

TIBET DIGEST

APRIL 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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Table of Content

Summary- April Tibet Digest	9
CCP’S Tibet Policies	9
State of Ecology of the Tibetan Plateau	9
Tibet in Exile	10
Protests, Detentions And Other News From The PRC	16
 CCP’S TIBET POLICY	 17
China to expand digital surveillance in Tibet with state firm Meiya Pico	17
China challenged to live up to its claim of guaranteed protection for Tibetan language	18
China says model militarized school education started in ‘Tibet’	18
New aid programme to Sinicize school education in Tibet	19
BUDDHISM	20
China's Game Plan To Sinicize Buddhism In Tibet Exposed	20
China hosts foreign Buddhist delegation amid renewed push to assert control Over Dalai Lama’s reincarnation	21
Abbot’s mysterious death in its custody, China cracks down on his monastery, locals	22
China detains Tibetans for sharing photos of late Buddhist leader	22
STATE OF ECOLOGY OF THE TIBETAN PLATEAU	24
Geologists Uncover 20 Million Tons of Copper Worth Over \$100 Billion in an Unexpected Location	24
New study reveals accelerated warming trend on Tibetan Plateau	25
Chinese archaeologists say humans inhabited Tibet over 10,000 years ago	25
China engages in ‘proactive’ archaeological excavations to justify current Tibet claims	26
Chinese scientists warn of more high-magnitude earthquakes in and around Tibetan Plateau region	27
TIBET IN EXILE	28
‘Women of Tibet’ exhibition honours unsung characters of the Tibetan freedom struggle	28
European Parliament Chairs Call for Independent Probe into Suspicious Death of Tulku Hungkar Dorje	29
Officiating Sikyong Dolma Gyari Meets with Delegation of Friedrich Naumann Foundation	29
Representative Dr Namgyal Choedup Speaks on Voice for the Voiceless at JiFeng Bookstore	30
Representative Thinlay Chukki Meets Czech Republic Officials in Prague & Strengthen Advocacy Ties	30

Dalai Lama's 90th birthday sparks worldwide Compassion Campaign led by International Campaign for Tibet	31
His Holiness the Dalai Lama Congratulates Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney on His Party's General Election Victory	32
Sikyong Penpa Tsering Begins Month-long Official Visit to North America, Meets with RFA Leadership and Staff	32
Delegation of Friedrich Naumann Foundation Visits Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile	33
Bhutila Karpoche misses out in Canada's parliamentary seat from Taiaiaiko'n—Parkdale—High Park	34
Summer Cultural Immersion Program Announced for Tibetans Enrolled in Non-Tibetan Schools in India & Nepal	34
A Unique Photo-Exhibition Highlights Some Interesting Aspects Of History Of Buddhism In Jammu And Kashmir	34
Office of Tibet, North America Participates in 18th Annual Roll Call of Nations Wreath Laying Ceremony by Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation	36
Tibetans rally behind Bhutila Karpoche's bid to become Canadian MP	36
Parliamentarians Dawa Tsering and Tsering Lhamo Visit Ravangla and Nearby Areas	37
V-TAG Germany and V-TAG Switzerland in Collaboration with Tibethaus Germany Organises "Get to Know Tibet!" Event	37
UK Representative Tsering Yangkey Attends 12th Annual Tibetan Flag Raising Ceremony in Milton Keynes	38
The story of one of Buddhism's most revered figures, long missing, explained	38
Exile seat of Panchen Lama celebrates 36th birthday of disappeared Buddhist leader	39
European Parliament Calls for the Release of the 11th Panchen Lama	40
Tibet Fund launches Peppa Pig series dubbed in Tibetan language	41
CTA, Himachal Pradesh government hold meeting on renewal of Tibetan settlement land lease	41
Tibet Support Group: The circumstances of the death of a high Tibetan religious leader need a transparent investigation	42
Parliamentary Committee Convenes to Compile Speeches by His Holiness on Democracy to Update a book on the Evolution of Tibetan Democracy in Exile	42
Tibetan Scholarship Program Preliminary Selection Process Concluded Successfully	43
Tibetans in Dharamshala join rally, observe day-long market shutdown in solidarity with Pahalgam terror victims	43
Sikyong Penpa Tsering Participates in a Virtual Book Discussion Held by Foundation for Non-Violent Alternatives	44
ICT statement on the Panchen Lama's 36th birthday	44
Choerig Zinkyong's Jamyang Lophel Sunday School Celebrated 10th Annual Children's Cultural Activity in Brussels	45

Dalai Lama condoles Pope's death, the two have never met	45
Arunachal: Deputy CM Inaugurates maiden Global Buddhist Conclave	47
Buddhist spiritual leader on week-long visit, Karmapa debate rekindled	47
Tibetan Parliamentary Delegation to visit Tibetans in Sikkim and West Bengal	48
Sikyong Emphasises Resolving Tibet-China Conflict as Key Priority of Central Tibetan Administration During His Visit to Kamrao	48
Sikyong Penpa Tsering Extends Condolences on the Passing of His Holiness Pope Francis	48
Dalai Lama in excellent health, renowned Indian surgeon confirms	48
Sikyong Penpa Tsering Visits Kham Kathok Tibetan Settlement, Emphasises Preservation of Tibetan Culture and Language	49
'Tibetan leader warns of cultural erasure, pushes Tibetan language education in exile	50
UNPO Condemns the Death of Tibetan Monk Hungkar Rinpoche and Reaffirms Support for the Tibetan People's Rights	50
Statement of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile on the Suspicious Death of Tulku Rigzin Hungkar Dorjee Rinpoche	51
China trying to co-opt foreign Buddhists to support its Dalai Lama reincarnation meddling	52
Dutch parliament passes resolution on Tibetan rights, Dalai Lama reincarnation despite China's objections	53
Tibetan exile President Penpa Tsering invites Himachal CM for Dalai Lama's 90th birthday	53
Samten Choedon sworn in as new member of 17th TPIE	54
Tortured for Telecoms in Tibet	55
Tibetan Parliamentary Delegation Concludes Official Visit to Goa	56
Tibetan youth activists held as they protested before New Delhi Chinese embassy over lama's sudden death	56
Parliamentary Delegation Concludes Visit to Mundgod	57
US ambassador to China nominee pledges strong stand on Tibet at confirmation hearing	57
Western intelligence agencies warn spyware threat targeting Taiwan, Tibetan rights advocates	58
Central Tibetan Administration Holds Press Conference to Address Suspicious Death of Tulku Hungkar Dorje	59
Tibetans call out China's language policy amid claims of cultural erasure and human rights violations	60
Dalai Lama "moved" as march retrace his historic escape route from Tibet	60
China's hydropower push destroying heritage, suppressing Tibetan identity: TCHRD report	61
Tibetans in-exile rap China's whitepaper on human rights	61
Two new Justice Commissioners, auditor general of CTA sworn into office	62
Secretary Dhondul Dorjee Attends Annual Graduation Ceremony of Ngagyur Nyingma Shugseb Nunnery Institute	63

TCHRD releases alarming reports on Tibet, Driru abuses deemed crimes against humanity	63
China must open Tibet for world to see truth: Govt-in-exile	64
Tibet Policy Institute Hosts Book Discussion on the Release of the 11th Edition of the Tibet Policy Journal	64
Scotland's MP Ross John Greer Visits the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile	65
German MP Michael Brand Visits Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile	65
Tibetan play highlighting repression in Tibet to do 34 shows across India	66
RFA radio transmissions to China, Tibet halted	67
Global Tibet Groups Urge US Government to Restore Vital Tibetan Broadcasts	68
Office of Tibet in Washington D.C. Hosts Sino-Tibet Youth Dialogue to Discuss Democracy in China and Tibetan-Chinese Relations	68
Tibetan Buddhist leader missing for 8 months has died, monastery confirms	69
Dalai Lama Centre for Indian and Tibetan Ancient Wisdom hosts inaugural conference in Bodhgaya	70
Freedom Trail' foot march retracing Dalai Lama's 1959 escape to India underway	71
Tibetan Losar Celebrated in the UK Parliament on the Day of His Holiness Receiving the Prestigious Gold Mercury International Award	72
4 House approves budget of ₹330 crore for 2025-26 fiscal year	73
6 Indian lawmakers jointly declare Tibet-support on Dalai Lama reincarnation issue	73

CHINA POLITICS

Investigation exposes China's global campaign of transnational repression	74
China deploys army of fake NGOs at UN to intimidate critics: media probe	74
Professors from Top Chinese University Allegedly Call to End CCP Rule	75
About the China Targets investigation	76
At the U.N., China is deploying a growing army of puppet organizations to monitor and intimidate human rights activists	77
China refines departure tax refund policy to encourage inbound consumption	83
Chinese Ministry of Education Issues Notice on Military Recruitment at Universities	83
China vows in Politburo meeting to support firms, workers affected by tariffs	84
China's action on climate change will not slow despite global political changes, Xi says	85
China warns of 'countermeasures' against any deals that harm its interests	85
People's Daily: Rewards and Honors Given for "Contributions to National Security"	85
China: Police Arrest Tibetans for Internet, Phone Use	86
RFA: Latest Chinese Internet Slang Reflects Youth Disillusionment and Economic Struggles	89
Rare Job Swap in CCP Leadership: Shi Taifeng and Li Ganjie Exchange Roles Amid Internal Power Struggle	89
Top China think tank shuts down research centre after questions of party loyalty	89

Former CCP Official Living in Belgium Introduces Lifeboat Plan Encouraging Other Officials to Break From the CCP	91
MILITARY AND INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT	92
Is China's 6th-Gen an Unprecedented Hybrid Stealth Fighter-Bomber?	92
China's Military Buildup Threatens Indo-Pacific Region Security, Pentagon Officials Say	93
Economic Watch: China edges closer to commercial nuclear fusion	94
Chinese Military Opens New Overseas Base	95
Tibet's largest solar-storage project powers up at 4,500 m	96
Economic Watch: China edges closer to commercial nuclear fusion	96
People's Daily on Current and Future Trends in Military Counter-Drone Technology	98
China flexes military muscles with rare, large-scale missile test in Gobi Desert	98
CYBER- SECURITY	100
DeepSeek is a 'profound threat' that collects Americans' data for China, House panel warns	100
Beijing Accuses US National Security Agency of Cyber Attack on 2025 Harbin Asian Winter Games	101
In Secret Meeting, China Acknowledged Role in U.S. Infrastructure Hacks	101
PROTESTS, DETENTIONS AND OTHER NEWS FROM THE PRC	104
Protests by unpaid Chinese workers spread amid factory closures	104
Sichuan Airlines to launch first Chengdu-Madrid direct flight	105
CHINA IN THE REGION	106
China-East Turkestan	106
Xinjiang conducts joint armed exercise on counterterrorism, deterrence	106
EU refuses to lift sanctions on Chinese officials over ongoing Uyghur rights abuses in Xinjiang	107
China gives suspended death sentence to former Xinjiang official for corruption	107
BASF exits Xinjiang ventures after Uyghur abuse reports	108
Chinese artist fined for filming Uyghur folk music in Xinjiang	108
Senior CPC official urges sound implementation of governance policies for Xinjiang	110
US House committee passes Uyghur Policy Act, again	110
China-Hong Kong	110
Hong Kong's oldest pro-democracy party is shutting down as Beijing leaves no room for dissent	110
China- Nepal	112
Nepali, Chinese police conduct joint patrol at Korala	112
Temporary passes distributed for those going to neighbouring China	112
Nepal Airlines seeks to send back rusting Chinese planes	113

Culture bridges Kathmandu and Guangzhou	114
China-built hydropower plant in Nepal put into operation	114
China plotting to unite Nepal's communists to further its agenda with ouster of their current top leaders?	115
China-Pakistan	116
China vows support to Pakistan, calls for restraint after Pahalgam terror attack	116
Pakistan requests extra 10 billion yuan on China swap line, says finance minister	117
China rushes PL-15 missiles to Pakistan amid India tensions	117
Pakistan seeks Chinese debt rollover	119
China Could Block India's Water If India Blocks Pakistan's: Claims Pakistani Journalist	121
IMF programme wasn't possible without China's support: PM Shehbaz	122
China becomes top education destination for Pakistanis as US tightens visa policies	122
Chinese defense minister meets with Pakistan air force chief	123
China-Taiwan	123
Taiwan on edge after Pope Francis's death, closely watching Vatican-China relations	123
Taiwan cracks down on holders of Chinese ID amid fears over propaganda and espionage	124
Taiwan detects one aircraft, 8 Chinese naval vessels around its territory	126
Marking 10 years of Xi's visit, Amb Jiang says CPEC has turned from vision to reality	126
China commends Cambodia when asked about Taiwanese deportation	128
Taiwan reports Chinese military activity near its territory	128
Cambodia says arrested Taiwanese fraud suspects handed over to China	129
Taiwan says China using generative AI to ramp up disinformation and 'divide' the island	129
China demands compensation from Taiwan after collision of navy ship, trawler	130
Taiwan calls on democracies to condemn Chinese military drills	130
CHINA- US	132
China hits out at 'extreme selfishness' of tariffs	132
China says US Pentagon chief's remarks hype up 'China threat'	133
Apple to move assembly of US phones to India in shift away from China	133
Former top US official on Hong Kong trip slams Trump's China 'miscalculation'	134
China pushes for tariff cancellation to end US trade war	134
China to sanction US lawmakers, officials, NGO leaders for Hong Kong democracy support	135
Trump tariffs making China friendlier towards other countries, India	135
China raises duties on US goods to 125%, calls Trump tariff hikes a 'joke'	136
China says it complains to US about Taiwan delegation's Washington visit	137

China vows countermeasures for US sanctions on its officials responsible for Tibet violations	137
US announces stricter visa restrictions for Chinese officials over Tibet access	138

SINO-INDIAN RELATIONS **140**

India, China move to normalise ties, Kailash Mansarovar Yatra to resume in June after 5 years	140
China opens doors to Indians, issues 85,000 visas in four months	141
Path forward may be difficult, we are prepared to walk: Vikram Misri on China ties	141
China, India discuss restarting direct flights after five-years	142
India overhauls teaching in Himalayan Buddhist monasteries to counter China	143
China, India should stand together in face of U.S. tariffs, says Chinese Embassy in India	144
Communist Party of China for strengthening ties between India and China	145
Xi Jinping Exchanges Congratulatory Messages with Indian President Droupadi Murmu on the 75th Anniversary of the Establishment of China-India Diplomatic Relations	145

COMMENTARIES **147**

An Auction in London Highlights the Truth on the Reincarnation of Dalai Lamas	147
SUFFOCATE	148
In Grief And In War: How Tibetans Have Always Stood With India In Her Darkest Hours	156
UN a playing field for China's rights repression policy?	156
As President Xi Jinping traveled the world, police swept peaceful protesters off the streets	157
Brewing Discontent in Kathmandu: China's Strategic Hand in Nepal's Political Unrest?	159
Placating China won't prevent it from invading Taiwan	160
A Pakistan hitch on road to normalizing Sino-India ties?	162
As Dalai Lama approaches 90, Tibetans weigh future without Buddhist leader	162
India must address Chinese espionage among Tibetan diaspora	163
Why China-Taiwan Relations Are Getting So Tense	164
China's conciliatory comments are purely cosmetic	165
China's game plan to sinicize Buddhism in Tibet exposed	166
'Cross-strait shadows: Inside the Chinese influence campaign against Taiwan (Part III)	167
Nest of Spies'?: The stories around Kalimpong as nodal point for Tibet, India and China	168
China Mobilizes Museums for Propaganda	170
Pokhara Airport: A runway for corruption, not for flights	170
'Voice For The Voiceless': The Dalai Lama's Struggle For Tibet And Religious Survival	171
Opinion: Vietnam's Transnational Religious Repression Mirrors China's Playbook	173
VOA, RFA vital in countering China	174
The Unfolding Sorry Saga of Nepal's China-built Airport at Pokhara	175

China Erases Tibet in Latest White Paper	176
Tibet's silent sorrows: Xi's Vietnam visit and death of a 'rebel' Lama	176
China denies the current Dalai Lama but eyes the next	178
Tibet Groups Condemn Cremation of Tulku Hungkar Dorje	179
The Silencing of Tibetan Voices: Who Benefits and Who Loses from the Closure of VOA and RFA?	181
Dalai Lama's quiet victory over China	184
China Buddhist Association: A Trojan Horse of Chinese Propaganda	184
Xi's intensifying war on Tibetans	185
China is sending soldiers to Ukraine to prepare for a Taiwan invasion	186
Taiwan: the sponge that soaks up Chinese power	187
Tibet, the territory where the Chinese Communist Party is omnipresent	188
Surprise: Lama Humkar Dorje Rinpoche "Died in Vietnam"	190
New Delhi's China Dilemma: Diplomacy and Defense Must Align	190
He Weidong's Possible Downfall and Xi's Trust Deficit With the PLA	191
Forthcoming book brings Tibetan history to the forefront	194
The challenge of establishing a politically self-reliant Tibet	194
The unfinished journey of India-China relations	195
Ready to return to an autonomous Tibetan homeland	197
China plans to build the world's largest dam – but what does this mean for India and Bangladesh downstream?	199
The Dalai Lama's Escape & CIA Money	200
Monks' Visit Provides Glimpse into a Different Culture	202
How Tibet's Earthquake Recovery Could Redefine China's Climate Security	202
Reincarnation Of Dalai Lama In A Free World	204
Tibetan people's middle way approach	204
China's plan for world's biggest dam a mega-disaster for India	205
'We try to assist the seed of belief': Pope's deal with Communist party in China draws criticism from some Catholics	206
China needs friends in Trump's trade war. But Xi may have to go it alone	209
China's Two Sessions, China's two challenges	211
Communist Party of China for strengthening ties between India and China	213

Summary- April Tibet Digest

April saw China intensify its campaign to reframe Tibetan identity under the banner of “ethnic unity” and Sinicization. A new “White Paper” claimed to guarantee Tibetan language rights and human rights protections, though international observers expressed concern over its propagandist tone and factual contradictions. China designated Tibet as a “model region” for enforcing the revised ethnic unity law, raising alarms about deepening ideological control and assimilation.

The state further asserted control over Tibetan religious leadership, doubling down on its efforts to select the next Dalai Lama—an act seen as a serious intrusion into Tibetan spiritual autonomy. Meanwhile, statistical portrayals of ethnic representation in “Xizang” were circulated to reinforce the Party’s narrative of progress, despite the ongoing suppression of authentic Tibetan voices.

In a revealing corruption case, China announced that a former Tibet Party Secretary took over 343 million yuan in bribes, underscoring the layers of exploitation and opacity embedded in the region’s governance structure.

Despite official rhetoric of inclusion and legal reform, these developments reflect a continued strategy of control, denial of self-determination, and manipulation of Tibetan identity under the Chinese state.

CCP’S Tibet Policies

China to expand digital surveillance in Tibet with state firm Meiya Pico - Chinese state-owned firm Meiya Pico will provide surveillance technology and training to Tibet Police College, escalating digital monitoring in Tibet. The company, blacklisted by the US for human rights abuses against Uyghurs, is developing advanced surveillance tools like phone spyware and hacking devices. The report raises concerns about Tibet becoming a testing ground for surveillance technologies that could be deployed globally.

China challenged to live up to its claim of guaranteed protection for Tibetan language - Despite China’s white paper claiming protection of Tibetan language rights, hundreds of Tibetans have taken to social media demanding restoration of Tibetan language studies in schools. Critics note China has suppressed the language by making Mandarin the primary instruction medium in schools and implementing Mandarin-only policies for college entrance exams, effectively eliminating Tibetan cultural identity.

China says model militarized school education started in 'Tibet' - China has implemented a "School-stationed Teaching Army Officers" program in Tibet where army veterans provide "patriotic education" and military training to Tibetan children. Starting in Ser-nye district, the program has spread to schools across Tibetan regions, focusing on political education to instill loyalty to the Chinese government from a young age, which experts view as escalating Beijing’s assimilation policies.

New aid programme to Sinicize school education in Tibet - China has established Tibet Shaanxi Experimental School in Ngari Prefecture as part of efforts to Sinicize Tibet’s education system. The school is completely sponsored by Shaanxi Province, including its building, resources, and curriculum. This approach represents a new strategy in China’s ongoing efforts to integrate Tibet culturally and educationally with mainland China.

State of Ecology of the Tibetan Plateau

Geologists Uncover 20 Million Tons of Copper Worth Over \$100 Billion in an Unexpected Location - A massive copper deposit exceeding 20 million tons has been discovered in China’s Tibetan Plateau, with potential resources reaching up to 150 million tons. This find positions the Qinghai-Xizang region as a major focus of global

copper exploration, strengthening China's role in the copper market. The discovery is particularly significant as copper is critical for renewable energy technologies and electric vehicles, with geopolitical implications for global supply chains.

New study reveals accelerated warming trend on Tibetan Plateau - Chinese researchers predict the Tibetan Plateau will experience accelerated warming, with temperatures rising by 0.98 degrees Celsius between 2025-2032 compared to the 1991-2020 baseline. This warming rate is 1.75 times faster than observed in recent years and is projected to reduce glacier volume by approximately 1.4 percent, threatening water security for hundreds of millions across Asia and potentially destabilizing regional ecological balance.

Chinese archaeologists say humans inhabited Tibet over 10,000 years ago - Chinese archaeologists have discovered stone tools and animal fossils in Tibet dating back over 10,000 years (later corrected to 100,000 years), based on findings from 34 archaeological excavation projects conducted between 2021-2024. Chinese authorities claim these discoveries show Tibet was an important part of the "multi-faceted structure of the Chinese people."

China engages in 'proactive' archaeological excavations to justify current Tibet claims - China is using archaeological discoveries from Paleolithic and Neolithic sites in Tibet to support its sovereignty claims over the region. Since 2021, Chinese research institutions have conducted 34 "proactive archaeological excavations" at 17 ancient sites, with authorities claiming these findings demonstrate "unity in diversity of Chinese civilization" and that Tibet has historically been an "important component" of China.

Chinese scientists warn of more high-magnitude earthquakes in and around Tibetan Plateau region - Chinese seismologists have published a study warning of increased risk of devastating earthquakes in the Tibetan Plateau region, following analysis of 150 years of seismic data. The research identifies six major earthquake "active periods" correlated with Earth's rotational speed changes, suggesting the region may be entering a new seismic active period. Questions remain about whether this will affect China's plans to build the world's biggest hydroelectric dam on the Yarlung Tsangpo river in a seismically active area of Tibet.

Tibet in Exile

'Women of Tibet' exhibition honours unsung characters of the Tibetan freedom struggle - The Tibet Museum in Dharamshala opened a temporary exhibition highlighting contributions of notable Tibetan women to the Tibetan cause, featuring historical photos and biographical information to inspire younger generations.

European Parliament Chairs Call for Independent Probe into Suspicious Death of Tulku Hungkar Dorje - European Parliament officials sent letters to Chinese and Vietnamese authorities demanding transparent investigation into the suspicious death and hasty cremation of prominent Tibetan Buddhist leader Tulku Hungkar Dorje.

Officiating Sikyong Dolma Gyari Meets with Delegation of Friedrich Naumann Foundation - Acting Sikyong Dolma Gyari held discussions with Friedrich Naumann Foundation delegation on governance and Tibetan issues during their four-day visit, which included meetings with His Holiness the Dalai Lama and visits to Tibetan institutions.

Representative Dr Namgyal Choedup Speaks on Voice for the Voiceless at JiFeng Bookstore - Tibet's representative spoke at a Washington DC bookstore about the Dalai Lama's latest publication, sharing his personal journey and explaining His Holiness's four commitments to a diverse audience including many Chinese attendees.

Representative Thinlay Chukki Meets Czech Republic Officials in Prague & Strengthen Advocacy Ties - Tibetan delegation held high-level meetings with Czech officials discussing human rights in Tibet, religious freedom concerns, and the upcoming 90th birthday of the Dalai Lama while presenting copies of his latest book.

Dalai Lama's 90th birthday sparks worldwide Compassion Campaign led by International Campaign for Tibet - ICT launched "The Compassion Rising World Tour 2025" to honor the Dalai Lama's life and message through global events, community challenges, and a digital platform to inspire compassion and spotlight Tibet's struggle.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama Congratulates Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney on His Party's General Election Victory - The Dalai Lama wrote to newly elected Canadian PM Mark Carney expressing gratitude for Canada's support to Tibetans and wishing success in fulfilling Canada's aspirations.

Sikyong Penpa Tsering Begins Month-long Official Visit to North America, Meets with RFA Leadership and Staff - Tibetan political leader began diplomatic tour of US, Canada, and Japan, meeting with democracy advocates and discussing concerns about Radio Free Asia's possible closure and US funding cuts to Tibetan programs.

Delegation of Friedrich Naumann Foundation Visits Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile - FNF delegation met with Deputy Speaker and MPs who briefed them on Tibet's critical situation, China's repressive policies, environmental concerns, and the importance of seeing Tibet as an international matter.

