and his dropping a bombshell on the Chinese before his 90th birthday with his statement, Vijay Kranti said, "Ya, you can call it bombshell but he has made a very clear announcement. He keeps the Chinese guessing. In 2011 when he made a very clear announcement about the future of the institution of the Dalai Lama, he was still 14 years away from his 90th birthday."

On the Dalai Lama saying that it is the moral responsibility of the Tibetans to speak on behalf of Tibetans inside Tibet and that by doing so, they are neither anti China nor splittist, Vijay said, "He is talking of exiled Tibetans who are living in free world who are talking about the Tibetan cause. I can tell you that the voice of the Tibetans living inside Tibet under Chinese occupation is more determined and strong compared to those living in the free world. The Chinese government installed a Panchen Lama of their choice and arrested the real Panchen Lama. We still don't know the whereabouts of the Panchen Lama or his family but the Tibetans have refused to accept the government sponsored Panchen Lama. They still have to pay people money to go and sit in his congregations. This shows that the resistance inside Tibet is very strong against China."

The Tibet scholar said that the Dalai Lama's leadership and vision has shown wonderful results. "It is because of Dalai Lama's leadership and vision and the Tibetans that India has become over last 70 years the largest reservoir of genuine Tibetan and Buddhist culture."

Mao Wanted Him Captured—How the Dalai Lama Outplayed the Chinese Army 65 Years Ago and Escaped the CCP

18 March 2025, [Republic](#), Yuvraj Tyagi

In March 1959, Tenzin Gyatso, the 14th Dalai Lama, made a daring escape from Lhasa, Tibet, disguised as a soldier.



Despite exile, the Dalai Lama's escape remains a powerful symbol of Tibetan resistance and the ongoing struggle against Chinese rule. | Image: AP

On a cold, tense night in March 1959, Tenzin Gyatso, the 14th Dalai Lama, made a daring escape from Lhasa, Tibet, narrowly avoiding what could have been a Chinese-orchestrated abduction—or worse. Disguised as a common soldier, Tibet's 23-year-old spiritual leader embarked on a harrowing journey through the Himalayas, pursued by Chinese forces that had already tightened their grip on the Tibetan capital. His flight was not just a personal bid for safety but a desperate act to preserve Tibetan identity, culture, and sovereignty—all of which were under systematic attack by the People's Republic of China.

Beijing's Betrayal: The Manufactured "Liberation" of Tibet

To understand the Dalai Lama's escape, one must first understand the blatant betrayal of Tibet by Communist China. Following the collapse of the Qing Dynasty, Tibet declared itself an independent nation in 1913—a reality the world largely acknowledged, despite China's reluctant denial. But the illusion of Tibetan self-rule was shattered in 1950, when Mao Zedong's People's Liberation Army (PLA) invaded the region, claiming to bring "liberation" while actually launching an unprovoked military takeover.

The Seventeen Point Agreement, signed under duress in 1951, was nothing more than a thinly veiled surrender document. China promised Tibet "autonomy" but quickly reneged, stationing thousands of troops in Lhasa and eroding Tibetan governance, religious freedoms, and cultural practices. The so-called peaceful liberation turned into an outright occupation.

By the late 1950s, China's rule had grown even more suffocating, with brutal crackdowns on Tibetan traditions and an aggressive push to Sinicize the

region. Tibetan monks, the backbone of the country's spiritual life, were persecuted and executed, while China tightened economic control, leaving Tibetans impoverished. This systematic cultural erosion set the stage for one of the most dramatic moments in Tibet's history—the Dalai Lama's escape.

The Uprising: Tibet Stands Its Ground

Tensions exploded on March 10, 1959, when the Dalai Lama received a suspicious invitation from Chinese General Zhang Jingwu. He was asked to attend a cultural performance at Chinese military headquarters—without his bodyguards. Tibetans immediately saw this for what it was: a trap. Fearing an attempted kidnapping or assassination, tens of thousands of Tibetans surrounded the Dalai Lama's residence at Norbulingka Palace, forming a human shield to protect their leader.



Chinese Troops March Through The Tibetan Capital Of Lhasa During The Chinese Invasion Of Tibet. | Archives The mass protests quickly turned into an armed uprising against Chinese occupation. Lhasa became a battlefield, with Tibetan resistance fighters engaging the PLA's heavily armed forces. Beijing responded with brute force, shelling monasteries, homes, and protest sites. It was clear: if the Dalai Lama stayed, he would be captured or killed.

The Escape: A Race Against Death

On the night of March 17, 1959, as Chinese artillery fire echoed through the city, the Dalai Lama, now disguised as a Chinese soldier, slipped past his anxious followers and into the darkness. With a handful of trusted officials, family members, and bodyguards, he began a hazardous trek across the mountains, avoiding Chinese patrols, bitter cold, and treacherous terrain. The journey to India was brutal. Travelling mostly at night, the group took refuge in monasteries and Khampa guerrilla camps, narrowly avoiding PLA search parties that scoured the mountains for Tibet's fleeing leader. Every step was a risk—capture would mean certain imprisonment or execution at the hands of the Chinese regime.

Meanwhile, Beijing scrambled to control the international narrative, falsely claiming that the Dalai Lama had been abducted by Tibetan rebels. Mao Zedong himself was initially uncertain about the

escape's implications, contemplating whether allowing the Dalai Lama to leave could serve China's interests. Ultimately, the Communist Party chose a different route: crush all Tibetan resistance and rewrite history to fit their agenda.

Safe in India, but Tibet Burns

On March 31, 1959, after two gruelling weeks, the Dalai Lama crossed into Arunachal Pradesh, welcomed by Indian authorities. Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru granted him asylum, recognizing the gravity of China's aggression in Tibet. The Dalai Lama eventually settled in Dharamshala, where he established the Tibetan Government-in-Exile—a move that infuriated Beijing.

As Tibet's spiritual leader found safety, his homeland faced unimaginable brutality. The PLA launched a merciless crackdown, executing thousands, imprisoning monks, and destroying monasteries. The Tibetan resistance was crushed, and Tibet's identity was systematically dismantled under the guise of Chinese "modernization". The world largely watched in silence.

Decades of Repression, but the Fire Still Burns

More than six decades have passed since the Dalai Lama's dramatic escape, but Tibet's suffering continues. China has doubled down on its authoritarian grip, flooding Tibet with Han Chinese settlers, enforcing Mandarin education over the Tibetan language, and brutally suppressing any hint of resistance. Self-immolation protests by Tibetan monks have become a desperate cry for help—one that Beijing ignores and the international community often fails to act upon.

Despite this, the Dalai Lama's escape remains a symbol of resilience. His unwavering advocacy for Tibet, despite exile, has kept the Tibetan cause alive. And while China boasts about its economic development projects in Tibet, it cannot erase the truth: Tibet was never voluntarily part of China, and its people continue to resist Communist rule in every way they can.

As Beijing tries to erase Tibetan identity, the memory of the Dalai Lama's escape serves as a reminder of the lengths China will go to maintain control—and the strength of those who refuse to be silenced.

Dalai Lama & his six decades of exile —withering goals?

17 March 2025, [Daily Excelsior](#), Col Satish Singh Lalotra

'If we believe that tomorrow will be better, we can bear a hardship today'—Thich Nhat Hanh. Faith and hope are twin facets of life that have within themselves the intrinsic quality of moving mountains, leave alone human beings. It is this vague but complete assuredness in these twin facets of life that

are the corner stones of any change which we wish to aspire. Faith and hope are complimentary to each other, with either of them reinforcing each one's quality and deriving strength for their survivability. Faith is grounded in the reality of the past, hope is looking to the reality of the future. Without faith, there is no hope and without hope there is no true faith. The invitation seemed innocuous: A Chinese General asked if the 14th Dalai Lama would like to see performance by a Chinese dance troupe. But when he was told to come to the Chinese military headquarters without soldiers or armed body guards, according to his official biography, the Tibetans sensed a trap. After years of guerrilla warfare between Tibetan rebels and the Chinese soldiers in a land that China considered to be its own territory, the friendly overture seemed suspicious enough that on the day of performance thousands of Tibetan protestors surrounded the Dalai Lama's palace in Lhasa to keep him from being abducted, arrested or killed. Over the following few days, the protests expanded into declarations of Tibetan independence and the mobilizing of Tibetan rebel troops to take on the PLA. The state oracle, the Dalai Lama's advisor urged him to flee. On this day of 17 th March in 1959, Tibet's spiritual and political leader all of 23 years in age disguised himself as a soldier and slipped through the crowds outside the 'Norbulingka' palace he would never see again. Something of these feelings of hope and faith must have played out in the mind of HH Dalai Lama when he headed towards India along with his close confidants including his immediate relations making their good escape from the famous 'Norbulingka' palace in Lhasa with the Chinese army (PLA) hot on their heels. Lot of water has flown down the rivers of Tibet since then to have an objective assessment of the goals with which the spiritual leader set his foot on the sacred land of India, secured in the firm belief that thousands of years of cultural cum religious ties between India & Tibet will see him as well his people through this predicament.

Back in Tibet, thousands died fighting the Chinese forces. All fighting rebels who had survived the revolt were deported, and those fleeing the scene reported that Chinese troops burned down corpses in (Lhasa) for 12 hours. Over the centuries, the mountain locked nation of Tibet has often been overrun by invaders- Mongols, Manchus, and Gurkhas, but most often the Chinese. Whenever China was strong, it would send a garrison to occupy Lhasa, and conversely whenever China was weak Tibetans would drive the garrison out. That discord endures even today albeit with changed and nuanced approach by the PLA. Tibetans can still be arrested if caught with the writings or a picture of their spiritual leader, a Noble prize winner. What were the cherished goals of HH Dalai Lama and has he been able to achieve them when he braved the mighty 'Karpo

pass' one of the highest on his flight route which began on 17 th March and ended finally with his setting foot on the soil of the then NEFA (Arunachal Pradesh) on 31 st March 1959? But before that -the official Chinese version of his fleeing to India. As per the Chinese, the Dalai Lama fled to India due to a failed attempt "to maintain the serfdom in the region, under which the majority of Tibetans were slaves leading a life of unimaginable misery'. What a sham of pretension on the part of the Chinese which they maintain even after 66 long years of their illegal occupation of Tibet. What options do the spiritual & political leader of Tibet harbour in order to pull out his masses from the morass that has seen six decades roll out in front of them?

DALAI LAMA'S GOAL WHILE FLEEING OUT OF TIBET.

When Dalai Lama fled to India in 1959, his cherished goals were to protect the Tibetan culture, and identity as also to establish a democratically based Tibetan government in exile. Overtime his stance saw a shifting from Tibetan independence to Tibetan autonomy that gained traction somewhere in 1970s after the US stopped its 'Tibetan programme' spearheaded mainly by the CIA. A proponent of the so called 'Middle way', this graded climb-down of the spiritual leader's stance is contested in many ways by his own people. **CHANGING WORLD ORDER & DALAI LAMA'S DILEMMA.**

The fast changing global world order was never ever in a state of such flux as it has been now in the last few years more so with the Gaza & Ukraine conflagration tempting the multipolar world to hedge its fortunes often at the expense of suffering countries. The fact that Trump 2.0 dispensation has done some clear somersaults with regards to both wars and in many ways found its long cherished goals of establishing world peace taking a beating and siding with the aggressor (read Putin) to reach a middle ground in abating the Ukraine war , should serve a warning to the spiritual leader of Tibet that he may have to do a rejig while asking unqualified support from the US for his Tibetan cause. Though it was under Trump 1.0 administration way back in December 2020 when America underwent a major shift in its foreign policy decision with regard to Tibet and signed the 'Tibetan policy and support act -2020' (TPSA) into a law; a move that dramatically strengthened US policy on Tibet , it remains to be seen how Trump 2.0 will square up to the Dragon's appetite of subjugation of Tibetan populace. Built on the historic 'Tibet policy act of 2002' , the TPSA makes it official US policy that decisions regarding the reincarnation of the Dalai Lama are exclusively within the authority of the current Dalai Lama ,Tibetan Buddhist leaders and the Tibetan people. Similarly the Biden administration carrying forward the baton from the Trump 1.0 administration put the seal of approval last June 2024

when it passed the RTA (Resolve Tibet act) which is much more stringent in its applicability and a bold successor to the earlier two acts preceding it few years back. This RTA enjoins China to define exact geographical limits of Tibet after more than 7 decades of Chinese intrusion which tantamount to saying that the Chinese intrusion is temporary in nature, and hence they should vacate the occupied area. Does the spiritual leader say so and tow this American line of thought, since his holiness doesn't say in so many words that China is an occupier force and wants only autonomy for Tibet rather than full independence as enshrined by the majority of his clan in their numerous utterances. With the spiritual leader stepping into his 90 th year this July 2025, have the goals once held as supreme by the leader mellowed down or changed direction under the onslaught of time and tide of events? In fact there is an increasing dichotomy between the spiritual leader and his followers as also how China views the succession of the present Dalai Lama to the 15 th in line of the said lineage. As per past utterances of the present 14 th Dalai Lama , he wants this centuries old tradition of succession to be left to his people -i.e whether to continue it or break off from this sacred act. If this is what is the thinking of the present spiritual leader of Tibet, then the very act of his seeking asylum in India comes into question. Since he fled Tibet primarily to save himself, his people from Chinese persecution who believed in the very ethos of Tibetan culture; and he being the progenitor of all that stands today as Tibetan exclusivity in an increasingly 'Sino- centrism' of Tibet where does this purported stand of his leaves him? Moreover with China considering the present 14 th Dalai Lama as a 'proponent of separatism' fanning the same sentiment in Tibet , and with no change of heart even after 66 long years in the leaders of mainland China are there any meeting grounds between the two entities? Though last June 2024 a US bipartisan delegation consisting of speaker Nancy Pelosi and house foreign affairs committee chairman Michael Mac Caul visited Dharamshala and met the spiritual leader and the big wigs of CTA (CentralTibetan administration) after passing of the RTA (Resolve Tibet act), did the spiritual leader say in so many words his appreciation of the above mentioned act which actually is a booster shot in the arms of the Tibetans asking for independence from China? Has the time come for the Tibetan diaspora living in various quarters of the world as well as in Tibet per se to 'step up the gas' on their spiritual leader to come clean on his stance with his one leg already in the grave (not withstanding his present good health). There are already rumblings inside Washington's Asian allies that US may abandon Taiwan if the island nation's tensions escalate with China. The Trump administration's stance on the Ukraine conflict with the US secretary of state Pete Hegseth saying

'Washington prioritising deterring war with China' in the Indo-Pacific because of the alleged threat to US core national interests should serve as a wakeup call to the spiritual leader of Tibet. Can not the same fate befall on Tibet? In fact the present Dalai Lama is the perfect person who has been first hand witness at age 23 to the sheer atrocities by the Chinese way back in the 1950s, to understand the devious mindset of this yellow race. Can his successor, the 15 th Dalai Lama who will be but natural younger in age bring forth the same intensity in his views that once were held by the present 14 th Dalai Lama with regards to his Tibetan identity and culture? Is it any brainer that for a nation-state to survive and leave its lasting impression in the comity of nations there are certain symbols which go with the very idea of that country? Symbols like the national flag, language, and a gigantic personality in terms of bringing forth to fruition a country free from the shackles of colonial legacy are the edifices on which is built a nation-state. Same when extrapolated in terms of Tibet, its national flag and its national cum spiritual leader HH Dalai Lama comes to the mind. Are they all in sync? No I do not think so. There seems to be a yawning gap cum dilemma what the national flag of Tibet portrays to the world at large vis a vis Dalai Lama's stated stand. Incidentally this flag has been the epitome of Tibetan independence as also adopted by all the resistance fighters and Tibetan organizations worldwide.

Is the purported stand by HH Dalai Lama (one of the Tibetan national symbols) asking for mere autonomy and not full independence from Chinese occupation not going against the second national symbol (Tibetan flag) that has been the standard bearer of Tibetan independence all along?

THE WAY FORWARD

As things stand today, the only way forward for the Tibetans is to stick to their long stated demand of full independence and nothing short of it. Any dilution of this stand and going along with the changed stance of grant of autonomy will not only embolden the Chinese hegemony in that area but will also be counterproductive to the very cause of a free and independent Tibet. Not only this, it will force the Tibetan diaspora spread all-over the world to question the very 'raison d etre' of their struggles since decades. With talks of 15 th Dalai Lama doing rounds, a very neat job is already cut out for him. Will he follow the same footsteps as that of his predecessor? Will he realign the cherished goals that seem to have been misaligned or will he heed to the call of expediencies of the times? As the famous Vietnamese Buddhist thinker cum philosopher 'ThichNhatHanh' said— 'If we believe tomorrow will be better, we can bear a hardship today'... Will not the same question be asked by countless Tibetans if bearing hardships were worth

the effort? Have the goals of his holiness withered over? Think it over.

66 years after Dalai Lama fled Tibet, his hopes for return fade

17 March 2025, [Scroll](#), Mayank Chhaya

The spiritual leader, who escaped from Lhasa on March 17, 1959, has written a new book in which he is unapologetically candid about the Chinese leadership.

There was a time not too long ago when Tenzin Gyatso, the 14th Dalai Lama, was optimistic about returning to his homeland. Now, 66 years after his dramatic escape from Lhasa, Tibet, his recently published book, unambiguously critical of Chinese President Xi Jinping, only decreases any prospects of his return home.

He was barely 24-years old when he was forced to flee the 330-year-old Potala Palace, the traditional abode of the Dalai Lamas, amid threats to his life from the Chinese army.

Today, as he approaches his 90th birthday, just four months away on July 6, his ancestral home remains but a hazy memory for the leader of the Tibetan Buddhist tradition of incarnate Lamas.

"On March 17, 1959, in the darkness and frozen air of the night, I slipped out of the main gate of the Norbulingka Palace disguised and wearing a *chuba*, an everyday layman's form of clothing," he writes in his new book *Voice for the Voiceless: Over Seven Decades of Struggle with China for My Land and My People*, published by William Morrow.

Unapologetically candid

The 256-page book was released on March 11, six days before the 66th anniversary of his escape from Lhasa. Over his years of forced exile, the Dalai Lama has remained remarkably free of rancour against the Chinese. However, his observations in the book about the Chinese leadership generally and Xi particularly are unapologetically candid.

"Judging by Xi's last decade in office, when it comes to individual freedom and everyday life, China seems to be reverting to the oppressive policies of Mao's time, but now enforced through state-of-the-art digital technologies of surveillance and control," he writes.

This view reduces the possibility of a thaw in the permafrost-like relationship between the two sides.

The last talks between the Dalai Lama's representatives and the Chinese government took place in January, 2010 in Beijing. At the time, Lodi Gyari, the lead Tibetan negotiator, had said, "We do not see any reason why we cannot find a common ground...if the Chinese leadership has the sincerity and the political will to move forward."

In the 15 years since then, Beijing has increasingly appeared to wage a battle of attrition counting on the Dalai Lama's mortality.

During the 12 years of Xi Jinping's presidency, the Tibetan issue and within that the Dalai Lama's standing, have receded in the memory of the international community.

Looming equally large is the question of the Dalai Lama's succession, something Beijing is determined to control and which the Dalai Lama is determined not to allow. In the book, he writes that his successor will be born in the "free world" – clearly not China.

He addresses the succession question thus: "Since the purpose of a reincarnation is to carry on the work of the predecessor, the new Dalai Lama will be born in the free world so that the traditional mission of the Dalai Lama – that is, to be the voice for universal compassion, the spiritual leader of Tibetan Buddhism, and the symbol of Tibet embodying the aspirations of the Tibetan people – will continue."

Beijing has long held that it is for the Chinese state to pick a successor. This prospect is profoundly troubling for some six million Tibetans in Tibet and over 100,000 in exile elsewhere, mainly in India.

Beijing's approach on the question of succession and reincarnation is essentially a standoff between an individual's mortality and a state's often misguided sense of permanence. In Beijing's logic a new Dalai Lama handpicked by the Chinese state would be a powerful tool to strengthen its control over not just Tibet but Tibetan Buddhism as well.

Advertisement

Distinct identity

In his book, the Dalai Lama reiterates his position on a negotiated settlement with China over the future of Tibet. But he also steadfastly sticks to his decades-long insistence that Tibet and Tibetans are a distinct identity separate from the Han Chinese. And thus, throughout his exile in India, he has focused on preserving Tibet's culture, language, ecology and religion, which he specifically refers to in his book.

"We Tibetans are the people who have traditionally inhabited the Tibetan plateau for millennia and have every right to continue to be the custodians in our own homeland," he writes.

He also counters China's oft-repeated argument that Tibet's overall economic development is the ultimate repudiation of the Dalai Lama assertions about Tibet's autonomous ambitions.

"The issue of Tibet is not about the matter of economic development, which we acknowledge as having improved significantly since the economic liberalization of the People's Republic of China," he writes. "The issue is about a people's need and right to exist in their distinct language, culture, and religious heritage. Since the people inside Tibet have no freedom to speak out, it has fallen to me especially, since I came into exile in 1959, to be the voice of the voiceless."

He has long apprehended that Tibet's identity as a unique civilisation faces erasure, a prospect that has worsened with Beijing tightening its stranglehold on Tibet.

The book's timing in the runup to the Dalai Lama's 90th birthday and the 66th anniversary of his escape is unlikely to be lost on President Xi. The Dalai Lama's observation that China has returned to the oppressive policies of the Mao era will also hit home, considering Mao's exalted status in certain quarters in China, particularly among Xi's supporters, who may treat the comparison, even a left-handed one, as a badge of honour.