Bhutila Karpoche misses out in Canada's parliamentary seat from Taiaiaiko'n—Parkdale—High Park - The first Tibetan-origin elected official in North America secured second place in Canadian parliamentary elections despite strong community support, after previously making history as an Ontario provincial legislator.

Summer Cultural Immersion Program Announced for Tibetans Enrolled in Non-Tibetan Schools in India & Nepal - The Department of Religion and Culture is launching a program at the College for Higher Tibetan Studies to help young Tibetans in non-Tibetan schools connect with their heritage through language instruction, cultural activities, history lessons, Buddhist philosophy, and field trips.

A Unique Photo-Exhibition Highlights Some Interesting Aspects Of History Of Buddhism In Jammu And Kashmir - A 40-day exhibition at the National Museum in New Delhi showcases photographs by Vijay Kranti of the 2000-year-old Buddhist site at Ambaran near Jammu, which gained international attention after the Dalai Lama's visit in 2011 and features artifacts excavated by the Archaeological Survey of India.

Office of Tibet, North America Participates in 18th Annual Roll Call of Nations Wreath Laying Ceremony by Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation - Representatives from the Office of Tibet joined diplomats from 17 countries and 40 organizations at a ceremony in Washington, D.C. to commemorate victims of communist regimes worldwide, offering flowers and prayers in solidarity.

Tibetans rally behind Bhutila Karpoche's bid to become Canadian MP - The Tibetan community and prominent activists across North America are supporting Bhutila Karpoche, who made history as the first Tibetan elected to public office in North America and is now seeking to become a Member of Parliament representing Taiaiaiko'n—Parkdale—High Park in Toronto.

Parliamentarians Dawa Tsering and Tsering Lhamo Visit Ravangla and Nearby Areas - As part of an ongoing visitation program, two Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile members toured Sikkim, visiting monasteries, schools, local assemblies and organizations in the Tibetan settlement of Ravangla while delivering public talks on current challenges facing Tibetans both in exile and in Tibet.

V-TAG Germany and V-TAG Switzerland Organises "Get to Know Tibet!" Event - A cultural and educational event held at Tibethaus in Frankfurt featured presentations on Tibet's current situation, religious freedoms, political history, and governance structure, along with cultural performances. Though modest in attendance, it raised awareness about Tibet and served as a platform for grassroots advocacy.

UK Representative Tsering Yangkey Attends 12th Annual Tibetan Flag Raising Ceremony - The Tibetan national flag was raised for the 12th consecutive year at a Buddhist temple in Milton Keynes, with Representative Yangkey highlighting China's intensified transnational repression and the harmful impacts of colonial boarding schools on Tibetan identity. The ceremony included speeches, poetry, music, and a Tibet flag run.

The story of one of Buddhism's most revered figures, long missing, explained - The 11th Panchen Lama, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, turned 36 while still missing after being abducted by Chinese authorities 30 years ago. His

disappearance illustrates China's attempt to control Tibetan Buddhism and is seen as a precursor to the future battle over who will succeed the Dalai Lama, who turns 90 this year.

Exile seat of Panchen Lama celebrates 36th birthday of disappeared Buddhist leader - Tashi Lhunpo Monastery in India commemorated the 36th birthday of the 11th Panchen Lama while demanding his release from Chinese custody. The Central Tibetan Administration launched a month-long awareness campaign, and the monastery's abbot urged international pressure on China to reveal information about the Panchen Lama.

Tibet Fund launches Peppa Pig series dubbed in Tibetan language - The Tibet Fund released 104 episodes of the popular children's cartoon Peppa Pig dubbed in Tibetan to preserve the language and culture among younger generations. The launch coincided with Lhakar (White Wednesday) and the 90th birthday of the Dalai Lama, involving a team of over 15 members including translators, voice actors, and technical experts.

CTA, Himachal Pradesh government hold meeting on renewal of Tibetan settlement land lease - Senior representatives from the Central Tibetan Administration met with Himachal state officials to discuss renewal of land leases and lease rents for Tibetan settlements. CTA representatives appealed for reduction in proposed lease rents, with Chief Secretary Saxena directing officials to submit relevant proposals to the state Cabinet.

Tibet Support Group: The circumstances of the death of a high Tibetan religious leader need a transparent investigation - The Tibet Support Group of Estonia's Parliament expressed concern over the arrest and death of Tibetan religious leader Tulku Rigzin Hungkar Dorje in Vietnam. The group highlighted conflicting accounts of his death and called on the international community to urge Vietnam to conduct a transparent investigation.

Parliamentary Committee Convenes to Compile Speeches by His Holiness on Democracy - A three-member committee of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile has been formed to compile speeches by the Dalai Lama on democracy and update a book on the evolution of Tibetan democracy in exile. The committee will submit its report before the 10th session of the 17th Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile.

Tibetan Scholarship Program Preliminary Selection Process Concluded Successfully - The Central Tibetan Administration's Department of Education completed preliminary selection for the Tibetan Scholarship Program 2026, with 65 candidates taking exams in Delhi and Bangalore. The top 30 will advance to interviews in May, with six finalists ultimately selected to pursue higher education in the United States.

Tibetans in Dharamshala join rally, observe day-long market shutdown in solidarity with Pahalgam terror victims - Tibetans in McLeod Ganj joined a rally with local Indians and closed their shops to express solidarity with victims of a terror attack in Pahalgam that killed 26 civilians. The Central Tibetan Administration president and a Tibetan parliamentarian expressed condolences and condemned the attack on social media.

Sikyong Penpa Tsering Participates in a Virtual Book Discussion Held by Foundation for Non-Violent Alternatives - Sikyong Penpa Tsering joined an online discussion of the Dalai Lama's book "Voice for the Voiceless" with Dr. Thupten Jinpa and Shri Dilip Sinha. Tsering reflected on the Middle Way Approach, Tibet's historical independence, and how the Dalai Lama combines spiritual thinking with political objectives.

ICT statement on the Panchen Lama's 36th birthday - The International Campaign for Tibet marked the 36th birthday of the Panchen Lama, who has remained in Chinese detention since 1995. ICT called on governments to press China about his whereabouts and well-being, while condemning China's control of Tibet and interference in Tibetan Buddhism.

Choerig Zinkyong's Jamyang Lophel Sunday School Celebrated 10th Annual Children's Cultural Activity in Brussels - The Tibetan community in Belgium celebrated the 10th Annual Children's Cultural Activity, featuring performances showcasing Tibetan culture. Secretary Thinley Wangdue urged community unity, while students from six schools across Belgium participated in traditional songs, dances, and plays.

Dalai Lama condoles Pope's death, the two have never met - The Dalai Lama expressed sadness over Pope Francis's death, praising his dedication to serving others. Though the Dalai Lama met previous popes including Paul VI and John Paul II, he never met with Francis or his immediate predecessor Benedict XVI, who both avoided meetings to prevent straining relations with China.

Arunachal: Deputy CM Inaugurates maiden Global Buddhist Conclave - India organized its first international Buddhist conclave in Arunachal Pradesh, a state bordering Tibet. The two-day event highlighted Buddhism's impact in India's northeastern region and featured participants from Bhutan, Myanmar, and Cambodia. Deputy Chief Minister Chowna Mein advocated creating a Buddhist tourist circuit to leverage the state's spiritual diversity for cultural and economic growth.

Buddhist spiritual leader on week-long visit, Karmapa debate rekindled - The visit of the 17th Gyalwa Karmapa Trinley Thaye Dorje to Kalimpong has reignited debate about the rightful Karmapa, as Ogyen Trinley Dorje is recognized as the 17th Karmapa by both the Dalai Lama and Chinese government. Karmapa Trinley's visit includes sacred ceremonies, a long-life offering ceremony, and a graduation ceremony for monks at the Diwakar Buddhist Academy.

Tibetan Parliamentary Delegation to visit Tibetans in Sikkim and West Bengal - Tibetan parliamentarians Dawa Tsering and Tsering Lhamo are scheduled to visit Tibetan communities in Gangtok, Kalimpong, Ravangla, Salugara, Oodlabari, and Jaigoan from April 21 to May 4, 2025. Their two-week tour includes various engagements with local Tibetan communities throughout Sikkim and West Bengal.

Sikyong Emphasises Resolving Tibet-China Conflict as Key Priority of Central Tibetan Administration During His Visit to Kamrao - Sikyong Penpa Tsering visited Kamrao Tibetan settlement, touring key institutions and addressing the community about land leases and the 16th Kashag's initiatives. He emphasized seeking resolution to the Tibet-China conflict through negotiation as the primary objective, while acknowledging Tibet's historical independence and discussing the Resolve Tibet Act and US support for Tibet.

Sikyong Penpa Tsering Extends Condolences on the Passing of His Holiness Pope Francis - Tibetan political leader Penpa Tsering expressed condolences to the Catholic Church on behalf of the Tibetan administration, highlighting Pope Francis's compassion, commitment to the marginalized, and environmental advocacy which resonated with Tibetan Buddhism.

Dalai Lama in excellent health, renowned Indian surgeon confirms - Dr. Pradeep Chowbey confirms the 89-year-old Dalai Lama is in excellent health with a sharp mind and slow aging, following his 2024 knee replacement surgery. The spiritual leader has expressed confidence he may live to 110, with celebrations planned for his upcoming 90th birthday.

Sikyong Penpa Tsering Visits Kham Kathok Tibetan Settlement - During his visit to the small Kham Kathok settlement, Sikyong emphasized the importance of unity, preserving Tibetan language and culture, and detailed a digital library initiative to safeguard sacred texts amid ongoing threats from China to Tibetan identity.

Tibetan leader warns of cultural erasure, pushes Tibetan language education in exile - Sikyong Penpa Tsering stressed the need for unity within the Tibetan community and urgent preservation of Tibet's cultural heritage through language education for exile children, highlighting ongoing tensions with China over Tibet's political status.

UNPO Condemns the Death of Tibetan Monk Hungkar Rinpoche - The Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization condemned the death of respected Tibetan monk Hungkar Rinpoche who died in Chinese custody after being detained in Vietnam, calling for an investigation into his death and highlighting China's ongoing persecution of Tibetan religious figures.

Statement of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile on the Suspicious Death of Tulku Rigzin Hungkar Dorjee Rinpoche: The Tibetan Parliament expresses deep concern over the death of 56-year-old Tulku Rigzin Hungkar Dorjee Rinpoche in Chinese custody in Vietnam, urging international investigation into his suspicious death and return of his body to his monastery for proper Buddhist rites.

China trying to co-opt foreign Buddhists to support its Dalai Lama reincarnation meddling: China has hosted Buddhist monks and officials from 12 countries on tours of Beijing and Lhasa to garner support for its position on controlling the Tibetan Buddhist reincarnation process, particularly focusing on the golden urn system for selecting Living Buddhas.

Dutch parliament passes resolution on Tibetan rights, Dalai Lama reincarnation despite China's objections:

The Netherlands passed three motions supporting Tibetan rights, calling for an EU Special Representative for Tibet, and opposing Chinese interference in the Dalai Lama's reincarnation process, despite strong criticism from the Chinese embassy.

Tibetan exile President Penpa Tsering invites Himachal CM for Dalai Lama's 90th birthday: Penpa Tsering met with Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhu to invite him to the Dalai Lama's 90th birthday celebrations starting July 2025, which will focus on the themes of compassion and non-violence.

Samten Choedon sworn in as new member of 17th TPIE: Former MP Samten Choedon has been sworn in as a new member of the 17th Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile from the Utsang constituency, replacing Dawa Phunkyi who became a Justice Commissioner, bringing over two decades of administrative and advocacy experience to her role.

Tortured for Telecoms in Tibet: Human Rights Watch reports widespread persecution of Tibetans for phone and internet-related activities, including contacting relatives outside China, possessing "banned content" related to Tibetan religious figures, or sharing content authorities disapprove of, all enforced through mass surveillance and mandatory tracking apps.

Tibetan Parliamentary Delegation Concludes Official Visit to Goa: Parliamentarians Geshe Monlam Tharchin and Kunga Sotop completed an official visit to Goa, meeting with university officials, local Tibetan traders' associations, and educating Indian students about Tibet's situation while encouraging Tibetan residents to maintain strong cultural identity.

Tibetan youth activists held as they protested before New Delhi Chinese embassy over lama's sudden death: Tibetan Youth Congress members protested at the Chinese embassy in New Delhi over the death of Tulku Hungkar Dorje in Chinese custody, with 16 of 17 protesters detained by police as they demanded international pressure for investigation and return of the lama's body.

Parliamentary Delegation Concludes Visit to Mundgod: Tibetan parliamentarians Geshe Monlam Tharchin and Kunga Sotop completed their visit to Doeguling Tibetan Settlement in Mundgod, touring monasteries, addressing monks and the community, inspecting schools, and meeting with local organizations.

US ambassador to China nominee pledges strong stand on Tibet at confirmation hearing: David Perdue, nominee for US Ambassador to China, committed to prioritizing Tibetan human rights during his Senate confirmation hearing, responding to concerns about religious suppression and China's water policies on the Tibetan plateau as a national security risk.

Western intelligence agencies warn spyware threat targeting Taiwan, Tibetan rights advocates: Intelligence agencies from six Western countries issued a warning about Chinese government-linked spyware targeting Tibetan rights advocates, Taiwanese independence activists, and other groups opposed by Beijing, deployed through malicious mobile applications that access cameras, microphones, and location data.

Central Tibetan Administration Holds Press Conference to Address Suspicious Death of Tulku Hungkar Dorje: The CTA held a press conference condemning the suspicious death of Tulku Hungkar Dorje in Chinese custody in Vietnam, calling for an independent investigation, immediate release of his body, and accountability from both Vietnamese and Chinese authorities.

Tibetans call out China's language policy amid claims of cultural erasure and human rights violations: Tibetans are challenging China's claims about protecting Tibetan language rights, arguing that Beijing's 2020 policy mandating Mandarin as the main instruction language in schools and 2023 Mandarin-only college entrance examinations are part of systematic cultural erasure.

Dalai Lama "moved" as march retrace his historic escape route from Tibet - The Dalai Lama expressed deep emotion about 300 people retracing his six-day escape journey from Tibet to India in 1959. The "Freedom Trail" trek retraced his route from Khen-dza-mani to Tawang, attracting monks, locals, and tourists. Officials hope this will develop into a significant spiritual tourism destination.

China's hydropower push destroying heritage, suppressing Tibetan identity: TCHRD report - A report by the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy details how China's hydropower projects in Tibet have led to forced relocations, cultural heritage destruction, and suppression of Tibetan identity. The report also criticizes China's efforts to sinicise Tibetan Buddhism and erode Tibetan language rights.

Tibetans in-exile rap China's whitepaper on human rights - Tibetans in exile strongly condemned China's recent white paper on human rights. The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy published a report detailing crimes against humanity in Driru county, including persecution, arbitrary detention, torture, and extrajudicial killings between 2012 and 2022.

Two new Justice Commissioners, auditor general of CTA sworn into office - Chief Justice Commissioner Yeshe Wangmo administered the oath of office to former parliamentarian Dawa Phunskyi and former minister Phagpa Tsering as new Justice Commissioners, while Secretary Tashi Topgyal became Auditor General of the Central Tibetan Administration's Audit Office.

Secretary Dhondul Dorjee Attends Annual Graduation Ceremony of Ngagyur Nyingma Shugseb Nunnery Institute - Secretary Dhondul Dorjee of the Department of Religion and Culture attended the annual graduation ceremony at the nunnery institute along with other dignitaries. He spoke about preserving Tibetan religion and culture amid rising challenges.

TCHRD releases alarming reports on Tibet, Driru abuses deemed crimes against humanity - The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy released two reports documenting extensive human rights abuses in Tibet, particularly in Driru County. Tibet received a Global Freedom Score of 0/100, and the reports detailed arbitrary detentions, torture, and crackdowns against protesters.

China must open Tibet for world to see truth: Govt-in-exile - After the United States imposed fresh visa restrictions on Chinese officials restricting access to Tibetan areas, the Central Tibetan Administration welcomed the move and called for China to open Tibet to international access. They questioned why China restricts access while claiming Tibet is a "socialist paradise."

Tibet Policy Institute Hosts Book Discussion on the Release of the 11th Edition of the Tibet Policy Journal - The Tibet Policy Institute hosted a book launch event for the 11th editions of the "Tibet Policy Journal 2024" in both Tibetan and English. The publications feature research articles aimed at nurturing research culture within the Tibetan community and raising public awareness.

Scotland's MP Ross John Greer Visits the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile - Ross John Greer MSP, Chair of the Scottish Cross-Party Group for Tibet, visited the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile with colleagues. Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel briefed them on the parliament's functioning and criticized China's White Paper claiming control over Tibetan lama reincarnations, requesting continued advocacy for Tibet.

German MP Michael Brand Visits Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile - Michael Brand, a member of the German Bundestag, met with Tibetan parliamentary leaders to discuss mutual interests. The Speaker updated him on the recently concluded budget session, which approved approximately 3,300 million Indian Rupees for fiscal year 2025-2026, a reduction of 300 million rupees due to suspended USAID funding.

Tibetan play highlighting repression in Tibet to do 34 shows across India - "A Fearless Voice," a Tibetan-language play organized by the Tibetan Youth Congress, depicts the story of a young girl forced to leave Tibet after her monk brother is killed by Chinese authorities. The play will tour 34 locations across India to raise awareness about human rights violations in Tibet, with a budget of approximately ₹20 lakhs.

RFA radio transmissions to China, Tibet halted - Radio Free Asia announced that shortwave radio broadcasts for its Mandarin, Tibetan, and Lao language services have been completely halted following the termination of its federal grant by the U.S. Agency for Global Media. The Trump administration has moved to slash news organizations funded by the U.S. Congress as part of efforts to reduce government spending.

Global Tibet Groups Urge US Government to Restore Vital Tibetan Broadcasts - A coalition of 146 Tibetan organizations worldwide has appealed to the U.S. Agency for Global Media to restore Voice of America and Radio

Free Asia Tibetan language services. The broadcasts represent a critical source of uncensored information for millions of Tibetans living under Chinese rule.

Office of Tibet in Washington D.C. Hosts Sino-Tibet Youth Dialogue - The Office of Tibet in Washington D.C. hosted a Sino-Tibet Youth Interaction featuring Chinese democracy advocates Fang Zheng and Zhou Fengsuo. The conference explored China's democracy movement, Tibetan-Chinese relations, and collaborative efforts, with participants discussing future initiatives to enhance dialogue between young Tibetans and Chinese.

Tibetan Buddhist leader missing for 8 months has died, monastery confirms - Tulku Hungkar Dorje, an influential Tibetan Buddhist leader who disappeared eight months ago after advocating for Tibetan language preservation, has died according to his monastery. The monastery claimed he died in Vietnam, but circumstances remain suspicious as Chinese authorities had imposed restrictions on discussing his disappearance.

Dalai Lama Centre for Indian and Tibetan Ancient Wisdom hosts inaugural conference - The center held its first All-India conference near the Mahabodhi Temple in Bodhgaya, bringing together 40 scholars to explore ancient wisdom traditions and modern challenges. The Dalai Lama emphasized integrating ancient wisdom with modern education and science to contribute to "a safer, happier, more harmonious world."

Freedom Trail' foot march retracing Dalai Lama's 1959 escape to India underway - A six-day trek retracing the Dalai Lama's historic escape route from Tibet to India 66 years ago began with 300 participants. The "Freedom Trail" commemorates his journey from Tibet to Tawang, Arunachal Pradesh, and aims to spread his message of peace while highlighting cultural ties between Tibet and Arunachal Pradesh.

Tibetan Losar Celebrated in the UK Parliament - The All Party Parliamentary Group on Tibet hosted Tibetan New Year celebrations at the UK Parliament, coinciding with the Dalai Lama receiving the Gold Mercury International Award 2025. The event featured cultural performances and appeals for the UK government to affirm that the Dalai Lama's succession is solely for him to decide.

China deploys army veterans for military, political training in Tibetan schools: China is placing army veterans as "on-campus instructors" in schools across Tibet to provide military and political training to Tibetan children as young as 6, part of Beijing's assimilation policies aimed at erasing Tibetan identity and instilling loyalty to the Chinese government.

House approves budget of ₹330 crore for 2025-26 fiscal year: The Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile unanimously approved a budget of ₹3,304,017,307 for fiscal year 2025-26, reflecting a reduction compared to the previous year due to termination of US government aid, with the Speaker urging the Tibetan public to work toward financial self-sufficiency.

Indian lawmakers jointly declare Tibet-support on Dalai Lama reincarnation issue: 46 Indian Members of Parliament signed a Joint Declaration recognizing the exclusive right of the Dalai Lama and Tibetan people to choose their religious leaders according to established traditions, demonstrating solidarity against China's attempts to impose its own 15th Dalai Lama.

Protests, Detentions And Other News From The PRC

Protests by Unpaid Chinese Workers Spread Amid Factory Closures: China is witnessing a surge in labor protests as factory closures linked to U.S. tariffs leave millions without wages or benefits. From Sichuan to Inner Mongolia, unpaid workers have staged strikes and threats of suicide, reflecting deep economic stress, poor company management, and rising labor unrest. The manufacturing and construction sectors are particularly affected, with older workers unfairly dismissed and local authorities often unresponsive.

Sichuan Airlines to Launch First Chengdu-Madrid Direct Flight: Sichuan Airlines will launch a new direct route between Chengdu and Madrid starting April 27, operating four times weekly. This is the airline's first direct link to Spain, enhancing travel and trade between western China and Europe. The move strengthens growing cultural and economic ties, including partnerships, language programs, and Spanish product demand in Chengdu's markets.

China to expand digital surveillance in Tibet with state firm Meiya Pico

17 April 2025, Phayul, Tsering Dhundup



A surveillance camera is seen in Lhasa, Tibet, with the Potala Palace in the background in January 2011(Photo/AFP)

CCP'S TIBET POLICY

Chinese state-owned digital forensics and cybersecurity firm Meiya Pico will provide advanced cyber operations training and digital forensic laboratory facilities to the Tibet Police College in Lhasa, according to a new report released on Wednesday by Tibetan human rights monitoring and research agencies, Tibet Watch and Turquoise Roof.

The report, titled “A Long Shadow: The Expansion and Export of China’s Digital Repression Model in Tibet”, details how this development represents a significant escalation in China’s surveillance infrastructure within Tibet, a country that has been under intense security monitoring since China invaded Tibet in 1950 and occupied completely by 1959.

Meiya Pico, which was placed on a U.S. entity list in 2019 for its alleged role in human rights abuses against Uyghurs in East Turkestan, has become a central component of China’s digital surveillance apparatus over the past decade. The company has developed various surveillance technologies, including covert phone spyware applications and forensic hacking devices for police use.

Security analysts cited in the report suggest that Lhasa, one of Tibet’s most sacred pilgrimage destinations, is increasingly serving as a testing ground for surveillance technologies that could potentially be deployed globally.

The report highlights concerns about the dual role played by Meiya Pico enabling domestic surveillance in China’s frontier regions while simultaneously exporting digital repression technology abroad. This raises further concerns about transnational repression efforts targeting Tibetan communities worldwide.

According to the report, the implementation of these digital forensics technologies may have serious

implications for the psychological well-being and community cohesion of Tibetans both within Tibet and in exile. The report draws parallels between tactics used against Tibetans and those employed against other diaspora communities.

The release of the report comes amid mounting international attention on China's surveillance practices. Just last week, global cybersecurity agencies issued a joint advisory warning of sophisticated spyware operations linked to Beijing targeting communities considered threats by the Chinese Communist Party.

The advisory released on April 9 identified two spyware tools, Badbazaar and Moonshine, as being used to infiltrate mobile devices of individuals connected to Tibet, East Turkestan, Taiwan, and the Falun Gong movement. The spyware can collect real-time GPS data, record audio, access cameras, and extract private messages and photos, all without the user's knowledge.

China challenged to live up to its claim of guaranteed protection for Tibetan language

05 April 2025, [Tibetan Review](#)

Tibetans have sought to hold the Chinese government on its recently issued white paper claims to demand that the academic study and other uses of their mother tongue be restored. In its white paper on the human rights situation in Tibet released on Mar 28, China claimed that the right to study and use the Tibetan language in public administration is guaranteed.

And now, hundreds of Tibetans have taken to social media to demand that China restore Tibetan language studies in schools, reported the Tibetan service of rfa.org Apr 4.

Amid reports that the teaching of Tibetan language has been sidelined in schools while privately run schools teaching Tibetan language and culture had been forced to shut down, China claimed in its white paper that "the right to study and develop the Tibetan language is also guaranteed in education and in the standardization of important terms." It also maintained that the Tibetan language is widely used in publishing, media, and daily life.

But critics say not only are these claims untrue, but also that that China has actively moved to suppress the use of the language – which they see as part of a wider plan to eliminate Tibetan cultural identity entirely, the report noted.

The report pointed to the fact that in 2020, for example, Mandarin was made the primary medium of instruction in all the primary and secondary schools in

Tibet while China claimed to have introduced bilingual education there.

It also noted that in 2023, China started a Mandarin-only policy for students taking the annual college entrance exam, which put many ethnic minorities including Tibetan children – who were previously allowed to take the test in their native language – at a disadvantage.

Anger over these developments are reported to be reflected in thousands of comments underneath several videos posted on the WeChat social media platform showing Chinese officials discussing the contents of the white paper.

Netizens on a Chinese social media platform are calling for the Tibetan language to be reinstated as a requirement for college entrance exams, integrated into school education, and used in the workplace. March 31, 2025. (Courtesy: RFA)

"Language and culture are the most precious wealth in the world...Restore Tibetan language in college entrance exams," a netizen from Tibet was stated to have posted.

"The Tibetan script and language carries a long and rich history and culture of the Tibetan people," another post was quoted as saying. "However, at present, Tibetan language is not seen in college entrance examinations and many workplaces do not use Tibetan language."

Dawa Tsering, Director of the Central Tibetan Administration-run Tibet Policy Institute at Dharamshala, India, has said, "The Chinese government has made sure that the Tibetan language remains practically useless in daily life, whether it is for education or to earn a living."

The report pointed to China's closing down in recent times of several highly popular privately-run schools teaching Tibetan language and culture as well as Tibetan vocational training centres under various pretexts for the simple reason that they were at odd with President Xi Jinping's call for the Sinicization of Tibet. Outside experts have also taken note of this situation. In Dec 2024, three members of the New Delhi-based think tank India Foundation, who went on a government-supervised visit to Tibet's capital Lhasa said Tibetan now "plays second fiddle" to Mandarin and is treated as second language, with all main signages in Mandarin, the report noted.

China says model militarized school education started in 'Tibet'

04 April 2025, [Tibetan Review](#)

China said Mar 21 that it had started for the first time in Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) a programme called "School-stationed Teaching Army Officers" (lob dar cha-doe mag pon) in Ser-nye (Chinese: Seni) district of

Nagchu City. The army veterans are tasked to provide “patriotic education” and prepare Tibetan children for future military service, the Tibetan service of rfa.org Apr 1 cited sources as saying.

Located at an altitude of 4,500 metres above sea level, Ser-nye district in Nagchu City is something of a pilot site for the spread of “School-stationed Teaching Army Officers” programme in the TAR, reported China’s online Tibet news service tb.tibet.cn Mar 21. Citing Tibet Daily newspaper.

The report said that last year, the first batch of 13 retired soldiers from Nagchu went to work in seven schools in the district area.

The report noted that under the programme, the No. 3 Primary School in the district started an emergency drill, and the students were able to reach the safe area in an orderly manner within a minute under the guidance of the “School-stationed Teaching Army Officers”.

Tenzin Nyima and Tharchin, the “School-stationed Teaching Officers” of the No. 3 Middle School in Ser-nye district were stated to teach the students how pack their bedding and belongings in a few minutes.

The report said that army veterans are regularly stationed in schools to provide students with strict routine management and training. The programme not only enables students to develop good living habits, but also makes national defence education and physical exercise a normal part of their daily life.

But according to the rfa.org report, the programme, which also focuses on political education, is a bid to instil loyalty to the Chinese government from a young age – an initiative that experts say highlight an escalation in Beijing’s assimilation policies aimed at erasing Tibetan identity.

The report cited sources as saying military personnel were being deployed to schools in Lhasa, Chamdo, and Nagchu cities in the TAR; Ngaba and Kyungchu counties in Sichuan province; Sangchu county in Gansu province; as well as other Tibetan regions in Qinghai province.

While the report does not say when the school was set up, it notes that it has been developing its curriculum for a long time.

The report says the school has taken measures to develop school-based curricula, reform the management system, and carry out art and sports activities, etc., to realize “students reading good books”, “teachers teaching good lessons”, and introducing high-quality resources from Shaanxi to Ngari.

The report says the State Ethnic Affairs Commission had awarded to the school the title of “National Innovative Model School for Ethnic Unity and Progress”.

The report does not say whether other similar schools have been set up in other parts of Tibet following the reported success of the Shaanxi-Ngari experimental school.

New aid programme to Sinicize school education in Tibet

02 April 2025, [Tibetan Review](#)

In a new approach to Sinicizing Tibet and its education system, China has set up a new experimental school in Tibet, with not only the entire school building and its resources but also its curriculum and related facilities being sponsored by a designated Chinese province.

The Tibet Shaanxi Experimental School in Ngari Prefecture is the first standardized school built with the assistance of Shaanxi Province, said China’s online Tibet news service tb.tibet.cn Apr 1 in a report titled “School-building, teaching assistance”.

BUDDHISM

China's Game Plan To Sinicize Buddhism In Tibet Exposed

25 April 2025, [The Sentinel](#)

The establishment of the Higher Buddhist Institute highlights China's plan to align Tibetan Buddhism with communist ideals and limit religious freedom.

The establishment of the Higher Buddhist Institute through the guidance of Communist Party of China (CPC) marks a fundamental change in the way of cultivating senior Tibetan Buddhist talents, and has opened a new chapter in the history of Modern Tibetan Buddhist education, to allow only that degree of freedom of religious belief which would be compatible with "complete acceptance of communism in China".

The Higher Buddhist Institute of the Tibetan Department in Beijing was initiated by the late 10th Panchen Lama and President of the Buddhist Association of China (BAC), Zhao Puchu, with the approval of the CPC Central Committee and the State Council, on September 1, 1987 in Xihuang Monastery in Beijing. The 10th Panchen Lama personally served as the first President, and Zhao Puchu, then President of the BAC, was the Senior Advisor.

This Institute is the only full-time institution across China of higher learning with the qualification of 'Tuorangpa' senior academic title (doctorate) training and awarding with the goal of cultivating high-quality monks. The current abbot is the 6th Lobsang Jigme Thubten Chokyi Nyima Living Buddha.

Since the establishment and implementation of the three-level academic title system of Tibetan Buddhism in 2004, the college has awarded a total of 363 senior titles and 150 intermediate titles of 'Zhiranpa'.

The college plans to enroll 39 students in the 2025 senior title class, including 13 Gelugpa, 13 Sakya and 13 Bon Pothroughout China. The enrollment targets of this institute are the winners of the intermediate title of 'Zhiranpa' of the Tibetan Department of Buddhism and the monks of the temple with high comprehensive quality.

Courses to be taught are mainly 'Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era', as well as courses such as 'Introduction to the Theoretical System of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics', 'Modern Chinese History' and 'Constitution and Legal Foundation'. Further, students have to carry out on-site teaching in Beijing and surrounding patriotic education bases, cultural relics and historic sites, museums, modern enterprises and other places to participate in academic exchange meetings such as doctrinal interpretation seminars and Huangsi forums, and carry out exchanges with domestic and foreign religious schools and academic institutions.(IANS)

China hosts foreign Buddhist delegation amid renewed push to assert control Over Dalai Lama's reincarnation

19 April 2025, [Phayul](#), Tenzin Nyidon



H.H. the Dalai Lama waving to the devotees in the courtyard at the Main Temple in Dharamshala on April 2, 2025 (Photo/OHHDL)

In a calculated move to bolster its narrative on the reincarnation of the exiled spiritual leader His Holiness the Dalai Lama, China recently hosted a delegation of more than 20 Buddhist leaders and religious affairs officials from 12 countries. The high-profile visit, which took place from April 14 to 16, included a visit to Sera Monastery, Potala Palace, Jokhang Temple, and Tibet University in Lhasa, as well as the Lama Temple and the China Tibetology Research Centre in Beijing.

According to China Daily, several members of the visiting delegation expressed that their tour deepened their comprehension of the “reincarnation system of Living Buddhas” and the evolution of Tibetan Buddhism within China. The visit was framed by Chinese media as an endorsement of Beijing’s interpretations and policies concerning Tibetan religious traditions.

After touring an exhibition on the reincarnation of Tibetan spiritual figures — including the Dalai Lama and Panchen Lama — at the Museum of Tibetan Culture in Beijing, Penh Vibol, a member of the Secretariat of the Supreme Sangha Council of Cambodia, remarked that the experience offered him valuable insight into the historical and cultural context of the reincarnation tradition as practiced in China.

However, Tibetan observers and exile leaders have sharply criticized the visit as a veiled propaganda effort aimed at legitimizing Beijing’s claim over the reincarnation process. Tenzin Lekshay, spokesperson for the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), condemned the orchestrated nature of the visit, stating, “China’s scripted tour of foreign Buddhist monks and religious officials to Tibet was to deviously assert control over reincarnation. However, China lacks legitimate, moral, and historical authority over the sacred and unique Tibetan Buddhist tradition of reincarnation.”

The timing of the visit is particularly significant, as it comes ahead of the 90th birthday of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama on July 6 — a milestone expected to reignite discussions within the Tibetan spiritual and exile communities about the future of the Dalai Lama institution. In a statement made in September 2011, the Dalai Lama affirmed that he would consult with senior Tibetan Buddhist scholars, the Tibetan public, and his followers before making a definitive decision on whether the institution should continue. “When I am about ninety I will consult the high Lamas of the Tibetan Buddhist traditions, the Tibetan public, and other concerned people who follow Tibetan Buddhism, and re-evaluate whether the institution of the Dalai Lama should continue or not. On that basis, we will take a decision. If it is decided that the reincarnation of the Dalai Lama should continue and there is a need for the Fifteenth Dalai Lama to be recognized, responsibility for doing so will primarily rest on the concerned officers of the Dalai Lama’s Gaden Phodrang Trust,” he stated.

In his recent book *Voice for the Voiceless*, the Dalai Lama further clarified that his reincarnation would not be born under Chinese rule, insisting that his successor should be born in the “free world” to ensure the continuation of the traditional spiritual mission of the Dalai Lama lineage.

Despite this, Beijing has consistently reiterated its claim to authority over the reincarnation process. In 2007, the Chinese government enacted State Religious Affairs Bureau Order No. 5, mandating that all reincarnations of Tibetan Buddhist lamas must be pre-approved by the state — a policy widely denounced by the Tibetan exile government as a flagrant violation of religious freedom and an attempt to politicize deeply spiritual traditions.

President Penpa Tsering, the President of the CTA, has been an outspoken critic of China’s reincarnation policy. “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,” he remarked.

To counter Beijing’s claims, the CTA’s 16th Cabinet released a comprehensive policy paper titled *Position on the Issue of Reincarnation of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama* on September 29, 2022. The document reaffirms the Tibetan people’s exclusive right to determine the future of the Dalai Lama’s succession without external interference, explicitly rejecting China’s Order No. 5 and the so-called Management Measures for the Reincarnation of Living Buddhas in Tibetan Buddhism.

Abbot's mysterious death in its custody, China cracks down on his monastery, locals

16 April 2025, [Tibetan Review](#)

China has launched a crackdown on Lung-ngon Monastery and surrounding Tibetan villages in Gade (Chinese: Gande) County of Golok (Guoluo) prefecture, Qinghai Province, even as it remains tight-lipped about the circumstance of the death of its abbot Hungkar Dorje in the custody of its visiting police in Vietnam late last month, reported the Tibetan service of rfa.org Apr 15.

Officials have placed the monastery under round-the-clock police surveillance, conducting random inspections of locals' mobile phones to curb information sharing about his death, the report cited local sources, who spoke on condition of anonymity for fear of reprisals, as saying.

The abbot had died on Mar 29 in Vietnam's Ho Chi Minh City, after missing for over eight months. He was found to have fled to the country to escape Chinese government persecution for his work as an educator and promoter of Tibetan language and culture. This went counter to China's ongoing campaign to Sinicize Tibet, including Tibetan Buddhism. He was stated to have been caught from a hotel room in a joint operation between Chinese intelligence officials and Vietnamese police and handed over to a visiting Chinese police team.

The report cited sources as saying that since Apr 2, prefecture and county-level authorities had been conducting inspections at the monastery and local villages, imposing tight restrictions and forbidding public memorial services for the late abbot.

"After Tulku Hungkar Dorje's death, local Tibetans have faced comprehensive restrictions. Many local residents who expressed condolences or shared photos of the Rinpoche on social media have been summoned for questioning by Chinese authorities," the report quoted one source as saying.

"Several Tibetans have also been detained, although detailed information cannot be obtained due to the strict controls and scrutiny," he has added.

Currently, there is no clear information about the status of Tulku Hungkar Dorje's body, which is reportedly at Vinmec Central Park International Hospital in Ho Chi Minh City, Ju Tenkyong, director of the Amnye Machen Institute, a Dharamsala-based Tibetan centre for advanced studies, has said. He has been monitoring developments in the case.

China detains Tibetans for sharing photos of late Buddhist leader

15 April 2025, [RFA](#)

Officials place monastery of Tulku Hungkar Dorje under strict surveillance, forbid public memorials.

Chinese authorities have interrogated and detained local Tibetans who posted photos and messages online mourning the loss of an influential Tibetan Buddhist leader said to have died while in custody in Vietnam, two sources from the region told Radio Free Asia.

Officials in Gade county in Golog prefecture of Qinghai province have placed the monastery of Tulku Hungkar Dorje, who died aged 56, under round-the-clock police surveillance, conducting random inspections of locals' phones to curb information sharing about his death, said the sources. Both spoke on the condition of anonymity for fear of reprisals.

On April 3, Lung Ngon Monastery in Gade county confirmed that its abbot, Tulku Hungkar Dorje, had died on March 29 in Vietnam's Ho Chi Minh City. His followers say the Buddhist leader, who had been missing for over eight months, had fled to Vietnam to escape Chinese government persecution for his work as an educator and promoter of Tibetan language and culture.

Since April 2, authorities from Golog prefecture and Gade county have been conducting inspections at the monastery and local village, imposing tight restrictions and forbidding public memorial services for the abbot, the sources told RFA.

"After Tulku Hungkar Dorje's death, local Tibetans have faced comprehensive restrictions. Many local residents who expressed condolences or shared photos of the Rinpoche on social media have been summoned for questioning by Chinese authorities," said the first source.

"Several Tibetans have also been detained, although detailed information cannot be obtained due to the strict controls and scrutiny," he added.

Tulku Hungkar Dorje was renowned as a philanthropist, educator and environmentalist, who promoted Tibetan language and culture. Followers and rights groups say he was a victim of transnational repression by China and have demanded the Vietnamese government allow an independent investigation into his death, which they say took place under suspicious circumstances after he was arrested in a joint operation led by local Vietnamese police and Chinese government agents.

Vietnamese authorities have not publicly commented about the case.

Monks from Lung Ngon Monastery who travelled with Chinese officials to Vietnam on April 5 to retrieve the Tulku Hungkar Dorje's body were initially refused permission to view the body of their abbot and from

participating in meetings held at the Chinese embassy in Vietnam, Tibetan rights groups said, citing sources familiar with the matter in the region.

However, on April 10, the monks were allowed to view Tulku Hungkar Dorje's face, but were not allowed to view the rest of his body, said Ju Tenkyong, director of the Amnye Machen Institute, a Dharamsala-based Tibetan center for advanced studies.

Currently, there is no clear information about the status of Tulku Hungkar Dorje's body, which is reportedly at Vinmec Central Park International Hospital in Ho Chi Minh City, Tenkyong said.

Tibetans across the globe have united in their call for a thorough probe into the death of the respected Buddhist teacher, holding peaceful marches in several countries, including in India and the U.S., with demonstrations outside the Chinese and Vietnamese embassies and consulates in New Delhi and New York as well as candlelight vigils, prayer ceremonies, and formal petitions

Closure of Tibetan language schools

Tulku Hungkar Dorje was a renowned Tibetan educator in a region where Chinese authorities are accused of stifling Tibetan language and culture and seeking to assimilate Tibetan children into the larger ethnic Han culture.

The abbot founded several schools and vocational centers to provide free education for children of local nomadic families. These schools, which included the Hungkar Dorje Ethnic Vocational High School and Mayul Center for Studies, were reportedly shut down shortly after he went missing last year, sources told RFA.

In another indication of the trend of Chinese authorities suppressing Tibetan education, a prominent school, also in Golog prefecture, announced Tuesday it was reopening but would not be teaching Tibetan language and culture as before.

In July 2024, Chinese officials shut down Ragya Gangjong Sherig Norbuling School, a reputed Tibetan vocational school run by prominent Buddhist teacher, Jigme Gyaltzen, citing lack of compliance with provincial communist party standards. The closure sparked widespread concern among Tibetans at the time over Beijing's efforts to eradicate Tibetan language and culture.

On Tuesday, Gyaltzen told hundreds of monks, students, and local Tibetans at a public event that the vocational school will focus on providing practical training on technology and technical skills to enable Tibetans to keep pace with the current tech-driven era.

Tibetan netizens welcomed the reopening and praised Gyaltzen as "invincible" and "indestructible." One also expressed hope that the "glory of Tibetan language and script will shine as before." However, sources told RFA the school will reopen without its Tibetan

language and cultural departments, which it was famed for.

STATE OF ECOLOGY OF THE TIBETAN PLATEAU

Geologists Uncover 20 Million Tons of Copper Worth Over \$100 Billion in an Unexpected Location

27 April 2025, [IDR](#), Evelyn Hart

A massive copper deposit has been discovered in an unexpected location, potentially changing the global market. This find could reshape energy strategies and supply chains.

In an unexpected breakthrough, experts have uncovered a massive copper deposit in China's Tibetan Plateau, exceeding 20 million tons. The newly identified copper resources are part of a larger potential resource base, which could reach up to 150 million tons. This discovery places the Qinghai-Xizang region at the heart of global copper exploration, with significant geopolitical and economic implications.

A Surprising Discovery in an Unexpected Location

The Qinghai-Xizang region, once considered remote and difficult to access, has become a major focus of copper exploration. Over the past few years, four major copper resource bases—Yulong, Duolong, Julong-Jiama, and Xiongcu-Zhunuo—have emerged, making the region one of the most promising areas for copper mining globally.

According to Global Times, the main site alone holds over 20 million tons of high-quality copper ore, and neighboring deposits could add up to 150 million tons of copper to the region's total resource base. This discovery is particularly significant in light of China's ambitious efforts to secure its mineral resources as part of the country's 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-2025). The development of these reserves will likely solidify China's role as a dominant player in the global copper market, with far-reaching effects on supply chains and international trade.

Copper's Role in the Green Energy Transition

Copper is a critical material in the green energy transition, playing a central role in renewable energy technologies like solar panels, wind turbines, and electric vehicles.

A single electric vehicle requires up to four times as much copper as a traditional combustion engine, and the growing demand for electric vehicles is putting pressure on global copper supplies.

Experts emphasize that copper's role is not limited to electric vehicles. The metal is also integral to the expansion of solar and wind energy, which are central to global efforts to combat climate change.

The discovery of such a vast copper deposit in the Tibetan Plateau comes at a time when the demand for this metal is higher than ever. It is expected to play a pivotal role in driving the development of green energy solutions worldwide, making the discovery even more impactful for China's future energy strategies.

He Exploration Site Of Copper In China's Qinghai Tibet Plateau

The exploration site of copper in China's Qinghai-Tibet Plateau. Photo: Courtesy of China Geological Survey
China's Growing Geopolitical Influence in the Copper Market

This new copper discovery has broad geopolitical implications, positioning China as a powerful player in the global copper market. With the newly identified reserves, China can further secure its resource independence, reducing its reliance on foreign copper supplies.

At a time when copper prices are surging due to increasing global demand, China's ability to control a significant portion of the market could shift the balance of power in the copper trade.

Other copper-producing nations, including Australia, Chile, and Kazakhstan, are closely watching China's growing influence in the industry. As the world's largest copper importer, China's strengthened position will likely have ripple effects across international markets, influencing supply chains, prices, and trade agreements.

For countries without significant copper reserves, China's dominance could lead to increased dependence on Chinese resources, shifting the global economic landscape.

Mining Challenges and Technological Innovation

Mining operations in the Tibetan Plateau are not without challenges. The region's high altitude and harsh climate conditions require specialized technologies and innovative solutions to extract the copper efficiently.

To meet these demands, China is developing advanced mining techniques, including autonomous drones and specialized drilling robots, to operate in the extreme environment of the plateau.

These technological advancements not only address the logistical challenges posed by the plateau's altitude but also represent a leap forward in mining practices globally.

The use of autonomous equipment could help improve the efficiency and safety of mining operations while reducing environmental impacts.

The innovations developed for this project could set new standards for the mining industry worldwide, reshaping the way natural resources are extracted in other remote and challenging locations.

New study reveals accelerated warming trend on Tibetan Plateau

11 April 2025, [Social news](#), Gopi

Chinese researchers have revealed that the Tibetan Plateau is expected to experience accelerated warming in the next 10 years, according to the

Institute of Atmospheric Physics (IAP) under the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

While traditional climate projections can highlight long-term trends, the temperature changes on the Tibetan Plateau over the next decade remain highly uncertain due to substantial internal climate variability.

However, this new study utilizing decadal climate prediction -- an emerging tool that combines the initial state of the climate system with external forcing -- suggests improved accuracy in regional climate forecasts.

The researchers from the IAP analysed advanced international decadal prediction systems to assess the predictability of temperature changes on the Tibetan Plateau.

Their findings indicate that between 2025 and 2032, the region's annual mean temperature will rise by 0.98 degrees Celsius compared to the 1991-2020 baseline. This warming rate is 1.75 times faster than the observed increase from 2016 to 2023.

Using the Open Global Glacier Model (OGGM), the researchers simulated the impact of accelerated warming on the Tibetan Plateau glaciers. The results suggest that the warming is projected to reduce glacier volume by approximately 1.4 per cent, leading to faster melt rates that threaten water security for hundreds of millions across Asia, Xinhua news agency reported. This dramatic loss also risks destabilising regional ecological balance and could trigger far-reaching climatic consequences globally.

The study also highlights that the decadal predictability of Tibetan Plateau temperatures is influenced not only by external factors like greenhouse gas concentrations but also by internal climate variability, particularly the Pacific Decadal Oscillation (PDO) and North Pacific Gyre Oscillation (NPGO).

Chinese archaeologists say humans inhabited Tibet over 10,000 years ago

15 April 2025, [Tibetan Review](#)

Humans had moved to Tibet over 10,000 years ago, according to recent discovery of stone tools and animal fossils, reported China's online Tibet news service [tb.tibet.cn](#) Apr 15, citing Chinese archaeologists. The report claims this to be evidence of Tibet being an important part of the multi-faceted structure of the Chinese people.

The report said archaeologists from China's National Cultural Heritage Administration, the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) Cultural Heritage Administration, and the TAR Cultural Heritage Protection Research Institute announced this during their joint work report conference on archaeological excavations in Tibet held in Beijing.

Many key achievements of archaeological excavations in Tibet from 2021 to 2024, as well as a series of archaeological discoveries and research were announced, the report said.



Cultural relics such as stone tools and animal fossils found in the Zangkargang site in Toelung Dechen County of Lhasa City. (Photo courtesy: CRPR)

From 2021 to 2024, the TAR Institute of Cultural Relics Protection and Research cooperated with many scientific research institutions to carry out 34 automatic archaeological excavation projects related to 17 ancient ruins and ancient tombs, the report said. Of them the report cited cultural relics such as stone tools and animal fossils found in the Zangkargang site in Toelung Dechen County of Lhasa City and the Melong Tagphuk cave in Gegyai County of Ngari Prefecture.

Through scientific dating methods, it is shown that their age is 10,000 years ago, which shows that human beings had already moved to the central area of the Tibetan Plateau 10,000 years ago, the archaeologists have said.

Those who participated in the Tibet Archaeological Research Work Report Conference in Beijing were stated to include a total of 12 scientific research institutions.

Noting that a large number of archaeological discoveries show that different periods of technological civilization have been nurtured and developed in Tibet, the report then gave a political twist to these research and findings by calling Tibet an important part of the multi-faceted structure of the Chinese people, attracting great attention from the scientific community at home and abroad.

Correction: It has been pointed out that the figure of 10,000 mentioned in this report should read as 100,000, that the tb.tibet.cn source report of Apr 15, 2025, mentioning “10,000 years” may be due to machine translation error, given previous Chinese state media reports on this matter. The figure should stand corrected accordingly. – Editors

China engages in ‘proactive’ archaeological excavations to justify current Tibet claims

11 April 2025, [Tibetan Review](#)

China is using current nationalist rhetoric to fabricate narratives which suggest that prehistoric archaeological discoveries made in Tibet recently show the territory to be part of its sovereignty even during such periods when the idea of nationhood as we know it today did not exist.