The book notes that for Mao the 1950 invasion of Tibet by the Red Army was a case of "blatant land grab of an independent nation by force". Since then, of course, China has cast the invasion as reclaiming what belonged to it historically.

The Dalai Lama met Mao in September 1954 in Beijing, when the latter was 61-years old to his 19. The 16-year-old Panchen Lama, considered second in importance to the Dalai Lama, who also joined the meeting, described Mao as "warm and welcoming".

After their hour-long interaction as the teenage Dalai Lama prepared to leave, Mao told him, "Your coming to Beijing is coming to your own home. Whenever you come to Beijing, you can call on me... Don't be shy; if you need anything, just tell me directly."

vvstrive for a society without national boundaries – these are excellent ideas," he writes.

In fact, he says he used to describe himself as "half-Buddhist" and "half-Marxist". This view changed over the years on discovering that Marxism lacks in compassion. In the case of China, in the Dalai Lama's judgment, Marxism has morphed into Leninism, "with state control of the people by the (Communist) Party as the primary objective."

Overall, the Dalai Lama's optimism as a monk and its implication for the future of the Tibetan cause run counter to his strong views expressed in the book about the Chinese leadership.

Why the choice of the next Dalai Lama is such a sensitive issue for Beijing

17 March 2025, [SCMP](#), Yuanyue Dang

The exiled Tibetan spiritual leader has hinted his successor may be born outside China, setting the scene for intense controversy

The Dalai Lama has been in exile in India since the People's Liberation Army (PLA) crushed an armed uprising in Tibet in 1959.

As he approaches his 90th birthday in July, the controversy over his successor is expected to reignite, with possible implications for social stability and China's relations with the United States and India.

According to Tibetan Buddhist tradition, the Dalai Lama will be reincarnated and he has repeatedly said he would resolve the issue this year.

In a new book published this month, he hinted that his successor would be born outside China – a proposal swiftly rejected by Beijing which described him as “a political exile who uses religion as a cover for anti-China secessionist activities and has no right to represent the Tibetan people”.

Here is the background to the controversy and the likely implications for the future.

Who is the Dalai Lama and why is his reincarnation so important?

According to Tibetan Buddhist tradition, the Dalai Lama is the political and spiritual leader of Tibet. When a living Buddha such as the Dalai Lama dies, he will be reincarnated as a young child, who must be found through a series of searches and rituals.

Traditionally, the selection was made by respected Tibetan monks. In the 18th century during the Qing dynasty (1644-1911), the Qianlong emperor attempted to use a lottery style ceremony known as the “golden urn”.

The ceremony was revived by the Communist Party and incorporated into official regulations in 2007, along with a clause explicitly banning interference by overseas individuals and parties.

The current Dalai Lama, the 14th, was selected using different methods in 1937, a period of war and turmoil inside China.

There have long been fears that the reincarnation of the Dalai Lama could lead to social unrest in China’s Tibetan areas.

Beijing insists it has the right to approve the appointment of all senior Tibetan Buddhist figures – something strongly contested by the Dalai Lama and his followers – and it is not expected to accept a reincarnation from outside its borders.

According to tradition, the next Dalai Lama must be recognised by the current Panchen Lama, whose own selection in 1995 was highly controversial with two rival candidates emerging.

The whereabouts of the boy recognised by the Dalai Lama are not known, although Beijing has said he has graduated from university and is now working and “living a normal life”.

Meanwhile, the one chosen by Beijing holds the position and is now a member of the Standing Committee of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference, the country’s top political advisory body.

Why is the Dalai Lama in exile?

The Dalai Lama briefly ruled Tibet as a young man and for a time tried to work with Beijing.

According to China’s State Council Information Office, Tibet has been under China’s rule since the 13th

century, with the Yuan, Ming and Qing dynasties all stationing officials there to manage local affairs.

In 1950, a year after the Communist victory in the civil war led to the foundation of the People’s Republic, the PLA entered the region after a victory over Tibetan forces in the Battle of Chamdo.

The following year, Beijing signed a 17-point agreement with local political elites that promised autonomy for the region and a commitment to retain its political system and cultural practices. It also agreed to keep the Dalai Lama as Tibet’s leader and merge his army into the PLA.

In 1954, the 19-year-old spent five months in Beijing studying Mandarin and Marxism. He not only met Mao Zedong, but also developed a good relationship with another senior official, Xi Zhongxun, the father of Chinese President Xi Jinping.

He also attended the first session of the National People’s Congress, China’s top legislative body, and was elected vice-chairman of its standing committee. But five years later, relations between the two sides broke down after the PLA put down an armed uprising and asserted full control over Tibet’s political system and religious practices.

The Dalai Lama went into exile in India along with thousands of others and he has never been able to return to China.

Instead, he became an enemy of Beijing, accused of creating chaos in Tibet – including waves of unrest in the late 1980s and 2008 – and being a separatist.

Although the two sides held several rounds of talks between 2002 and 2010 to resolve the tensions, they achieved little.

In 2011, the Dalai Lama stepped down as head of Tibet’s administration-in-exile but retained his religious role.

How does the Tibet issue affect US-China relations?

Washington was deeply hostile to the Communist takeover of China and helped the Dalai Lama escape. Declassified documents show that the CIA also supported Tibetan guerilla forces at the time.

Several US presidents have met the Dalai Lama, the most recent being Barack Obama in 2016, while US officials have also made regular visits.

Beijing opposes any such contact from any country’s government as interference in China’s internal affairs.

The US State Department recognises the Tibetan autonomous region as part of China, but Beijing has been angered by a number of acts that it sees as challenging its sovereignty.

For instance, the Tibetan Policy and Support Act, passed in 2019, stipulates that the reincarnation of the Dalai Lama should be determined solely by Tibetan Buddhists and that Chinese officials who interfere in this process will be sanctioned.

The Promoting a Resolution to the Tibet-China Dispute Act, passed last year, aims to fund increasing support

for Tibet and counter what it describes as “disinformation” from Beijing about the region’s history, people and institutions.

What about China-India relations?

India has provided a haven for Tibetan exiles and the Dalai Lama has been based in the hill town of Dharamsala for decades.

However, New Delhi’s stance has varied over the years. In 2003, it recognised the Tibet autonomous region as part of China and promised not to allow Tibetans in India to engage in activities aimed at splitting China. In return Beijing recognised New Delhi’s rule over Sikkim, which it annexed in 1975.

But Beijing and New Delhi have never been able to resolve their long -running border dispute, which led to a war in 1962.

Much of the disputed territory is along the Tibetan border, which was drawn up during the British colonial era.

Following the most recent deadly border clash in 2020, India stepped up contacts with the Dalai Lama, including a phone conversation with Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2021.

More recently China and India have been trying to improve relations and New Delhi has not expressed a clear position on the Dalai Lama’s reincarnation.

The Dalai Lama’s Testament

17 March 2025, [Council on Foreign Relations](#), Elliot Abrams

The fourteenth Dalai Lama has written scores of books, most of them about compassion, wisdom, happiness, and enlightenment, and two of them about his own life. Now, as he approaches ninety years of age in July, he has written what is likely his last book—and the most political, about Tibet and the People’s Republic of China (PRC).

Named the next Dalai Lama at the age of two, he fled into exile in 1959 at the age of twenty-three. The “voiceless” people in *Voice for the Voiceless* are the people of Tibet, and here the Dalai Lama recounts his roughly sixty-five years of attempting to lead his people from his refuge in India. He tells the story of his efforts to negotiate with the Communist Chinese—and (though the term is perhaps inappropriate in this context) he pulls no punches.

The term “Communist Chinese” appears in the very first paragraph of the preface to the book, and readers are left in no doubt about the nature of Chinese rule. As he puts it, “The simple fact is that in so far as the Tibetans on the ground are concerned, the Communist Chinese rule in Tibet remains that of a foreign, unwanted, and oppressive occupying power.” He describes the brutal suppression of the Tibetan uprising in 1959 in searing words: “atrocities that I

found difficult to believe for their levels of depravity.... forced sterilization, crucifixion, vivisection, disemboweling, dismemberment, beheading, burning, beating to death, burying alive...and other horrors.”

The Dalai Lama has tried, as he recounts here, to negotiate with the PRC government to improve his people’s situation. As a teenager, he visited Beijing and met Mao in 1954—who told him “religion is poison.” The young Buddhist leader was interested in the theoretical Marxist opposition to exploitation but concluded even then that “what is lacking in Marxism is compassion” and he could not accept “the deliberate promotion of hate through class struggle.” He met with Zhou Enlai several times in 1956 and was given many assurances that any “excesses” committed by Chinese officials in Tibet would be corrected. Moreover, Tibet could enjoy autonomy within the PRC. But he writes that “by midsummer (1957), it had become clear that virtually everything I had been told by Zhou himself and by him on behalf of Mao had been falsehoods and dissimulations.”

When the Chinese army seized total control in 1959, the twenty-five-year-old Dalai Lama fled to India, which has given him and the growing Tibetan exile community around Dharamsala safe refuge ever since. That was not the end of his efforts to negotiate with the PRC, a story he tells here. But as he writes, “there were only two substantial periods of discussions with Beijing.” The first was when Deng Xiaoping was the communist party leader, and Deng told the Dalai Lama’s brother in 1979 that “except for independence everything is negotiable. Everything can be discussed.” But the talks that took place proved that “there was no space yet for a substantive conversation.”

The Dalai Lama then, in the 1980s, made a historic decision to abandon any hope of independence for Tibet and promote instead his “middle way,” which sought autonomy within the PRC. He told the European Parliament in 1988 that he was “expressing our willingness to remain part of the People’s Republic of China, but only with the guarantee of genuine autonomy.” He also began to outline the evolution in his thinking about his own role, and stated that “it was my wish not to take any active part in any future government of Tibet....”

This period of engagement with the PRC ended with its crushing of the freedom demonstration in Tiananmen Square in 1989. “The process that had begun in 1979 with Deng Xiaoping’s statement to my brother... that apart from independence, everything could be discussed, had come to an end.” Deng was the last Communist Chinese leader the Dalai Lama knew, and after 1989, there were few meetings. Over the ensuing years, the Chinese communist hostility to the Dalai Lama increased: in 1994 a complete ban on

any photographs or portraits of him in either public spaces or even private homes was adopted.

But a second period of dialogue began in 2002, with a new series of meetings between representatives of the Dalai Lama (led by Lodi Gyari, a key adviser of the Dalai Lama for decades) and the PRC. There were nine rounds of discussions, the last one in January 2010, but “at no point did the Chinese side present any substantive proposals.” There were further informal and confidential contacts through individual Chinese, all the way up to 2019. But, as he writes of these decades of efforts at serious discussions with the PRC, “looking back with the benefit of hindsight, I wonder if there was ever a genuine intention on the part of the Chinese leadership for substantive discussions.... What mattered to China was to be seen talking, rather than to actually talk.”

He also describes an interesting facet of his negotiations with the PRC: he was focused on Tibet, but the Chinese communist officials were focused mostly on him. That is, the Chinese were trying to get him to return to Tibet as if his return would suggest that the issue of Tibet was now resolved. As he puts it, from 1979 on, the Chinese position has been all about his own status “with no attempt at addressing the real issue—the well-being of the Tibetan people.”

The Dalai Lama candidly describes the situation today as “grim. The policies of Xi Jinping, who visited Tibet in 2021 (the first visit of a Chinese leader in more than thirty years) seem to be focused on “tightening of control and intensification of measures aimed at assimilation.” For example, young Tibetans are educated only in Chinese, so it becomes their first language. There is direct Communist Party control over monasteries and even more pervasive surveillance. “Increasingly the Tibetans inside Tibet are being made to feel that what is wrong with them from the Chinese authorities’ perspective is simply that they are Tibetans.”

I first came in contact with the Tibetans when I served as assistant secretary of state for Human Rights in the Reagan administration. Lodi Gyari, who then headed the office of Tibet in Washington, asked to come see me. I happily agreed and asked him to come to my office. This was shocking and unacceptable to the China Desk. The Tibetans could not be allowed in the building lest the Chinese Communists be offended, and I was told to call the meeting off. When I protested to the Secretary, the compromise was that I could meet with them— but not at the State Department. So, we ended up meeting in a hotel lobby.

Over the years, I kept up my contact with the Tibetans, especially with Lodi Gyari, and finally, when serving on the White House staff, I got to meet the Dalai Lama when he visited President George W. Bush. In fact, the Dalai Lama has met with both Presidents Bush, Bill Clinton, and Barack Obama, though he was not

granted a meeting with President Trump or President Biden. In the elaborate efforts to honor the Dalai Lama but not overly offend the Chinese communists, all these meetings took place in the White House but not in the Oval Office. The theory is that the Dalai Lama is not a head of state. But the real reason is a sort of kowtow to the PRC.

It is certainly correct that he is not a head of state, due to his own changes to Tibet’s political structure. At age seventy-five in 2011, he fully ended his own political role and established both an elected executive and parliamentary body. “I said that rule by kings and religious figures was outdated, and we had to follow the trend of the free world, which is toward democracy.” But numerous religious leaders get Oval Office meetings, so the refusal ever to grant one to the Dalai Lama is hard to defend.

In an interesting reflection on world politics, he wonders about the contrast between Mongolia, which maintained its independence, and his beloved Tibet, which lost its own. Could the outcome have been different? He knows that it is partly due to the Soviet Union’s backing for Mongolia’s independence from China and the pressure on Chiang Kai-shek to accept it. He also blames Tibet for not asserting its own independence at the international level after the First World War—not, for example, joining the League of Nations or, later, the United Nations. But that is water over the dam a century ago.

Now, the Dalai Lama writes of the future. He notes that there is now both a Tibetan political leadership and a substantial population of Tibetans living outside Tibet in the free world who can continue the struggle. Whether there will be a fifteenth Dalai Lama is a separate question. He reminds readers that “as early as the 1960s, I have expressed that whether the Dalai Lama institution should continue or not as a matter for the Tibetan people. So, if the Tibetan people feel that the institution has served its purpose, and there is now no longer any need for a Dalai Lama, then the institution will cease, in which case I would be the last Dalai Lama. I have also said that if there is continued need, then there will be the Fifteenth Dalai Lama.”

The problem is how that individual will be chosen. When the last Panchen Lama (the second most important Tibetan Buddhist leader) was chosen, he was immediately seized by communist authorities and has not been seen in thirty years. In an effort to avoid such a disastrous situation after his own death, the fourteenth Dalai Lama has said that only a reincarnation “done through traditional Tibetan Buddhist methods” can be accepted by the Tibetan people and Tibetan Buddhists around the world. Moreover, he has added that “since the purpose of reincarnation is to carry on the work of the predecessor, the new Dalai Lama will be born in the free world....” This is a pre-emptive rejection of anyone

selected by the PRC or inside its borders. The “meddling” of the PRC in recognition of the next Dalai Lama is wildly inappropriate, he has noted, because the regime explicitly rejects religion. Here he comments (“half joking”) that “before communist China gets involved in the business of recognizing the reincarnation of lamas, including the Dalai Lama, it should first recognize the reincarnations of its past leaders Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping!”

This volume ends with expressions of gratitude and an appeal to the world not to forget Tibet and its people. The fourteenth Dalai Lama, recognized at age two, has led his people well for three-quarters of a century. The independence of his country has not survived, but his leadership has ensured that its people, culture, and religion have remained visible—crying out against oppression, demanding attention, and seeking only peaceful support in their long struggle against what amounts to cultural genocide. The overused term is appropriate here, given PRC efforts to move Han Chinese to the Tibetan plateau and change its demography, combined with regime suppression of Tibetan language, culture, religion, and traditions. The PRC is not trying to kill the Tibetans, but to erase their identity as a people.

As a Reagan administration official, I used to speak each year at “Captive Nations” events. Those were commemorations of the juridical existence of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, whose forced absorption into the Soviet Union in 1940 had never been accepted by the United States. The attendees were usually aged couples, and I wondered if they thought—as I did—that my brave words about restoring the independence of the Baltic nations were neither persuasive nor very realistic. Yet it happened; all those decades of Captive Nations protests ended in freedom. Those who are demanding not independence but real autonomy for Tibet, with the ability to protect its people and their culture, wonder today when or whether their captive nation will achieve such freedom.

The fourteenth Dalai Lama, for so long a fixture of Tibetan and international life, will not live to see whether his efforts succeed. But he has, in his own life, achieved more for his people than could possibly have been expected, and if Tibetan identity survives, history will point to him as the key figure in that achievement.

VOA, RFA put on Trump-Musk chopping block

16 March 2025, [Tibetan Review](#)

President Donald Trump has on Mar 14 signed an executive order, aimed at gutting the parent agency which runs the US government-funded media outlets *Voice of America* (VOA) and *Radio Free Asia*, among others, in his administration’s latest step to

trim the federal bureaucracy. It is not clear yet what impact this decision will have on the Tibetan services of these two media outlets.

VOA, an international media broadcaster that operates in more than 40 languages online and on radio and television, is overseen by the US Agency for Global Media (USAGM). The agency also funds *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*.

The order says that this – and several other agencies targeted by the Mar 14 order – should eliminate all operations not codified in statute as well as “reduce the performance of their statutory functions and associated personnel to the minimum presence and function required by law.”

The order represents the latest step by Trump to downsize the federal bureaucracy, a task he has largely put in the hands of tech billionaire Elon Musk and his Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE). So far, the DOGE effort has produced potential cuts of more than 100,000 jobs across the 2.3-million-member federal civilian workforce, the freezing of foreign aid, and the cancellation of thousands of programs and contracts, noted *Reuters* Mar 14. The freezing of foreign aid already has a significant adverse effect on Tibetan projects.

The report said some Republicans have accused VOA and other publicly-funded media outlets of being biased against conservatives. Last month (Feb 9), Musk called for VOA and *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty* to be shut down in a post to his X social media platform.

Trump, who clashed with the VOA during his first term, picked former news anchor Kari Lake to be its director for his second. Lake, a staunch ally of the president, has often accused mainstream media of harboring anti-Trump bias. However, in a speech at the Conservative Political Action Conference on Feb 22, Lake said that while she understood calls to completely dismantle VOA, she believed it could be improved.

Meanwhile, some of VOA’s local-language radio stations have stopped broadcasting news reports and switched over to music to fill the airtime, reported *edition.cnn.com* Mar 15, citing listeners.

Even top editors at VOA have been ordered to stop working, so employees expect the broadcaster’s worldwide news coverage to grind to a halt, the report cited half a dozen sources who spoke with it on the condition of anonymity as saying.

“The *Voice of America* has been silenced, at least for now,” a veteran correspondent has said.

While Trump allies argue that the broadcasters are bloated and outdated, advocates say that by dismantling the networks, the United States is ceding the airwaves to China and other world powers, thereby harming American interests abroad. They

have called the broadcasters a bulwark for democracy. Those voices include Republican lawmakers.

“Gutting *Radio Free Asia* and other US Agency for Global Media platforms counters the principles of freedom our nation was founded on and cedes leverage to the Chinese Communist Party, North Korea and other regimes,” Rep. Young Kim, a California Republican who chairs the House Select Committee on East Asia and Pacific, has told *Politicolast* week.

The report continued that the United States has been funding international news and current affairs coverage intended for global audiences for decades. Both Republican and Democratic leaders have supported the attempts to promote accurate news — and democratic values — in places that are saturated by foreign propaganda.

This was in keeping with the agency’s mission statement, codified in law, which is to “inform, engage, and connect people around the world in support of freedom and democracy.”

But the Trump administration has different expectations. An internal memo earlier this month said the mission is to “clearly and effectively present the policies of the Trump Administration around the world,” the report said.

Trump’s order is stated to be in line with Musk’s declaration in February that government-funded international broadcasters should be shut down altogether.

Following Trump’s decision, the American Foreign Service Association released a statement Mar 15, saying it “will mount a vigorous defense of USAGM and the Foreign Service professionals whose expertise is indispensable to its mission.”

The Dalai Lama pre-emptively China on reincarnation

16 March 2025, [The Sunday Guardian](#), Khedroob Thondup

By declaring that his reincarnation will take place outside of China and Tibet, the Dalai Lama is pre-emptively countering Beijing’s attempts to politicize his succession.

The Dalai Lama’s recently released book, “Voice for the Voiceless”, has sent ripples through geopolitical and spiritual landscapes. In this deeply personal and reflective work, the Tibetan spiritual leader not only recounts his decades-long struggle for the autonomy and dignity of his people but also makes a ground-breaking declaration: his next reincarnation will occur outside of China and Tibet. This statement is not merely a spiritual decision but a calculated move with profound political implications.

For centuries, the reincarnation of the Dalai Lama has been a deeply spiritual process, guided by Tibetan Buddhist traditions. However, the Chinese

government has sought to co-opt this process, asserting that the reincarnation must comply with Chinese laws and receive Beijing’s approval. This stance is part of a broader strategy to tighten control over Tibet and its religious institutions, ensuring that the next Dalai Lama would be a figure aligned with Chinese interests.

By declaring that his reincarnation will take place outside of China and Tibet, the Dalai Lama is preemptively countering Beijing’s attempts to politicize his succession. This decision underscores his commitment to preserving the spiritual and cultural integrity of Tibetan Buddhism, free from external interference. It also serves as a message to the international community, highlighting the ongoing struggle for Tibetan autonomy and the lengths to which the Chinese government will go to suppress it.