Announcing that progress was being made at multiple archaeological sites in Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), China maintains that these new discoveries highlight “unity in diversity” of Chinese civilization, its current rhetoric to justify claims of sovereignty over occupied territories such as Tibet, East Turkestan (Xinjiang), Inner Mongolia, and numerous other territories.

And so, from claiming that Tibet was part of China since ancient times by rewriting its history, China now engages in “proactive archaeological excavations” to predate this claim into Palaeolithic and Neolithic ages. Since 2021, the regional institute has collaborated with 12 Chinese research institutions on 34 “proactive archaeological excavations” at 17 ancient sites and tombs, which range from the Palaeolithic and Neolithic to the Early Metal Ages in seven areas of TAR, China’s official globaltimes.cn Apr 10 cited Li Linhui, director of the institute, as saying.

The institute was stated to have announced, concerning its 2024 “Xizang” archaeology work, that archaeological finds at the Palaeolithic sites, including the Shanggagang Site, Xiuma Cave and Gani Site, have provided important evidence for understanding how early humans explored and adapted to life on the Tibetan Plateau, and how these people communicated with surrounding region, the report said. “Xizang” is China’s Sinicized name for Tibet.

The regional institute has also said discoveries at the Neolithic sites of Mabucuo and Lapo reveal the cultural inheritance and exchanges between prehistoric populations in the high-altitude interior of the Tibetan Plateau and surrounding regions, “providing strong evidence for unity in diversity of Chinese civilization.”

Particularly, the Mabucuo Site, which dates from 4,800 to 2,000 years ago, is currently the highest, earliest, longest, and most culturally continuous Neolithic lakeside site discovered on the plateau, the institute has said.

Also, the archaeological discoveries at the Sangdalongguo Tomb and the Kuoxiong Site were stated to have provided data for the study of the Early Metal Age on the Tibetan Plateau. “While findings from the Sangdalongguo Tomb suggest the emergence of social stratification at the time, artifacts unearthed at the Kuoxiong Site show similarities with those found in the western part of Southwest China’s Sichuan

Province, indicating possible cultural exchanges between these regions,” the report said.

Besides, the relics excavated from the Wenjiangduo Site, which has a history of over 1,000 years, were stated to show that “close cultural ties existed between the Tibetan Plateau, the Central Plains in the Tang Dynasty (618-907) and neighbouring regions, offering key evidence of multi-ethnic interaction along the South Asian corridor of the Silk Road since the 7th century.”

“A large number of archaeological findings reveal that humans arrived at the heart of the Tibetan Plateau 100,000 years ago. Different stages of archaeological cultures developed and flourished in TAR. The archaeological findings vividly demonstrate the historical facts that Xizang is an important component of the unity in diversity structure of the Chinese nation,” Li has told China’s official Xinhua news agency.

Chinese scientists warn of more high-magnitude earthquakes in and around Tibetan Plateau region

08 April 2025, [Tibetan Review](#)

A team of Chinese seismologists have published a study last month warning of a heightened risk of devastating earthquakes – like the one with magnitude 7.9 which struck Myanmar on Mar 28 – in and around the Tibetan Plateau region, reported the scmp.com Apr 6. The question is whether this will lead China to rethink the world’s biggest hydroelectric dam it has given the go ahead to be built on the Yarlung Tsangpo river in Tibet’s Metog County, near the border with India. It is known to be a seismically active area and prone to landslides.

The study was published after the devastating 7.1-magnitude Jan 7 earthquake in Tibet’s Mt Everest county of Dingri, and days before the Myanmar quake which flattened buildings and killed thousands of people.

The peer-reviewed study, led by senior engineer Zhu Hongbin with the Beijing Earthquake Agency, was stated to have been published on Mar 20 in the Journal of Geodesy and Geodynamics, an academic publication run by the China Earthquake Administration.

The seismologists have analysed around 150 years of seismic data – from 1879 to the present day – to identify six major earthquake “active periods” in “China” and adjacent regions.

Each period was stated to correlate with shifts in the Earth’s rotational speed – measured through changes in the length of a day (LOD) – and corresponding tectonic stress realignments.

An active period from 1897 to 1912 was found to have clustered 12 major quakes along the Pamir-Baikol seismic belt in East Asia.

Subsequent phases were stated to have migrated clockwise: to the northeastern Tibetan Plateau (1920-1934), its southeastern edge (1946-1957), Yunnan and north China (1970-1976), and the Bayan Har block on the eastern Tibetan Plateau (2001-2015).

And the current phase, the sixth, centres on the Bayan Har block’s periphery, with researchers cautioning that stress fields may now pivot northeast, increasing the risk in Sichuan, Yunnan and the Himalayan front.

“The region may currently be entering the nascent phase of a new seismic active period,” Zhu’s team was stated to have written.

The study was stated to highlight accumulating strain in locked segments of the Longmenshan Fault in “southwest China”, which includes Tibet and was the site of the 2008 Sichuan earthquake, as well as the Eastern Himalayan Syntaxis, where GPS measurements show India’s northward push accelerating.

The Myanmar quake was stated to have occurred during a transitional LOD phase, which happened to fall in one of the predicted high-risk areas due to heightened northeast-oriented stress.

Satellite data was stated to reveal a 500km-long (310-mile-long) rupture zone extending all the way south to Thailand, with thrust mechanisms consistent with these forces.

Striking just 280km (174 miles) from the Tibetan Plateau’s southeastern edge, the Myanmar earthquake has intensified scrutiny of Zhu’s findings, the report said.

However, China may rest its decision to continue with the Yarlung Tsangpo world’s biggest dam project with sceptics of Zhu and his team’s report. They have argued that global seismic activity in 2025 remains below historical averages.

“There’s no evidence Earth has entered a shaking mode,” Gao Mengtan, a senior researcher with the China Earthquake Administration, was quoted as having told China’s state media on Mar 31.

“Seismic activities this year are actually quieter than before,” he has maintained.

Meanwhile, the scmp.com report noted that the Myanmar disaster was followed by smaller tremors which rattled Tibet, Xinjiang (East Turkestan) and Guangdong the week before, unnerving residents.

‘Women of Tibet’ exhibition honours unsung characters of the Tibetan freedom struggle

30 April 2025, [Phayul](#), Tsering Dhundup



The Tibet Museum unveiled a special temporary exhibition titled ‘Women of Tibet’ at its facility in Gangchen Kyishong, Dharamshala, on Wednesday, honouring Tibetan women who have made significant contributions to the Tibetan cause.

TIBET IN EXILE

The exhibition, which coincides with the 25th anniversary of the Tibet Museum’s establishment, features notable deceased Tibetan women from 1951 to the present. It highlights patriotic women from both inside and outside Tibet who dedicated their lives to the Tibetan cause, including heroines of the resistance movement, educators, activists, and those who made significant contributions to Tibetan religion, culture, and the arts. A special emphasis is placed on the compassionate Tibetan woman, the Great Mother of Tibet, Diki Tsering—the mother of His Holiness the Dalai Lama—through a dedicated section featuring historical photographs and biographical information. “This temporary exhibition about Tibetan women is especially important,” said Tenzin Topdhen, Director of the Tibet Museum. “Thanks to the efforts of many women, including female warriors, patriotic women, and mothers, the exile government has been more organised compared to other exile governments. However, their contributions are not sufficiently visible in social media and promotional materials.”

Topdhen emphasised that the exhibition aims not only to honour the sacrifices of these women but also to inspire the younger generation of Tibetans to carry forward the struggle for Tibet with renewed vigour.

Chief Guest Rinchen Khando shared her personal perspective: “From my own life experience and as a woman, I believe that women play an important role in society through their confidence, courage, and ability to work hard. When I see how much courage elder Tibetan women have shown in times of need, I feel that my belief in them has not been misplaced.”

The ‘Women of Tibet’ exhibition will remain on display for two months, highlighting the vital roles Tibetan women have played in preserving their identity,

culture, and contributions to the freedom movement. Following this, the next temporary exhibition will focus on the legacy of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama and is set to be inaugurated on his 90th birthday, July 6.

The Tibet Museum was initially established in 1998 near the main gate of Tsuglagkhang (the Main Temple) in McLeod Ganj and was officially inaugurated by His Holiness the Dalai Lama on April 30, 2000. In December 2021, the museum relocated to its current location at Gangchen Kyishong, the headquarters of the Central Tibetan Administration, and was inaugurated by Sikyong (President) Penpa Tsering on February 9, 2022.

The museum, which operates under the Department of Information and International Relations of the Central Tibetan Administration, currently features permanent exhibitions on themes including Tibetan civilisation, history, the work of the 14th Dalai Lama, invasion, resistance, exile, refugee life, contemporary Tibet, environment, and Tibetan identity. The museum also organises temporary and travelling exhibitions throughout the year to raise international awareness about Tibet.

European Parliament Chairs Call for Independent Probe into Suspicious Death of Tulku Hungkar Dorje

30 April 2025, [CTA](#)



European Parliament Chairs Call for Independent Probe into Suspicious Death of Tulku Hungkar Dorje

The Chair of the European Parliament's Subcommittee on Human Rights, MEP Mounir Satouri, and the Chair of the Delegation for Relations with the People's Republic of China, MEP Engin Eroglu, have jointly addressed a letter to the Chinese Ambassador to the European Union concerning the suspicious death of prominent Tibetan Buddhist leader, Tulku Hungkar Dorje. In parallel, the Chair of the Subcommittee on Human Rights has sent a separate letter to the Vietnamese Ambassador to the EU, reflecting similar concerns.

Both letters express grave concern and alarm over the unexplained circumstances of Tulku Hungkar Dorje's

death and the subsequent cremation of his body in Vietnam without the consent of his family.

The Chairs call on both Chinese and Vietnamese authorities to ensure a transparent, independent, and impartial investigation to determine the circumstances of Tulku Hungkar Dorje's disappearance and the cause of his passing.

"While extending heartfelt gratitude to the Chairs of the Subcommittee on Human Rights and the Delegation for Relations with the People's Republic of China for their timely and principled communication on the suspicious death of Tulku Hungkar Dorje in Chinese custody in Vietnam, Representative Rigzin Genkhang also acknowledged sincere and productive discussions held with both Chairs in recent times. Tulku Hungkar Dorje was a respected spiritual leader whose suspicious passing and the unexplained circumstances surrounding his swift cremation in Vietnam has caused profound distress among Tibetans worldwide. In light of this, we continue to urge for a transparent and independent investigation. We deeply value the Chairs' engagement and encourage sustained international attention to ensure such troubling incidents are neither ignored nor repeated."

-Report filed by Office of Tibet, Brussels

Officiating Sikyong Dolma Gyari Meets with Delegation of Friedrich Naumann Foundation

30 April 2025, [CTA](#)

A delegation from the Friedrich Naumann Foundation (FNF) South Asia met with officiating Sikyong Dolma Gyari, Kalon (Minister) of the Department of Security, at the Kashag Secretariat and engaged in a meaningful discussion on governance and the Tibetan cause on 28 April 2025.

The delegation comprised Dr Carsten Klein, Regional Head of FNF South Asia; Veit Dengler, Co-Founder and Member of Parliament, The NEOS; Alena Fink-Trauschel MdL, Member of Baden-Württemberg's State Parliament; along with other members of FNF.

As part of their four-day visits in Dharamshala, the delegation also received an audience with His Holiness the Dalai Lama, followed by a series of meetings with Tibetan leadership at the Central Tibetan Administration. The visiting group further visited several prominent Tibetan institutions based in Dharamshala, including the Tibetan Children's Village, Monlam Tibetan IT Research Centre, Tibetan Medical and Astro Institute, Nechung Monastery, Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, The Tibet Museum, Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts, and Norbulingka Institute.

Representative Dr Namgyal Choedup Speaks on Voice for the Voiceless at JiFeng Bookstore

30 April 2025, [CTA](#)

The JiFeng bookstore in Washington DC became a gathering place for those interested in Tibet and the teachings of His Holiness the Dalai Lama on 24 April 2025. The intimate venue was filled as Representative Dr Namgyal Choedup took the stage to address His Holiness's latest publication, "Voice for the Voiceless". The bookstore owner, Yu Miao, extended a warm welcome to the Representative, and his colleague moderated the book talk.

Representative Dr Choedup began the address by sharing his personal journey as a background of a Tibetan born and raised in India. He recounted how his parents, like thousands of other Tibetans, fled Tibet in the aftermath of the Chinese occupation in 1959, seeking refuge in neighbouring India. He explained that under the leadership of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, he became a beacon of hope and courage during the darkest period in Tibetan history for many generations of Tibetans. He further explained the four commitments of His Holiness.

The Representative elaborated on how the Dalai Lama has been a beacon of hope and resilience for Tibetans during what he described as "the darkest chapter in Tibet's history." Despite the immense challenges of displacement and cultural destruction, His Holiness consistently inspired generations of Tibetans to maintain their cultural identity while embracing modern education and democratic values.

The representative further delved into the four principal commitments of His Holiness's lifelong mission: the promotion of human values such as compassion, forgiveness, tolerance, and contentment as the foundation for human happiness; the fostering of inter-religious harmony through dialogue and mutual respect; the preservation of Tibet's unique culture, language, and environment; and promotion of greater awareness and interest in the value of ancient Indian knowledge, particularly in the fields of mind science and emotional well-being.

The event attracted a diverse audience including many Chinese attendees, who listened attentively. The question-and-answer session addressed a range of topics, including the future of Sino-Tibetan relations to the possibility of His Holiness the Dalai Lama returning to Tibet. One Chinese audience member asked about cultural preservation in the face of modernisation, while another inquired about the succession of His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

In responses, Representative Dr Choedup addressed each question, emphasising that the Tibetan movement was not anti-Chinese but rather a peaceful

call for justice and mutual benefit for both countries. He underscored His Holiness's recommended consistent advocacy for dialogue and a middle-way approach as a mutually beneficial path to resolve the issue.

The evening concluded with attendees having the opportunity to engage briefly with Representative Dr Choedup. Many have left with not only a copy of "Voice for the Voiceless" but also a deeper understanding of Tibet's enduring struggle and the compassionate, non-violent vision of His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

Representative Thinlay Chukki Meets Czech Republic Officials in Prague & Strengthen Advocacy Ties

30 April 2025, [CTA](#)

A Tibetan delegation led by Representative Thinlay Chukki, alongside Tibet Brief 20/20 author Michael van Walt van Praag and UN Advocacy Officer Phuntsok Tobgyal from the Office of Tibet in Geneva, held a series of high-level meetings in Prague with officials from the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs and key policy institutions.

The delegation met with Barbora Cardona Ševčíková, Head of the International Organisations Unit; Dr Hana Brodská, UN Human Rights Agenda Coordinator; and Ivana Grollová from the Unit for Strategy and Analysis. Discussions centred on the upcoming events marking the 90th birthday of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, the deteriorating human rights situation in Tibet, and the erosion of religious freedom and cultural identity under current Chinese policies. The delegation called for greater international cooperation to address these urgent issues.

Later, the delegation met with Robert Řehák, Special Envoy for Holocaust Issues, Interfaith Dialogue, and Freedom of Religion. The conversation focused on the increasing surveillance of Tibetan Buddhist practitioners as well as broader religious and cultural repression in Tibet. The delegation urged enhanced international efforts to safeguard religious freedom and cultural heritage inside Tibet.

In the afternoon, the delegation met with Czech Senator Pavel Fischer—former director of STEM and current member of the Forum 2000 conference. Senator Fischer reaffirmed the Czech Republic's strong support for the Tibetan cause, referencing the nation's enduring commitment to human rights and democracy. The dialogue touched on China's repressive policies in Tibet, their global implications, and potential strategies for advancing Tibetan rights within a shifting geopolitical landscape.

Copies of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's latest book, Voice for the Voiceless, were presented to Czech

officials and parliamentarians as a gesture of gratitude and solidarity.

At 4:30 PM, the delegation met with Zdeněk Bečánek, Foreign Policy Advisor to the Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies of the Czech Republic. The discussion highlighted the upcoming World Parliamentarians' Convention on Tibet (WPCT) in Japan, stressing the critical role of parliamentary advocacy in the international campaign for justice, freedom, and dignity for the Tibetan people.



Representative Thinlay Chukki Meets Czech Republic Officials in Prague & Strengthen Advocacy Ties.

The Tibetan delegation expressed deep appreciation for the steadfast support from Czech officials and parliamentarians and reiterated their hope for continued collaboration to raise global awareness of the challenges facing Tibet.

Dalai Lama's 90th birthday sparks worldwide Compassion Campaign led by International Campaign for Tibet

29 April 2025, [ICT](#)

In celebration of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's 90th birthday, the International Campaign for Tibet (ICT) launched The Compassion Rising World Tour 2025—a sweeping global campaign to honor the Dalai Lama's life and efforts, while inspiring acts of compassion, spotlighting Tibet's enduring struggle for freedom, and uniting global communities around the Dalai Lama's message of peace and resilience.

"At its core, this campaign is about more than celebration—it's a movement to amplify the Dalai Lama's enduring message of compassion, wisdom, and peace, while shining a powerful spotlight on the hopes and resilience of the Tibetan people," said Tencho Gyatso, President of ICT. "Through Compassion Rising, we seek to build more connected communities and mobilize action worldwide, planting the seeds of a more compassionate and just planet."

The Compassion Rising World Tour 2025 will unite individuals and communities across cultures and continents who have been touched by the Dalai Lama's message, and this milestone birthday will be a catalyst for solidarity, deeper understanding of Tibet's vibrant heritage, and a collective commitment to compassion in action.

Campaign Highlights:

The World Tour will celebrate His Holiness's 90th birthday with Tibetan communities, friends and supporters around the globe, fostering cultural exchange and strengthening global empathy for Tibet's struggle.

Invites participants and/or organizers to contribute to a series of immersive "Tour Stops"—both in-person and virtual—that will bring His Holiness's teachings to life through events, concerts, community challenges, live-streamed gatherings, and real-world acts of compassion that drive change.

A dynamic digital platform, www.CompassionRising.com, will serve as the movement's anchor, celebrating the Dalai Lama's life's work, offering inspirational content, community resources, and interactive tools to encourage global participation and action.

Together, we will strive towards building a powerful international network of individuals and partners committed to justice, resilience, and peace.

Initial posts are live on Compassion Rising World Tour 2025 social media accounts on Youtube, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and BlueSky, links to handles can be found at www.CompassionRising.com.

About Compassion Rising

The Compassion Rising World Tour 2025 is a landmark global campaign supported by the International Campaign for Tibet. Designed to honor the 90th birthday of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, in the vision of Central Tibetan Administration's announcement of a "A year of Compassion" honoring the Dalai Lama's 90th birthday, it seeks to inspire acts of compassion, celebrate Tibetan culture, and broaden worldwide support for the Tibetan cause. Individuals and communities everywhere are invited to join the movement through immersive events, digital engagement, and acts of compassion. To learn more, explore partnership opportunities, or join the movement, visit www.CompassionRising.com or contact us at info@compassionrising.com.

About the International Campaign for Tibet

For more than 30 years, the International Campaign for Tibet has advanced the vision of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and supported the Tibetan people's peaceful struggle for human rights and democratic freedom. As the largest Tibet support group in the world, ICT works to preserve Tibet's ancient culture of wisdom and to promote lasting peace. Learn more at www.savetibet.org or contact press@savetibet.org.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama Congratulates Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney on His Party's General Election Victory

29 April 2025, [CTA](#)



His Holiness the Dalai Lama Congratulates Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney on His Party's General Election Victory

His Holiness the Dalai Lama has written to Mark Carney, Prime Minister of Canada to congratulate him on his party's victory in the general election under his leadership.

"During my visits to Canada over the years," he wrote, "I have been deeply touched by the warmth of the friendship and affection that Canadians have shown me. I also take it as a great privilege to be an honorary Canadian citizen myself. I am an admirer of Canada, a multicultural society which enjoys a vibrant democracy."

"As I have mentioned to your predecessors, I would like to express my gratitude to the government and people of Canada for your continued support and assistance to the Tibetan people."

"I wish you every success in fulfilling the hopes and aspirations of the people of Canada and in contributing to global peace and stability."

His Holiness concluded by offering his prayers and good wishes

Sikyong Penpa Tsering Begins Month-long Official Visit to North America, Meets with RFA Leadership and Staff

29 April 2025, [CTA](#)

In the early hours of 26 April 2025 (IST), Sikyong Penpa Tsering of the Central Tibetan Administration departed on a month-long official visit to three nations: the United States, Canada, and Japan. This significant diplomatic engagement comes at a critical juncture for the Tibetan cause, amidst evolving geopolitical dynamics and recent shifts in U.S. foreign assistance policies.

Upon his arrival in Washington, D.C. on the afternoon of 27 April 2025 (EDT), Sikyong was warmly received at the airport by Representative Namgyal Choedup and

Chinese Liaison Officer Tsultrim Gyatso from the Office of Tibet, Washington, D.C., along with representatives of the Tibetan Association and members of the local Tibetan community.



Sikyong with Damon Wilson, President of the National Endowment of Democracy.

Sikyong's visit to the U.S. takes on heightened importance in light of the new U.S. administration assuming office and ongoing deliberations concerning the allocation of foreign aid. In this context, Sikyong seeks to underscore that U.S. support for the Tibetan people should not be viewed merely through the lens of humanitarian assistance. Rather, the Tibetan issue is inherently linked to American strategic interests, particularly in the Indo-Pacific region, and is reflective of the values the United States upholds.

On 28 April, Sikyong met with Damon Wilson, President of the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), at the latter's office. Representative Namgyal Choedup accompanied Sikyong during the meeting. The discussion centred on the current political climate in Washington and the implications of administrative transitions on institutions like NED, which has long supported democratic initiatives and resilience programs in the Tibetan community.

Following this meeting, Sikyong met with Bay Fang, President and CEO of Radio Free Asia (RFA), along with Chief Communications Officer Rohit Mahajan and members of the RFA staff at their headquarters. RFA leadership conveyed their deep concerns regarding the possible imminent closure due to funding shortfalls. They underscored that the organisation may be forced to go dark within weeks if no remedial action is taken. Sikyong expressed his solidarity with RFA staff and promised to discuss about this in his forthcoming meetings on Capitol Hill.

Continuing his high level engagements, Sikyong met with U.S. Representative Young Kim, a steadfast supporter of the Tibetan cause. Congresswoman Kim has consistently championed human rights in Tibet, including introducing resolutions that condemn the Chinese Communist Party's repressive policies and ongoing violations of fundamental freedoms in Tibet.

During the meeting, Sikyong, accompanied by Representative Namgyal Choedup from the Office of Tibet and Tencho Gyatso from the International Campaign for Tibet, extended an invitation to Representative Kim to attend events marking the 90th birthday of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama.

Sikyong then provided an overview of the CTA's annual budget, with particular reference to the portion supported by U.S. funding. He highlighted the impact of recent financial reductions, noting that these cuts have directly affected several key resilience programs serving Tibetan communities in exile. He expressed concern that these reductions threaten the sustainability of essential initiatives aimed at preserving Tibetan identity and education.

To this, Representative Kim expressed her continued solidarity with the Tibetan people and reiterated her commitment to advocating for robust U.S. support for Tibetan programs and initiatives. Sikyong also emphasised the strategic significance of the Tibetan Plateau, particularly in the context of China's increasing militarisation and environmental exploitation of the region. He warned that China's weaponisation of Tibet's natural resources and geography poses long-term security risks not only to Asia but also to global stability. In response, Representative Young Kim acknowledged the concerns raised by Sikyong and assured the delegation that she is fully aware of the broader implications surrounding the situation in Tibet and the importance of sustaining U.S. support. She noted that she would look into possible ways to address the issues highlighted during the meeting and see what can be done to strengthen support for the Tibetan people.

The final official engagement of the day was a meeting with U.S. Senator Jacky Rosen, who has previously expressed support for the Tibetan people. Sikyong briefed Senator Rosen on recent developments, including his ongoing correspondence with Secretary of State Marco Rubio, a long-standing advocate for the Tibetan cause. He also offered an overview of the financial support extended by the U.S. to the CTA, to which Senator Rosen remarked on how the funding, though small in the context of the overall U.S. federal budget has had profound and far-reaching effects in sustaining Tibetan communities.

Senator Rosen commended the strong bipartisan consensus that Tibet has consistently enjoyed in the U.S. Congress and reaffirmed her commitment to continuing advocacy on Tibet-related issues. As a gesture of appreciation, Sikyong presented her with a signed copy of *Voice for the Voiceless*, the latest publication by His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama. Senator Rosen accepted the gift warmly, expressing her gratitude and noting, with a smile, that she now has a new book to accompany her on her next flight.

Delegation of Friedrich Naumann Foundation Visits Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile

29 April 2025, [CTA](#)

A delegation of Friedrich Naumann Foundation (FNF) South Asia, consisting of Dr Carsten Klein, regional head FNF South Asia; Veit Dengler, Co-Founder and member of Parliament, The NEOs; Alena Fink-Trauschel Mdl, Member in Baden-Wurttemberg's State Parliament; along with other key participants of FNF visited Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile earlier and met with the Dolma Tsering Teykhang, Deputy Speaker of TPiE; and MP Tsering Yangchen and MP Tenzin Jigdre from Political Section of the Standing Committee at Standing Committee's Hall on 28 April 2025.

A video titled "Democracy: A gift of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to the Tibetan people" was screened. This was followed by a welcome address from the Deputy Speaker, wherein she briefed them on the critical situation of Tibet, including its environmental condition considering Tibet's fragile ecosystem, and on the condition of Tibetans in Tibet under the repressive policies of the CCP's government. She highlighted the threat faced by Tibet as a nation and Tibetans as a nation under China's occupation, with policies targeted at Sinicising Tibet.

Furthermore, the Deputy Speaker explained the CCP's expansionist mentality and its attempt to claim Arunachal Pradesh – a North-eastern state of India as well as other areas. She also explained why the world should see the Tibet matter as an international matter not as an internal matter claimed by China. Tibet, being the roof of the world and water tower of South Asia, serving millions of people from the downstream countries. Unchecked exploitation of Tibet's minerals and the construction of mega dams in Tibet cause destruction to Tibet's fragile ecosystem.

Deputy Speaker informed the gathering about China's targeting of Tibet's unique identity, culture and language by taking away millions of Tibetan children from their parents and sending them to the colonial-style boarding school. And about the self-immolation of 157 Tibetans from every sector of society in protest against the CCP's repressive policies since 2009.

MP Tsering Yangchen and MP Tenzin Jigdal extended gratitude to FNF for its long-standing partnership with CTA, especially with the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile and for facilitating many important delegations' visits to the seat of the Central Tibetan Administration.

After that, they were taken on a guided tour to the Tibetan Parliament hall.

-Report filed by Tibetan Parliamentary Secretariat

Bhutila Karpoche misses out in Canada's parliamentary seat from Taiaiaiko'n—Parkdale—High Park

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

Bhutila Karpoche protesting beside fellow Tibetans during Tibetan Uprising Day, March 10 protest in Canada. (Photo/Bhutila Karpoche X)

The first person of Tibetan origin to be elected to public office in North America, Bhutila Karpoche, the candidate of the Democratic Party for Taiaiaiko'n—Parkdale—High Park, has secured second-place in yesterday's Canadian parliamentary election.

Karpoche, who currently serves as the Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP) for Parkdale—High Park in the Ontario Legislative Assembly, was seeking to make history once again by becoming a Member of Parliament. In 2018, she made headlines as the first person of Tibetan origin to be elected to public office in North America when she won her seat in the provincial legislature.

The Taiaiaiko'n—Parkdale—High Park riding, previously known as Parkdale—High Park before boundary adjustments for the 2025 federal election, saw strong voter participation with a turnout of 69.14% – 63,618 of 92,011 registered electors casting their ballots.

Throughout her campaign, Karpoche received strong support from the Tibetan community in Toronto and prominent Tibetan artists and activists across North America. Parkdale—High Park is home to one of the largest Tibetan communities in Canada.



With 220 of 221 polls reporting, Karpoche garnered 14,665 votes, representing 23.05% of the total ballots cast. The riding was won by Liberal Party candidate Karim Bardeesy, who received 35,333 votes (55.54%), while Conservative Party candidate Wladyslaw Lizon finished third with 12,452 votes (19.57%).

During her provincial tenure as MPP, Karpoche proposed legislation to designate July as Tibetan Heritage Month, which became law in Ontario in September 2020. She also founded the Ontario

Parliament's Friends of Tibet initiative and hosts regular Tibet Day events.

Currently serving as the First Deputy Chair of the Ontario Legislative Assembly, Karpoche has been recognised for her advocacy on affordable housing, workers' rights, and public healthcare. Her accolades include being named Toronto's Best MPP by NOW Magazine readers and being listed as one of Canada's Top 25 Immigrants by Canadian Immigrant Magazine.

Summer Cultural Immersion Program Announced for Tibetans Enrolled in Non-Tibetan Schools in India & Nepal

29 April 2025, [CTA](#)

The Department of Religion and Culture (DRC), Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), Dharamshala is pleased to announce the Summer Language and Cultural Immersion Program exclusively for young Tibetans enrolled in non-Tibetan schools in India and Nepal at the College for Higher Tibetan Studies, Sarah. The program aims to build a bridge for this segment of Tibetan children to teach Tibetan language, culture, and make them closer to the larger Tibetan community.

Participants will gain a general understanding of their cultural heritage, tradition, community in exile and issues associated with Tibet. They will also experience and engage in the challenges and possibilities that confront the exile Tibetan community which is striving to preserve traditional cultural values and identity in the context of globalisation. The SCIP program will offer communication skills, Social Emotional and Ethical (SEE) Learning, Tibetan history, Buddhist philosophies and cultural immersion incorporated by field trips to enable first-hand experience.

A Unique Photo-Exhibition Highlights Some Interesting Aspects Of History Of Buddhism In Jammu And Kashmir

28 April 2025, [The Tibet Express](#), Vijay Kranti

The Historic Buddhist Site At Akhnoor Near Jammu Which Won International Attention Due To Visit Of H.H. Dalai Lama

In November 2011, the visit of His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Ambaran, a so far forgotten historic Buddhist site near Jammu's Akhnoor town, placed it on the international Buddhist map. Since then Ambaran has become an important tourist spot of Jammu region. The findings of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) during its excavation in 1999-2000 period have established that a Buddhist monastery thrived at this site over 2000 years ago and remained active for about 900 years. A photo-exhibition entitled "AMBARAN:

THE HISTORIC BUDDHIST CITADEL OF JAMMU & KASHMIR” by renowned Tibetologist and journalist-photographer Vijay Kranti, presenting high quality images of a wide assortment of the historic artifacts, excavated by the ASI from this site, is on a 40-day long show at the National Museum in New Delhi these days. Inaugurated this month on 2nd April, the exhibition will be on public display till 9th May, 2025. An interesting historical fact about Ambaran is that Buddhism was flourishing in this region of Jammu even a thousand years before it went to Ladakh and Tibet. Besides many archaeology and history enthusiasts and photography lovers, this exhibition is attracting the Tibetan community of Delhi also in a big way. The exhibition was inaugurated by Mr. Satish Sharma, Cabinet Minister in Jammu & Kashmir government and Ms. Meenakshi Lekhi, former Central Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Culture. Dr. B.R. Mani, archaeologist of national and international fame and Director General of National Museum was the host of this event. On the inauguration day special visitors included Mr. Wilson Chang the Counselor Taiwan, Mr. Jigme Jugney the Representatives of HH the Dalai Lama, Mr. Balbir Punj, famous journalist and former Raja Sabha MP.

This photo-exhibition, is a wholesome visual, historic and cultural presentation of the spirit of an excavation site, called ‘Ambaran’ (pron: ‘ambaa-raan’) by veteran photo-journalist Vijay Kranti. The artifacts, discovered by a team of Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) under the leadership of famous Indian archaeologist Dr. B.R. Mani during 1999-2000 period indicate that this site is over 2000 years old and has been an active and vibrant Buddhist monastery for about 900 years between 2nd century BC and 7th century AD. This show has been jointly organized by capital’s National Museum and ‘Centre for Himalayan Asia Studies and Engagement (CHASE)’, a think tank based in New Delhi. The exhibition is scheduled to be on public display between 2nd April and 9th May, 2025 at the Ajanta art gallery of the National Museum at Jan Path in New Delhi.

Ambaran is located at the right bank of river Chenab on the outskirts of famous Akhnoor town of J&K, about 30 km from Jammu. The Chenab, also known as ‘Chandra Bhaga’ and ‘Askini’ in earlier history, has been host to many learned saints and scholars along its banks. Archeologists believe that the Ambaran Buddhist establishment was an important link point for travellers between the ancient universities of Nalanda in the east and Taxila in the west.

The articles and constructions discovered in these excavations present a wide range of interesting items which include the base of a large Buddhist Stupa; a smaller Votive Stupa; meditation cells, larger rooms and house walls constructed with well baked and long lasting terracotta bricks of standardized sizes; a set of

copper, silver and gold caskets with some bone relics as well as jewelry made of pearls and semi-precious stones. Another range of terracotta pots and human figures not only reflect the quality of various skills but also the refined tastes of the contemporary population in their choice of dressing and hairstyles. Discovery of some iron nails and a range of coins in addition to the copper, silver and gold caskets also indicate the knowledge of metallurgy among populations of those times in this region.

According to Dr. Mani, who later served as the Additional Director General of ASI and is currently Director General at the National Museum, the coins — These coins, total 8 of them with 6 belonging to the Kushan rulers Soter Megas, Kanishka and Huvikshka, establish the period during which this monastic establishment was active. One coin belongs to period of Toramana, the Hun ruler. These coins are believed to have been in circulation in later period also.

Vijay Kranti, the photographer of this exhibition is a veteran journalist and photographer with family roots in Jammu and Kashmir. His five decade long photographic work on the Tibetan diaspora is acknowledged internationally as the largest one-man aesthetic documentation of Tibetan life and culture. His other areas of serious photographic interest include Himalayan Buddhism, Ladakh and J&K. Currently he is focused at promoting some such areas of Jammu and Kashmir which are not much talked about but hold great potential as popular tourist destinations.

It was on the persuasion of Kranti’s friend and Lok Sabha member (Late) Madan Sharma from Akhnoor that he undertook extensive photography at Ambaran site. It was after seeing Kranti’s photo exposition on Ambaran in 2011 that H.H. the Dalai Lama decided to visit Ambaran. Following his discussion with Dr. Mani about the archeological findings and significance of this site that Dalai Lama commented that further excavations and research on this area might encourage the historians to rewrite some chapters of history of Buddhism.

According to Vijay Kranti, since taking over responsibility as the Chief Minister of J&K, Mr. Omar Abdullah has placed special emphasis on promoting the rich cultural heritage of the State and its tourism. His team member in the Cabinet and son of (Late) Mr. Madan Sharma, Mr. Satish Sharma too is actively engaged with him in taking this cause ahead. His active involvement in this photo exhibition on Ambaran and Akhnoor is one of many such projects.

About Akhnoor Mr. Sharma says, “Akhnoor is blessed with five extra-ordinary cultural, historic, natural and technological specialties. These are: the Buddhist Monastic Site of Ambaran; the Akhnoor Fort; the Jia Pota Mandir which is also the Coronation site of Maharaja Gulab Singh ji; Akhnoor Railway Bridge

which is the highest in the world; and the majestic Chenab river which presents its most beautiful and peaceful facet at Akhnoor". It is J&K government's endeavor to place Akhnoor on the tourist map of J&K and India.

The area of Ambaran won attention of archaeologists first time in 1936 when Charles Fabri, an art critic and Indologist of Hungarian origin was appointed as Curator at the Lahore Museum. There he found some beautiful terracotta heads which lied undocumented in a forgotten corner. His curiosity to find the source of these heads took him to some places in Jammu & Kashmir which finally ended at Ambaran where he found some more similar heads and other artifacts of identical nature in some locally tilled fields. The next phase of archeological research at Ambaran started in 1999 when Dr. Mani, who was the Superintending Archeologist of ASI at Srinagar undertook a project of excavation at this site.

Office of Tibet, North America Participates in 18th Annual Roll Call of Nations Wreath Laying Ceremony by Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation

28 April 2025, [CTA](#)

On 24 April 2025, representatives from the Office of Tibet, North America, participated in the 18th Annual Roll Call of Nations Wreath Laying Ceremony organised by the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation based in Washington, D.C.

The event commemorates those who have suffered under communist regimes worldwide. During the event, Secretary Tsering Dolma and Chinese Liaison Officer Tsultrim Gyatso from the Office of Tibet, Washington, DC, offered flowers and a memorial prayer in solidarity with victims of communist regimes. Staff members from the International Campaign for Tibet also attended the ceremony.

Representatives of embassies from more than 17 countries, as well as the Tibetan representatives, representatives from the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office, and more than 40 organisations from various countries attended the ceremony.

Every mid-year in June, various embassies and organisations gather to commemorate victims of communism, celebrate victories for freedom, and work toward liberation from communist regimes worldwide. The foundation also presents awards to individuals who have made significant sacrifices for peace and freedom. This year, former award recipient Chen Guangcheng delivered a speech as the event's special guest.

Tibetans rally behind Bhutla Karpoché's bid to become Canadian MP

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

The Tibetan community in Toronto and prominent Tibetan artists and activists from across North America have united in support of Bhutla Karpoché, the Democratic Party (NDP) candidate for Taiaiaiko'n—Parkdale–High Park in today's Canadian federal election and become a Member of Canada's highest legislative body.

Karpoché, who currently serves as the Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP) for Parkdale–High Park in Toronto, is seeking to make history once again as she campaigns to become a Member of Parliament. In 2018, she became the first person of Tibetan origin to be elected to public office in North America when she won her seat in the Ontario Legislative Assembly.

Several influential figures in the Tibetan diaspora community have endorsed Karpoché and are encouraging Tibetans in Toronto to vote and volunteer for her campaign. The supporters include Loten Namling, a Tibetan singer, musical artist, entertainer, and cartoonist; Tenzin Kunsel, a USA-based Tibetan singer; Jigme Ugen, the first Tibetan refugee to be elected as a US labor union leader and a prominent activist; Shennpenn Khymgar, a Tibetan filmmaker and director; and Sonam Wangdue, a Tibetan comedian and actor.

"Representation matters. When Tibet is silenced on the world stage, Bhutla has used her leverage to highlight Tibet where policy and awareness matters," said Jigme Ugen. "Her political career defies China's suppression of Tibetan identity and sends a strong signal that Tibetan voices can and will shape global politics. This is resistance in its purest form."

Parkdale–High Park is home to one of the largest concentrations of Tibetans in Canada, and Karpoché has been a steadfast advocate for her community.



Bhutla at the Tibetan Women's Uprising Day on March 12, 2025 at the Parkdale Collegiate Institute (Photo/Tibetans for Bhutla)

During her first term as MPP, she proposed a bill to designate July as Tibetan Heritage Month, which became law in Ontario in September 2020. She also founded the Ontario Parliament's Friends of Tibet initiative in 2019 and hosts Tibet Day events to foster connections between community members and politicians. Additionally, Karpoche has developed internship programs specifically designed to cultivate political leadership skills among Tibetan youth.

Re-elected as MPP in 2022, Karpoche currently serves as the First Deputy Chair of the Ontario Legislative Assembly. She has been recognized for her advocacy on affordable housing, workers' rights, and public healthcare, earning accolades including Toronto's Best MPP by NOW Magazine readers and being named one of Canada's Top 25 Immigrants by Canadian Immigrant Magazine.

Holding degrees from the University of British Columbia and the University of Toronto, Karpoche is currently pursuing a PhD in public health policy at Toronto Metropolitan University.

Parliamentarians Dawa Tsering and Tsering Lhamo Visit Ravangla and Nearby Areas

28 April 2025, [CTA](#)

As part of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile's ongoing visitation program, parliamentarians Dawa Tsering and Tsering Lhamo continued their tour of the North East with a visit to Sikkim.

On 26 April 2025, the fifth day of their visitation program, the MPs travelled from Kalimpong to Sikkim. En route to Ravangla in South Sikkim, they made stops at Samdruptse and the Temi Tea Garden.

Upon reaching the Tibetan Settlement in Ravangla, the MPs were warmly welcomed by the Tibetan Settlement Officer, the Chair of the Local Tibetan Assembly, representatives from local organisations, and the general public. The MPs then paid their respects at several notable locations, including the Tathagata Tsal (Buddha Park), Bon Youndrung Kundrakling Monastery, and Men-Tse-Khang.

On 27 April, the parliamentarians visited several key places in the settlement, including the Thupten Dhargyaling Monastery, Sambhota Tibetan School, Local Tibetan Assembly, Tibetan Cooperative Society, Regional Tibetan Freedom Movement (BRDL), and the Health Care Centre.

They also visited Lelung Monastery and held a public talk at the settlement's hall. During their speeches, they provided an overview of the current situation faced by the Tibetan diaspora and the ongoing issues in Tibet, followed by a Q&A session with the audience.

The visit concluded with a visit to the Ralang Palchen Choeling Monastery before the MPs departed for Gangtok to continue their program.

-Report filed by Tibetan Parliamentary Secretariat

V-TAG Germany and V-TAG Switzerland in Collaboration with Tibethaus Germany Organises "Get to Know Tibet!" Event

28 April 2025, [CTA](#)

A unique cultural and educational event "Get to Know Tibet!" was held on 19 April 2025 at Tibethaus in Frankfurt, drawing visitors from Germany. Organised by V-TAG Germany and V-TAG Switzerland in collaboration with Tibethaus, the event offered an introduction to Tibet's culture, history, and current situation.

Running from 1 in the afternoon, the half-day program was open to the public with free admission, and it featured a combination of presentations, performances, and interactive discussions designed to engage both newcomers and longtime supporters of the Tibetan cause.

The event kicked off with a warm welcome from Thoesam Rinpoche, head of the Art and Culture of Department at Tibethaus and Sejee Phurtag followed by a cultural song performance by Passang Juliane Lhamo

In a series of presentations delivered in both English and German, speakers covered critical topics including "What's Happening in Tibet Right Now?" by Tenzin Khando, V-TAG coordinator Switzerland; "Religious Freedom in Tibet" by Passang Juliane Lhamo, V-TAG coordinator Germany; "The Dalai Lamas and Tibetan Politics" by Sejee Phurtag, V-TAG member, Switzerland; and "Central Tibetan Administration – Structure and Functioning" by Tenzin Yeshe, V-TAG member, Germany, providing an in-depth look at Tibet's current situation, religious freedoms, political history, and governance structure.

Attendees were also treated to additional cultural performances, including music and dance by performer Tashi Tsering, V-TAG member, Switzerland. The event concluded with an open discussion, encouraging audience members to reflect and share their thoughts.

Though modest in attendance, the event fulfilled its purpose of raising awareness about Tibet. It served as a platform for sincere expression and knowledge-sharing, reflecting the spirit of grassroots advocacy. The organizers hope this effort contributes to a growing understanding of and support for the Tibetan cause in Europe

-Report filed by Tibet Advocacy Section, DIIR, CTA

UK Representative Tsering Yangkey Attends 12th Annual Tibetan Flag Raising Ceremony in Milton Keynes

28 April 2025, [CTA](#)



UK Representative Tsering Yangkey Attends 12th Annual Tibetan Flag Raising Ceremony in Milton Keynes

On the afternoon of 27 April 2025, the Tibetan national flag was raised for the 12th consecutive year at the Nipponzan Myohoji Buddhist Temple in Milton Keynes, standing tall as a symbol of solidarity with the Tibetan people.

The ceremony began with a serene singing bowl meditation and prayer session inside the temple, led by Kunchok Nyima. His skilful performance on singing bowls of varying sizes set a contemplative and reverent tone for the gathering of around 50 local residents and Tibet supporters.

Following a blessing of the Tibetan flag by Sister Maruta of the Japanese Buddhist temple, Councillor Marie Bradburn, Mayor of Milton Keynes, joined Tsering Yangkey, Representative of His Holiness the Dalai Lama in the UK, to raise the Tibetan flag against the backdrop of the majestic temple. The Tibetan national anthem filled the air as the flag ascended, sung passionately by the Tibetans present.

In her maiden visit to Milton Keynes, Representative Tsering Yangkey expressed deep gratitude to the Mayor and attendees for their enduring support for Tibet. She spoke candidly about the worsening situation inside Tibet, spotlighting China's intensified transnational repression, exemplified by the suspicious death of Tulku Hungkar Dorje in Vietnam, and the harmful impacts of colonial boarding schools on Tibetan identity.

In a heartfelt address, Mayor Marie Bradburn shared her sorrow upon learning about the plight of Tibetan children in these colonial institutions. She affirmed that her presence at the event was a strong message of solidarity with freedom-loving people everywhere, especially those in Tibet.

Catherine Mostyn Scott, who played a pivotal role in initiating the flag-raising tradition in Milton Keynes,

delivered an emotional speech recalling the hardships faced by Tibetan refugees crossing the Himalayas into exile.

Adding to the poignancy of the event, local volunteer and key organiser, Indigo Sync, recited a powerful poem written just days earlier, evoking deep emotion among many in the audience. Singer Lee Bellingham, a regular feature at these gatherings, uplifted spirits with his heartfelt performance of a song dedicated to freedom.

Phuntsok Norbu, Chairperson of the Tibetan Community in Britain, thanked the participants for their enduring support. He also read excerpts from the statement issued by Tashi Lhunpo Monastery on 25 April 2025, marking the 36th birthday of Tibet's Panchen Lama.

As in previous years, the ceremony concluded with the popular Tibet flag run, with participants proudly carrying Tibetan flags through the local area. The event once again reaffirmed the community's unwavering commitment to the Tibetan cause and the hope for a free Tibet.

The story of one of Buddhism's most revered figures, long missing, explained

25 April 2025, [RFA](#), Tenzin Dickyi and Tenzin Pema

Taken by China 30 years ago, the Panchen Lama's abduction underscores Beijing's bid to interfere in the succession of the Dalai Lama, who turns 90 this year.



Members of the Tibetan Women's Association hold portraits of the 11th Panchen Lama, Gendhun Choekyi Nyima, as they participate in a protest demanding his release, in New Delhi, India, Wednesday, May, 17, 2023. ((Altaf Qadri/AP))

The young boy who was abducted as a 6-year-old turned 36 on Friday

What he does, where he lives or even if he's still alive isn't known, thanks to the reticence of the Chinese government, which kidnapped him along with his family and his teacher 30 years ago.

Beijing leaders, ever wary of potential rivals for the Communist Party's authority, viewed the boy, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, as a possible threat.

Days earlier the Dalai Lama had named him the 11th reincarnation of the Panchen Lama, the second-highest spiritual leader in the largest sect of Tibetan Buddhism.

Tibetans have long marked his birthday with celebrations held in absentia, and reiterated long-standing requests to Beijing to reveal Gedhun Choekyi Nyima's fate.

The Panchen Lama's abduction illustrates the sensitivity of Chinese authorities to other prominent religious figures amid their effort to control Tibetans by suppressing expressions of their Buddhist faith.

The fight over the 11th Panchen Lama is seen as a likely precursor to the battle over who will succeed the 14th Dalai Lama, who turns 90 this year.

China, always wary of opposition to its authority, particularly in the restive Tibetan region, says it can appoint the successor under Chinese law. But the Dalai Lama said, in a new book, that his reincarnation will be born in the "free world," which he described as outside China.

Tibetan Buddhists believe the Dalai Lama and Panchen Lama are reincarnated when they die, and that they have the right to select the religious leaders based on their belief in the principle of rebirth.

Who is the Panchen Lama?

The word "Panchen" is based on a Sanskrit word for "Great Scholar." Traditionally the Panchen Lama has played a leading role in Tibetan Buddhist scholarship as the leader of the Tashi Lhunpo Monastery in Shigatse, the second largest city in Tibet, which has been controlled by China since 1951.

Buddhists believe that the Dalai Lama is a physical representation of Avalokiteshvara, the Buddha of compassion, and the Panchen Lama of Amitabha, the Buddha of infinite light.

The two lamas share a special spiritual relationship, with each recognizing the other's successive reincarnations and serving as the other's teacher.

Tibetan Buddhists believe that the reincarnations of the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama are revealed through a series of tests as judged by prominent religious leaders.

The Panchen Lama's most important responsibility includes finding and recognizing the reincarnation of the Dalai Lama in the event of his passing, one reason why China wants a Panchen Lama under its control.

What happened to the Panchen Lama?

On May 14, 1995, the Dalai Lama recognized Gedhun Choekyi Nyima as the Panchen Lama, the 11th reincarnation of his predecessor, who passed away in 1989 at the Tashi Lhunpo Monastery in Shigatse.

This angered Chinese authorities, who rejected the choice.

Three days later the boy, his family and his teacher were abducted. They have been missing ever since.

For 30 years, Tibetans, global leaders, and rights groups have called on the Chinese government to reveal their whereabouts, to no avail.

Who is the Beijing-appointed Panchen Lama?

Shortly after the abduction of the Dalai Lama-appointed Panchen Lama, Beijing installed another boy, Gyaltzen (in Chinese, Gyaincain) Norbu, as their own candidate in his place.

However, the Chinese government-appointed Panchen Lama remains unpopular with Tibetans both in exile and at home and is perceived as a "political tool" for Beijing.

Ordinary Tibetans and monks in monasteries traditionally loyal to the Dalai Lama have been reluctant to acknowledge or receive him, and during his visits to Tibet, Beijing has in the past handed out small monetary incentives for people who receive his blessing.

Significance of the Panchen Lama's role

China's appointment of Gyaincain Norbu as Panchen Lama underscores Beijing's attempts to interfere in the selection of the reincarnation of the Dalai Lama, and gain control and legitimacy among Tibetans, both inside Tibet and in exile, say experts.