The Dalai Lama’s announcement is a bold assertion of self-determination, not just for himself but for the Tibetan people as a whole. It challenges the notion that a government—especially one that officially rejects religious beliefs—can dictate the spiritual practices of a people. Moreover, it places the issue of Tibet’s autonomy back into the global spotlight, urging the world to recognize and support the Tibetan cause. This move is not without risks. It could further escalate tensions between the Tibetan exile community and Beijing, potentially leading to increased crackdowns on religious and cultural practices within Tibet. However, for the Dalai Lama, the stakes are clear: the preservation of Tibetan Buddhism and the rights of his people outweigh the potential repercussions.

In “Voice for the Voiceless”, the Dalai Lama reminds us that the struggle for freedom and dignity is a universal one. His decision to reincarnate outside of China and Tibet is a testament to his unwavering commitment to this cause, even in the face of immense challenges. It is a call to action for the global community to stand with Tibet and uphold the principles of justice and self-determination.

India China relations remain opaque

16 March 2025, [Daily Excelsior](#), Harsha Kakar

Addressing his annual press conference in Beijing last Friday, the Chinese foreign minister, Wang Yi, on being questioned on Indo-China ties, mentioned, ‘We should never allow bilateral relations to be defined by the boundary question or specific differences to affect the overall picture of our bilateral ties.’ He added, ‘China always believes that the two should be partners that contribute to each other’s success. A cooperative *pas de deux* of the dragon and the elephant is the only right choice for both sides.’ This was China’s latest outreach to India.

Jaishankar had last met his Chinese counterpart on the sidelines of a G20 foreign ministers meet in Johannesburg last month. Later, speaking at the Japan-India-Africa business forum, Jaishankar, in a veiled attack on China, mentioned, 'Unlike extractive models, India prioritizes capacity-building, skill development and technology transfer, ensuring that African nations not only benefit from investments but also develop self-sustaining growth ecosystems.' It is known that China extracts resources of countries which fail to repay its dues.

Countering Jaishankar, the Chinese Government mouthpiece, The Global Times, in an editorial stated, 'India's criticism of China's investments in Africa is nothing more than a case of sour grapes.' It added, 'some hardline, anti-China voices in India take China's investments in Africa as part of so-called rivalry for leadership over the Global South.' Striking a conciliatory note, the Chinese ambassador, Xu Feihong, mentioned in a recent event in New Delhi, 'The China-India relationship is one of the most important bilateral relationships in the world.' The Chinese military spokesperson commented in Beijing, 'Chinese and Indian militaries are implementing resolutions related to border areas in a compressive and effective manner.'

China continues hinting that it is time to move forward setting aside ongoing tensions along the LAC. The Indian army chief, General Upendra Dwivedi, has repeatedly stated that the situation along the LAC remains 'sensitive but stable' and that the army deployment is 'balanced and robust.' Neither China nor India have shown any inclination to reduce troops along the LAC. On the contrary both nations are enhancing infrastructure conveying that the current phase of peace is only temporary. The global scenario is also changing. Trade wars are likely to be the future with Trump promising reciprocal tariffs on all nations, impacting both China and India, with China facing the brunt. With Zelensky back on track on talks for peace, Trump's possible meeting and reproachment with Putin could change Russia-China ties.

Russia has been forced, due to western actions, to partner with China, an alliance of necessity rather than ideology. Russia has major concerns regarding China, which it has been compelled to ignore, including Beijing's growing influence in Central Asian nations as also its illegal immigration into Eastern Russia, impacting demography. Xi, hoping to keep the alliance alive, spoke to Putin on the third anniversary of the Ukraine war.

PM Modi will be present in Moscow in May to attend the '80th anniversary of Victory in the Great Patriotic War,' a growing sign of Indo-Russia ties. An Indian army contingent is also expected to participate. While India's allies are on the rise, Chinese remain limited.

India conducts military exercises with a host of nations, while China with very few. Simultaneously, the new US administration comprises of China Hawks while being strongly pro-India. The current US Secretary of State, Marc Rubio, has been sanctioned twice by China and is still not permitted to enter the country. The Secretary of Defence, Pete Hegseth, mentioned in Europe that the US's main rival is China and it desires to concentrate its efforts to counter China.

Washington has also removed a sentence mentioning, 'we do not support Taiwan independence' from its Taiwan 'factsheet.' On the contrary it added a line, 'will support Taiwan's membership in international organisations, where applicable.' China objected to the same and its spokesperson commented that the position of the US on Taiwan-related issues has 'seriously regressed.'

The EU has imposed 35% tariffs on Chinese Electronic Vehicles, further hurting the Chinese economy. The Chinese economy is slowing down, with record FDI outflows, and it needs nations where it can invest as also markets where it does not face tariffs. Hence, India is an opportunity it cannot let go. China also holds the rotating Presidency of the SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organization) which it dominates as most members are beholden to China being participants of the BRI (Belt Road Initiative). India's attendance gives the organization global legitimacy and hence Beijing would pull all stops to ensure the presence of PM Modi for the annual summit. Thus, there is sweet talk as also an intent to remove differences and restore normalcy in ties. At the same time, fearing the Indian economic challenge, China is placing blocks on move of manufacturing to India. Beijing blocked export of specialised manufacturing equipment for making iPhones to India. It also stopped FoxConn's Chinese employees from visiting factories in India while recalling those that were already in India. China placed similar restrictions on export of German Tunnel Boring Machines, being manufactured in China. These machines are essential for construction of metro's, railway tunnels and development of infrastructure along the LAC. This was offset when the German manufacturer, Herrenknecht, began assembling/manufacturing the same in Chennai. On one side China seeks to enhance ties with India, while on the other, it plays a double game. This conveys that China fears the west shifting manufacturing from China. With unemployment at alarming levels, Chinese actions are a display of concern of global manufacturing shifting base to India. India, on its part, has neither lifted its ban on Chinese mobile Apps, nor on Chinese investments in local companies nor permitted Chinese press representatives within. Even on direct flights, while

India has agreed in principle, it has yet to implement the same. Simultaneously, India continues with infrastructure development and enhanced deployment along the LAC, sending the message that it will not bend but challenge China. While China sweet talks on enhancing of ties, its actions are contrary and negative. For Beijing, India is a competitor it must suppress. Further, militarily it is aware that India will always be a force to reckon with. India has understood the Chinese game and is playing tough, aware that this is the time to extract the maximum from China.

China to slow the Earth's rotation — Asia tries to stop its terrifying plan

16 March 2025, [The Pulse](#), Kelly L.

China is not being a good neighbor, according to India. Last year, China approved construction of the world's future largest hydropower dam, but apparently the government failed to consider how India and Bangladesh would feel about this.

The site of the dam is the Yarlung Zangbo River in Tibet, which becomes the Brahmaputra River in India and also flows into Bangladesh, and the **potential impact of restricting the water flow** on regions downstream has become a serious concern.

China is cementing its place in renewable power with the world's biggest hydropower dam

China's excitement about building the biggest hydropower dam on Earth is being somewhat dampened by the blowback from India and its neighboring country, Bangladesh. Activists have been loudly protesting the gigantic construction project, which is of such a scale that it's impossible that communities and ecosystems downstream will be unaffected.

The renewable energy project was approved by the Chinese government in Beijing in December 2024. Its location on the lower reaches of Tibet's Yarlung Zangbo River was chosen to capitalize on a stretch where the **water plunges an incredible 6,560 feet** along a section known as the Great Bend. This has huge electricity-generating potential.

The Chinese Xinhua news agency says the hydropower dam will go a long way to achieving the country's net-zero goals and described the mega-project as a safe one that "prioritizes ecological protection."

India feels China's being "dam" inconsiderate. However, it appears that **China failed to adequately engage with stakeholders** outside its borders before taking the important decision. Soon after the news was announced to the rest of the world, India rose up in arms with Bangladesh not far behind.

Indian environmentalists point to the ecological sensitivity of the mountainous

region below the proposed dam site, explaining that harnessing the river and affecting the downstream water flow will have consequences for the northeastern states of India. Bangladesh will also witness the effects further down the line when the Brahmaputra River leaves India and branches into the Jamuna and Old Brahmaputra rivers.

India raised its voice while China made soothing noises. Indian foreign ministry spokesman Randhir Jaiswal **reminded China about the interests of downstream states** and stated that the country is prepared for action:

"We will continue to monitor and take necessary measures to protect our interests."

The Chinese government responded to say that scrupulous and rigorous scientific research was carried out before any firm decisions about the construction of the dam were made. Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Guo Jiakun reassured:

"The project will not have a negative impact on the ecological environment, geological conditions, and the rights and interests related to water resources of downstream countries."

Concerns about the mega-dam extend beyond ecological

Indian and Bangladeshi experts are not backing down, though. Y. Nithiyanandam, the head of the Geospatial Research Programme at the Bengaluru-based Takshashila Institution, drew attention to a **risk of disasters**:

"The region proposed for dam construction is highly susceptible to landslides and is located on a geological fault line that intersects the Yarlung Zangbo. Planning a dam of this magnitude in such complex terrain poses significant risks to downstream regions of India and Bangladesh, especially in the event of a mishap or if there is alteration in the water flow."

Nithiyanandam also highlighted the recent Tibetan earthquake that killed at least 126 people and the region's vulnerability to further disasters of this nature, saying it should be a reminder of the risks of the environment and the unintended consequences that building this mega-dam could have.

China's dam may awaken military conflict

The proposed dam is also near the **heavily militarized border** of India's northeastern state of Arunachal Pradesh, an area that Beijing has claimed and renamed "South Tibet." Indian and Chinese relations deescalated toward the end of 2024 when both sides withdrew their troops from two contested border regions. However, analysts say mistrust lingers and extends to the project.

It's clear that China has great ambitions to rule the renewable power world, but there are concerns that the country is doing too much, too fast. And that's just on Earth. The Asian country has another super-project

in development involving installing a solar version of the Three Gorges Dam in space.

How China Is Weaponizing Education to Erase Tibetan Identity

14 March 2025, [The Diplomat](#), Tsering Dolka Gurung

For China, Sinicizing Tibet's next generation through boarding schools is the ultimate strategy for solidifying its control over the region.

For the past two years, reports have laid bare the systematic erasure of Tibetan identity, and Tibetans across the world have been staging protests, demanding accountability from China. Most recently, on February 18, Tibetan activist Namkyi shared her testimony at the Geneva Summit. At the age of 15, she staged a peaceful protest alongside her sister – an act that led to years of relentless surveillance, intimidation, and repression. She told the summit that Chinese authorities followed her every move until she escaped Tibet for good in 2023.

The weight of China's rule has been growing for decades in Tibet, but incidents over the past few years have revealed an intensifying effort to wipe out Tibetan culture through a strategy of forced assimilation, particularly targeting children. Under the guise of promoting "national unity" and "economic progress," the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has embarked on a systematic campaign to integrate Tibetans into the dominant Han Chinese culture, diminishing their language, religion, and traditions. What Beijing calls "unity" is a methodical erasure of Tibetan identity – a slow-motion cultural genocide taking place in one of the world's most isolated regions.

Xi Jinping's government in 2021 announced an ambitious national goal to have 85 percent of China's population speaking Mandarin by 2025. The official narrative behind this policy claims language conformity and economic cohesion as justifications. But in Tibet, this push for Mandarin fluency is yet another tool for dissolving cultural ties. Central to this policy is the forced assimilation of young Tibetan children through residential schools, where children are systematically separated from their families and immersed in a curriculum designed to extinguish Tibetan identity and replace it with allegiance to the Chinese state.

A 2021 report from the Tibet Action Institute detailed the scope of these assimilation efforts. The institute counted 423,801 Tibetan students in boarding schools in the Tibetan Autonomous Region alone, with another 166,935 in Qinghai, 36,730 in Gansu, 170,565 in Sichuan, and 8,187 in Yunnan – all regions that include ethnic Tibetan populations. Together, it's estimated that there are more than 1 million children

attending these schools. That means at least 78 percent of Tibetan schoolchildren in grade one and above (age 6-18) are being taken from their homes and forced into what activists describe as an effort to suppress Tibetan culture and identity.

"Classes are taught primarily in Chinese with state-approved textbooks," said Dr. Gyal Lo, an activist and leading expert on China's assimilation and education policies in Tibet. "Most teachers are Chinese undergraduate students who have little to no teaching experience." Gyal Lo fled Tibet in 2020 and now resides in Canada.

Generations of Tibetans have been raised in village schools and monasteries that preserved Tibetan language and customs, but under recent new CCP policies, these schools are rapidly being shut down and replaced with state-run boarding facilities. Tibetan children are now forced into an exclusive Mandarin curriculum, deprived of Tibetan textbooks and language class, cut off from their families and way of life.

"When I was in school, I used to feel most of my classmates were Chinese when everyone indeed was Tibetan. My school was 3,000 kilometers away from my home and the only time I could go home was during my one-month summer and two-month winter vacation," said a source who now resides in exile in Dharamsala, India and went to a school in Shanghai. "Missing my parents was the biggest problem."

In July 2024, an internationally acclaimed vocational high school for Tibetans – Gangjong Sherig Norling school in Golog county of Qinghai province – which had been operating for 30 years, was abruptly shut down. A video shared by Radio Free Asia showed the 110 students visibly tearful during the school's final graduation ceremony.

China has also shuttered thousands of monasteries that preserved Tibetan language and customs across Tibet and replaced them with centralized boarding schools over the last dozen years. Tibet is home to a rich Buddhist tradition, and its monasteries have long been the guardians of Tibetan culture and knowledge. The few monasteries that remain face strict surveillance, with monks required to display loyalty to the state above all else.

China's Education Modernization 2035 Plan, a blueprint for the country's future schooling system highlights the promotion of Xi Jinping's ideology of "socialism with Chinese characteristics" and the pursuit of so-called high-quality education with "Chinese characteristics" and cultivating patriotism. The repercussions of this education policy are profound. Language is more than a means of communication; it is the backbone of culture, memory, and identity. Stripping Tibetan children of their native language erases not just their ability to speak Tibetan but also their connection to

the stories, values, and philosophies of their ancestors.

The Chinese government's calculated approach to language suppression ensures that each generation of Tibetans becomes less connected to their roots, less able to resist assimilation, and less visible as an independent cultural entity.

Boarding Preschools: A Hidden Agenda

State-run boarding schools in the Tibet Autonomous Region have been operating since the early 1980s, but their expansion has escalated significantly under Xi's leadership, particularly during his second term. Since 2016, a new wave of boarding preschools for children aged 4-6 have been established, a completely hidden policy of the Chinese government.

Preschools are a mandatory part of China's education policy, with all children required to attend. In urban areas, where day schools exist, children can return home after classes. However, in rural areas – where the majority of Tibetans live – children must stay in boarding schools. Children are only allowed to return home during weekly breaks or for the summer and winter vacations. The vacation period varies across different provinces.

Dr. Gyal Lo recounted witnessing his two grandnieces, then 4 and 5 years old, completely transformed by their experiences in these preschools: "When they returned home, they only spoke in Chinese and didn't like the Tibetan food at home. And this was just after three months of enrollment." After that, he embarked on a journey and visited over 50 such schools in the Tibetan plateau and the other five provinces to dig deeper into this new hidden policy.

While there is no official data on the exact number of these schools, experts roughly estimate around 100,000 to 150,000 Tibetan preschoolers are currently enrolled in them.

"Children, even as young as four years old, are sent away to these schools which, for middle and high school aged students can be located as far as 1,000 miles from their homes," said Lhadon Tethong, director of Tibet Action Institute. "At a critical stage of their development, they are forcibly placed into environments designed to turn them into Chinese and ensure their obedience to CCP."

By offering free food and accommodations, the boarding schools coax children into accepting their new reality, said Gyal Lo. But these children don't realize what is being quietly taken from them: the right to speak to their parents in their mother tongue, to whisper their wishes in Tibetan, to argue with their siblings in the language of their ancestors, to pray in the words that generations before them have used. Piece by piece, their heritage is stripped away – not through force, but through a system designed to make them forget who they are.

Educational Advancement or Systematic Trauma?

CCP propaganda portrays these assimilation policies as benevolent efforts to modernize Tibet, with the boarding schools branded as an educational advancement. Chinese media have made constant efforts to debunk the narrative of forced assimilation while painting a rosy, state-approved picture. But those who managed to escape Tibet and videos obtained through a clandestine network of sources describe a vastly different reality – one of isolation and indoctrination.

Kunzang Longyang, 17, took his own life after being separated from his monastery and sent to a state-run boarding school in April 2024 in Qinghai province's Drakkar County, as reported by Radio Free Asia. A monk at Yulung Monastery, Kunzang Longyang was forced to attend a state-run boarding school because, under China's law, children should be in state-run schools until the age of 18.

Last September, a harrowing video surfaced showing five young monks attempting to take their own lives by jumping into a river. In the video shared by a local, one monk can be heard saying, "It's unbearable to stay in the local school. It's like a prison. They don't give us food, and they beat us."

In another video shared by the Tibet Action Institute on Instagram, a young boy is seen being forcibly pushed into a car by two unidentified men. The boy was one of 140 children from Muge Monastery in Muge town, Ngaba, Sichuan, being taken to a government-run boarding school.

The latest video depicting child abuse at one of these schools went viral on Chinese social media. The silent video shows a man identified as Dang Qingfu, the school principal of Tsokhyil Township Ethnic Boarding Primary School in Tsolho Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, in China's Qinghai province, throwing a young student to the ground before slapping and pinching him in front of numerous other students. The children in the background appear terrified, while other teachers stand by. The video was allegedly filmed in November 2024.

While China's laws explicitly prohibit corporal punishment in schools, reports have highlighted practices that go far beyond physical violence. An anonymous source, now residing in India, who attended school in Kardze, Kham (now Ganzi, Sichuan) shared in a report: "Physical torture such as sexual molestation and beatings by teachers and school managers have been ongoing silent practices and have caused many children to experience enduring mental traumas."

A research by Tibetan Researcher Gazang Cao revealed more than one in three children were experiencing "alienation" in rural colonial boarding schools in Qinghai. Another study found that boarding on campus negatively impacts the socio-emotional

competence (SEC) of children living away from their parents.

Forced Choices: Sacrificing Identity for a Hopeful Future

Parents in Tibet once had the option to send their children to monastic day schools, privately-run institutions, or even to schools in exile in India. However, these choices have been systematically eliminated, leaving families with no alternatives but to send their children to state-run residential schools with limited visits from parents.

Those who refuse to send their children to these schools are denied the necessary certificate for their kids to enroll in grade one. They are also blacklisted and barred from receiving any government benefits.

"If they live in rural areas, where most Tibetans live, then kids are often sent to boarding preschools, which are often attached to boarding elementary schools," said Lhadon. "Rather than send their very young children to boarding schools, some families choose to move to urban centers where there are still day school options for preschoolers, but this is not not feasible for most people."

Caught in a difficult situation, many parents reluctantly comply to ensure their children do not fall behind in an era of rapid urban development. When I asked a friend of mine, now living in Paris, about her siblings back in Tibet who attend these boarding schools, she expressed having little to no understanding of what the schools are really aimed at. All she knew was that her parents had no choice but to send the children away even though the school was just an hour away. "That was the only option," she said.

Tibetans living through this in Tibet often don't fully grasp the extent of what they are experiencing because they are simply surviving. Their understanding of their rights is limited and skewed by the systemic oppression they face. In many cases, they want their children to be educated, hoping they can thrive within the Chinese-dominated system, even though it comes at the cost of their identity and autonomy.

Where Does the World Stand?

"Free Tibet" was a global rallying cry in the 1990s. In recent years, global attention on Tibet has faded significantly, with several interlinked factors contributing to its decline. Key among these are shifts in activist networks, diminished public momentum, and the CCP's aggressive efforts to silence dissent and control the narrative on Tibet.

For years, international action has been sporadic and largely symbolic. It wasn't until 2022 that the United Nations issued a 17-page communication to the Government of China urging them to address the separation of 1 million Tibetan children from their families – a move that shed light on the grave human rights violations.

In July 2024, former U.S. President Joe Biden signed the "Promoting a Resolution to the Tibet-China Dispute Act" – also known as the "Resolve Tibet Act" – reaffirming U.S. support for Tibetan human rights and cultural preservation. The same month, the United States took a stronger stance, announcing visa restrictions on Chinese officials implicated in the repression of marginalized religious and ethnic communities, including Tibetans.

"You can wipe out the identity of a group over several generations without killing anybody," said Stephen Rapp, former ambassador-at-large for global war crimes issues at the U.S. State Department. "And that can be genocide if your intent is to destroy that national group, which can be inferred from the continuous pursuit of such a policy."

In October 2024, 15 U.N. member states, including the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, and Japan, issued a joint statement at the United Nations General Assembly's Third Committee, calling on China to address its human rights violations in Tibet.

While many Western governments have condemned Beijing's use of education as a weapon of cultural genocide, China continues to deny any wrongdoing. Despite the severity of the issue and tireless efforts by Tibetans to draw attention and appeal for support, substantial progress has yet to be achieved. The road to justice for Tibet remains long, fraught with geopolitical complexities and a global community that often prioritizes economic ties with China over human rights.

John Jones, research manager at Free Tibet U.K., said, "China will be even more assertive in Tibet. So sometimes it's about winning a campaign and achieving your goal, and sometimes it's about holding the line and just waking up every day and reminding your government and your supporters that what's happening in Tibet is not acceptable."

This "soft" genocide is rarely visible to the global public, partly due to China's extensive control over information flow from Tibet. Beijing enforces severe restrictions on local media and internet access, keeping reports of repression from reaching the outside world.