The move is also seen as China's attempts to acquire more influence over Buddhism not only inside occasionally restive Tibet but throughout the Himalayan region. Beijing has increasingly looked to leverage religion as a soft power diplomacy tool across various Buddhist nations in South and Southeast Asia. In 2007, the Chinese government decreed that China would begin overseeing the recognition of all reincarnate Tibetan lamas, or "Living Buddhas," including the next incarnation of the Dalai Lama, for which China plans to use its own Beijing-appointed Panchen Lama to sign off on.

Exile seat of Panchen Lama celebrates 36th birthday of disappeared Buddhist leader

25 April 2025, [Phayul](#), Tenzin Nyidon

In a solemn yet resolute observance, Tashi Lhunpo Monastery, in Bylakuppe Tibetan Settlement, South India, the spiritual and cultural seat of the Panchen Lama in exile, commemorated the 36th birthday of the 11th Panchen Lama, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, on Thursday while also continuing to demand his immediate release from Chinese custody.

In his keynote address, Zeekyab Rinpoche, the abbot of Tashi Lhunpo Monastery, delivered a powerful appeal to the United Nations and the global community, stating, "For thirty years, he has remained

the world's youngest political prisoner and a forcibly disappeared Tibetan spiritual leader. His fundamental rights and freedoms must be restored without delay."



Tashi in Bylakuppe Tibetan Settlement, South India, the spiritual and cultural seat of the Panchen Lama in exile, commemorated the 36th birthday of the 11th Panchen Lama, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima on Thursday (Photo/Tashi Lhunpo Monastery Facebook)

He urged the international community to increase pressure on the Chinese government for the release of Panchen Rinpoche, his parents, and all other unjustly imprisoned Tibetan political detainees. Rinpoche also condemned China's long-standing refusal to provide credible information about the Panchen Lama's whereabouts, denouncing its interference in Tibetan religious affairs. "For over three decades, the United Nations and governments worldwide have expressed grave concern over the Panchen Lama's fate. Numerous international human rights organizations have issued statements demanding clarity about his whereabouts and well-being. Yet, to this day, the Chinese authorities have failed to provide any credible information about him or his family," he said.

Meanwhile, in Dharamshala, the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) through its Department of Information and International Relations (DIIR) launched a month-long awareness campaign dedicated to the Panchen Lama's birthday and his 30-year disappearance. The initiative, beginning April 25 and concluding May 17—the date of his abduction in 1995—aims to intensify international attention on the case and mobilize support for transparency regarding his status.

The campaign kicked off with a public talk at the Tibet Museum titled "Legacy of the 10th Panchen Lama and the Circumstances Surrounding the Enforced Disappearance of the 11th Panchen Lama," delivered by Dr. Tsewang Topla, Senior Lecturer at Sarah College. The 11th Panchen Lama, Gendun Choekyi Nyima, revered as one of the eminent spiritual figures in Tibetan Buddhism, was officially recognised by His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama in 1995 when he was just six years old. However, shortly after his recognition, on May 17, 1995, the Chinese Communist Party forcefully abducted him and his family into state custody. Since then, the disappearance of the 11th Panchen Lama

has remained a grave concern for the Tibetan administration in exile, as well as various Tibetan advocacy groups and non-governmental organisations in exile, which have persistently campaigned for transparency regarding his health and current whereabouts.

European Parliament Calls for the Release of the 11th Panchen Lama

25 April 2025, [CTA](#)

On today's occasion of the 36th birthday of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, the 11th Panchen Lama of Tibet, members of the European Parliament have reiterated their unwavering support for his release and demanded that the Chinese government immediately disclose his whereabouts.



European Parliament Calls for the Release of the 11th Panchen Lama.

To mark the sombre anniversary, several MEPs publicly displayed solidarity by holding placards that read: "The 11th Panchen Lama turns 36 on 25 April 2025. But where is he? China is answerable to the world." The message, both powerful and poignant, echoes the growing international demand for transparency and justice. Additionally, the European Parliamentary Group for Tibet has tabled a written question to the High Representative on the Panchen Lama.

While birthdays are typically a time of joy and celebration with loved ones, the 11th Panchen Lama has been denied this fundamental right. Abducted by Chinese authorities in 1995 at the age of six, just 3 days after being recognised by His Holiness the Dalai Lama, he has not been seen since. His enforced disappearance remains one of the most troubling cases of religious and cultural repression in modern times.

The Panchen Lama's case is a stark reminder of China's ongoing suppression of Tibetan identity, religion, and culture. Despite being a member of the United Nations and a signatory to key international treaties, including the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), China has failed to uphold its obligations. The Convention guarantees every child the right to

enjoy civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights. These rights were stripped from the Panchen Lama, and continue to be denied to countless Tibetan children inside Tibet.

Selected in accordance with ancient Tibetan Buddhist traditions, the 11th Panchen Lama is a vital spiritual figure, and his disappearance represents a grave violation of religious freedom, human rights, and the principles of freedom of thought, conscience, and belief.

Members of the European Parliament join international voices in urging the Chinese government to end this decades-long silence. It is time for China to reveal the truth and allow the world to know the fate of Tibet's Stolen Child.

-Report filed by Office of Tibet, Brussels

Tibet Fund launches Peppa Pig series dubbed in Tibetan language

25 April 2025, [Phayul](#), Tenzin Nyidon

In a move to preserve and promote the Tibetan language and culture among younger generations, the New York-based non-profit organisation, the Tibet Fund, launched the Tibetan-dubbed version of the popular British animated children's series, Peppa Pig, on Wednesday. The initiative saw the release of 104 episodes, encompassing the first two seasons of the beloved cartoon.

The launch coincided with Lhakar (White Wednesday), a day of cultural significance for Tibetans dedicated to honoring their language, culture, and identity. This year's Lhakar holds added importance as it marks the 90th birthday of exiled spiritual leader His Holiness the Dalai Lama. The Tibet Fund stated that these animated videos serve as "an offering to honour His Holiness' visionary leadership of the Tibetan people and his commitment to preserving Tibetan language and culture."

Speaking with [Phayul](#), Tenzin Chodon, the Small Grants Officer at the Tibet Fund, highlighted that Peppa Pig was specifically chosen due to its immense popularity among young children and its simple animation coupled with relatable family narratives. "Recognizing its appeal to children, the Tibet Fund initiated this project with the belief that this production will strengthen mother-tongue literacy by making age-appropriate Tibetan language content more accessible for young Tibetan children, which has been a top priority of our organisation," Chodon explained.

She further revealed that the project had been under discussion for years, with active work commencing in June of the previous year. The initiative involved a dedicated team of over 15 members, including four script translators, two script editors, one dubbing director, six voice actors, a project officer, and an advisor. Additionally, a team from a Mumbai-based

dubbing studio, comprising video editors, mixers, and sound engineers, contributed their expertise.

"This is another milestone in our efforts to expand access to excellent quality Tibetan language content for young learners. I hope these videos make learning Tibetan a playful, joyful experience for Tibetan children," said Bob Ankerson, President of The Tibet Fund. "We are grateful to be able to contribute to His Holiness' vision in a small way, and this Tibetan-language production of Peppa Pig is a heartfelt offering toward that vision. We hope Tibetan children and families will enjoy watching this as much as we enjoyed producing it," he further added.

CTA, Himachal Pradesh government hold meeting on renewal of Tibetan settlement land lease

25 April 2025, [Phayul](#), Tsering Dhundup

In a development addressing the longstanding concerns of Tibetan settlements in Himachal Pradesh, senior representatives from the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) met with Himachal state officials to discuss the renewal of land leases and lease rents for both revenue and forest lands occupied by Tibetan settlements on April 23 in Shimla.

This high-level meeting marks a crucial follow-up to Sikyong Penpa Tsering's recent visit to Shimla, where he engaged with state authorities on various issues affecting Tibetan communities. During his visit, Sikyong Tsering emphasised the challenges related to lease documentation and renewals and conveyed appreciation for the state's continued support.

Present at the meeting from the Himachal Pradesh government were Shri Prabodh Saxena, Chief Secretary of Himachal Pradesh; Shri Kamlesh Kumar Pant, Additional Chief Secretary (Forest); Shri Devesh Kumar, Principal Secretary (Urban Development); Shri Balwan Chand, Additional Secretary (Revenue); and other senior officials. Representing the Tibetan side were Palden Dhondup, Secretary of the CTA's Department of Home; Tsewang Phuntsok, Chief Representative Officer (CRO) of Shimla; newly appointed CRO Lhakpa Tsering; and Deputy Secretary Ngodup Waser.

The discussions primarily focused on lease renewals and proposed lease rents for settlements situated on both revenue and forest lands. Secretary Palden Dhondup, speaking to [Phayul](#), revealed that one of the key topics was the lease renewal of Dalhousie Phuntsokling settlement, which falls under urban development. The department had proposed a lease rent of ₹1.89 crore for a 10-year period. Another case discussed was the Sangye Choeling Tibetan residential area, with a proposed lease rent of around ₹40 lakh.

In response to these proposed rates, CTA representatives appealed for a reduction in the lease

rents. Following extensive deliberations, Chief Secretary Saxena directed officials from the concerned departments to submit the relevant proposals and agreed to forward the cases to the state Cabinet.

The talks also extended to other Tibetan settlements across the state, including those in Kangra, Mandi, and Sirmour districts, where similar land and lease concerns persist.

The issue of land lease renewals has long been a source of uncertainty for Tibetan refugee communities residing in Himachal Pradesh. Over the years, several efforts have been undertaken to resolve these matters through sustained dialogue between the CTA and state authorities. This recent engagement signals a continued commitment from both sides to find a fair and sustainable solution for Tibetan refugee community.

Tibet Support Group: The circumstances of the death of a high Tibetan religious leader need a transparent investigation

25 April 2025, [CTA](#)

The Tibet Support Group of the Riigikogu (Parliament of Estonia) expresses concern over the arrest and death of a Tibetan high religious leader.

[Press Release](#)

“We are deeply concerned about the reports of the arrest of high Tibetan religious leader Tulku Rigzin Hungkar Dorje on 25 March 2025 at a hotel in Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon) during a joint operation involving Vietnamese police and Chinese agents, and the subsequent announcement of his death by his monastery Lung Ngon on 3 April 2025,” the Support Group writes in a joint statement.

The Support Group points to reports which indicate that a group of officials from the United Front Work Department of the Communist Party of China, the Religious Affairs Bureau of Gade County Government, the National Security Bureau of Golok Prefecture government and the Intelligence Department of Qinghai Province arrived in Vietnam on the morning of 5 April.

According to the information available to the Tibet Support Group of the Riigikogu, in August 2024, the authorities of the communist People’s Republic of China conducted an interrogation of high Tibetan religious leader Tulku Rigzin Hungkar Dorje, allegedly in connection with the failure of religious leader Hungkar Dorje to provide a sufficiently warm welcome to the (internationally unrecognised) Panchen Lama appointed by the Chinese government, and Hungkar Dorje’s commitment and work to preserve Tibetan religion, culture and language through local schools that are independent of the state authority.

The Support Group’s concerns are compounded by conflicting accounts of the circumstances surrounding the death of the religious leader, including the facts that the initial cause of death of Tulku Rigzin Hungkar Dorje according to the Vietnamese authorities was a heart attack, and that the Chinese authorities briefly showed Tulku Rigzin Hungkar Dorje’s death certificate to Lung Ngon Monastery in Tibet, but did not allow the monastery to retain or make copies of the documents. “We emphasise the obligation of states to take responsibility in cases of death in custody and stress that a failure to conduct a thorough and impartial investigation constitutes a violation of the right to life. The right to life is one of the fundamental human rights and is guaranteed in all universal international human rights instruments,” the Support Group underlines in its statement.

“We call upon the international community to urge the Vietnamese Government to uphold its international legal obligations and ensure a credible and transparent investigation of this deeply concerning case.”

The Tibet Support Group of the Riigikogu is chaired by Juku-Kalle Raid; members of the group are Annely Akkermann, Anti Allas, Ester Karuse, Ando Kiviberg, Eerik-Niiles Kross, Leo Kunas, Hanah Lahe, Tõnis Lukas, Evelin Poolamets, Anti Poolamets, Henn Põlluaas, Marek Reinaas, Urmas Reinsalu, Riina Sikkut, Kalev Stoicescu, Tarmo Tamm, Toomas Uibo, Kristo Enn Vaga and Jaak Valge.

Parliamentary Committee Convenes to Compile Speeches by His Holiness on Democracy to Update a book on the Evolution of Tibetan Democracy in Exile

24 April 2025, [CTA](#)



Parliamentary Committee Convenes to Compile Speeches by His Holiness on Democracy to Update a book on the Evolution of Tibetan Democracy in Exile

As per the official resolution, Document No. 58, passed in the 9th Session by the 17th Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile, a three-member committee was formed to compile the speeches of His Holiness the

Dalai Lama on democracy and the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile. The committee also needs to update the existing book detailing the evolution of Tibetan democracy in exile.

The committee officially commenced its work this afternoon, following a consultation with Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel and Deputy Speaker Dolma Tsering Teykhang.

The members of the committee are parliamentarians Lhagyari Namgyal Dolkar, Geshe Atong Rinchen Gyaltsen, and Tenzin Jigdal. The committee is scheduled to submit its report to the Parliamentary Secretariat prior to the commencement of the 10th session of the 17th Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile.

Tibetan Scholarship Program Preliminary Selection Process Concluded Successfully

24 April 2025, [CTA](#)



Tibetan Scholarship Program (TSP) Preliminary Selection Process Concluded Successfully.

The Department of Education, Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), has successfully conducted the preliminary selection process for the Tibetan Scholarship Program (TSP) 2026. On 23 April 2025, the General Written Test in Tibetan (GWTT) and the TOEFL ITP (Institutional Testing Program) examinations were conducted simultaneously in Delhi and Bangalore.

A total of 79 candidates (44 male and 35 female) were deemed eligible for the preliminary round. Of these, 65 appeared for the tests, while 14 withdrew from the process. The top 30 candidates will be shortlisted to advance to the final interview round.

The interview phase is scheduled to take place on 20–21 May 2025, at the Department of Education headquarters in Dharamshala. Following this stage, six finalists from India and Nepal will be selected to pursue higher education in the United States in 2026. The Tibetan Scholarship Program is regarded as one of the most prestigious educational opportunities available to Tibetans in exile, and has a legacy spanning over three decades. It has produced a

diverse group of graduates who went on to contribute meaningfully within the Central Tibetan Administration and other Tibetan institutions.

The TSP is funded by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) and administered by The Tibet Fund (TTF) under a cooperative agreement. The program is implemented in partnership with the CTA's Department of Education and the Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi, India.

Tibetans in Dharamshala join rally, observe day-long market shutdown in solidarity with Pahalgam terror victims

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



Tibetan shops in McLeod Ganj remained shut on Thursday in solidarity with the victims of the Pahalgam terror attack (Phayul photo)

Tibetans joined a rally in McLeod Ganj alongside local Indians today condemning the recent terror attack in Pahalgam, Jammu & Kashmir and shut down their shops in the main market area for the entire day to express grief and solidarity for the victims who lost their lives.

The head of the exile Tibetan polity President Penpa Tsering of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) conveyed his condolences on X (formerly Twitter), stating, "We are deeply saddened by the recent terrorist attack in Kashmir. On behalf of the Central Tibetan Administration, we extend our heartfelt condolences to the victims and their families. We pray for the swift and full recovery of those injured. Our thoughts and prayers are with the people and Government of India during this difficult time."

Echoing the sentiment, Tibetan parliamentarian Tenzin Jigdal also expressed his condemnation of the attack on X, "My deepest condolences to the families of all the victims in Pahalgam. It was a heinous act of terrorism, and I strongly condemn it. Standing in solidarity with our Indian brothers and sisters. #Tibet stands with #India."

The attack, which took place on April 22 in Baisaran Valley near Pahalgam, claimed the lives of at least 26 civilians, marking one of the deadliest assaults on Indian soil since the 2008 Mumbai attacks

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi condemned the attack as a “heinous act,” vowing that justice would be served. In response, India took a series of retaliatory diplomatic measures, including downgrading ties with Pakistan, recalling defense staff, reducing embassy personnel, suspending the Indus Waters Treaty, and closing the Wagah border—the only land crossing between the two countries.

Sikyong Penpa Tsering Participates in a Virtual Book Discussion Held by Foundation for Non-Violent Alternatives

24 April 2025, [CTA](#)



Sikyong Penpa Tsering Participates in a Virtual Book Discussion Held by Foundation for Non-Violent Alternatives

Sikyong Penpa Tsering on Wednesday, 23 April 2025, participated in an online book discussion on His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s recent book, *Voice for the Voiceless*, alongside Dr Thupten Jinpa, the editor of the book and chief English translator for His Holiness, and Shri Dilip Sinha, the former Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations in Geneva.

The discussion, organised by the Foundation for Non-Violent Alternatives, was chaired by Ambassador Dilip Sinha and was virtually attended by many Tibetans and Indians, as well as others.

In his keynote address, Sikyong reflected on the enduring vision of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, emphasising the policy of Middle Way Approach as a balanced response to Tibet’s historical and political reality. “When His Holiness says Middle Way, then you talk about polarities... one of the polarities is the historical status of Tibet as an independent state,” he said.

Sikyong then touched on Tibet’s complex historical ties with China, stating that “comparative studies of Tibetan history with that of Chinese history” reveal Tibet has “never been considered part of China,” citing past relations with the Mongol, Ming, and Qing empires, and referencing modern international law.

Sikyong further added, “I’m always amazed at how His Holiness combines his spiritual thinking with the political objectives that he has set in this world, which very often we see a lot of contradictions. But His Holiness has always managed to seamlessly combine his spiritual thinking with the realities of today and then come up with solutions for not only Tibet but also for humanity as a whole. And going forward, of course, His Holiness prepared us from 1960 onwards.”

“And His Holiness is able to live up to his expectations as ordinary people leading the Tibetan movement. And I’m sure there will be leaders that will follow me. And I’m trying to set the right precedent to a more moralistic leadership as much as possible and keep the community together as much as possible,” Sikyong concluded.

Following that, Dr Thupten Jinpa offered deep and comprehensive insights into the book and His Holiness’ vision, drawing from his many years of close association with His Holiness.

ICT statement on the Panchen Lama’s 36th birthday

23 April 2025, [ICT](#)

April 25, 2025 marks the 36th birthday of the Panchen Lama, who has remained under continued detention by Chinese authorities since 1995, only for being recognized by the Dalai Lama as a prominent Tibetan Buddhist master. His situation concretely symbolizes China’s abuse of Tibetan religious freedom and tradition.

Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, the 11th Panchen Lama, was born in Chinese-occupied Tibet on April 25, 1989.

On May 17, 1995, three days after he was recognized by the Dalai Lama, at age 6, Chinese authorities kidnapped him and his parents. The Panchen Lama has not been seen since, a clear violation of China’s own constitution. Article 37 of the Chinese Constitution says, “Unlawful detention, or the unlawful deprivation or restriction of a citizen’s personal freedom by other means, is prohibited.” The International Campaign for Tibet reiterates its demands that China allow the Panchen Lama, who is an adult, to exercise this right and release him so that he can take his rightful place at the Tashi Lhunpo Monastery, the traditional home of the Panchen Lama.

ICT also calls on the governments and the international community, to press China to account for the Panchen Lama’s whereabouts and well-being. In particular, we urge Secretary of State Marco Rubio to act on his statement of March 3, 2025, to protect “the universal, fundamental, and inalienable human rights of Tibetans and promoting their distinct cultural, linguistic, and religious heritage.” We urge Secretary Rubio to directly raise the issue of the Panchen Lama with the Chinese Government.

After kidnapping the Panchen Lama, the atheist Chinese Communist Party selected another boy, Gyaltzen Norbu, as Panchen Lama. Today, Norbu is being made to serve Beijing as a mouthpiece and political agent.

The continued disappearance of the Panchen Lama is emblematic of China's repressive control of Tibet, which has led to executions, torture, imprisonment, the destruction of religious institutions, political indoctrination, the expulsion of monks and nuns from monasteries and nunneries, the banning of religious ceremonies, restrictions on the numbers of monks in monasteries and the extreme disruption of the religious practices of average Tibetans.

China's attitude toward the detained Panchen Lama clearly shows that its claim of respecting religious freedom in Tibet—a historically independent country that China has occupied and ruled with an iron fist for the past 60 years—is aimed solely at serving its political goal of controlling Tibetan Buddhism.

The Chinese authorities have realized that Tibetan Buddhism is the core of Tibetan identity, and the attempt is to alter this identity to comply with their CCP goals. Thus, Sinification serves to make Tibetan Buddhism conform to the CCP ideology and be an active agent of its promotion and implementation.

If the Chinese authorities really believe that everything is fine in Tibet today and the Tibetan people are happy living under Chinese rule, they should have the courage to free the Panchen Lama Gedhun Choekyi Nyima and let him return to his people.

Choerig Zinkyong's Jamyang Lophel Sunday School Celebrated 10th Annual Children's Cultural Activity in Brussels

23 April 2025, [CTA](#)

The Tibetan community in Belgium gathered in unity and celebration as Choerig Zinkyong's Jamyang Lophel Sunday School marked its 10th Annual Children's Cultural Activity in Brussels on 19 April 2025. With vibrant performances and moving speeches, the event served as a powerful tribute to Tibetan identity, education, and the collective strength of the diaspora. The evening was graced by Secretary Thinley Wangdue of the Office of Tibet, Brussels, who served as Chief Guest. In his address, Secretary Wangdue commended the teachers, students, and parents for their hard work and dedication to preserving Tibetan language and culture.

He also called on the community to rise above divisions. "Let us leave behind small regional issues," he urged. "Our strength lies in unity. To truly serve the Tibetan cause, we must walk forward together."

Reflecting on the theme of the cultural evening — "Thank You" — Secretary Wangdue reminded the audience of the lifelong contributions of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. "There is no greater champion of the Tibetan cause than His Holiness. If we are truly grateful, we must listen to his guidance and fulfil his aspirations for a united and compassionate Tibetan society."

Choerig Zinkyong runs six schools across Belgium, located in Antwerp, Brussels, Leuven, Ostende, Gent, and Brugge. These schools have over 500 students from Primary to 8th Class, supported by more than 400 engaged parents. They are run under the guidance of the Tibetan Cultural Centre and form the backbone of cultural preservation for Tibetans in exile.

The day-long program featured colourful performances by students, showcasing traditional Tibetan songs, dances, and plays, all reflecting the richness of Tibetan culture and the dedication of young Tibetans to their heritage.

Lhakpa Tsering, Education Officer of the Tibetan Cultural Centre, delivered an impactful message highlighting the essential role of education in safeguarding the Tibetan identity. "Our children are not just learning subjects — they are learning who they are," he said. "They are the torchbearers of the Tibetan cause. To ensure its survival, we need strong cooperation between parents, teachers, and schools." Following his address, School Director Jigme Denwa took the stage to deliver the official words of thanks. He extended his heartfelt appreciation to all participants, organisers, and supporters of the event. In particular, he offered special gratitude to Dzogchen Ranyak Patrul Rinpoche, who generously donated €6,000 in support of the school. "We are sincerely thankful for Rinpoche's ongoing support and belief in the importance of Tibetan education," Denwa said. "This generous contribution will greatly aid in the growth and success of our programs."

The 10th Annual Children's Cultural Evening not only celebrated Tibetan traditions and student talent but also reaffirmed the community's unwavering commitment to unity, education, and the vision of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. It was a heartfelt reminder that through shared purpose and cultural pride, the future of Tibet remains bright, even in exile.

Secretary Thinley Wangdue was accompanied by Tenzin Phuntsok, EU Advocacy Officer of the Office of Tibet in Brussels.

Dalai Lama condoles Pope's death, the two have never met

22 April 2025, [Tibetan Review](#)

The Dalai Lama has on Apr 21 expressed sadness over the death of Pope Francis, writing to The Most Reverend Leopoldo Girelli, The Apostolic Nuncio to

India and Nepal, the ambassador of the Holy See. The executive head of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) and the Speaker of the Tibetan Parliament in Exile too have offered their condolences, while the CTA held a prayer service for the departed soul. The Dalai Lama has met with several popes, but not Francis or his immediate predecessor, both of whom did not want to anger Beijing.

"His Holiness Pope Francis dedicated himself to the service of others," the Dalai Lama wrote, "consistently revealing by his own actions how to live a simple, but meaningful life. The best tribute we can pay to him is to be a warm-hearted person, serving others wherever and in whatever way we can."

He also wrote that a memorial service was being held by the Tibetan community at the Tsuglagkhang, the Main Tibetan Temple, in Dharamshala.

The memorial service was held on Apr 22 evening, attended by the CTA staff as well as the local Tibetan public and others.

"The late Pope truly embodied the dignity of his title, earning profound respect and admiration from people around the world," officiating Sikyong Ms Tharlam Dolma Changra, Kalon (Minister) of the CTA's Department of Education, has told the gathering.

In the passing of Pope Francis, Beijing loses a well-respected global leader who had pushed the Vatican closer to China's Communist Party leadership than any of his predecessors, noted [edition.cnn.com](#) Apr 22. Nevertheless, China expressed condolences on the Pope's passing only after being asked about it at a regular press conference, 24 hours later, the report noted. "In recent years, China and the Vatican have maintained constructive contact and engaged in beneficial exchanges. The Chinese side is willing to work together with the Vatican to promote the continued improvement of China-Vatican relations," Guo Jiakun, a spokesperson for the ministry, was quoted as telling reporters on Apr 22, while expressing condolences over the death of Pope Francis.

Also, the Chinese state-controlled media's coverage on his death has been terse, the report noted.

The Pope never met with the Dalai Lama who is despised by China as a separatist, even though he only seeks genuine autonomy for his Tibetan homeland as guaranteed by China's constitution.

The only occasion Pope Francis had of coming close to the Dalai Lama, in a manner of speaking, was in Dec 2024 when, as a representative of Tibetan Buddhists, Kyabje Kundeling Tatsak Rinpoche presented to him a copy of the Tibetan spiritual leader's book, *The Art of Happiness in a Troubled World*. Rinpoche made the presentation during a private meeting with the Pope while attending the World Interfaith Conference organised by the Sree Narayana Gurukulam Trust, in collaboration with the Italy-based Pontifical Council

for Inter-religious Dialogue, over Nov 29-30, 2024 in the Vatican.

The Dalai Lama had his first meeting with a Pope in 1973, with Pope Paul VI. He also had a number of meetings with Pope John Paul II, including in 1980, 1982 (in Rome), 1986 (at the interfaith prayer meeting in Assisi), 1988, and 1990s (in various interreligious contexts). He was the most engaged pope with interfaith dialogue, including with Buddhist leaders.

There have been no meetings with a pope since then. Pope Benedict XVI (2005–2013) though involved in interreligious dialogue, never met with the Dalai Lama. So also his successor, the late Pope Francis. Both did not want to strain relations with China, which strongly opposes any sort of official recognition of the Dalai Lama.

Pope Francis, in particular, started a new, controversial phase of relationship with Beijing, with a secret deal on the issue of the appointment of bishops in China. Catholicism is one of five state-recognized faiths in China, where religious practice is strictly controlled by the Communist Party, which asserts its supremacy over all aspects of life. By official count, there are about 6 million Catholics in China, but the number may be higher when counting those who practice at underground churches to avoid Beijing's watchful eye. Said the [edition.cnn.com](#) report.

Francis had repeatedly expressed a wish to make a trip to China, but only managed to be authorized to fly over Chinese airspace. This happened in 2014 when he visited South Korea. While in Chinese airspace, the Pope said in a radio message to President Xi Jinping: "Upon entering Chinese airspace, I extend my best wishes to your excellency and your fellow citizens, and I invoke divine blessings of peace and wellbeing upon the nation."

Addendum: It has since been pointed out that Pope Benedict XVI, who preceded the recently deceased Pope Francis, did meet the Dalai Lama. The one-time meeting took place on Oct 13, 2006, and was thus reported by the National Catholic Reporter on its website the next day: "The meeting did not appear in the list of the pope's appointments on Friday (Oct 13, 2006), nor was it mentioned in the news bulletins of the Vatican Information Service or Vatican Radio. No journalists were present, and there were no official photos. When reporters called the vice-director of the Vatican Press Office, Passionist Fr. Ciro Benedettini, they were told that it was a 'private meeting'."

The meeting was stated to have been kept "low-profile" in order to be sure that meetings with the pope did not become artificial exercises in seeking photo opportunities simply to keep the Tibetan cause in the news.

Arunachal: Deputy CM Inaugurates maiden Global Buddhist Conclave

22 April 2025, [Tibet Express](#), Tenzin Chokyi

In a first, the government of India has organised a two-day international Buddhist conclave in Arunachal Pradesh (AP), its bordering state with China-occupied Tibet, to highlight the spread and impact of Buddhism in India's northeastern region (NE) and to promote cultural exchange and dialogue.

According to the Public Intelligence Bureau of India, the "Two-Day international conclave on Buddha Dhamma and the culture of Northeast India" commenced yesterday at the Multipurpose Hall in Namsai, a district known for its deep-rooted Buddhist tradition, particularly the Theravada tradition in AP.

It is stated that the conclave, organised by the International Buddhist Confederation (IBC) in collaboration with India's Ministry of Culture, saw Chowna Mein, Deputy Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh, as the Chief Guest and Chau Zingnu Namchoom, MLA Namsai, as the Guest of Honour.

The conclave hosted sessions and talks on the historical and cultural relevance of Buddha Dhamma in NE and its heritage and diaspora influence. Representatives from Bhutan, Myanmar, and Cambodia are stated to have participated in the session with over 300 participants, including heads of sanghas, political representatives, professors and academicians from the Northeast and other regions.

According to Arunachal 24, Mein advocated for the creation of a Buddhist tourist circuit to leverage AP's spiritual wealth for cultural and economic growth. He highlighted the state's rich spiritual diversity by pointing to the strong presence of the Theravada tradition in Namsai district, the Mahayana Buddhist tradition and the historic Tawang monastery with its links to the 6th Dalai Lama of Tibet.

The International Buddhist conclave held at Namsai is the first of its kind in the state of Arunachal Pradesh and the whole of India's northeastern region. Previously, International Buddhist conclaves were hosted in Delhi, attracting monks and scholars from South and Southeast Asia.

In yet another unprecedented move, the Government of India has recently announced its first-ever school curriculum for Buddhist monasteries in the contested Himalayan region adjoining China-occupied Tibet. It is aimed at unifying education programs and fostering patriotism to insulate religious learning in the wake of China's growing encroachment and influence in the region.

Namsai, in AP, stands as a vibrant epicentre of Theravāda Buddhism in Northeast India, making it a symbolic and strategic choice for the maiden international Buddhist conclave in the region.

Buddhist spiritual leader on week-long visit, Karmapa debate rekindled

22 April 2025, [Telegraph India](#), Vivek Chhetri

Sources in the Karmapa Trinley camp said the highlights of the revered figure's visit to Kalimpong would be the white tara/amtayus puja, a tenshug (long-life offering) ceremony followed by the graduation ceremony of monks at the Diwakar Buddhist Academy in Kalimpong.

The 17th Gyalwa Karmapa Trinley Thaye Dorje reached Kalimpong from Delhi on Sunday for sacred ceremonies but his week-long visit has sparked a Karmapa-versus-Karmapa debate among Buddhist followers in Darjeeling hills.

The Karmapa lineage is the oldest reincarnating lineage in Tibetan Buddhism.

Sources in the Karmapa Trinley camp said the highlights of the revered figure's visit to Kalimpong would be the white tara/amtayus puja, a tenshug (long-life offering) ceremony followed by the graduation ceremony of monks at the Diwakar Buddhist Academy in Kalimpong.

"His Holiness will also bestow the long life empowerment (sacred wang) on April 27," said the source.

Karmapa Trinley's visit, however, has brought back the Karmapa versus Karmapa debate in Darjeeling as there is another claimant to the 17th Gyalwa Karmapa title. Karmapa is the head of the Kagyu school, one of the four main schools of Tibetan Buddhism. The other schools are Nyingma, Sakya and Gelug.

"His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, the spiritual leader of Tibetans, however, recognises Ogyen Trinley Dorje as the 17th Gyalwa Karmapa," said a follower of Karmapa Ogyen. Even the Chinese government recognises Karmapa Ogyen.

The first Karmapa, Dusum Khyenpa, was born in 1110. He was the first of the great Tibetan masters to establish an incarnating lineage.

Since his death in 1193, successive Karmapas have been incarnated.

The search for the reincarnate Karmapa is an elaborate process that includes deciphering signs left by the previous incarnate, visions received by some other high-ranking lamas and also observing the designated child over the years.

Karmapa Trinley and Karmapa Ogyen were both born in Tibet.

While Karmapa Trinley escaped from Tibet in 1994, Karmapa Ogyen escaped to India in 2000.

The 16th Karmapa Rangjung Rigpe Dorje, who passed away in the US in 1981, had set up the Rumtek monastery in Sikkim.

Tibetan Parliamentary Delegation to visit Tibetans in Sikkim and West Bengal

22 April 2025, [CTA](#)

As per the program of Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile, a delegation comprising of Parliamentarians Dawa Tsering and Tsering Lhamo are scheduled to visit Gangtok, Kalimpong, Ravangla, Salugara, Oodlabari, and Jaigoan from 21 April to 4 May 2025.

The MPs will depart from Dharamshala on 21 April and reach Bagdogra on the same day. On the next two days, they will have engagements in Jaigoan and Oodlabari, followed by programs in Kalimpong and Ravangla on the following days. From 28 April to 3 May, the MPs will have engagements in Gangtok and areas under the jurisdiction of TSO Gangtok. On 3 May, they will be visiting Salugara before leaving for Dharamshala.

-Report filed by Tibetan Parliamentary Secretariat

Sikyong Emphasises Resolving Tibet-China Conflict as Key Priority of Central Tibetan Administration During His Visit to Kamrao

22 April 2025, [CTA](#)

Sikyong Penpa Tsering arrived at the Kamrao Tibetan settlement on 20 April 2025, as part of his recent official visits, to a warm reception from community members led by the Tibetan Settlement Officer.

Sikyong began his official programmes in the settlement with a series of visits to key institutions and offices, including to Ga Kye Gu Monastery (Sa Ngor Tse Chen Samdrub Ling Monastery), auditorium of the Local Tibetan Assembly, Tibetan Primary Health Centre, and Himalayan Tibetan Public School.

Later that day, Sikyong convened the general Tibetan public to address on key issues concerning land leased by state government and initiatives of the 16th Kashag. Emphasising the sustainability of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) for the continued endurance of the Tibetan struggle, Sikyong highlighted the importance of maintaining a close connection between the Tibetan people and the administration to ensure this. At the same time, he expressed concerns over the dwindling populations in Tibetan settlements, which have led to a drastic reduction in school and monastic enrolments.

Hence, Sikyong spoke about the 16th Kashag's efforts to provide housing and land facilities to around 1,800 Tibetans who have recently come into exile and have no access to such resources, aiming to revitalise the community.

"Above all, seeking a resolution to the Tibet-China conflict through negotiation is our primary objective. To achieve this, the 16th Kashag is committed to

adhering to the Middle Way Approach, while maintaining our firm stand on the factual status of Tibet as an independent nation in the past," Sikyong added. "It is equally important that every Tibetan acquire knowledge about this and remain harmonious and united, despite differences in stands between Rangzen and Uma."

Sikyong also discussed the Resolve Tibet Act, which asserts that the Tibet-China dispute remains an unresolved international issue. He also mentioned the US Secretary of State's assurance of continued support for Tibet and the Tibetan people.

Sikyong Penpa Tsering Extends Condolences on the Passing of His Holiness Pope Francis

21 April 2025, [CTA](#)

Sikyong Penpa Tsering penned a letter upon the passing of His Holiness Pope Francis to extend deepest condolences to the Catholic Church and its faithful around the globe on behalf of the Central Tibetan Administration and Tibetans worldwide.

"In a world fractured by religious divisions, Pope Francis embodied the true spirit of compassion and universal brotherhood," Sikyong wrote. "His unwavering commitment to support the marginalised, speaking truth to power, and advocacy for environmental stewardship resonated deeply across various traditions, including Tibetan Buddhism."

Sikyong further highlighted the deep admiration His Holiness the Dalai Lama held for Pope Francis, especially in light of their shared dedication to environmental protection—an effort rooted in their profound understanding of humanity's interconnectedness.

"In these difficult times, we join in solidarity with the Catholic community worldwide in mourning this profound loss. May Pope Francis' vision of a more compassionate and just world continue to guide us all," Sikyong expressed in his message.

Dalai Lama in excellent health, renowned Indian surgeon confirms

21 April 2025, [Phayul](#), Tsering Dhundup

His Holiness the Dalai Lama is in excellent health, according to renowned Indian surgeon Dr. Pradeep Chowbey who visited the Tibetan Buddhist leader at his residence on Monday.

The spiritual leader, who turns 90 this July, remains mentally sharp and physically well, said Dr. Chowbey.

"He is absolutely fine. He is mentally absolutely sharp and physically fine," he stated after the meeting. "His ageing is very slow, which will give him a very long life."

Medically speaking, I think he has superb health – an absolutely healthy person.

Dr. Chowbey shares a unique connection with the 89 year old spiritual leader, having performed gallbladder surgery on him in 2008. The surgeon expressed profound gratitude for this relationship, noting how the encounter transformed his outlook on life.

“Since then, our life has changed after we came across him in terms of his spirituality and compassion. The whole mindset changed for us, for our family, and for our institution, Max Institute in Delhi,” Dr Chowbey reflected.

This positive health assessment follows knee replacement surgery at the Hospital for Special Surgery (HSS) in New York City in June 2024, followed by six weeks of recovery at Nappi Farmhouse in Syracuse, New York.’

In December last year, Dr Zorba Paster, a U.S. based physician and long-time member of the Dalai Lama’s medical team, also confirmed the leader’s good health. Writing in the Wisconsin State Journal, Dr Paster noted, “At 90 years old, he’s not as physically robust as he used to be, but his mind is sharp.”

The Tibetan leader, who will celebrate his 90th birthday in July, has expressed confidence in his longevity, stating on multiple occasions that “I may live 110 years.” His enduring vitality comes as welcome news to his global followers ahead of a series of major celebrations and long life prayer ceremonies to mark his 90th birthday. The Office of His Holiness has announced a schedule of five major events to be held between May and July at the Main Tibetan Temple (Tsuglagkhang) in McLeod Ganj, Dharamshala—the spiritual and administrative centre of the Tibetan exile community.

Sikyong Penpa Tsering Visits Kham Kathok Tibetan Settlement, Emphasises Preservation of Tibetan Culture and Language

21 April 2025, [CTA](#)

After his official engagements in Shimla, Sikyong Penpa Tsering commenced visitation programmes in Kham Kathok Tibetan Settlement in Sataun on 19 April 2025. Upon his arrival, Sikyong was warmly welcomed by Gyasho Kyaptul Rinpoche, Tibetan Settlement Officer (TSO) Ugyen Choedon, the President of the Local Tibetan Assembly, members of the Regional Tibetan Freedom Movement, and members of the local Tibetan community.

Following a visit to the Kathok Monastery, a public gathering was convened, during which Tibetan Settlement Officer (TSO) Ugyen Choedon presented a comprehensive report highlighting the history and ongoing projects of the Sataun settlement.



Sikyong Penpa Tsering addressing the Kham Kathok Tibetan Settlement in Sataun during his official visit.

As part of the program, young monks from the Kathok Monastery presented a vibrant performance of the eight-chapter Lingdro dance.

In his address, Sikyong Penpa Tsering acknowledged the relatively small size of the Kham Kathok settlement but emphasised the importance of internal unity, collaboration, and mutual support within the community. “Our generation exists because the older generation worked hard and contributed immensely,” while stating, “Whether the future exists or not depends on the current younger generation.”

Sikyong also emphasised the importance of understanding the current global political climate, particularly the situation inside Tibet. Sikyong reiterated the need to intensify efforts in providing Tibetan language education to exile Tibetan children in order to safeguard Tibet’s unique religious traditions, culture, and linguistic heritage—elements that remain under existential threat from the PRC’s persistent attempts to erase Tibetan identity.

Furthermore, Sikyong shared updates on a significant initiative spearheaded by the Department of Religion and Culture—the development of a digital library aimed at preserving and providing access to sacred monastic texts. This project reflects the Central Tibetan Administration’s ongoing commitment to ensuring that the spiritual and cultural treasures of Tibet remain accessible for future generations.

In light of efforts to resolve the longstanding Tibet-China conflict, Sikyong spoke about the U.S. legislation on Tibet that was passed last year. Sikyong explained to the gathering that the major differences between the two sides stem from disagreements over the historical status of Tibet, with China consistently repeating a distorted narrative of its sovereignty over Tibet. “This Act recognise the longstanding Tibet-China dispute as an unresolved international conflict and pushes China to engage in sincere negotiations with His Holiness, His representatives, or the democratically elected leaders of the Tibetan community.

‘Tibetan leader warns of cultural erasure, pushes Tibetan language education in exile

21 April 2025, [Indian Narrative](#)

The President of the Tibetan Government in exile, Sikyong Penpa Tsering began his visit to the Kham Kathok Tibetan Settlement in Sataun on April 19, 2025, following his official engagements in Shimla, according to a report by the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA).

A public meeting was held after a tour of the Kathok Monastery, where Tibetan Settlement Officer (TSO) Ugyen Choedon presented a detailed report outlining the history and current initiatives of the Sataun settlement, as stated in the CTA report.

While acknowledging the very small size of the Kham Kathok settlement, Sikyong Penpa Tsering emphasised the importance of unity and mutual support within the community. He was quoted in the CTA report as saying, “Our generation exists because the older generation worked hard and contributed immensely,” adding, “The younger generation now will determine whether the future exists or not.”

Sikyong also highlighted the need to understand global political trends, particularly those that impact the future of Tibet. He reiterated the urgency of preserving Tibet’s unique religious traditions, cultural identity, and linguistic heritage – all of which remain under existential threat from the People’s Republic of China.

According to the CTA report, he said it is necessary to “step up efforts to teach Tibetan language to Tibetan children living in exile.”

Additionally, Sikyong provided updates on a major initiative from the Department of Religion and Culture: the development of a digital library dedicated to preserving and providing access to sacred monastic manuscripts. The CTA report noted that the project reflects the Central Tibetan Administration’s continued commitment to ensuring Tibet’s spiritual and cultural legacy is protected for future generations. The Tibet-China conflict stems from the political status of Tibet and China’s rule over the region. Tibet, once an independent entity, was incorporated into China in 1951 following military occupation.

Since then, Tibetans – led by the Dalai Lama – have campaigned for greater autonomy and protection of their religious, cultural, and political rights.

China, however, considers Tibet an inseparable part of its territory, resulting in continued tensions and widespread concerns about cultural suppression.

UNPO Condemns the Death of Tibetan Monk Hungkar Rinpoche and Reaffirms Support for the Tibetan People’s Rights

18 April 2025, [UNPO](#)

On 28th March 2025, Tibetan monk Hungkar Rinpoche died in custody shortly after being detained in a coordinated operation involving Vietnamese authorities and Chinese agents. A highly respected spiritual leader, educator, and advocate for Tibetan cultural and religious preservation, Hungkar Rinpoche had sought refuge in Vietnam after growing harassment from Chinese authorities in Tibet. His death signals a dangerous intensification of transnational repression in the region, with Tibetan and Uyghur communities particularly targeted by the Chinese government’s efforts to silence dissent and dismantle cultural identity. UNPO is gravely concerned by these developments and calls for an immediate, independent investigation into the circumstances of Hungkar Rinpoche’s death. UNPO continues to work alongside Tibetan representatives and civil society partners to defend the rights of Tibetans to justice, dignity and self-determination.

UNPO strongly condemns the death of Tibetan monk Hungkar Rinpoche, a revered spiritual leader, educator, and advocate for the preservation of Tibetan culture and identity, who died in Chinese custody shortly after his detention in Vietnam. According to reports by the Central Tibetan Administration, the Lungnon Monastery in Tibet, and human rights organizations, Hungkar Rinpoche fled from Tibet to Vietnam in September 2024 to escape escalating harassment by Chinese authorities. On 25 March 2025, he was arrested from his hotel room in Ho Chi Minh City during a coordinated operation involving local Vietnamese police and Chinese agents. He was reportedly transferred to Chinese custody on March 28, where he died on the same day. This tragic event shows a clear increase of transnational repression, and grave human rights violations in the region, where states enable or permit foreign repression within their borders, endangering the lives of individuals who are fleeing persecution and systemic discrimination. The circumstances of his death demand an immediate, independent, and transparent investigation, as well as full accountability from both Vietnamese and Chinese authorities.

Hungkar Rinpoche was not only a revered spiritual leader but also a symbol of hope and resilience for the Tibetan people. Over the course of his life, he authored more than twenty books and tirelessly advocated for the preservation of the Tibetan language, Buddhist traditions, and cultural practices, emphasizing their vital role in maintaining the identity and resilience of the Tibetan community. Throughout his life, he remained deeply devoted to the service of others and

to the preservation of Tibetan traditions and cultural identity. In 2005, Tulku Hungkar Dorje founded the first Buddhist nunnery in the history of the Golog region, significantly advancing the role of women in Tibetan monastic life; he also established several educational institutions, including the Hungkar Dorje Ethnic Vocational High School and the Mayul Center of Studies, providing free education to Tibetan children from local nomadic families. Further demonstrating his deep dedication to the welfare of his people, Hungkar Rinpoche spearheaded numerous humanitarian initiatives through the Gesar Shenpen Foundation, which he founded in 2004. Through this foundation, he organized the free distribution of food, clothing, and medicine to thousands of Tibetans, including monks, nuns, and elderly individuals in need. Hungkar Rinpoche's life was a testament to the enduring strength of Tibetan cultural and spiritual values, and his passing represents an immeasurable loss not only for the Tibetan community but for all those who believe in the universal right to cultural preservation, religious freedom, and human dignity. His tireless commitment to the well-being of his community and to safeguarding its spiritual and cultural heritage made him a powerful source of inspiration, and, tragically, a target of political persecution, culminating in his suspicious and untimely death. His loss marks a troubling escalation in China's systematic efforts to silence influential Tibetan figures and erase Tibetan culture, and his case once again exposes the dire reality in Tibet, where the mere expression of cultural or religious identity can lead to harassment, persecution, and death.

The persecution of Tibetan monks by the Chinese government has deep historical, political, and cultural roots. In 1950, the Chinese army invaded Tibet, swiftly annexing the region and declaring the Tibetan government illegitimate. Tibet was subsequently divided, with parts of its territory incorporated into neighboring Chinese provinces. By 1964, the remaining area had been reorganized into what is now known as the Tibet Autonomous Region, officially designated as a special administrative province of China.

For the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), Tibet represents a crucial pillar of its vision of "national sovereignty" and territorial unity. From Beijing's standpoint, any expression of cultural or religious identity that fosters a sense of "separateness" or autonomy from central authority is seen as a direct challenge to its control.

Tibetan monasteries are not just places of worship; for centuries, they have served as centers of moral, cultural, and educational identity for the Tibetan people. Monks, as custodians of religious tradition and supporters of the Tibetan cause, embody an authority capable of inspiring sentiments of resistance and

autonomy. For this reason, the Chinese government views them as potentially subversive elements.

As part of a broader strategy of cultural assimilation, the Communist Party promotes the so-called "sinicization" of minorities, imposing Han Chinese culture as the dominant model. In this context, Tibetan Buddhism is systematically marginalized: monks are subjected to strict control, religious education is severely restricted, and monasteries are placed under intense surveillance, including the installation of cameras and the presence of government officials. Through arbitrary arrests, forced re-education campaigns, constant surveillance, and severe restrictions on religious freedom, the People's Republic of China seeks to sever the deep connection between the Tibetan people and their cultural and spiritual identity. In this sense, the persecution of Tibetan monks represents one of the most tragic chapters in Beijing's broader policy of forced assimilation toward its ethnic minorities.

Tibet has been a foundational member of UNPO since the organization's establishment in 1991. Over the past decades, the Tibetan people have faced profound challenges in their pursuit of political and cultural rights, encountering systemic restrictions on religious practice, cultural expression, and political freedom under Chinese administration. In this difficult context, UNPO continues to work tirelessly to defend the rights of the Tibetan people, collaborating with various civil society organizations and representatives. Within UNPO's membership, the Government of Tibet in Exile serves as the main organization officially representing the Tibetan cause at the General Assembly.

UNPO reaffirms its unwavering support for the Tibetan people's right to justice, dignity, and self-determination. An immediate and thorough clarification of the circumstances surrounding his death is imperative, along with full accountability from all parties involved.

Statement of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile on the Suspicious Death of Tulku Rigzin Hungkar Dorjee Rinpoche

18 April 2025, [CTA](#)

The Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile expresses deep sorrow over the untimely passing of Tulku Rigzin Hungkar Dorjee Rinpoche, the 56-year-old head of Lung-ngon Monastery in Gade County, Golog, Tibet, who tragically died while in Chinese custody in Vietnam in late March 2025.