The fear of retaliation or harm to loved ones is also a powerful deterrent that keeps many silent about their experiences. Many Tibetans are reluctant to discuss their experiences with the state-run boarding schools. Individuals interviewed for this article expressed hesitation, fearing that speaking out could jeopardize the safety of their families in Tibet.

"It's a sensitive topic to discuss with my parents and we never bring it to our conversations," said Tenzin (name changed for safety reasons) who lives in exile in India.

Gyal Lo's brother in Tibet told him that they continue to face intense pressure from the government due to

his activism. They fear he will not be allowed back into Tibet. “I heard it from my neighbor that my father had passed away. My family couldn’t contact me,” he said. The residential school systems in the United States and Canada, designed to systematically erase Indigenous identities, remain a deeply regrettable chapter in their histories. While North America confronts and reckons with this legacy, China is actively pursuing a similar campaign against Tibetans today – brazenly, under global scrutiny, and without remorse. Despite China’s continued denial and refusal to take accountability, the struggle for Tibetan identity and freedom persists, unwavering and resolute.

Tibetan Language, Epic, and the Bards Safeguarding Heritage

14 March 2025, [The Diplomat](#), Tim Thurston

There is a veritable cottage industry of cultural production related to the Gesar epic.

Language has a strange place in the intangible cultural heritage safeguarding efforts of Chinese governments and UNESCO. Languages themselves are not recognized on UNESCO’s lists nor are there specific plans for their safeguarding. However, the linguistic expressions of different groups are available for safeguarding, and other traditions are often taught and transmitted in minoritized languages.

As such, even though languages are not explicitly safeguarded, they are implicitly part of the broader “heritage regime.”

This makes traditions recognized as heritage especially powerful in a moment of heavy pressure on the transmission and use of minoritized languages in the People’s Republic of China.

The Bards of the Gesar Epic

Lobzang sits on a tall chair at the front of a windowless room filled with benches and deep-backed Tibetan style sofas. He wears a pointed hat and a traditional Tibetan shirt, and sometimes he holds a white silk scarf in his hands (at other times it sits in his lap). The hat serves as a clear indication that he is a *babdrung* (བཅའ་བླ་མ་), an inspired bard of the Tibetan “national” epic, called by some the longest epic in the world.

The epic represents a rich distillation of Tibetan folk culture into a single, massive opus. It combines verse, prose, song, speech, and proverbs, drawing on Tibetan folk cosmology that extends well beyond the tangible world.

It tells of King Gesar’s incarnation, his difficult childhood, winning a horse race to ascend to the throne, and his victories over neighboring kingdoms. As a living epic, certain versions even include Gesar’s exploits against the Nazis. To many, Gesar is both a

historical figure and a deity who can help with real-world concerns.

The Gesar Epic and Heritage

In the early years of the 1980s, as the upheavals of the Cultural Revolution slowly gave way to a new period of “Reform and Opening Up,” scholars and policymakers expressed concern that China lacked an epic. The Greeks have the Homeric epics. The Indians have the Bhagavad Gita. Intellectuals in Finland and Scotland compiled the Kalevala and Ossian to promote their national identities.

Lacking a meaningful epic for the Han majority, academics and officials in China looked to minority epics of the “Zhonghua minzu” (中华民族, sometimes translated as “Chinese nation”) to help fill this cultural gap. This included the Gesar epic.

Between 1980 and 2020, the Gesar epic was mentioned as “one of the most important scientific research items at the national level” in several of the five-year plans through which the government lays out its strategic roadmap for the near and long-term future.

In 2003, the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage brought new life into oral and performance traditions across the People’s Republic of China. The Chinese government was among the first nations to ratify the Convention (by comparison, the U.S. and Australia still have not, while the U.K. only entered in 2024) and establish a multitiered system to identify and safeguard traditions nationwide.

In 2009, the Gesar epic, was officially inscribed on UNESCO’s list of the representative intangible cultural heritage of humanity.

Tibetan Language Visibility

For the epic, heritage recognition transforms a complex genre of folklore with a relatively limited audience into a symbol of the Chinese nation’s valuable cultural contributions to world culture.

In this way, cultural heritage in China has evolved into something of a “brand” that authorizes display of Tibetan traditions and languages, even in the current moment of heightened tensions and restrictions.

A number of new “complete” textual editions of the epic have been created by local governments, sometimes beautifully calligraphed, often with the assistance of bards. Painters have been employed to create traditional *thangka* paintings depicting different characters or scenes from the epic. In 2024, some local bards and cultural officials in Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture received a significant amount of funding from the government to create a website aimed at preserving the Gesar epic by establishing an online archive of epic performance to make it readily available to online audiences. Meanwhile, outside of government activities, bards

livestream their performances on the popular application KuaiShou, sometimes reaching thousands of viewers at a time. Some also create informal publications about the epic as well.

In short, there is a veritable cottage industry of cultural production related to the epic.

Set against the background of global pressures of homogenization and tightening of the spaces for acceptable public expression in the Xi Jinping era, this support for Tibetan heritage seems particularly important.

Recently, government promotion of the concept “*minzu gongtongti yishi* 民族共同体意识” – translated in state media as “a sense of community for the Chinese nation” – has seen the imposition of new restrictions on religious practice, cultural display, and minority language education. In spite of this, the Gesar epic and its bards remain prominent and visible.

Heritage Recognition Authorizes Displays that Might Otherwise Be Difficult

Changes to Tibetan society, politics, and contexts of performance require bards to navigate the contemporary worlds of heritage and digital media as well.

In this way, the epic’s bards play a crucial role as its intermediaries, creating a place for the continued presence of Tibetan language and culture through epic performance, religious services to the local community, and working along with government to both preserve the epic and share it with the world. Crucially, this also includes government support of heritage.

The cynic might say that these bards and other culture workers are simply collaborating with the state. Yet, we might also recognize that these actors leverage available avenues to create space for Tibetan language visibility in contemporary China — an effort that could have significant implications for the future of Tibetan language in the PRC.

Dalai Lama’s book offers ‘framework’ for Tibet after his death

12 March 2025, [DAWN](#)

The Dalai Lama published a book on Tuesday which he says is a “framework for the future of Tibet”, to guide compatriots in relations with Beijing after his death.

China says Tibet is an integral part of the country, and many exiled Tibetans fear Beijing will name a successor to the Dalai Lama when he dies, bolstering control over a land it poured troops into in 1950 — 75 years ago this coming October. The book, “Voice for the Voiceless”, describes the Dalai Lama dealing with successive leaders of the People’s Republic of China on behalf of Tibet and its people.

“The right of the Tibetan people to be the custodians of their own homeland cannot be indefinitely denied, nor can their aspiration for freedom be crushed forever through oppression,” the exiled Tibetan spiritual leader writes. “One clear lesson we know from history is this: If you keep people permanently unhappy, you cannot have a stable society.”

Giving a sight to his followers about his succession, the spiritual leader of Tibetan Buddhism also writes in his new book that a successor will be born outside China, raising the stakes in a dispute with Beijing over control of the Himalayan region he fled more than six decades ago.

The spiritual leader says his successor will be born outside China

Tibet has alternated over the centuries between independence and control by China, which says it “peacefully liberated” the rugged plateau and brought infrastructure and education. Celebrating his 90th birthday in July, he is among a fading few who can remember what their homeland was like before the 1959 uprising.

The Dalai Lama, who fled to India in 1959, said the book details the “persistent efforts” he has made to over seven decades to “save my homeland and people”. “Only when we have created an atmosphere where both sides can speak and negotiate freely can there be a lasting settlement,” he writes in the book. “Tibetans have spent nearly 75 years fighting for freedom,” the Dalai Lama wrote in the Washington Post earlier this month, ahead of the book’s publication. “Their struggle should continue beyond my lifetime.”

‘Free world’

Tibetans worldwide want the institution of the Dalai Lama to continue after the 89-year-old’s death, he writes in his book. He had previously said the line of spiritual leaders might end with him.

His book marks the first time the Dalai Lama has specified that his successor would be born in the “free world”, which he describes as outside China. He has previously said only that he could reincarnate outside Tibet, possibly in India where he lives in exile. “Since the purpose of a reincarnation is to carry on the work of the predecessor, the new Dalai Lama will be born in the free world so that the traditional mission of the Dalai Lama — that is, to be the voice for universal compassion, the spiritual leader of Tibetan Buddhism, and the symbol of Tibet embodying the aspirations of the Tibetan people — will continue,” the Dalai Lama writes.

Tibet in exile, &c.

12 March 2025, [NR](#), Jay Nordlinger

On a nation's struggle and agony; the nature of democracy; Trump vs. Canada; and more

On Monday, next to the Hudson River in New York, there was a demonstration. It was essentially across the street from the Chinese consulate. The demonstration was by Tibetans and Tibetan Americans. March 10 is an important day for them.

On that day in 1959, Tibetans rose up against their Chinese captors and oppressors. Thousands of Tibetans were killed. (A precise number is impossible to come by.) March 10 is known as "Tibetan Uprising Day."

The ruling Chinese have done to Tibet what they are now doing in the Xinjiang region, where the Uyghurs live. That is: all things Tibetan, and all things Uyghur, must be crushed out.

In 2008, there was further rebellion in Tibet. Three years later, the Chinese government sent a man named Chen Quanguo to that "province," to establish perfect totalitarian control. He did such a good job, they sent him to Xinjiang in 2016, to do the same.

Chen Quanguo was the *Gauleiter* in both places.

Alongside the Hudson River on Monday, people held signs: "Tibet Is Not Part of China." "Independence for Tibet." "Stop Cultural Genocide in Tibet."

A 16-year-old girl spoke to the crowd. (I did not catch her name.) She lives in New Jersey. She read a beautifully prepared speech in a confident, defiant, passionate way. She said she had skipped school to be at the demonstration — but she made no apologies for it.

To see her giving her speech, look at the photo above this column.

Students in Tibet, she said, have no chance to learn about their history, their culture, etc. They are forced into "Chinese colonial schools." She, however, has been able to learn about Tibet in America.

She said,

The Chinese government wants to erase us. They want to destroy our culture and our traditions. But how can you erase something that refuses to die? How do you erase a community that is unwilling to stop fighting? The Chinese Communist Party has spent billions of dollars to destroy the Tibetan way of life, but they have yet to make a dent in our spirit.

She went on to say,

When I look at all of you, I see a nation that refuses to be silenced or erased. All of us standing here are proof that the Chinese government has failed. We are the living proof. The fact that I am here, that I can speak Tibetan, that I know my history — that is resistance. Every word that you speak in Tibetan, every time you learn something about our past, every time you show pride in being Tibetan — that is resistance.

In her peroration, she said,

Tibet will be free. Maybe not today and maybe not tomorrow, but one day we will return home. Until that day arrives, we must continue to speak out, we must protest, and we must fight back, no matter how long it takes.

I can hear some readers saying, "These people are not proper Americans." True, they are people in exile, people scattered in a diaspora. I am glad they are here. If Tibet is ever Tibet again, some will go home. (This 16-year-old girl, for example, refers to Tibet as "home," even though she has never set foot there.) Some will stay.

The same is true of Cuba. Were Cuba to throw off the yoke of dictatorship, some Cuban Americans would return to the island — or go there for the first time. Others would stay, being principally American.

Think of Israel. When the state was reestablished — 2,000 years later — some went home (or "home"). But others felt principally American or French or Australian or what have you.

An old story. I'm glad to live in a country that opens its arms to refugees, or some of them. It is good for the refugees, obviously, for they need a haven; and it is good for America, enriched in various ways. For one thing: we are reminded of the American purpose, our whys and wherefores. We are not an ordinary, run-of-the-mill nation.

Are we?

With a Brazilian intellectual, I was talking about democracy — liberal democracy, or ordered liberty. I mentioned an old kindergarten lesson: Democracy means extending your arm as far as you can, before it grazes someone else's face. My friend was reminded of something a Portuguese writer said.

That writer is João Pereira Coutinho, who writes for a Brazilian newspaper, the *Folha de São Paulo*. Coutinho said,

I have an immediate distrust of "engineers of the human soul." My political bible can be found on the door of any hotel room: "Do Not Disturb." And, when circumstances require it, just turn the sign over: "Please Clean the Room."

Highly interesting.

On a related note — just a mundane one — I've noticed that these doorknob signs are changing, in America. There used to be "Do Not Disturb" and "Please Clean the Room" on front and back. These days, I'm seeing "Do Not Disturb" only, on both sides.

• Last month, President Trump published a statement: "He who saves his Country does not violate any Law." I have often quoted something Patrick J. Buchanan wrote in 2016. This was when Trump was refusing to say whether he would accept the result of the forthcoming election. The "populist-nationalist Right," said Buchanan, was "moving beyond the niceties of liberal democracy to save the America they love."

Were we ever to ditch liberal democracy, I think we would find that “niceties” are more like essentials. The rule of law is priceless. Our Founders bequeathed us something rare and great.

In Canada, the Liberals were far down in the polls, and the Conservatives looked set to romp. Then Trump was sworn in, again, and made belligerence toward Canada a signature of his new administration. Canadians, being patriotic, like most peoples, rallied around their government, which is now in the hands of Liberals. The Liberals may win again.

If they do, they should say, “Thank you, President Trump.” (The administration is very big on thank-yous, certainly where Ukraine is concerned.)

Here is Lauren Boebert, a MAGA congresswoman:

My question: Should the Canadians have any say in the matter? Or just MAGA?

Daniel Hannan, the British Conservative, wrote,

The last couple of weeks have been revealing. A number of Americans, including some whom I counted as friends, have been prepared to spew bile about Canada — Canada, for God’s sake — simply because they have been given a new party line. I can’t now look at them in the same way.

Many of us could sing that song, and have been singing it for years. It is not so much a song as a lament or wail. A famous American poem begins, “I saw the best minds of my generation destroyed by madness.” I don’t know about “best minds.” But recent years have been a trip, no doubt.

- Did you see this story? I have linked to an Associated Press report that begins, References to a World War II Medal of Honor recipient, the Enola Gay aircraft that dropped an atomic bomb on Japan, and the first women to pass Marine infantry training are among the tens of thousands of photos and online posts marked for deletion as the Defense Department works to purge diversity, equity, and inclusion content . . .

The *Enola Gay*, huh? Wait’ll they find out that Gay Brewer won the 1967 Masters.

- Kind of related:

A top acting State Department official deleted at least half a dozen tweets that ridiculed his now boss, Secretary of State Marco Rubio, including ones calling him “low IQ” and repeating a false rumor about Rubio’s sexuality.

Ah. Another day in MAGA-town. (For the story, if you can digest it, go here.)

- A scene in New York — a scene that plays out most anywhere. A young woman, upset, walks out of a brownstone. She calls behind her, “Have a great life. Good luck.” I wish only the best for both of them. (Hell, they may be back together by now.)

Let’s have a little music. For a review of Angel Blue (soprano) and Lang Lang (piano) in recital together, go here. For a review of the London Symphony

Orchestra, under Sir Antonio Pappano, with the pianist Yunchan Lim as soloist, go here.

And for my “New York chronicle,” published in the current *New Criterion*, go here.

Lotsa music.

- I’m not sure that these are the first blooms of spring — but they are the first I have seen. In Central Park on Sunday:

How China Is Increasing Surveillance Around India's Borders

11 March 2022, [NDTV](#), Gunjan Singh

In a recent statement, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi asserted that India and China should “support each other rather than undermine each other or undercut each other”, and that they “should work with each other rather than guard against each other”. On face value, the statement appears to indicate the positive momentum that India-China relations have witnessed since October 2024. After a gap of more than four years since the violent 2020 Galwan Clashes, New Delhi and Beijing have started to discuss ways to proceed ahead with border patrolling and disengagement. With this, China has also continued to reiterate that the border issue should not be the central point to base the direction of the bilateral relations. Even though Beijing calls for “trust” and not guarding “against each other”, it has continued to undertake surveillance, reconnaissance and monitoring exercises.

Chinese efforts to gain influence and access, especially in the South Asian region, have grown consistently over the last few years. The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which was launched in 2013, has helped Beijing gain a strong foothold in the region as it has used its economic prowess in the form of loans and aid to gain leverage. A number of South Asian countries are facing major debt challenges as a result of that.

Opinion | How China Is Increasing Surveillance Around India's Borders

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Sri Lanka And Maldives

The first casualty was the leasing of the Hambantota Port by Sri Lanka to China in 2017 for a period of 99 years. This has intensified New Delhi's security woes. China has also used its economic clout over Sri Lanka to let its spy ships and vessels dock there under the garb of research. These vehicles have consistently added to the Indian Navy's security challenges, as they can gather confidential data on movement and preparedness. In 2017, the Gwadar Port's day-to-day operations were also handed over to a Chinese state-run company for 40 years. China has also sent a number of submarines to the region.

New Delhi faces a similar challenge from the Maldives as well. The strong tilt of Male towards Beijing under the Muizzu government is a cause of concern for India. Chinese ships have continued to dock in Male. Recent talks between China and Maldives also involved discussions about installing fish aggregating devices (FADs) in the Indian Ocean Region. In early 2024, *Xiang Yang Hong 03*, which is one of the most advanced research vessels in China, also visited Maldives.

It was during a 2015 visit to Mauritius that the Indian Prime Minister had envisioned the idea of Security and Growth for all in the Region (SAGAR). Years later, as the Prime Minister visits the island nation on March 11-12, New Delhi is set to conclude MoUs that will help India in sharing white-shipping information and counter growing Chinese inroads. India has also been working towards strengthening its Lakshadweep Islands and has established the *INS Jatayu base*, on Minicoy, the southernmost archipelago.

The LPAR In Yunnan

Apart from oceans, China, as per reports, also recently deployed a Large Phased Array Radar (LPAR) in Yunnan province and near the Myanmar border, which has a monitoring range of 5,000 kilometres. This provides Beijing with access to a large tract of Indian land, which will help it keep tabs on missile and other air force movements. It is believed that this radar has the capacity to detect missile tests conducted at Abdul Kalam Island off the coast of Odisha. The island is used primarily for the launch of Agni V, an intercontinental missile, and of the K4 submarine-launched missiles. Both these things compromise India's security preparedness as they help Beijing monitor every possible move undertaken by New Delhi. India, meanwhile, has been in talks with Moscow to receive the Voronezh radar system with a range of 8,000 kilometres, a step that will enhance India's security apparatus.

It is not only land and sea; the Chinese space reconnaissance system is also quite sophisticated. Beijing had started this programme in 2006 and has launched more than 140 Yaogan satellites so far. Yaogan can be literally translated as 'remote sensing'. This coupled with its other satellite systems, like Gaofen and Shiyang, provides China with the capability to track even car-sized objects in the Indian and Pacific Oceans. As per reports, Beijing has a total of 245 operational reconnaissance satellites, while New Delhi has just 26. The Chinese satellites also enjoy better range, resolution and all-weather capabilities.

Caution Is Key

Given this backdrop, New Delhi has every reason to be on guard when it comes to moving ahead with any kind of normalisation with Beijing. The defence budget for China for fiscal year 2025 has been set at \$246 billion, while India's defence budget is at around \$82 billion. China will be spending more than three times that of India in the next year.

True, when it comes to diplomatic channels, China has consistently argued that there is a need to push for building economic relations and reestablish people-to-people connections and direct flights between the two countries. India has been quite consistent in its argument: of keeping bilateral talks focused on the resolution of the border issue. Even so, it is quite obvious that China is fully cognisant of the fact that security is crucial when it comes to India-China relations and has been working towards building its security infrastructure. These developments should be taken into consideration when New Delhi answers Beijing's calls for a rethink on bilateral ties. This also raises the question, can India-China relations ever be based on mutual trust and respect?

Tibet's lakes are growing and threatening to flood — no one knows why

11 March 2025, [ITC](#), Oleksandr Fedotkin

Scientists are trying to understand the reasons for the rapid rise in water levels in Tibetan lakes, which threatens the region with large-scale flooding.

Satellite images, taken over many decades, indicate that the rapid rise in water levels in Tibetan lakes is influenced by changes in precipitation, as well as — melting of glaciers. Water levels are rising most rapidly in lakes in the northern Tibetan highlands. At a time when lakes around the world have been shrinking over the past 30 years, this highland region is experiencing a rapid rise in water levels and an increase in the area covered by water.

Satellite images demonstrate dramatic changes in the situation in the provinces Nima and Tsiemo, as well as — in the Changtan region of southwestern China. An image taken by Landsat 5 back in 1994 and a photo from Landsat 9 taken in August 2024 show a significant increase in the area covered by lakes in these areas.

Since the 1970s, satellites under the NASA program Landsat sends images of the Tibetan Plateau, providing scientists with the necessary data set for analysis.

In a study conducted in 2024 on climate change in the The study of the Tibetan Plateau notes that as of 1991, there were about 4,385 lakes in the region, each covering an area of about 100 square meters. Of these, only 4.2% covered an area of 10 to 50 square kilometers, and 2.9% exceeded 50 square kilometers. The total area occupied by them was 37,471 square kilometers.

As of 2023, the region has already recorded an increase in the number of lakes to 6,159 with a total area of 53,267 square kilometers.

These lakes are particularly sensitive to changes in water levels, because they are not connected to other waterways. They are filled by precipitation, seasonal melting of glacial ice and frozen ground. The water level is also affected by the rate of evaporation.

A number of researchers are convinced that the growth of the area of lakes in the The Tibetan highlands are most affected by intense precipitation. Others argue that the rising global temperature is to blame, melting of glaciers and permafrost.

A group of scientists predicts that further expansion of the lakes could lead to the region facing large-scale flooding by 2100 Hundreds of kilometers of roads, hundreds of settlements, and 10,000 square kilometers of meadows, wetlands, and arable land could be underwater.

«The dramatic increase in lake area will lead to flooding of people's homes, displacement of livestock, and make some glacial lakes vulnerable to flash floods The Tibetan highlands are a very remote, harsh

environment. Satellites, such as Landsat, are the only way to observe changes in numerous lakes and over long periods of time», — warns a researcher at the University of Colorado at Boulder and lead author of the study, Fanfang Yao.

Forced Assimilation in Tibet and Erased History in China's 14th Five-Year Plan on Tibet

11 March 2025, [ICT](#)

China's 14th Five-Year Plan in Tibet targets forced assimilation of Tibetans and gateway to South Asia

This year China's 14th five-year plan enters its final year of implementation (having begun in 2021). An analysis of the projects in Tibet shows that under the pretext of improving the lives of the Tibetan people, the plan is more aimed at fulfilling a two-pronged political objective: aggressively assimilate Tibetans into the Chinese society and use Tibet as a springboard for China's further ambitions in South Asia.

The 19th Chinese Communist Party Central Committee started the process of formulating the 14th Five-Year Plan in October 2020, which was officially endorsed by the National People's Congress (NPC) on March 11, 2021. Chinese state media reported that with the 14th Five-Year Plan, "The influence of the Chinese culture will be increased, and the Chinese nation's cohesiveness will be further strengthened."

Chinese state media reported that there will be an investment of 601.5 billion yuan (about 94.3 billion US dollars) in the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) during the 14th Five-Year Plan period. In 2022, China said it will invest 140.4 billion yuan (about \$22 billion) in major projects mainly used for 181 projects, including construction of railway, highway, airport, tourism, and border trade logistics. These are dual objective projects, superficially appearing to have developmental impact, but designed more towards meeting Chinese leader Xi Jinping's political objective.

Tibetans assimilated as pomegranate seeds

Assimilation of Tibetans has been one of the main focus of Xi Jinping, the other being securitization of Tibet, and the 14th five-year plan is being used to further this objective.

In November 2021, the Chinese Communist Party laid out the theoretical basis to this when it adopted a resolution on "Major Achievements and Historical Experience of the Party over the Past Century" that outlined "a correct and uniquely Chinese path to dealing with ethnic affairs, and made fostering a strong sense of community for the Chinese nation the main task in its work related to ethnic affairs." In simple terms, for the Tibetan people this has meant the reconstitution of Tibet and Tibetans as an integrated

part of the Chinese identity. This November 2021 CCP resolution's importance lies in the fact that it (only the third such resolutions since CCP was founded in 1921) enshrined Xi Jinping's position in the Party pantheon alongside Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping. Xi has used the metaphor of pomegranate seeds to outline his approach. During a Politburo study session on December 9, 2024, Xi reiterated, "We should continue to deepen efforts on ethnic unity and progress, actively build an integrated social structure and community environment, and promote the unity of all ethnic groups – like pomegranate seeds tightly held together". This use of pomegranate seeds by Xi as metaphor for "ethnic unity" was particularly applied to Tibetans during his visit to the northeastern Tibetan region of Kangtsa (Gangcha) County of Tsonub (Haibei) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Qinghai in June 2021. Talking to Tibetans in Homchu (Shaliuhe) township there, Chinese state media reported that "Xi stressed that the Chinese nation is closely united like the seeds of a pomegranate. "We are all members of the community of the Chinese nation".

Similarly, Xinhua carried a report headlined, "Xi Focus: United like pomegranate seeds — Tibet tells stories of ethnic unity" in May 2022 reminding Tibetans that "Xi Jinping has stressed on many occasions that the Chinese nation is closely united like the seeds of a pomegranate.

The US Defense Department also analyzed it as such with regard to Tibet by saying in its 2024 annual report to Congress on "Military and security developments involving the People's Republic of China" released on December 18, 2024, saying, "In more sparsely populated Tibet, Beijing has accelerated its efforts at assimilating the local population into PRC society."

Domestic and Red Tourism – Vehicles to speed enforced assimilation

In order to implement the forced assimilation policy, the 14th five-year plan's focus on tourism is being used in Tibet to establish a new normal where Tibetans are subtly made to change their perception of "Chinese" from the "other" to being one of them. Through this, the Chinese authorities hope to make forced assimilation the new norm in Tibet. In January 2022, the Chinese authorities released a "Comprehensive Tourism Development Plan" for TAR, which established that "tourism development has become an important vehicle" for promoting ethnic "integration." This strategy includes encouraging mass Chinese-speaking tourists to visit different parts of Tibet; including in rural areas, and indirectly making the local Tibetans to embrace Chinese language, culture and way of life and to normalize this in the Tibetan society. The TAR plan is in line with the "Opinions on Implementing a Plan to Promote Exchanges and Integration among Ethnic

Groups through Tourism", issued in June 2022, jointly by the Chinese Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the State Ethnic Affairs Commission, and the National Development and Reform Commission.

According to Chinese state media, the TAR allocated a total of 20.16 billion yuan (2.83 billion in dollars) for cultural and tourism infrastructure between 2021 and 2024, purportedly for the benefit of the Tibetans. China says that in 2023, the TAR saw 55.17 million tourists, in 2022 it received 30 million tourists, while in 2021, there were 41.5 million.



Chinese tourists with a Tibetan family in Kardze (Ganzi) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Sichuan Province in 2023.

However, the Chinese authorities have not indicated how many of these were foreign tourists. Therefore, given the prevailing restrictions on foreign visitors to Tibet leading to selectively opening Tibet for tourists from abroad, the vast majority of these tourists would be from within the People's Republic of China. This would mean that the Chinese authorities invested in flooding different parts of Tibet with Chinese-speaking tourists. The political and social impact to the Tibetan society is far greater than the short-term economic benefit these tourists provide to the local Tibetans. Firstly, even if we go by the data provided by the Chinese government itself, in 2023 alone, around 15 times more predominantly Chinese tourists (55 million) were in different parts of TAR over different times than the local population size (3.6 million as per PRC's 2020 census). This puts great stress on the fragile local ecology and limited infrastructure. Secondly, the "incentive" of receiving "tourist dollars" is accompanied by immersion courses for the local Tibetans in the Chinese language and way of life. This is mandated by Xi Jinping's diktat that the Chinese language "should be comprehensively popularized in border regions." Eventually, these could lead to Tibetans losing their unique identity and further, identify themselves as Chinese. Such a massive presence of Chinese-speaking tourists in suburban and rural Tibet is encouraging a Chinese-language dominated environment in a traditional Tibetan society.

As Judith Hertog, a US-based writer and photographer working on a book about Tibet, puts it in her article, "How Tourism Trapped Tibet" in Foreign Policy on

January 24, 2025, “After decades of trying to subsume this once independent country through force, Beijing may finally have found a way to effectively make Tibet an inseparable part of the Chinese nation: by turning it into a tourist destination.”

The reason for restricting foreign tourists also has a security angle. A Chinese foreign policy expert and professor at Cornell University, Allen Carlson, analyzed why the Chinese government is promoting “domestic tourism” as opposed to opening Tibet to the outside world. In an interview to the Singapore based Chinese-language newspaper Lianhe Zaobao published in 2023, he said, “Beijing’s primary concern for Tibet is security, not economic development. He noted that economic development serving the security interests of Tibet is encouraged by the authorities, while economic activities that may pose a threat to security are not promoted. While foreigners have the potential to bring significant sources of income to Tibet, they may also bring in perspectives that differ from the official Chinese narrative.”

In recent years, the Chinese authorities have been creating a narrative of opening up more to the international community. In November, they announced that visitors from 38 countries will enjoy visa exemptions to enter China and stay for no more than 30 days for business, tourism, family visit, exchange and transit purposes. However, this does not in any way loosen the restrictions for travel to not just the Tibet Autonomous Region, but to almost all Tibetan areas. Foreign travelers to the TAR continue to need the mandatory permit in advance while various restrictions are being imposed on foreigners trying to enter those Tibetan areas where such permits are not needed.

Shaping China’s educated acquiescence approach on Tibet

An additional reason for promoting more Chinese tourists to visit Tibetan areas is to cultivate a community of educated Chinese who will stand by the Communist narrative on Tibet, for now and into the future, what China scholar Elizabeth Perry terms “educated acquiescence.” This is because Tibet has increasingly attracted the educated Chinese society, including the elites, who see it as a trendy and fashionable destination. The authorities are seizing upon this fad to provide political propaganda. In the process, the authorities lure the educated community to its side while discouraging independent thinking on Tibetan history, as a case in point. They attempt to do this by enrapturing the educated Chinese with exoticness of Tibet presenting it in “the Chinese popular imagination as the spiritual and ecological heart of the country” as an article in Foreign Policy puts it.

Red Tourism creating new narrative of Chinese Tibet

China has said during the 14th five-year plan, it will “promote the innovative development of Red tourism.” Red tourism is an initiative of the CCP that encourages the populace to visit locations with historical significance to the CCP. It promotes nationalistic thinking through encouraging tourism to areas supposedly connected to the CCP and thus contributing to the state-approved historical narrative. It is only in the border regions of eastern Tibet where there were some connections to the Communist Party, particularly in the course of the Long March. But the Chinese authorities are now attempting to create a non-existing broader revised Tibetan history with Chinese Communism even in places that do not have a historical connection. Red Tourism is aggressively being promoted in many Tibetan areas.

In its 2022 tourism development plan for TAR, the Chinese authorities categorically state the political objective that “tourism development to create an important channel to carry out patriotic education.” In January 2024, China launched a “Red Tourism Guide” for the TAR that “aims to use red stories to develop “red links” and guide the public to ignite patriotic enthusiasm, establish ideals and beliefs, and embark on a red journey.” One Chinese media report on “red tourism” in TAR in fact clearly outlines the political objectives behind it by saying “Visit these historical holy sites in Tibet, pay tribute to the footsteps of our ancestors, and take a red journey that will not forget your original aspirations.” Red Tourism is being used in assimilation of Tibetans through a unified “Chinese” identity. Accordingly, the Chinese authorities have identified several sites in Tibetan areas as being “red tourism scenic spots” encouraging Chinese-speaking visitors to these areas and in the process, promote a sense of “Chinese” among the local Tibetans.

Red Tourism is also targeted towards the younger generation. China’s Ministry of Culture and Tourism, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, the Central Committee of the Communist Youth League, the National Women’s Association and the China Customs Commission, has jointly unveiled a comprehensive “Action Plan for Cultivating New Talented Generation in the Era through Red Tourism 2023-2025”.

Among the places listed under Red Tourism are the Lhasa Martyrs Cemetery for those who died in the “peaceful liberation”. But the political objective is clearly laid out as “a national patriotism education demonstration base, a patriotism education base in the Tibet Autonomous Region, and a national defense education base.” The list also includes the “anti-British historical site” in Gyantse commemorating the 1904 invasion of Tibet even though Communist China was nowhere in sight then.



Red Tourism site in Lhasa: Martyrs Memorial.



Red Tourism site in Gyantse: Anti-British historical site in the Tibetan town of Gyantse with the fort in the background.

Tibet seen as key to confronting India in South Asia

The Chinese leadership sees Tibet as a key factor in implementing its political objectives in South Asia: expanding its economic and political influence while containing and replacing Indian dominance in the region. China perceives significant security threats along the long-contested border with India, commonly known as the Line of Actual Control (LAC) and wants to ensure its supremacy on the issue. As the Washington, DC based think tank Center for Strategic and International Studies, says in a report on “How Is China Expanding its Infrastructure to Project Power Along its Western Borders”, “these perceived threats have compelled China to invest heavily” in TAR’s infrastructure in military and dual-use air facilities.

Accordingly, much focus of the 14th Five-Year plan is on infrastructure development along the lengthy Tibetan border with India, Nepal, and Bhutan while maintaining the pretext that these are to improve the life of the Tibetan people. China is particularly planning to replace Indian influence in South Asia, particularly in Nepal and Bhutan, two countries that have traditionally been friendly with it. It has already made headway in other countries in the region like Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh. Even the narrative is such as to preempt any voicing of concern by countries in South Asia. This is clear from the line taken by a Chinese researcher who told a Bhutanese scholar, “China tries to convince the small South Asian states that it is a benign power without hegemonic aspirations”.

An analysis of China’s agenda for South Asia published by the Foreign Affairs Committee of the United States

House of Representatives in 2022 says, “In South Asia, the PRC aims to expand its economic activity and influence, enhance its strategic presence, secure overland energy routes to avoid maritime chokepoints, and check India’s rise through strategic encirclement.”

The Australian Strategic Policy Institute carried a report in 2023, “India and China’s rivalry is reshaping South Asia” that says, “For China, greater influence in South Asia supports domestic and foreign policy goals, specifically protecting access to world markets via the Indian Ocean region’s important global maritime routes.

Chinese state media announced in March 2021 that China plans to spend over yuan 190 billion (approximately \$30 billion) on infrastructure projects in TAR during the plan period. Most of these are close to the Indian border in Tibet.

At a December 2024 politburo study session, Xi stressed the need for CCP leadership over all aspects of border area governance and demanded all Party organizations in border areas align with Beijing consistently. Comprehending Tibet’s strategic location in Asia, China’s outline of the 14th Five-Year Plan says, “...we will support Tibet in building an important corridor that opens to South Asia.”

This Chinese “opening” to South Asia has predominantly military and strategic objective with trade relations as one of the vehicles to achieve that goal. Take the case of Shigatse, a place close to the Indian border, whose airport has undergone renovation, rail connectivity is being established from there to Nepal and into neighboring Xinjiang (known to Uyghurs as East Turkestan) and the strategic road along the border is being upgraded.

As China analyst based in India, Jayadev Ranade sees significance in the focus to “make Shigatse a hub connecting Tibet with South Asia.” Shigatse is close to the Indian border and he feels this will “augment the PLA’s capacity to rapidly transport troops, military cargo and hardware into Tibet thereby sharpening the threat to the LAC’s middle sector especially Sikkim and Yadong.”

The Institute for Security and Development Policy, a Stockholm-based think tank, outlined China’s ambitions in South Asia saying, “Beijing remains committed to advancing its geopolitical, economic, and security interests, using a mix of soft and hard power tools.”

Driving the narrative of the South Asian communities to align with the Chinese government position has also been a focus during this plan period. Since 2023, using the opportunity of opening after the pandemic, the Chinese authorities have been permitting conducted tours in Tibet for social media influencers from India, Nepal, Pakistan, and even from Bhutan, to produce videos about life in Tibet. These videos are made

publicly available. Also, the Chinese government orchestrated tours to Tibet for selected foreign diplomats, primarily from developing countries, to encourage them to conform to its prescribed narrative on Tibet, representatives from Pakistan and Nepal were included in 2023.

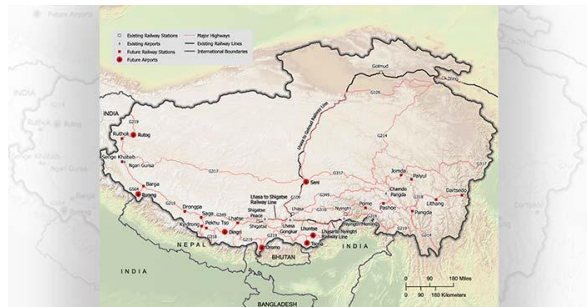
Similarly, the Chinese authorities have come up with academic sounding conferences like the “China-Tibet “Rim of the Himalayas” International Cooperation Forum” aimed particularly at wooing the South Asian countries, including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka, while excluding India.

Dual Use Air, Road, and Rail Networks

This objective is supported by the nature of investments being made in Tibetan areas during the 14th Five Year-Plan period. In 2022, the Chinese authorities announced the investment of 140.4 billion yuan (about \$22 billion) in TAR, which include the construction of railway, highway, airport, and border trade logistics. In 2023, Chinese state media said TAR will undertake 191 key projects with an investment of more than 143 billion yuan (\$21 billion) “for key infrastructure projects, characteristic industries, ecological civilization, border-area consolidation.”

According to the New Delhi based research organization Centre for Land Warfare Studies, these expansions of road, rail and air connectivity, which can be used both by the civil and the military, connect many of the major military centers and airports. It further says adjoining the new airports are the terminals for roads and rail networks, “with underground shelters and military air defense units, in proximity.”

The US-based think tank Jamestown Foundations highlighted the military significance of the Chinese infrastructural build up in TAR along the Indian border saying, “The improved infrastructure that China has built over the last two decades makes mobilization of the armed forces to counter India relatively faster and easier. For instance, the Sichuan-Tibet railway connects Chengdu to Lhasa. Chengdu and the adjacent municipality of Chongqing host the PLA’s 77th Group Army, which would be one of the first units to mobilize after the Tibet and Xinjiang Military Districts in the event of an escalation of conflict with India.”



*China’s air, road and rail network along the Indo-Tibetan border.
(Cartography by Tsering Wangyal Shawa)*

Air Expansion projects airpower into India

During the 14th five-year plan, China plans to upgrade the five existing airports (all five are military and civilian dual-use facilities) in TAR while building new ones in Dingri, Lhuntse and Purang (all located close to the south-west borders). Chinese state media have said the cost of the three new airports is expected to exceed 13.6 billion yuan (about \$2.09 billion).

China’s “General Aviation Development Plan of the Tibet Autonomous Region (2021-2035)” says that during this period, the four existing transport airports in Nyingtri (Menling), Chamdo (Pangda), Ngari (Gunsu), and Shigatse (Peace) will be transformed into general aviation services, and the three new transport airports in Dingri, Lhuntse, and Purang will be built for general aviation functions.

The new airports in Dingri, Lhuntse and Purang are close to the Indian border and according to a report by the Washington, DC based think tank Center for Strategic and International Studies they have military strategic importance saying they “fill large gaps along the Indian border where there were previously no airports. If PLA Air Force (PLAAF) units are based at these airports, China will gain several new nodes along the border from which to project airpower into India.”

The same report says that China will build 14 new “general airports” in the following places in TAR: Sernyi (Seni) and Sog in Nagchu; Tsamdha (Zanda), Shentsa (Shenzha), Rutok, and Gertse (Gaize) in Ngari; Dromo (Yadong), Kyirong and Saga in Shigatse; Tsona (Cuona) in Lhoka; Zayul and Pome (Bome) in Nyingtri, Kharo (Karuo) and Markham (Mangkam) in Chamdo.

Outside of the TAR, the Chinese authorities have planned to establish airports in Serchen (Gonghe) Qinghai Lake Airport in Tsoholo (Hainan) Prefecture, and Malho (Huangnan) Airport, both in Qinghai province.

Upgrading road connectivity along Indian border

During this plan period, China plans to enhance the existing road network in TAR to strengthen what it calls the “strategic backbone corridors”. The Chinese authorities have said they will “intensify the construction of strategic trunk corridors with improved access to Xinjiang and Tibet, the central and western regions, and regions along the coast, rivers, and border areas.” The TAR transportation department states that by 2025, TAR will exceed 1300 km of expressways, and have over 120,000 km in highways total.

The highways include Xining to Lhasa (G109), Chengdu to Lhasa (G318), Kunming to Lhasa, and from Yecheng to Lhatse (G219). The latter two runs parallel to the strategic Indian and Nepalese borders. In the 14th Five-Year Plan, TAR has allocated an investment of

16.98 billion yuan for the quality improvement and transformation of G318 and G109 and the new extension of G219. Analyst Ranade says upgrading the G219 and G318 highways will further strengthen China's defense border infrastructure targeting India.

Expanding rail connectivity along the southern border and to Nepal

The 14th Five-Year Plan hopes to extend rail connections in Tibet close to the Indian border, including start the extension to Nepal "to serve the major national strategies."

Xi Jinping pointed out that we must adhere to maintaining national security and social stability as the bottom-line requirement for border governance.

Together these perceived threats have compelled China to invest heavily in upgrading the two regions' infrastructure. New and upgraded airports promise to bring an influx of new business activity and tourism to areas previously disconnected from China's main commercial and political centers. New roads and rail aim to do the same and facilitate easier movement of people within the regions. At the same time, investments in military and dual-use air facilities afford the PLA a growing menu of options for projecting airpower within the region. New ground infrastructure is likewise rendering remote areas significantly more accessible for Chinese military and security forces, allowing them to project power more easily within Tibet and Xinjiang and potentially into neighboring countries.

The planned railway line between the Tibetan town of Shigatse and Nepal's capital Kathmandu is one such project that will have dual use purpose for the Chinese. The line is planned to enter Nepal through the Kyirong border on the Tibetan side. Chinese state media have said the first phase of feasibility study was completed in January 2024 and that the overall feasibility study will be completed in 2026.

Trains central to Chinese domination in South Asia

Explaining the significance of the planned rail connectivity along the Indian border, Qian Feng, director of the research department at the National Strategy Institute at Tsinghua University told the Chinese state media in June 2021, "If a scenario of a crisis happens at the China-India border, the railway will provide a great convenience for China's delivery of strategic materials."

Prior to the 14th five-year plan, there were only three rail lines in Tibet: the Golmud-Lhasa line which opened in 2006 and the Lhasa-Shigatse line that started in 2014. In 2021, the Lhasa-Nyingtri line started its operations.

China has said that during this plan period it will strengthen the rail connections all along the southern border, along India, Bhutan, and Nepal. Accordingly, it will extend the train connection from Shigatse up along the Western Tibetan border towards Xinjiang

(known to Uyghurs as East Turkestan), built the Yunnan-Tibet Railway (both Pome-Rawok section and Rawok-Gyalthang section), and the Kyirong Port Railway. The Shigatse to Kyirong section is hoped to be completed at the end of the plan period. The plan also includes extending the line from Shigatse to Dromo (Yadong) County. Dromo is the closest county along the Indian border in Sikkim.

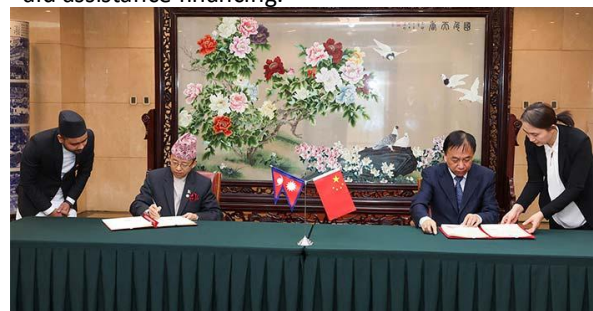
In this plan period, China intends to extend the Lhasa to Nyingtri line (one of a number of railway projects approved by China's economic planning body with a total investment of about 200 billion yuan (\$32.7 billion) to Chengdu to make it Chengdu-Lhasa line. Nyingtri is strategically located close to the border with India (around 10 miles distance). When completed, it will connect Tibet onto China's rail network. Indicating this line's strategic importance, Xi Jinping, said in 2020, "It is crucially important for the country to safeguard national unity, enhance ethnic solidarity and consolidate stability in border areas."

Promising economic incentives to Nepal

Nepal is seen as a crucial country in China's ambitions in South Asia, particularly to counter and contain Indian influence in the region. Accordingly, China has expanded its charm offensives in Nepal, using both economic incentives and political outreach.

Nepal Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli was invited to visit China in December 2024, interestingly before his visit to India, which has been the tradition for new prime ministers. During PM Oli's visit the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) cooperation framework was signed that China had proposed and Nepal initially agreed to in 2017 but implementation of which had lagged.

The signing which was to happen on December 3 was delayed due to disagreements over terminology to be used in the draft. Nepal did not want the term "grant" in the financial cooperation modality. Following further discussions, both sides agreed to use the term "aid assistance financing."



Officials from Nepal and China signing the BRI Cooperation Framework on December 4, 2024. (Photo: Nepal PM Secretariat)

Hinting at Nepal trying to protect itself from Indian influence, China used the opportunity of Nepali Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli's visit to Beijing in December 2024, to insert the following in the joint statement: "China firmly supports Nepal in upholding its

independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, and respects and supports Nepal's independent choice of political and social system, and development path that suit its national conditions."

Taking advantage of Nepal's economic condition, the Chinese authorities have been dangling the carrot of economic incentives and in the process pulling Nepal into its Belt and Road orbit.

China also sees an opportunity in Nepal as the birthplace of the Buddha to aid it in its religious diplomacy with Buddhist countries, yet another field of competition with India. Over the years the Chinese Government has launched international initiatives, including the World Buddhist Forum, as a way to achieve this objective. An analyst in Nepal also connects this Chinese plan to legitimize its rule over Tibet. Referring to Chinese "unparalleled interest in Lumbini", the birthplace of the Buddha, Siddhartha Thapa, wrote in The Kathmandu Post, "The political opportunity Lumbini provides China is also substantive. Above all, China's ambitious plans in Lumbini are aimed at providing leadership to the development of Lumbini to establish China as the natural and undisputed leader of the Buddhist world. China's insecurity is natural, as it was only after the then US President, Richard Nixon, visited Beijing in 1972 that America's shadow war in the Tibetan plateau against China's invasion of Tibet came to an end. Not only is China most serious about its hand in selecting the next Dalai Lama, but with the development of Lumbini, China aims to control the narrative of Buddhism, which it hopes will put the lid on the Tibetan issue with a lasting solution that no longer challenges China's national security."

Accordingly, different initiatives have been launched during the 14th five-year plan period to strengthen Chinese influence in Nepal. Understanding how tourism is critical to Nepal's economy, China embarked on a "tourism diplomacy as soft power tool" and announced on June 27, 2024, during the 16th round of the Nepal-China diplomatic consultation mechanism meeting in Kathmandu, that it will declare 2025 as 'Visit Nepal Year in China'. Chinese Ambassador to Nepal, Chen Song, told the Kathmandu Post that they will promote Nepal "through a series of activities, more cultural exchange programmes, more attractive packages and more flights". However, the tourism industry in Nepal is wondering what this will result in. It is ironical (and hints at racial discrimination) that while China is using the promise of more Chinese tourists to expand its sphere of influence in Nepal, the Tibetan people who share a long border with Nepal and who have been historically contributing to its lucrative spiritual tourism infrastructure, have virtually been banned from travelling to Nepal. In the post 1959 period, only a handful of Tibetans from Tibet, at best, have been able to travel to Nepal legally. In the

1980s and going into the 2000s, Tibetans started escaping across Nepal's border, at one time over 3,000 did so annually. But in recent years the numbers have dwindled to only a handful primarily due to the Chinese stringent border controls. According to CTA officials, in 2021, only four Tibetans were able to come out while five had arrived in 2020. The numbers did not improve much, with 10 arrivals in 2022 and 15 in 2023. The Chinese government has tightened its control imposing stricter border controls. One can only assume that even if China permits more Chinese tourists to visit Nepal, the Tibetans in Tibet will not be included and subjected to another set of discriminatory rules.

Asserting Indirect influence in Bhutan

Bhutan's very close relations with India and with its history of strong spiritual and cultural connection to Tibet, the Chinese authorities have always been looking for ways to get an inroad into the country. The Chinese invasion and occupation of Tibet engendered fear and concern in Bhutan. Therefore, until the 1970s, the Chinese authorities could not make much headway with the Bhutanese authorities showing no interest in any direct interaction. It was India that was dealing with China and the outside world on behalf of Bhutan.

Since the 1980s, China has been trying to offer the possibility of resolving the disputes on Bhutan's border with Tibet as an incentive to establish a bilateral relationship. China lays claim to around 495 square kilometers (191 sq miles) in northcentral Bhutan and 269 sq km (104 sq miles) in western Bhutan. Since 2020, it has claimed another 740 sq km (286 sq miles) in eastern Bhutan.

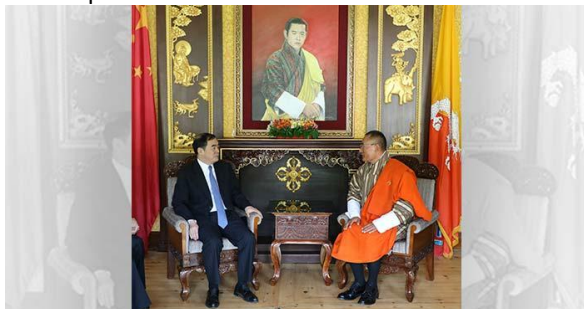
Beginning in 1984, there have been 25 rounds of boundary talks between Bhutan and China, the last one being held in October 2023.

China is also trying to use its charm offensive to influence the Bhutanese people's perception through appearing to be supporting Bhutanese aspiration for a more visible global role, away from India. Chinese government mouthpiece Global Times carried an article in 2021 headlined, "How Bhutanese seek national security via independence pursuit; what China could do to help" wherein the blame was laid on India. It said, "Experts on border studies said that some people in Bhutan feel that India's "embrace" is becoming "suffocating and controlling" as Bhutan's national defense, energy and economy are tightly under their neighbor's grasp."

No less than China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi conveyed the message implying that China wants direct ties and supports Bhutan's move to distance itself from India. During Wang's meeting with visiting Bhutanese Foreign Minister Tandin Dorjee in 2023, he told him, "China will continue to stand firmly on the side of developing countries, shoulder its due

international responsibilities, act on true multilateralism, support greater democracy in international relations, and oppose all hegemonic and bullying practices.” Chinese state media quoted Wang as even suggesting formal diplomatic ties to the Bhutanese Foreign Minister, “China is ready to conclude boundary negotiations and establish diplomatic relations with Bhutan as soon as possible.” China has also been trying to use the possibility of increased Chinese tourists in Bhutan as an incentive. While only a handful of Chinese tourists visited Bhutan going back some decades, today China is among the larger source markets for Bhutanese tourism, according to the Tourism Council of Bhutan. The Bhutanese media outlet, Kuensel reported in 2016, “China made it to the top five major markets for the first time in 2010, with an increase of about 30 percent in arrivals from 2009.”

In 2018, Chinese state media China Daily commissioned an article by a Bhutanese writer with the enticing headline, “Tourism can bring China-Bhutan closer”. The article concluded, “I believe that the concept of BRI put forward by China will certainly enhance connectivity and help tourism globally. Therefore, tourism is a common aspiration of China and Bhutan and will be one of the bedrocks to build strong economic and cultural bond in making Sino-Bhutan relations stronger.” It may not be a coincidence that a Bhutanese is being used to bring a reference to China’s interest in having Bhutan be a part of its Belt & Road Initiative. This article appeared some days after a rare visit to Bhutan by Chinese vice foreign minister Kong Xuanyou during which he invited Bhutan to join the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and share its “development dividend”.



Chinese Vice Foreign Minister Kong Xuanyou meeting Bhutan PM Tshering Tobgay during his trip to Thimphu in July 2018.

Concerning tourism, China was among the top 10 source markets for tourism in Bhutan in 2023. From the denial of permission for Bhutanese to enter Tibet in the past, even for pilgrimages, the Chinese authorities today are encouraging Bhutanese to visit with Tibet-based tour groups permitted to announce tours such as “12 Days Tibet and Bhutan Scenic and Cultural Discovery Tour.” Bhutanese social media influencers have also started coming out with YouTube

videos about visits to holy sites in Tibet. **Hydropower station to challenge India**

The 14th Five-Year Plan had outlined hydropower development in the lower reaches of the Yarlung Tsangpo (River) which flows along the Indian border in Tibet and eventually flows into India. Accordingly, in December 2024, China announced its approval of such a dam. Observers however said this is “stoking concerns about displacement of communities in Tibet and environmental impacts downstream in India and Bangladesh.” Two weeks prior to China’s announcement, ICT came out with a detailed report on how hydropower and dam projects are increasingly leading to massive human rights violations and environmental damage in Tibet. Since Asia’s largest rivers originate in the Tibetan plateau, the construction of hydroelectric dams in Tibet also threatens the water supply, livelihoods and health of up to 1.8 billion people across China, South and Southeast Asia.

“India and Bangladesh are concerned that the dam would change the river’s natural flow, which could disrupt access to water for agriculture, drinking and other essential human needs,” Neeraj Singh Manhas, an expert on transboundary rivers and water security in south Asia told the Financial Times.

In a formal reaction, Indian External Affairs Ministry spokesman Randhir Jaiswal said on Jan 3, 2025 that as a “lower riparian state with established user rights to the waters of the river, we have consistently expressed, through expert-level as well as diplomatic channels, our views and concerns to the Chinese side over mega projects...”

Conclusion

Although we have not been able to find a direct attribution of this reference, Mao Zedong is believed to have laid out China’s ambitions in South Asia by saying during the early 1950s that Tibet is the palm with Ladakh, Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan and NEFA (former name of Arunachal Pradesh) as its five fingers and they need to be liberated.

In 1954 the Chinese government published a school book called “A Brief History of Modern China”, which included a map showing the territories allegedly taken by “imperialist powers” between 1840 and 1919, and included Ladakh, Nepal, Bhutan, Sikkim, and the entire Northeast India.

The Chinese authorities have said that the objectives of the 14th Five-Year Plan period include, the anti-secession struggle will firmly grasp the overall initiative, the sense of community of the Chinese nation will be deeply rooted in the hearts of the people, new progress will be made in the sinicization of Tibetan Buddhism, and economic development will maintain a good momentum. Ultimately, whatever the Chinese authorities have been working on in Tibet in this 14th Five-Year Plan period is more to “serve the

major national strategies” than for the welfare of the Tibetan people.

Investments and projects in TAR under the 14th Five Year Plan

Exposing China’s Legal Preparations for a Taiwan Invasion

11 March 2025, [War On the Rocks](#), Cheng Deng feng and Tim Boyle

China is systematically building a legal framework for a potential invasion of Taiwan. How can Taiwan’s friends, partners, and allies push back?

We come together as a unique writing team: military lawyers from the U.S. and Taiwanese armed forces. We seek here to explore China’s ongoing legal preparations for the use of force against Taiwan and uncover likely legal maneuvers Beijing will employ in the lead-up to an invasion. On that basis, we outline key steps for Taiwan’s international supporters to strengthen deterrence, including dismantling China’s legal pretext for aggression and implementing coordinated counter-lawfare strategies to challenge Beijing’s lawfare campaign.

Why Does a Legal Framework for War Matter?

Legal frameworks shape the way conflicts are justified, perceived, and responded to — both domestically and internationally. By crafting a legal basis for war, China is not only preparing its domestic landscape for a Taiwan invasion but also seeking to influence global narratives, erode Taiwan’s international support, and reduce the likelihood of foreign intervention.

Beijing understands that modern warfare extends to the legal domain, where the struggle for perceived legitimacy is paramount. By embedding this mindset into its military strategy, China aims to frame an invasion as a lawful internal matter, fostering diplomatic ambiguity that could deter international opposition and delay collective security responses. This is particularly critical in an era where legitimacy plays a central role in shaping geopolitical alignments and the willingness of nations to take decisive action. Through legal instruments like the Anti-Secession Law, Beijing is setting conditions for the use of force by normalizing its legal claims, asserting jurisdictional control, and criminalizing resistance. This incremental approach to lawfare seeks to shift the strategic environment in China’s favor before conflict, making an eventual invasion seem like a reasonable and legally justified course of action.

Countering China’s legal preparations for war is therefore essential to preserving peace and security in the Western Pacific and ensuring that international law remains a bulwark against aggression, rather than a weapon used to facilitate it. The more China’s lawfare is exposed and opposed, the harder it

becomes for Beijing to legitimize aggression against Taiwan, both at home and abroad.

China’s Legal Case for Taking Taiwan

China leverages its “one China principle” as a purported legal justification for a Taiwan invasion, labeling the issue an “internal matter” exempt from the U.N. Charter’s prohibition on the use of force. Amid rising geopolitical tensions over the past two decades, Beijing has intensified efforts to promote its one China principle internationally. Simultaneously, Beijing has institutionalized its one China principle domestically by establishing a legislative framework rooted in its 1982 constitution, which designates Taiwan as an inseparable part of the People’s Republic of China.

In 2005, after Taiwan reelected a president viewed by Beijing as pro-independence, China enacted the Anti-Secession Law to signal its resolve and willingness to use force. Notably, the law mandates “non-peaceful means” if Beijing identifies undefined “major incidents” entailing secession, or deems peaceful “reunification” unachievable. Since its enactment, the Anti-Secession Law has become a cornerstone of Beijing’s lawfare campaign against Taiwan, providing a domestic pretext for escalating coercion and military threats.

Throughout the 2000s, as Taiwan sought to deepen ties with democratic partners and expand its global presence, China reinforced the Anti-Secession Law with additional domestic laws that framed foreign engagement with Taiwan as a violation of its sovereignty. Among these, the National Security Law (2015) and National Defense Law (2020) authorize military action to defend China’s claimed territory, incorporating Taiwan-related preparations into a broader national security structure aligned with Xi Jinping’s push for modernization of the People’s Liberation Army (hereafter, Chinese military) and centralized war powers.

By 2021, as U.S. and allied naval operations increased in the Western Pacific, China enacted the Coast Guard Law and Maritime Traffic Safety Law, granting its maritime forces sweeping authority to regulate and control so-called jurisdictional waters. In Beijing’s view, this includes not only Taiwan’s territorial sea but also areas of the Taiwan Strait where international law guarantees high-seas freedoms to all nations. A series of maritime notices and coast guard regulations have since expanded domestic enforcement powers even further, enabling Chinese authorities to exclude, detain, and use force against foreign vessels. Meanwhile, in the airspace above the Taiwan Strait, China implemented modified civilian flight routes, creating opportunities for military aircraft to blend with civilian air traffic and strain Taiwan’s air defenses. Together, these legal maneuvers strengthen the Chinese military’s counter-intervention strategy

by masking potential cross-Strait aggression within routine activity, buying time and space to amass forces for conflict without foreign interference.

Building on this foundation, China has adopted an increasingly aggressive and sustained posture in the Taiwan Strait, catalyzed by perceived provocations — most notably, former U.S. Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi's 2022 visit to Taiwan. Since then, China has worked to normalize large-scale joint operations, routine centerline crossings, and persistent air and naval patrols near, and sometimes within, Taiwan's claimed territorial sea and airspace. This pattern reached new heights with last year's Joint Sword exercises,

featuring unprecedented blockade and invasion rehearsals staged in response to Taiwan's election of President William Lai, whom Beijing labels a separatist. Joint Sword also showcased Beijing's military-civil fusion strategy, with the Chinese military integrating commercial roll-on/roll-off ferries in amphibious formations — intentionally blurring the legal distinction between civilian and military objects to obscure aggression and complicate decision-making by law-abiding adversaries.

Consistent with its military-civil fusion strategy, Beijing's recent institutional reforms under the National Defense Mobilization Act (2010), Cybersecurity Law (2017), and National Defense Transportation Law (2017) support rapid force expansion during conflict by ensuring military access to dual-use technologies and infrastructure, such as commercial shipping, civil aviation, and artificial intelligence. The National Intelligence Law (2018) reinforces this approach by compelling Chinese companies and foreign firms to assist in intelligence gathering, potentially weaponizing foreign data against Taiwan's supporters. Reports of newly developed, purpose-built landing barges reflect emerging dual-use threats on the front lines, as the Chinese military harnesses whole-of-society power to enhance critical capabilities for an invasion.

In addition to conventional force rehearsals during Joint Sword, Beijing seized on Lai's election to escalate its lawfare campaign. Shortly after his inauguration, Beijing introduced 22 new rules to bolster enforcement of the Anti-Secession Law, criminalizing support for Taiwan independence and expanding its authority to prosecute alleged "separatists." These measures, which allow trials in absentia and, in some cases, the death penalty, signal an intensified effort to pressure Taiwan's leaders, businesses, and civil society into submission.

By strengthening its legal foundation for invasion, Beijing aims to achieve what the Chinese military's "three warfares" strategy calls "legal principle superiority" — a position of strategic dominance intended to legitimize escalating coercion and

potential aggression. A recent Lowy Institute report highlights progress toward this goal, revealing that nearly half of U.N. member states now endorse Beijing's one China principle and all efforts toward unification. Crucially, this support comes without explicit conditions for peaceful resolution, arguably signaling tacit consent for Chinese military aggression. Indeed, Beijing's strategic use of lawfare appears to be gaining ground in preparing both the legal and physical environments for potential conflict.

What's Next? Anticipated Legal Maneuvers

China has already laid its legal groundwork for a Taiwan invasion, but we expect further legal maneuvers as Beijing aims to solidify its position and establish legal principle superiority. Accelerated efforts to advance Beijing's one China principle will remain central, building on the trend highlighted in the Lowy Institute report. This will include coercive measures to secure international endorsements and embed Beijing's one China principle in international instruments, as seen in China's secret memorandums of understanding with U.N. organizations. In the information environment, Beijing will continue framing its one China principle as a "universal consensus," while perpetuating the false assertion that U.N. General Assembly Resolution 2758 (1971) establishes Taiwan as subordinate to Communist China under international law. By shaping global perceptions of the legality of its one China principle, Beijing will seek to create a permissive environment that maximizes decision space for Party leadership.

Meanwhile, China will continue leveraging global development to foster complacency and suppress dissent. When there is resistance, including among the 12 nations maintaining official ties with Taiwan, China will weaponize domestic laws — such as the Foreign Relations Law (2023) and the Anti-Foreign Sanctions Law (2021) — to impose economic costs while shielding itself from sanctions in the event of an invasion. Internally, Beijing will advance military-civil fusion implementation, issuing incremental legal and regulatory mandates as necessary to swiftly mobilize resources and enhance military readiness.

To further tighten the noose in the Taiwan Strait, China may publish straight baselines around Taiwan under the guise of Article 16 of the Law of the Sea Convention, mirroring the legal strategy it used to assert control over the Paracels, Senkakus, and, more recently, the Gulf of Tonkin and Scarborough Shoal. In tandem with this, China will step up implementation of its Coast Guard Law and Maritime Traffic Safety Law, potentially through more frequent and closer patrols — like those near Kinmen and Matsu in 2024 — ultimately leading to enforcement within Taiwan's claimed territorial sea and airspace. Leveraging its increasingly robust assertions of jurisdiction, China

could establish unlawful exclusion zones, not only during exercises like Joint Sword but also amid everyday maritime activities. China's law enforcement authorities previewed this tactic in April 2023, when they initiated a "special joint patrol and inspection operation," permitting officials to board and inspect vessels in the Taiwan Strait.

Lastly, in line with the Anti-Secession Law and China's 2022 white paper, Beijing may introduce a "One Country, Two Systems" model for Taiwan, similar to the construct in Hong Kong. China's enactment of a "Basic Law" for Hong Kong in 1990 — seven years before the handover of sovereignty — could foreshadow similar preemptive legal measures for Taiwan. Some Chinese scholars have proposed a "Taiwan basic law" loosely modeled after the Hong Kong version, which outlines Taiwan's purported autonomy under Communist China's rule.

As part of a broader carrot-and-stick strategy, a basic law could serve as propaganda to weaken resistance in Taiwan — offering amnesty to those who comply alongside arrest warrants for designated "separatists." If Taiwan rejects a basic law, Beijing could cite this as evidence that peaceful measures have been exhausted, or alternatively, use the law to justify declaring a "major incident" following a perceived provocation, thus triggering the mandatory use of force under the Anti-Secession Law. For Taiwan's supporters, the potential for China to strengthen its position through such legal maneuvers highlights the need to not only expose these actions but also actively challenge them, while evaluating the implications for both the possibility of an invasion and the effectiveness of deterrence strategies.

Conclusion and Recommendations

While an invasion of Taiwan is neither inevitable nor tied to a specific timeline, China's establishment of legal principle superiority could raise the risk of conflict by lowering the perceived costs of aggression for Beijing. Conversely, securing the legal high ground and denying China the veneer of legitimacy associated with legal principle superiority could reduce the likelihood of conflict. To achieve this deterrent effect, policymakers should recognize the legal environment as a battleground and implement coordinated counter-lawfare strategies to challenge China's lawfare campaign. U.S. Indo-Pacific Command's counter-lawfare initiative exemplifies an approach that others can replicate. Though not a panacea, counter-lawfare can bolster broader deterrence efforts.

Effective counter-lawfare requires confronting the two main pillars of China's legal framework: the one China principle and the Anti-Secession Law. Strategic communications should go beyond standard talking points to expose the legal flaws and aggressive implications of Beijing's stance. Whether in high-level

dialogues or through security cooperation and legal diplomacy at the tactical level, officials should work to eliminate confusion surrounding national one China policies, distinguishing them from Beijing's one China principle, and explaining why this distinction is crucial for peace and security. Notably, the recent United States-Japan-Republic of Korea trilateral statement opposing unilateral efforts to alter the status quo by force or coercion marked a significant show of solidarity — one that should be broadly echoed, particularly by those countries that, like the United States, "acknowledge," "take note of," or "respect" (but do not endorse) Beijing's claim over Taiwan.

Additionally, the United States, along with other nations and international bodies, should back growing opposition to China's distortion of U.N. General Assembly Resolution 2758, while making clear that the resolution merely recognizes the People's Republic of China as the representative of China at the United Nations without resolving Taiwan's status. A recently proposed U.S. Senate resolution reflects bipartisan momentum on this issue, which could be harnessed into a whole-of-government campaign.

Part of that campaign should focus on dismantling the legal arguments underlying China's position, including Beijing's false assertion that the Cairo and Potsdam Declarations (1943/1945) affirm its sovereignty over Taiwan, despite these proclamations predating the founding of Communist China and bearing no legal relevance to the current regime. More pertinent to Taiwan's status is the San Francisco Peace Treaty (1951), which confirmed Japan's renunciation of sovereignty over Taiwan after World War II without designating a successor state. This omission was no accident. It left Taiwan's legal status open pending a future resolution — an enduring ambiguity that China ignores. Furthermore, the reality of Taiwan's de facto autonomy contradicts China's claim that Taiwan is purely an internal matter and reinforces the opposing view that international law governs China's actions in cross-Strait relations. In other words, the U.N. Charter's prohibition on the use of force bars cross-Strait aggression, and Taiwan, as a peaceful, self-governing entity, retains an inherent right to self-defense, regardless of formal statehood. To facilitate dialogue on these legal considerations, counter-lawfare strategies should break the China-imposed Taiwan taboo in international engagement by ensuring Taiwan has a meaningful voice in global forums, including international legal conferences. This does not equate to granting statehood, but rather acknowledges that Taiwan's perspective deserves to be heard, and that its security experts can offer valuable insights to foster strategic empathy and inform cross-Strait policies. Practically, Taiwan's participation in international bodies remains

essential, as Taiwan continues to play a key role in global governance, from air traffic control to international trade, despite China's opposition.

As China attempts to isolate Taiwan internationally, the growing number of nations — including Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Japan, New Zealand, the United States, and the United Kingdom — exercising navigational freedoms in the Taiwan Strait is a positive step toward preventing China from achieving air and sea dominance over Taiwan. Militaries should continue this drive by engaging in combined activities in the strait, potentially expanding their operations beyond simple transit to include other lawful uses of the sea and airspace. This would signal to Beijing that unilateral attempts to alter the legal status of the Taiwan Strait will not be tolerated. Moreover, it would reaffirm international commitment to operating in this vital waterway to the fullest extent permitted by international law, possibly undermining Beijing's confidence in its counter-intervention strategy.

In support of the actions outlined above, officials should exercise combined legal vigilance as a core tenet of counter-lawfare. This entails continuous monitoring and assessment of the legal environment to ensure early detection of significant changes — ranging from subtle shifts in China's national mobilization framework to overt declarations under the Anti-Secession Law. With fluency in Mandarin and a deep understanding of Beijing's bureaucratic and legal discourse, Taiwan's security experts are uniquely positioned to assist international partners in this area. By jointly developing legal indicators and warnings, integrating them into intelligence collection, and strengthening interorganizational cooperation, information sharing, and capacity building, Taiwan and its international partners can enhance readiness and response capabilities. These efforts depend on strong partnerships to project strength in numbers, reinforce deterrence, and safeguard peace and security in the Western Pacific.

Tibet's Endless Struggle: A Story of Oppression and Resistance

10 March 2025, [One India](#), Ashu Maan

March 10 marks Tibetan Uprising Day, commemorating the 1959 rebellion against China's oppressive rule.

On this date, thousands of Tibetans courageously rose against Chinese military occupation, only to face a brutal crackdown that forced His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama and around 80,000 Tibetans into exile, primarily to India.

Now, 66 years later, Tibet's condition remains dire, characterised by systematic repression, cultural

annihilation, and extensive human rights violations under Chinese rule. China's control over Tibet began with a military invasion in 1950, cynically termed a "peaceful liberation" by Beijing despite vehement Tibetan resistance. Since the invasion, Tibetans have endured sustained oppression, persecution, and cultural erasure, with human rights groups estimating that over one million Tibetans have died due to direct violence or as a consequence of oppressive Chinese policies.

A key aspect of China's oppressive regime in Tibet is the deliberate destruction of Tibetan cultural identity. A 2023 report highlighted Beijing's accelerated implementation of "Sinicization" policies aimed explicitly at assimilating Tibetans into the dominant Han Chinese culture. Tibetan language education has been drastically curtailed, with Mandarin Chinese imposed as the primary language in schools, severely restricting younger Tibetans from accessing their heritage and traditions. Religious persecution remains intense. Since 2009, at least 159 Tibetans have resorted to self-immolation, a desperate act of protest against China's severe suppression of religious freedoms.

Tibetan monasteries are heavily surveilled, monks are routinely subjected to arbitrary arrests, and many face harsh prison sentences merely for expressing loyalty to the Dalai Lama or advocating basic religious rights. The ongoing detention of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, recognised by the Dalai Lama as the 11th Panchen Lama, starkly highlights China's cruelty; abducted at age six in 1995, he remains the youngest and longest-detained political prisoner globally. China's policies also extend to ruthless environmental exploitation, significantly worsening Tibet's plight. Known as the "Third Pole," Tibet holds the world's largest freshwater reserves outside the Arctic regions. China's aggressive dam-building and mining threaten Tibet's delicate ecological balance, affecting nearly two billion people downstream in India, Bangladesh, and Southeast Asia and intensifying geopolitical tensions and ecological crises. Furthermore, Tibetans face severe restrictions on basic freedoms, including movement, speech, and assembly. Amnesty International's 2023 report documented pervasive surveillance, including the deployment of facial recognition technology and drones throughout Tibet, enabling authorities to systematically target Tibetan activists, intellectuals, and ordinary citizens for arbitrary detention, imprisonment, and torture on vague charges such as "inciting separatism." China's aggressive dam-building and mining threaten Tibet's delicate ecological balance, affecting nearly two billion people downstream in India, Bangladesh, and Southeast Asia and intensifying geopolitical tensions and ecological crises. Furthermore, Tibetans face severe restrictions on basic freedoms, including

movement, speech, and assembly. Amnesty International's 2023 report documented pervasive surveillance, including the deployment of facial recognition technology and drones throughout Tibet, enabling authorities to systematically target Tibetan activists, intellectuals, and ordinary citizens for arbitrary detention, imprisonment, and torture on vague charges such as "inciting separatism." Yet, amidst overwhelming adversity, Tibetans remain resilient. Their struggle for freedom continues, fueled by unwavering determination and hope. While international support has grown, it still lacks the unified, sustained political action required to effectively challenge China's oppressive measures effectively. Countries like the United States and various European nations have recently undertaken symbolic yet significant steps by highlighting human rights abuses in Tibet, imposing sanctions on Chinese officials involved, and legislating support for Tibetan autonomy. India's consistent support, including sheltering the Dalai Lama and thousands of Tibetan exiles, highlights its solidarity with the Tibetan cause. However, greater diplomatic pressure, heightened awareness campaigns, and coordinated international actions remain crucial to hold China accountable for the ongoing human rights violations and cultural genocide in Tibet. On this Tibetan Uprising Day, it is vital to reaffirm our moral responsibility to support Tibet's quest for freedom, human dignity, and cultural preservation. Tibet's struggle transcends mere bilateral disputes; it represents a broader fight for fundamental human rights, justice, and accountability—core values upon which democratic nations worldwide stand. Recognising and actively supporting Tibet's quest for freedom is not merely a political choice but a moral imperative for the global community.

China's Grip Tightens on Tibetan Buddhism

10 March 2025, [The Sunday Guardian](#), Aritra Banarjee



In recent years, China's strategy has shifted from mere suppression to active control and reshaping of Tibetan Buddhism.

In Tibet, monasteries are not just spiritual centers but repositories of culture, history, and identity. Yet under Xi Jinping's China, these traditional institutions have become prime targets in an accelerating campaign to enforce ideological conformity. Beijing's ever-

tightening grip over Tibetan Buddhism is eroding religious autonomy, reshaping practices to reflect Communist Party orthodoxy, and systematically undermining the faith's once-independent institutions.

In recent years, China's strategy has shifted from mere suppression to active control and reshaping of Tibetan Buddhism. A cornerstone of this strategy is the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) push for the "sinicization" of religion—transforming Tibetan Buddhism into an instrument supportive of socialist principles. Monasteries must now run mandatory "patriotic education" programs, during which monks and nuns publicly pledge loyalty to the Party, renounce their allegiance to exiled religious leaders such as the Dalai Lama, and incorporate CCP ideology into their religious practices.

Surveillance technologies have intensified this ideological enforcement. Across the Tibetan plateau, CCTV cameras and advanced facial recognition systems monitor monks and religious devotees, looking for signs of discontent or expressions of cultural independence. Even the simple act of possessing or distributing images of the Dalai Lama is criminalized, resulting in detentions and imprisonment.

Nowhere is China's interference more visible—and contentious—than in its control over Tibetan Buddhism's reincarnation system. The CCP maintains exclusive authority to recognize incarnate lamas, including the Panchen Lama, the second-highest-ranking figure in Tibetan Buddhism. Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, recognized by the Dalai Lama as the 11th Panchen Lama, disappeared mysteriously in 1995 at the age of six. In his place, Beijing installed its own candidate, Gyaltsen Norbu, now actively promoted as the official Panchen Lama and serving as a mouthpiece for CCP-approved messages. This controversial intervention foreshadows an eventual crisis surrounding the reincarnation of the 14th Dalai Lama, a scenario China plans to control.

Such heavy-handed measures are part of a broader CCP strategy that leverages both religious authority and high-tech surveillance. Cameras and monitoring systems have transformed monasteries into virtual prisons, and monks live under constant fear of punishment for minor infractions. Newer methods, including AI-based monitoring, have created an atmosphere of perpetual suspicion.

International observers—including Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, and various UN bodies—have raised alarms. Yet diplomatic denunciations and human rights reports have so far failed to halt Beijing's escalating repression. Despite condemnations at UN forums, Beijing continues its policies unabated, arguing that they maintain "social stability" and "national unity."

The impact of these actions is profound. Monasteries, once flourishing centers of education and cultural transmission, are increasingly isolated and subdued. Young monks, traditionally trained from an early age in monastic institutions, have been forcibly transferred to state-run schools, severing their cultural and spiritual education. This forced assimilation has disrupted the generational transfer of religious knowledge, threatening the continuity of Tibetan Buddhism itself.

China's efforts to shape Tibetan Buddhism according to its ideological template are not merely domestic policy—they represent a geopolitical calculation to prevent religion from serving as a rallying point for Tibetan nationalism or separatist aspirations. Yet, paradoxically, this aggressive control has amplified international criticism and attention, mobilizing human rights advocates and policymakers globally.

As the CCP tightens its grip, the future of authentic Tibetan Buddhism within Tibet grows uncertain. For Tibetans—inside and outside the region—the battle to preserve their faith, cultural identity, and autonomy continues, even as Beijing's repression intensifies.

Tibet language politics aren't just Tibetan vs Mandarin. Minority languages are being erased

09 March 2025, [The Print](#), Gerald Roche

If Tibetans stop speaking Manegacha and other minority languages, this will contribute to the Chinese government's efforts to erase Tibetan identity and culture.

Three days after he was released from prison in December, a Tibetan village leader named Gonpo Namgyal died. As his body was being prepared for traditional Tibetan funeral rites, marks were found indicating he had been brutally tortured in jail.

His crime? Gonpo Namgyal had been part of a campaign to protect the Tibetan language in China. Gonpo Namgyal is the victim of a slow-moving conflict that has dragged on for nearly 75 years, since China invaded Tibet in the mid-20th century. Language has been central to that conflict.

Tibetans have worked to protect the Tibetan language and resisted efforts to enforce Mandarin Chinese. Yet, Tibetan children are losing their language through enrolment in state boarding schools where they are being educated nearly exclusively in Mandarin Chinese. Tibetan is typically only taught a few times a week – not enough to sustain the language.

My research, published in a new book in 2024, provides unique insights into the struggle of other minority languages in Tibet that receive far less attention.

My research shows that language politics in Tibet are surprisingly complex and driven by subtle violence, perpetuated not only by Chinese authorities but also other Tibetans. I've also found that outsiders' efforts to help are failing the minority languages at the highest risk of extinction.

Tibetan culture under attack

I lived in Ziling, the largest city on the Tibetan Plateau, from 2005 to 2013, teaching in a university, studying Tibetan and supporting local non-government organisations.

Most of my research since then has focused on language politics in the Rebgong valley on the northeast Tibetan Plateau. From 2014 to 2018, I interviewed dozens of people, spoke informally with many others, and conducted hundreds of household surveys about language use.

I also collected and analysed Tibetan language texts, including government policies, online essays, social media posts and even pop song lyrics.

When I was in Ziling, Tibetans launched a massive protest movement against Chinese rule just before the Beijing Olympics in 2008. These protests led to harsh government crackdowns, including mass arrests, increased surveillance, and restrictions on freedom of movement and expressions of Tibetan identity. This was largely focused on language and religion.

Years of unrest ensued, marked by more demonstrations and individual acts of sacrifice. Since 2009, more than 150 Tibetans have set themselves on fire to protest Chinese rule.

Not just Tibetan under threat

Tibet is a linguistically diverse place. In addition to Tibetan, about 60 other languages are spoken in the region. About 4% of Tibetans (around 250,000 people) speak a minority language.

Government policy forces all Tibetans to learn and use Mandarin Chinese. Those who speak only Tibetan have a harder time finding work and are faced with discrimination and even violence from the dominant Han ethnic group.

Meanwhile, support for Tibetan language education has slowly been whittled away: the government even recently banned students from having private Tibetan lessons or tutors on their school holidays.

Linguistic minorities in Tibet all need to learn and use Mandarin. But many also need to learn Tibetan to communicate with other Tibetans: classmates, teachers, doctors, bureaucrats or bosses.

In Rebgong, where I did my research, the locals speak a language they call Manegacha. Increasingly, this language is being replaced by Tibetan: about a third of all families that speak Manegacha are now teaching Tibetan to their children (who also must learn Mandarin).

The government refuses to provide any opportunities to use and learn minority languages like Manegacha. It also tolerates constant discrimination and violence against Manegacha speakers by other Tibetans.

These assimilationist state policies are causing linguistic diversity across Tibet to collapse. As these minority languages are lost, people's mental and physical health suffers and their social connections and communal identities are destroyed.

Why does this matter?

Tibetan resistance to Chinese rule dates back to the People's Liberation Army invasion in the early 1950s. When the Dalai Lama fled to India in 1959, that resistance movement went global. Governments around the world have continued to support Tibetan self-determination and combat Chinese misinformation about Tibet, such as the US Congress passage of the Resolve Tibet Act in 2024.

Outside efforts to support the Tibetan struggle, however, are failing some of the most vulnerable people: those who speak minority languages.

Manegacha speakers want to maintain their language. They resist the pressure to assimilate whenever they speak Manegacha to each other, post memes online in Manegacha or push back against the discrimination they face from other Tibetans.

However, if Tibetans stop speaking Manegacha and other minority languages, this will contribute to the Chinese government's efforts to erase Tibetan identity and culture.

Even if the Tibetan language somehow survives in China, the loss of even one of Tibet's minority languages would be a victory for the Communist Party in the conflict it started 75 years ago.

For human rights in Tibet to improve, solidarity and support from nations like Australia are critical

07 March 2025, [ABC](#), Kynzom Dhongdue and Daniela Gavshon



On 10 March, Tibetans around the world mark their National Uprising Day — commemorating the 1959 rebellion against the rule of the People's Republic of China in Tibet. But due to government repression, Tibetans won't be marking it publicly in China. (Photo by Burhaan Kinu / Hindustan Times via Getty Images)

Tibetans around the world mark their National Uprising Day on 10 March, commemorating the 1959 rebellion against the rule of the People's Republic of China in Tibet. But Tibetans in China won't be marking it publicly. They continue to suffer widespread violations of their human rights, which have only worsened under President Xi Jinping's repressive rule.

The fact that the international community rarely hears much news from Tibet anymore is not a coincidence — it is a consequence of China's increasing efforts to seal off information from the region. There is no independent civil society, nor is there freedom of expression, association, assembly or religion in Tibet.

The government has stepped up intrusive policing and surveillance as it forcibly assimilates the culturally distinct Tibetans into the Chinese nation. Tibetans must do what they are told — for instance, use Mandarin Chinese instead of Tibetan as a medium of instruction in schools, and relocate en masse from their long-established villages to sometimes hundreds of kilometres away — because any form of questioning government policies can lead to detention, enforced disappearance and torture.

Many Tibetans — like the family of Kynzom herself — fled across the Himalayas following the Tibetan Uprising and went into exile. But this option doesn't exist anymore insofar as the Chinese government severely restricts Tibetans' access to passports and has effectively sealed off the border to those seeking to cross without permission. Even simply communicating with the outside world — such as calling one's family in exile — is a dangerous act.

These acts of repression reflect a larger campaign that appears intended to hollow out and erase Tibetans' unique culture, language and identity. Yet, as Tibetans suffer without effective recourse, the Chinese government is curating a version of Tibet, much like a theme park, that they want visitors to see. This is why the visit to Tibet by Australia's ambassador to China, Scott Dewar, in October 2024 was so disappointing. His failure to challenge this mirage was a missed opportunity — especially since it was the first visit of Australia's ambassador in over a decade.

In the absence of unfettered access, visiting Tibet risks being turned into a stage-managed propaganda exercise. However, a diplomatic visit can also present a valuable opportunity to highlight human rights abuses. Whether this potential is realised depends on what happens during the visit, and what happens after.

When the *Sydney Morning Herald* covered the Australian ambassador's visit to Tibet in 2013, the headline read, "Tibet: Australian ambassador pulls no punches on human rights concerns after rare visit". This time around, however, the Australian government

issued no public statement on human rights and the trip slipped largely under the public's radar. The Australian and international media barely reported on the trip.

The Chinese government, on the other hand, publicised this visit in official media — with the consent of the Australian embassy — portraying it as an educational visit during which the Australian ambassador could learn about “Tibet's development and prosperity” so he could “introduce the beautiful, prosperous, open and progressive Tibet” to Australians.

Imagine, instead, that the ambassador had immediately issued a press release following the visit or, better yet, addressed the media and named the Tibetan political prisoners such as the disappeared Panchen Lama or the imprisoned monk philosopher Go Sherab Gyatso.

The ambassador could have been a strong voice for Tibetan human rights. But when pressed at Senate Estimates, the Australian government stated that human rights concerns were raised in private. When it comes to human rights violations as grave as those in Tibet, public accountability is essential.

It is not too late. This year, as another Tibetan Uprising Day approaches — and this date falls within *Losar*, or *Tibetan New Year* — the Australian government can use this occasion to make its voice heard. A high-profile, public appearance by Ambassador Dewar or Foreign Minister Penny Wong with the Tibetan community in Australia would send a powerful message of solidarity.

But words alone are not enough. Australia should also take concrete action. Following the United States government's funding freeze on foreign aid, some Tibetan civil society groups in exile are now facing an unprecedented financial crisis. These organisations cannot raise funds inside Tibet due to Chinese government repression. And they cannot easily do so abroad due to the Chinese government's long arm, weakening their capacity to document abuses and advocate for human rights and provide vital support to their community.

Ultimately, for the human rights situation in Tibet to improve, strong and determined solidarity and action will be needed from countries like Australia.

Villages of prosperity or military outposts? China's LAC game-plan

07 March 2025, [India Today](#)

The 'dual-purpose' Xiaokang villages along the border with India are symbols of China's unrelenting ambition and a warning on future confrontations

The snow-capped, windswept Himalayan heights of the India-China border are in greater spotlight as fresh satellite images reveal a startling development: a sprawling new Chinese settlement on the south bank of the Pangong Lake in Ladakh.

The 'dual-purpose' Xiaokang village cluster of 91-odd weatherproof structures marks yet another bold move by Beijing along the contentious border, the Line of Actual Control (LAC). The settlement, nestled on territory that China has held since the 1962 war with India, is raising alarm bells among military experts and policymakers alike.

Last October, India and China announced they had resolved their border patrolling issues by disengaging from the friction points in eastern Ladakh, on the boil since 2020. However, the Chinese side hasn't responded with anything on de-escalation and de-induction of its troops along the LAC. In fact, China has recently said it will increase its defence budget in 2025 by 7.2 per cent to over \$245 billion (Rs 21.3 lakh crore) to rapidly boost military capabilities across the land, air, sea, nuclear, space and cyber domains.

Xiaokang isn't just a village it's a statement. The construction boom follows last year's completion of a bridge linking the north and south banks of the Pangong Tso that straddles the disputed border. Analysts say the bridge is a game-changer that can enable the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) to swiftly redeploy forces and tap into reserves with unprecedented ease.

The strategic military implications of these villages are undeniable. They can serve as forward operating bases for the PLA, allowing China to extend military presence along the LAC. The dual-use nature of the infrastructure roads, communication networks and even residential buildings means these villages can be swiftly converted for military use when needed.

This military build-up has heightened tensions in the region and raised concerns about China's long-term intentions. China watchers claim the Xiaokang village programme is part of a broader strategy towards the sinicisation of Tibet, aimed at erasing its unique cultural identity and assimilating it into the Chinese mainstream. Under this, traditional Tibetan architecture is replaced with generic concrete structures, nomadic lifestyles are discouraged in favour of sedentary agriculture, and Tibetan language and culture are suppressed in schools and public life.

This systematic erosion of Tibetan culture is a form of cultural genocide that threatens the very survival of the Tibetan people, China analysts say.

The construction of Xiaokang villages in the Tibet Autonomous Region, initiated in 2017, has been met with scepticism and concern. While Beijing presents these villages as engines of economic development and poverty alleviation, critics see them as tools for

political control, cultural assimilation and strategic military expansion.

According to a research report published last month by the Centre of Excellence for Himalayan Studies, Shiv Nadar University, Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh, the official narrative of Xiaokang villages emphasises on improving living standards and modernising rural areas. However, their construction serves several other less benevolent purposes.

One alleged key objective is to increase the Han Chinese population in the sensitive border areas, diluting Tibetan presence and altering the region's demographic make-up. This demographic shift is intended to weaken Tibetan cultural identity and consolidate Beijing's control over the region.

The 'Party-building' initiatives, touted as efforts to improve governance and promote ethnic unity, are suspected to be campaigns of political indoctrination, the aim being to erase Tibetan identity and instil loyalty to the Communist Party of China (CPC). Tibetan language and culture are marginalised in favour of Mandarin and Chinese cultural norms. Religious practices, particularly reverence for the Tibetan spiritual leader Dalai Lama, are heavily monitored and suppressed. Any expression of dissent, however minor, is met with swift and severe punishment, creating an atmosphere of fear and self-censorship.

The so-called 'Tibet Aid Programme', presented as a benevolent effort to assist the Tibetan people, is a vehicle for the influx of Han Chinese workers and businesses. These newcomers often displace local Tibetan populations and exploit the region's natural resources, further marginalising Tibetans and undermining their traditional livelihoods. The infrastructure, while ostensibly for the benefit of the local people, also serves strategic military purposes, strengthening China's ability to project power and control the border region.

Analysts say the Xiaokang village programme is not a genuine effort to improve the lives of Tibetans but rather a calculated strategy to consolidate Beijing's control over the region, suppress dissent and erase Tibetan culture. It is imperative that the world community condemns these policies, demands greater transparency and accountability from the Chinese government, and supports the Tibetan people's right to self-determination and cultural preservation. The narrative of economic progress should not blind the world to the reality of political oppression and cultural destruction.

The creation of dual-purpose Xiaokang villages close to the LAC has posed a serious challenge for the Indian security establishment. In response, India has launched the 'Vibrant Villages Programme'. This initiative seeks to reinvigorate hundreds of settlements along the frontier. Last year, the government approved the Vibrant Villages Programme

as a centrally sponsored scheme for the comprehensive development of select villages in 46 blocks in 19 districts abutting the LAC in Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Uttarakhand and Ladakh.

China's Pangong Lake settlement is just the latest flashpoint in a decades-long standoff with India. Sceptics see a Trojan horse: a network of outposts that bolster China's grip on disputed territory while projecting an image of prosperity. For India, the stakes couldn't be higher. With both sides pouring resources into border defences, the LAC remains a tinderbox, where every new structure feels like a step closer to confrontation.

As satellite lenses zoom in on these icy heights, one thing is clear: the Xiaokang villages are more than dots on a map. They're symbols of China's unrelenting ambition and a warning of the battles, both military and cultural, yet to come.

Wolf Warrior Diplomacy: Beijing coerces Dhaka to show Arunachal Pradesh, Aksai Chin as parts of China in map, texts

06 March 2025, [Northeast News](#), Bidhan Chandra Das

Taking advantage of the anti-India rhetoric being promoted in Bangladesh under the Interim Government led by Mohammed Yunus, Beijing demands that Dhaka change the map of Asia and texts in Bangladeshi textbooks and the Department of Survey website

With the changing political landscape in Bangladesh, China is again at its old game of wolf warrior diplomacy in Dhaka.

Taking advantage of the anti-India rhetoric being promoted in Bangladesh under the Interim Government led by Mohammed Yunus, Beijing demands that Dhaka change the map of Asia and texts in Bangladeshi textbooks and the Department of Survey website.

These correctly depict now Arunachal Pradesh and Aksai Chin as parts of India, but Beijing wants Dhaka to show them as parts of China. Beijing also wants Arunachal Pradesh to be renamed as 'Zangnan' in Bangladeshi maps.

Borrowing from the doctrine of Minister of Propaganda of German Third Reich Joseph Goebbels that a falsehood repeated ad infinitum will convert it into truth, Beijing routinely keeps claiming Arunachal Pradesh and Aksai Chin are Chinese territories. Threatening Bangladesh to change its maps is, however, more than propaganda. It is coercion.

A report in the Bangladeshi newspaper Prothom Alo quoting diplomatic sources says that in a letter to Bangladesh in the last week of November, China raised objections regarding two Bangladeshi textbooks and a

map of Asia displayed on the website of the Department of Survey, claiming that Arunachal Pradesh and Aksai Chin had been incorrectly depicted as part of India and maintaining that these two territories had historically belonged to China. Beijing also wanted Dhaka to correct the maps and the information presented in the textbooks and the survey department website.

Now nothing can be further from the truth than the claim of China on Arunachal Pradesh and Aksai Chin. It is a well-known historical fact documented in diaries and travelogues of British civil and military officers on posting in India that the eastern part of Arunachal Pradesh inhabited by warlike tribes had little contact with Tibet and had gradually been brought under the administrative control of British India. The Tibetan administration extended to the Tawang tract. China had never, however, set its footprint in any part of Arunachal Pradesh; whether the tribal areas or Buddhist Tawang. By the Tripartite Simla Agreement of 1914, signed between the Great British, China and the administration of an independent Tibet under the 13th Dalai Lama, the boundary was established in form of the McMahon Line, which separated British India from China and Tibet. The McMahon line clearly included the Tawang region of Arunachal Pradesh as part of British India.

It is also a historical fact that Aksai Chin belonged to Ladakh since the days of the Namgyal dynasty and the Dogra kingdom. Being a remote area, surveillance was not strong, though India used to send police and military patrols occasionally to Aksai Chin since the days of Ladakh joining the Indian Union. Taking advantage of this and the trust India had placed in China under the Panchsheel Agreement, the Chinese authorities built the Western Tibet Highway through Aksai Chin.

To the chagrin of Beijing, a textbook for students of classes IX and X titled 'Bangladesh and Global Studies' which includes a list of Bangladeshi export destinations has designated Taiwan and Hong Kong as countries. Now Beijing is mounting pressure on Dhaka that these areas be shown as Chinese territories.

Beijing in its diplomatic note has insisted on calling Arunachal Pradesh 'Zangnan,' a Chinese name the mandarins of the Chinese Communist Party have invented. This time around, however, the CCP mandarins have not found ready accommodation by Dhaka as the National Curriculum and Textbook Board of Dhaka has informed that the process of printing the new textbooks has already been completed; leaving no opportunity for correction at this stage. Besides, what China has claimed to be an "error" has been printed in the same way for a long time and amendments could not be made abruptly. The issue would be addressed at a later stage in a coordinated manner.

Beijing has lately been inventing all sorts of Chinese names also for places in Tibet which has been under illegal occupation of China since 1959. These are attempts to wipe off the history of the places which China wants to occupy illegally and to create a false Chinese identity for them. The most blatant among these is the conspiracy to replace 'Tibet' with 'Xizang' in the official records of China. To counter the Chinese conspiracy, Sikyong Penpa Tsering, the President of the Tibetan Government-in-Exile, has announced the composition of a book and map with the original names of Tibetan counties.

ANI has quoted Penpa Tsering, saying: "The Chinese cartographic aggression is not only against Tibet. They are doing it in the East China Sea, in the South China Sea, with India in Arunachal Pradesh and Ladakh. This is the overall policy of the Chinese government in expanding their territorial claims in the regions.

This is not the first time, however, that China has threatened Bangladesh with its wolf warrior diplomacy. In May 2021, a Chinese diplomat posted in Dhaka threatened Bangladesh not to join the QUAD, of which Australia, Japan, India and the USA are members. "We do not want any form of participation of Bangladesh in this alliance," Chinese Ambassador in Dhaka Li Jiming had said. The Chinese threat had not gone down well with Bangladesh on that occasion. Bangladesh Foreign Minister A. K. Abdul Momen had described the remarks by the Chinese Ambassador as "very unfortunate" and "aggressive." He had said: "We are an independent and sovereign state. We decide our foreign policy."

In yet another instance of coercive diplomacy practised by China in Bangladesh, in 2016, at the Dhaka Art Summit, one of the biggest art shows in Bangladesh, Tibetan artists had to cover up an exhibit as it had offended the Chinese embassy.

It was a photographic piece featuring letters from five Tibetans who had committed self-immolation in protest against Chinese rule.

The Chinese Ambassador in Bangladesh had demanded that the art pieces be removed, threatening serious consequences.

China's actions regarding maps and territorial claims are interference in other nations' sovereignty. While it advocates for non-interference in principle, its actions in various regions suggest otherwise.

Because it considers maps as symbolic of sovereignty and national integrity, China responds strongly when other countries issue maps that conflict with its territorial claims, using it as an excuse to legitimize intervention, ignoring the other nation's sovereignty. Bangladesh must address these aggressive cartographic practices and ensure that its integrity and sovereignty are respected.

The Dalai Lama: My hope for the Tibetan people

06 March 2025, [The Washington Post](#)



Thousands of Tibetan women surround the Potala Palace, the main residence of the Dalai Lama, to protest the Chinese occupation on March 17, 1959, in Lhasa, Tibet. (AP)

Tibetans have spent nearly 75 years fighting for freedom. Their struggle should continue beyond my lifetime.

The 14th Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, is the spiritual leader of Tibet. His book “Voice for the Voiceless: Over Seven Decades of Struggle With China for My Land and My People” will be released on Tuesday.

One important task of my life, since the age of 16, has been the leadership of a nation and its people. Recognized as the 14th Dalai Lama when I was 2 and then asked to assume formal leadership soon after my country was invaded by the forces of Communist China in 1950, my entire adult life mirrors the tragic fate of Tibet and its people.

For nearly nine years after the invasion, I tried to reach some kind of accommodation, including traveling to Beijing to meet with Chairman Mao Zedong. Sadly, despite the assuring words of Mao himself — even though what he whispered to me about religion being poison did unsettle me — saving Tibet and the Tibetan people while remaining inside Tibet proved impossible. On March 10, 1959, a spontaneous uprising of the Tibetan people took place in Lhasa, the capital city. And a few days later, on March 17, 1959, in the darkness of a frozen night, I slipped out of the city, thus beginning more than six decades in exile. Ever since, along with more than 100,000 Tibetans, India has been my home.

It has been nearly 75 years since China’s invasion, and this month marks 66 years since my escape. Tibetans inside Tibet continue to be deprived of their dignity as a people and their freedom to live according to their own wishes and their culture, as they did for more than a millennium before 1950. Since then, the People’s Republic of China itself has undergone dramatic changes. With Deng Xiaoping’s turn to

capitalism and his opening up of China to the world, today China is a major economic power. And, of course, with economic power come military might and international political influence. How the country exercises these powers over the next decade or two will define its course for the foreseeable future. Will it choose the path of dominance and aggression, both internally and externally? Or will it choose the path of responsibility and embrace a constructive leading role on the world stage?

The latter path is in the interest not only of the whole world but also of the Chinese people themselves. In essence, this is a matter of the very heart of China as a country and its people. Here, I believe that resolving the long-standing problem of Tibet through dialogue would be a powerful signal, both to its own people and to the world, that China is choosing the second of these two paths. What is required from China’s leadership is long-term vision, courage and magnanimity.

For my part, right from the start, I have insisted to my people that our struggle adhere strictly to the principles of nonviolence. Violence brings more violence; even when violence leads to some temporary solution, it sows the seeds for future violence. Since the early 1970s, I have also managed to convince my people that a lasting solution to our problem could be found only if we take into account the needs and concerns of both sides and strive for a mutually acceptable resolution. What matters most to Beijing is the territorial integrity of the People’s Republic of China, and what matters most to us is the ability to survive as a people with our distinct identity, language and culture on the Tibetan Plateau. Despite Tibet’s historical status, I have believed — and still believe — that with political will on the part of leadership in Beijing, the Tibetan people can thrive with their distinct identity, language and culture on the Tibetan Plateau while remaining within the People’s Republic of China.

There have been three periods of intense dialogue with Beijing in our attempts to resolve the issue of Tibet: in the 1950s, when I was in Tibet as a young leader; in the 1980s, when Deng opened up China; and in the first decade of this century, especially during the period running up to the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing. I have tried my best, ceaselessly, to make openings for a negotiated settlement with Beijing. In fact, through my envoys, I have presented to Beijing a road map that outlines how a mutually satisfactory resolution of the long-standing issue of Tibet could be achieved. Ours is an existential struggle: The very survival of an ancient people and their culture, language and religion is at stake. The Tibetan people have no choice but to persist in our just struggle.

Personally, even while stateless, I feel I have been able to live a life with freedom, joy and purpose, and have

been able to make some contribution toward the betterment of humanity. In July, I will turn 90, and even though I fully devolved political authority to elected Tibetan leadership in 2011, many Tibetans are concerned about what will happen to my people and homeland if no resolution is found during my life. Today, because any expression of Tibetan identity seems to be increasingly viewed as a threat by Beijing leadership, there is the danger that in the name of “stability” and “territorial integrity,” attempts might be made to erase our civilization. Given that ours is a struggle of a people with a [long history](#) of distinct civilization, it will, if necessary, continue beyond my lifetime. The indomitable spirit and resilience of Tibetans, particularly inside Tibet, remain a source of inspiration and encouragement for me.

On Monday, Tibetans everywhere in the free world will be commemorating the 66th anniversary of the [Tibetan people’s uprising](#) in Lhasa. The right of the Tibetan people to be the custodians of their own homeland cannot be indefinitely denied, nor can their aspiration for freedom be crushed forever.

One clear lesson we know from history is this: If you keep people permanently unhappy, you cannot have a stable society. I hope that the Beijing leadership will, in the near future, find the necessary will and wisdom to address the legitimate aspirations of the Tibetan people. To all those who have consistently stood by us, especially the people and government of India, thank you for your solidarity in our long, peaceful struggle for freedom.

Losar in Occupied Tibet: A Staged Spectacle Under Chinese Rule

03 March 2025, [Tibet Rights Collective](#)

The recent equestrian show in Lhasa, heavily publicized by Chinese state media, is yet another example of Beijing’s relentless attempt to mask its oppressive rule over Tibet with a façade of cultural celebration. The event, held on the third day of Losar—the Tibetan New Year—was showcased as a grand spectacle of traditional performances, horse races, and colorful attire. However, this display serves as little more than a propaganda tool aimed at convincing the world that Tibetan culture flourishes under Chinese occupation. In reality, Tibetans inside Tibet remain under constant surveillance, denied fundamental freedoms, and prevented from celebrating their heritage in an authentic manner.

The True Essence of Losar

Losar, which means “New Year” in Tibetan, is one of the most important festivals for Tibetans, marking the beginning of a new year based on the lunar calendar. Traditionally, Losar celebrations span over fifteen days, with the first three days being the most significant.

Families come together to perform ancient rituals, make offerings to deities, engage in traditional dances, and share special foods like guthuk (a noodle soup eaten before the new year) and khapse (fried Tibetan biscuits). Monasteries conduct elaborate prayers and ceremonies, seeking blessings for the coming year.

However, in occupied Tibet, genuine religious and cultural expressions are tightly controlled. The Chinese government has systematically cracked down on monasteries, restricted religious gatherings, and imposed propaganda-driven alternatives such as state-approved festivals, aiming to repackage Tibetan traditions into a politically sanitized version that aligns with Beijing’s narrative.

Losar in Exile: A Celebration of Freedom

In contrast, the Tibetan exile community, primarily based in India, celebrates Losar with an unbreakable spirit of resilience and cultural preservation. Free from Chinese oppression, Tibetan refugees in Dharamsala, Bylakuppe, and other Tibetan settlements in India follow the authentic traditions of Losar. His Holiness the Dalai Lama often leads special prayers, emphasizing the importance of compassion, hope, and the preservation of Tibet’s rich spiritual heritage. Monastic institutions, free from Chinese interference, conduct prayers and ceremonies as they have for centuries, ensuring that the true essence of Losar is passed down to younger generations.

Losar in exile is not just a celebration; it is an assertion of identity. The Tibetan community uses the occasion to highlight their ongoing struggle, remembering those in Tibet who are denied the right to celebrate freely. While Tibetans in exile gather in monasteries, light butter lamps, and offer prayers for their homeland, Tibetans in occupied Tibet live under an atmosphere of fear and control, where even displaying the Tibetan national flag or an image of the Dalai Lama can result in imprisonment.

The Chinese Agenda: Cultural Erasure

China’s calculated promotion of events like the equestrian show in Lhasa is part of its larger strategy to erase Tibet’s distinct identity. By staging carefully controlled performances, Beijing aims to mislead the international community into believing that Tibetans are happily celebrating under Chinese rule. However, these displays stand in stark contrast to the reality of Tibetans’ suffering, including forced assimilation, mass surveillance, and the systematic dismantling of Tibetan Buddhist institutions.

The Tibetan people’s struggle for genuine cultural and religious freedom continues despite these adversities. While China seeks to turn Losar into a mere showcase of costumes and performances stripped of their deeper spiritual and historical significance, Tibetans in exile keep the true traditions alive, ensuring that their heritage remains intact for future generations.

As the world watches the spectacle in Lhasa, it must also remember the countless Tibetans who have self-immolated in protest, the political prisoners who remain silenced, and the families who are separated due to Beijing's brutal policies. The struggle for a free Tibet is far from over, and Losar serves as a solemn reminder of both what has been lost and what must be reclaimed.

Social concerns find online voice in China

02 March 2021, [The Sunday Guardian](#), Khedroob Thondup

The lines blur as entertainment morphs into activism. Online communities rally around trending hashtags, amplifying voices that challenge the status quo.

China's internet, a tightly controlled domain, presents a paradox. While the state maintains a firm grip, citizens carve out spaces for debate, raising social concerns and forming communities. This delicate balance between entertainment and state guidance reveals the resilience of the Chinese people and their desire for expression.

Entertainment serves as a gateway. Short-video platforms and live-streaming apps captivate millions, fostering a sense of shared experience. Within these spaces, discussions emerge, often subtly addressing social issues. Celebrities and influencers, while mindful of censorship, can spark conversations about inequality, mental health, or environmental concerns. The lines blur as entertainment morphs into activism. Online communities rally around trending hashtags, amplifying voices that challenge the status quo. The #MeToo movement, despite facing censorship, gained traction, exposing sexual harassment and sparking a national dialogue. Such instances demonstrate the power of collective action in the digital age.

However, the state's watchful eye looms large. Censorship is pervasive, with keywords and hashtags routinely scrubbed from the internet. Dissenting voices are silenced, their accounts suspended or deleted. Yet, citizens find creative ways to circumvent restrictions, employing metaphors, wordplay, and coded language to express their views. The government's approach is multifaceted. While suppressing dissent, it also recognizes the need to address public concerns. Online platforms are used to disseminate information, promote government initiatives, and even solicit feedback. This creates a complex dynamic, where citizens navigate a landscape of both control and opportunity.

The future of online debate in China remains uncertain. The state's desire for control clashes with citizens' yearning for expression. As technology evolves, so too will the methods of censorship and

resistance. Yet, one thing is clear: the desire for dialogue and community will persist, finding new avenues in the ever-shifting digital landscape.