Tulku Rigzin Hungkar Dorjee Rinpoche was reportedly subjected to interrogation and politically motivated accusations by Chinese authorities in Tibet in August 2024. These included alleged failure to organise a

[illegible]

Lharkyal Lama is a controversial figure in Nepal. A leader of the Maoist Centre Communist Party of Nepal, he was forced to resign shortly after being appointed a minister when his party came to power on an earlier occasion. He was also suspected to be the key person who tried to bring the Chinese government-appointed 11th Panchen Lama Gyaincain Norbu to a Chinese Buddhist conference in Nepal last year even after Kathmandu had decided not to issue him a visa.

The report also said that after viewing an exhibition on the reincarnation of Living Buddhas — including the Dalai Lama and Panchen Lama — at the Museum of Tibetan Culture at the China Tibetology Research Centre, Penh Vibol, a member of the Secretariat of the Supreme Sangha Council of Cambodia, said the visit helped him better understand the background of the reincarnation tradition in China.

Other visitors mentioned by the report included Phra Sophonvachirabhorn, assistant abbot of Wat Arun Ratchawararam in Thailand; Nguyen Van Tan, a member of the General Buddhist Association of Vietnam; and Mendbayar Demberel, an abbot from Mongolia.

“I’m glad to have the opportunity to visit it for the first time. There are so many worshippers here, which shows that Buddhism has been well promoted,” Nguyen was quoted as saying.

Dutch parliament passes resolution on Tibetan rights, Dalai Lama reincarnation despite China’s objections

16 April 2025, [Tibetan Review](#)

Despite strong criticisms from the Chinese embassy, the Dutch House of Representatives has passed a resolution on three motions on Tibet on Apr 15, which the exile Tibetan administration has called a significant development after a prolonged period.

This resolution underscores the Netherlands’ commitment to addressing human rights issues in Tibet, said the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) at Dharamshala, India, Apr 16.

On the first motion, the resolution accuses China of committing human rights violations on a frequent basis, in particular, subjecting religious and ethnic minorities (such as Uyghurs, Tibetans, Mongols and others) to discrimination, harassment, criminalisation, re-education and imprisonment.

On the second motion, the resolution calls on the Dutch Cabinet to push for an EU Special Representative for Tibet and a joint EU-Tibet strategy, along the lines of the US “Resolve Tibet Act” and to inform the lower chamber of the Dutch Parliament about this prior to the planned EU-China Summit.

And on the third motion, the resolution requests the Dutch cabinet to express opposition to China’s interference in the Dalai Lama reincarnation issue at bilateral and multilateral forums. Noting that any interference with Tibetans’ customs regarding their spiritual leader is undesirable, it urges the Dutch government to speak out that the Chinese Communist Party should not have a voice in the Dalai Lama’s succession.

The motions were stated to have been introduced by Jan Paternotte, Isa Kahraman, DG Boswijk, E Van der Burg, SRT Van Baarle, TMT van der Lee, DGM Cedar, Don Ceder, Chris Stoffer, Martin Oostenbrink and Joï NB and passed with overwhelming support.

Earlier, on Apr 11 night, following the tabling of the motions, the spokesperson of the Chinese Embassy in the Netherlands called them a gross interference in China’s internal affairs which openly support anti-China separatist forces.

Referring to the motions’ mention of “sensitive issues concerning Taiwan, Xinjiang, and Xizang,” the embassy said in a statement published on its official WeChat account, “We are strongly dissatisfied with and firmly oppose to these actions.”

The statement claimed that the 14th Dalai Lama is “a political exile engaged in separatist activities under the guise of religion”.

“He has absolutely no right to represent the people in Xizang,” China’s official globaltimes.cn Apr 12 quoted the statement as saying, using China’s Sinicized name for Tibet.

The statement sought to make it clear that “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.”

The spokesperson wanted the Dutch side to “bear in mind the overall interests of China-Netherlands relations, correct its erroneous statements and actions regarding Taiwan, Xinjiang, Xizang, and other related matters, and play a positive role in promoting our cooperation in various fields and the sound development of bilateral relations.”

Tibetan exile President Penpa Tsering invites Himachal CM for Dalai Lama’s 90th birthday

17 April 2025, [The Tribune](#)

A delegation of the Tibetan Government-in-Exile, led by Sikyong (President) of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) in exile, Penpa Tsering, called on Chief Minister Thakur Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu at the HP Secretariat on Thursday.

A delegation of the Tibetan Government-in-Exile, led by Sikyong (President) of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) in exile, Penpa Tsering, called on Chief Minister Thakur Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu at the HP Secretariat on Thursday.

The delegation apprised the Chief Minister that global celebrations to mark the 90th birthday of His Holiness the Dalai Lama will commence in July this year and will continue for one year. They extended an invitation to the Chief Minister to participate in this auspicious occasion. The delegation also discussed various issues concerning the Tibetan community with the Chief Minister.

Former Chief Secretary of Uttarakhand, Subhash Kumar and other senior officials of the Tibetan Government-in-Exile were also present on the occasion.

Meanwhile, in an exclusive interview with ANI, Penpa Tsering spoke at length about his visit to Shimla, his meeting with the Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh, and key concerns of the Tibetan community.

Tsering, who is currently touring Tibetan settlements across India, reiterated his commitment to keeping the Tibetan diaspora connected and united.

"During my campaign in the election four years ago, I promised the Tibetan people that I would visit them twice in four years. This is my second visit to Shimla," said Penpa Tsering, highlighting the importance of community outreach.

"Meeting the Tibetan community is very essential as His Holiness the Dalai Lama is going to turn 90 this year. He does not travel as much as he used to. One of our responsibilities is to keep the community together," he added.

Tsering noted that Tibetan settlements are spread across 10 Indian states and two Union Territories, as well as in Nepal, Bhutan, and 27 countries worldwide. The Central Tibetan Administration, he said, holds a moral responsibility to stay in touch with each of these communities.

While in Shimla, he met Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu and extended an official invitation for the Dalai Lama's 90th birthday celebrations, scheduled for July 6, 2025.

"The main reason for coming here to Shimla was to meet the Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh... The Chief Minister had come to Dharamshala to celebrate the 88th birthday of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. We have been living here for the past 64 years since His Holiness came to Dharamshala in May 1960, but there are still certain issues regarding land and other matters," Tsering told ANI.

He further elaborated that this year's celebrations would be themed around Karuna (compassion) and Ahimsa (non-violence)--values drawn from ancient Indian wisdom that the Dalai Lama has promoted globally.

"As His Holiness is going to turn 90 this year, I had come to discuss these issues and invite him for the birthday celebration, which will be observed as the year of compassion, Karuna and Ahimsa, values propagated by ancient India and now manifested through the message of His Holiness the Dalai Lama all around the world," he said.

On the question of the Dalai Lama's reincarnation, Tsering stated that a major religious conference would be held three days before the birthday celebrations, where senior Buddhist leaders will convene to reflect on a key 2011 document outlining the Dalai Lama's wishes.

"Just before the celebration of His Holiness' 90th birthday, we will be having a conference of religious leaders for three days... The only document available on the reincarnation of His Holiness is the 2011 statement, where he says that when he reaches the age of 90, he will consult the high lamas. During that meeting, His Holiness may make an announcement. He is the only one who will decide on his reincarnation," he said.

On geopolitical issues, Tsering touched upon the ongoing US-China trade war and its impact on Tibet's future.

"The trade war between the United States and China has escalated beyond what anyone imagined. We are small, but global politics affects us. China's economy is struggling, with unemployment, an ageing population, and over, overdependence on exports. The country could face political instability. These are things we are studying closely," he added.

He believes that any major political change in China could open opportunities for Tibetans in exile and insists on the need for policy readiness.

"We need experts to understand possible political scenarios in China. If a major shift happens, we should be prepared to act," he added. (ANI)

Samten Choedon sworn in as new member of 17th TPiE

16 April 2025, [Phayul](#), Tenzin Nyidon

Former member of parliament Samten Choedon was officially sworn in as the newest member of the 17th Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile (TPiE) from the Utsang constituency, on Wednesday following the resignation of fellow U-Tsang MP Dawa Phunki, who was elected as a Justice Commissioner during the ninth session of the 17th TPiE.



MP Samten Choedon taking the oath of office on April 16, 2025 (Photo/TPIE)

In accordance with Article 57, Clause 2 of the Charter of Tibetans in Exile, the Central Election Commission notified Samten Choedon—who was first on the waiting list from the 2021 parliamentary elections—to contact the Parliamentary Secretariat to initiate the oath-taking procedure.

The swearing-in ceremony was administered by Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel, Deputy Speaker Dolma Tsering, and members of the Standing Committee at the Parliament hall.

Hailing from the Bylakuppe Tibetan Settlement, Samten Choedon holds a Bachelor's degree in Commerce from Teresian College, Mysore, earned in 1992. She has over two decades of service to the Tibetan community across various administrative and advocacy roles. Her professional career began in 1993 as Assistant Accountant cum Secretary at the Finance Department's Bylakuppe branch. From 1995 to 1997, she served as an Auditor at the Office of the Auditor General under the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA). In 1998, she joined the Lugsung Samdupling Tibetan Cooperative Society as an accountant and later rose to become its Manager.

Choedon was a member of the Tibetan Women's Association (TWA) since 1990; she served as an executive member from 2003 to 2006 and was elected President from 2006 to 2009. In 2008, she contributed as chief accountant during the peace march from Dharamshala to Tibet, organized by five major Tibetan NGOs. She later served two consecutive terms (2009–2015) as Vice President of the Central TWA. She also served as a member of the 16th Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile.

Tortured for Telecoms in Tibet

15 April 2025, [CTA](#)

-By Human Rights Watch, 14 April 2025

Have you ever phoned or emailed someone in another country? A friend, a relative, or maybe a work colleague?

It seems almost a silly question. In today's hyperconnected world, where communications are incredibly inexpensive and easily available, these are things people do countless times a day without giving it a second thought.

If you're Tibetan, however, you have to think about it very carefully. For years, China's government has arrested people in Tibetan areas for politically motivated phone and internet-related offenses.

Contacting people outside China, even relatives, is just one action that can get you into trouble with authorities. Another is having images or text on your phone the government doesn't like – so-called “banned content.” Another is sharing material authorities frown on. It might even be just a funny video.

Such things – trivialities in much of the world – can lead to arrest, detention, and torture in Tibet under Chinese rule.

Tibetans have to keep these dangers in mind every time they touch their phone. This is because there, a mobile phone is essentially a government tracking device.

Now, people say this about mobile phones all over the world, and there's some truth in it, generally speaking. But in Tibet, surveillance through your cell phone is next level.

Authorities use mass phone searches, and everyone is required to install mandatory phone apps with built-in government surveillance.

The full scale of arrests and prosecutions for these telecoms-related “crimes” is unknown. Chinese authorities do not disclose official data for political offenses. A new HRW report found more than 60, but this is surely just the tip of the iceberg.

Some of the cases give you an idea of just how draconian the situation is, especially around the wildly broad definition of “banned content.”

In many cases, those arrested for “banned content” have possessed or shared nothing more than references to Tibetan religious figures, like the exiled spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama.

In one case, a man was arrested for setting up a WeChat group celebrating the birthdays of 80-year-old Buddhist monks. The police said it was “illegal” to form such a chat group “without permission.”

Chinese authorities are making a mockery of Tibetans' rights. They don't allow Tibetans to freely express themselves nor access information. They are even taking away Tibetans' basic right to stay in touch with their loved ones.

Global communications are expanding rapidly in most parts of the world. Being in touch with others has never been easier.

In China, things are heading in the opposite direction, as the government increasingly seeks to close off and control entire populations.

Tibetan Parliamentary Delegation Concludes Official Visit to Goa

14 April 2025, [CTA](#)

As part of the program of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile, parliamentarians Geshe Monlam Tharchin and Kunga Sotop successfully concluded their official visit to Goa.

On 10 April 2025, after successfully completing their program in Mundgod, they departed to Goa. Upon their arrival in Goa, they were welcomed by representatives of the Calangute and Baga Tibetan Traders Association – Tashi Rabten, Sonam Wangmo, and Nyima Tsering. They were briefed about the Goa program as arranged by the Chief Representative Office of the South Zone.

On the next day, they visited Goa University, where Professor Ganesh Sommaiya welcomed them. They proceeded to Professor Jonna Coelho's teaching section, where Professor Ganesh delivered a welcome speech emphasising the importance of raising awareness about the Tibet issue. Tsewang Chopel, a senior Tibetan resident in Goa, introduced the two parliamentarians and the Central Tibetan Administration. The parliamentarians then spoke about His Holiness the Dalai Lama's great deeds, the democratic framework of the Central Tibetan Administration, and the critical situation inside Tibet. They raised awareness about the Tibet issue and appealed to the new generation of Indians for their support. After Professor Jonna Coelho's thank-you speech, they visited her office for an in-depth discussion on Tibet-related matters and how to provide assistance to Tibetan residents in Goa. Professor Jonna is known to be highly knowledgeable about the Tibet issue and a strong supporter of the Tibetan cause. Tsewang Chopel and Tibetan Traders Association representatives Tashi Rabten and Sonam Wangmo also attended this meeting.

In the evening, they met with Tibetan traders from Calangute and Baga. Tsering Chopel presented a brief history of the Tibetan traders and delivered a welcome speech. The two parliamentarians introduced the critical situation inside Tibet and provided detailed guidance on how individual Tibetans should fulfill their responsibilities as Tibetan nationals, maintain harmonious relations with local residents, and preserve Tibetan religion and culture, all in accordance with His Holiness the Dalai Lama's advice to maintain good ethical conduct regardless of where Tibetans are scattered. Chopel then expressed gratitude and reported that, regardless of their small numbers, Tibetans living in Goa maintain internal harmony and conduct Tibet-related campaigns with humble and ethical behavior.

On 12 April 2025, the two parliamentarians arrived at the Tibetan market in Vasco, where they were welcomed by local Tibetan traders Karma Yeshe, Wangyal, and other Tibetan residents. After touring the market, they provided guidance on proper conduct and held in-depth discussions on Tibet-related issues, thus concluding their official tour program.

Tibetan youth activists held as they protested before New Delhi Chinese embassy over lama's sudden death

11 April 2025, [Tibetan Review](#)

Members of the Tibetan Youth Congress, the largest Tibetan NGO, have staged a protest in front of the Chinese embassy in New Delhi today over the explained sudden death in Chinese police custody in Vietnam of a prominent Tibetan religious leader from Golog, Qinghai province.

All but one of the 17 protesters were stated to have been held and taken away by police shortly after they collected before the embassy at 11 am with shouting of slogans.

Police in Delhi have generally released such detained Tibetans shortly afterwards in recent years, unlike in the past when they used to be put on trial.

The protesters have demanded that the international community put pressure on China and Vietnam to conduct globally acceptable tests to determine the cause of the religious leader's unexplained sudden death. They wanted the results of such tests to be publicly announced and the body of the lama handed over to his monastery.

They also wanted the Chinese authorities to allow the monastery to carry out proper traditional death rituals and ceremonies for the deceased lama.

Meanwhile, in Australia, the Australia Tibet Council has written to the Vietnamese Embassy in Canberra, seeking information on the circumstance of the lama's death and a credible investigation of the cause thereof, as also the handover of his remains to his monastery with urgency.

At McLeod Ganj in Dharamshala, the Tibetan Youth Congress, the Tibetan Women's Association, Students for a Free Tibet, and the National Democratic Party of Tibet decided to jointly carry out a candle-light march through the market later in the evening.

The religious leader, Tulku Hungkar (also written as Humkar) Dorje, was living in Vietnam since about Nov 2024 to escape Chinese persecution for his stupendous work in preserving Tibetan culture which was seen as inimical to China's Sinicization drive in Tibet. The Chinese government was stated to be especially incensed by his perceived snub of the Beijing-installed 11th Panchen Lama Gyaincain Norbu who is not accepted by mainstream Tibetan Buddhists.

Tulku Hungkar Dporje was stated to have been caught in a joint operation between Chinese intelligence officers and Vietnamese police from a hotel. He reportedly died on the day he was handed over into the custody of a Chinese police team from his homeland.

Parliamentary Delegation Concludes Visit to Mundgod

10 April 2025, [CTA](#)

As per the program of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile, a parliamentary delegation consisting of parliamentarians Geshe Monlam Tharchin and Kunga Sotop successfully concluded their periodic visit to Doeguling Tibetan Settlement in Mundgod.

Upon their arrival in Jangchup Choeling nunnery on 8 April, the MPs were warmly received by the nunnery's Khenpo and Chagzoe and briefed on the functioning of the nunnery as they paid their respect to the nunnery's shrine hall. Followed by a visit to Jian Rei Sek Ling Society with inspection of the school's various departments and paid their visit to the Sakya Tsechen Damchoe Ling and Nga-Gyur Nyingma Monastery respectively.

Thereafter, the MP paid their respects at Drepung Gaden Shartse Monastery and Drepung Jangtse Monastery respectively and visited the monastery's shrine and the deity statue blessed by His Holiness at Jangtse. They were warmly welcomed at these monasteries and presented with mementos.

In the afternoon, the MP visited Gaden monastery, and they were presented with a statue of Je Tsongkhapa as a token of gratitude. Thereafter, the MP addressed the gathering of monks in the monastery's hall and engaged in a Q&A session.

Followed by a visit to Shartse Monastery, where they observed students from elementary to fifth class taking their three-month calligraphy examinations, with the principal providing detailed explanations. The MPs were presented with examination papers, the Gaden Shartse school journals "Light of Wisdom" and "Light of Compassion," Primary Tibetan language textbooks, and drawing books. The TSO and LTA chair accompanied them on this visit.

The next day, on 9 April, the MPs held a public gathering at Mundgod Doeguling's main community hall. The settlement officer presented the settlement's annual report, followed by addresses from the two MPs and a Q&A session. BRDL's President presented a thank you note, concluding the event successfully.

In the evening, 26 governmental and non-governmental organisations of Mundgod Doeguling hosted a dinner in honour of the visiting MPs and presented them with mementos. The two MPs again advised the officials about fulfilling public

responsibilities, thus successfully completing their visit to Mundgod Doeguling.

US ambassador to China nominee pledges strong stand on Tibet at confirmation hearing

09 April 2025, [Phayul](#), Tsering Dundup



Former Sen. David Perdue of Georgia (Photo/Brynn Anderson/Associated Press)

During the confirmation hearing of David Perdue, nominee for US Ambassador to China, before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on Thursday, Tibet emerged as a focal point in discussions surrounding human rights in China. Perdue faced questions from senators about ongoing rights violations, with particular emphasis on Tibet, East Turkestan, Taiwan and Hong Kong.

Senator Jeff Merkley, known for his bipartisan work with Senator Marco Rubio on China-related legislation, drew attention to the long-standing abuses in Tibet. He highlighted legislative efforts such as the Uyghur Forced Labour Prevention Act and legislations related to Tibet and Hong Kong. Merkley pressed Perdue for his stance on the Act, emphasising its effectiveness in keeping goods produced with forced labour out of the US market. Perdue voiced strong support, pledging to uphold American values on human rights across all of China, including Tibet.

Perdue's commitment was welcomed by Merkley, who expressed hope that the incoming ambassador would prioritise human rights over commercial interests in dealings with Beijing. Perdue affirmed that he would act in the interest of the American people and emphasised the importance of working with democratic allies to present a unified front against Chinese disinformation and rights violations.

Senator Jacky Rosen brought Tibet into focus, warning of Beijing's aggressive policies on the Tibetan plateau. She condemned the People's Republic of China (PRC)'s repression of Tibet's religious and cultural heritage and highlighted the strategic dangers of China's weaponization of water resources. "Water is the key to

life,” Rosen said, adding that she had introduced language into the FY26 National Defence Authorisation Act (NDAA) to require a Pentagon analysis of China’s water policies in Tibet as a national security risk.

When asked if he would commit to safeguarding Tibet’s culture, security, and environmental resources from PRC aggression, Perdue responded, “Absolutely, Senator.” He invoked historical Chinese state-led disasters such as the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution to underline the severity of risks posed by large-scale state planning—warning that China’s actions in Tibet today could have similarly dire consequences for both the region and the global environment.

Senator Rosen also raised concerns about Chinese sabotage of undersea communication infrastructure, to which Perdue responded with a warning about China’s cyber capabilities and the urgent need to bolster US military readiness.

Throughout the hearing, Perdue positioned himself as a firm advocate for human rights and democratic values. He pledged to confront the Chinese Communist Party on issues including forced labour, religious suppression, cyber threats, and control over critical global infrastructure.

If confirmed, David Perdue will replace Nicholas Burns as the 14th US Ambassador to China. His nomination comes at a time of increasing tension between Washington and Beijing, with Tibet continuing to stand as a central issue in the broader conversation on human rights, regional stability, and environmental security.

David Perdue (born December 10, 1949, in Macon, Georgia) is an American business executive and politician. He served as a U.S. Senator from Georgia from 2015 to 2021. Before entering politics, Perdue held executive positions, including CEO of Reebok and Dollar General. In December 2024, President-elect Donald Trump nominated him as the United States ambassador to China.

Western intelligence agencies warn spyware threat targeting Taiwan, Tibetan rights advocates

08 April 2025, [KFGO](#), Thomson Reuters

Western intelligence agencies warned on Tuesday of an increasing threat from Beijing’s security services to use malicious mobile phone applications to surveil Taiwanese independence activists, Tibetan rights advocates and others opposed by the Chinese government.

An advisory issued late on Tuesday warned of “the growing threat” posed by malicious surveillance software deployed by a Chengdu-based contractor reported to have ties to China’s Ministry of Public

Security. The advisory was signed by cybersecurity agencies in Britain, the U.S., Canada, New Zealand, Australia and Germany.

Those most at risk include people connected to Taiwanese independence, Tibetan rights, Uyghur Muslims and other minorities in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, democracy advocates (including in Hong Kong) and the Falun Gong spiritual movement, according to Britain’s National Cyber Security Centre in the advisory.

The warning comes amid increasing tensions surrounding Taiwan, including April 1 Chinese military drills around the island and a March 28 visit to the Philippines by U.S. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth in which he reaffirmed Washington’s commitment to deterring Chinese aggression in the region.

The Chengdu-based contractor, Sichuan Dianke Network Security Technology Co., Ltd., was linked to the deployment of a pair of distinct malware packages. They were tracked as “BADBAZAAR” and “MOONSHINE” and used to ferret sensitive information from mobile devices while also giving operators remote access to devices’ cameras, microphones and location data, the advisory said.

The warning is for non-governmental organizations, journalists, businesses and other individuals who advocate for or represent the groups, the NCSC said in the advisory.

“The indiscriminate way this spyware is spread online also means there is a risk that infections could spread beyond intended victims,” it said.

Liu Pengyu, spokesperson for the Chinese Embassy in Washington, told Reuters that China “firmly opposes the smear attacks against China without any factual basis,” and that the tracing of cyberattacks is complex. “We hope that relevant parties will adopt a professional and responsible attitude when characterizing cyber incidents, basing their conclusions on sufficient evidence rather than unfounded speculation and accusations.”

The warnings build on previous cybersecurity industry reporting that detailed malware and infrastructure have been used by the contractor going back several years.

The advisory cited a January 29 report published by Intelligence Online, a news organization focused on international intelligence operations, linking the malware to the contractor. The report said the contractor has provided services to China’s Ministry of Public Security.

The FBI, NSA and intelligence agencies in Australia, Canada, Germany and New Zealand participated in the advisories, according to the NCSC.

The FBI declined to comment and the NSA did not respond to requests for comment.

Central Tibetan Administration Holds Press Conference to Address Suspicious Death of Tulku Hungkar Dorje

08 April 2025, [CTA](#)



Department of Information and International Relations Holds Press Conference to Address Suspicious Death of Tulku Hungkar Dorje

This afternoon, on 8 April 2025, in response to recent reports of the suspicious death of Tibetan religious figure Ven Tulku Hungkar Dorje, the Department of Information and International Relations, Central Tibetan Administration, held a press conference at Lhakpa Tsering Hall, inviting Ju Tenkyong, Director of the Amnye Machen Institute, and Tsangshol Desal from the Dhomay Cholkha Association.

The press conference was led by Additional Secretary Tenzin Lekshay, CTA's Spokesperson, who introduced the two speakers and provided a brief update on the urgent call for the press conference. Both the speakers and Spokesperson Tenzin Lekshay strongly condemned the Chinese government's role in the death of Ven Tulku Hungkar Dorje, calling for accountability and intervention.

During the press conference, the speakers strongly appealed for an independent and transparent investigation into the suspicious death of Tulku Hungkar Dorje; the immediate release of his body to Lungnon Monastery for proper Buddhist rites; and accountability from both the Vietnamese and Chinese authorities for the detention and suspicious death.

PRESS RELEASE

With deep sadness, the Central Tibetan Administration confirms the sudden and mysterious demise of Tulku Hungkar Dorje, a prominent Tibetan religious leader, in the custody of Chinese officials in Vietnam. Since late September 2024, Hungkar Rinpoche had lived in hiding in Vietnam due to the harassment he faced in Tibet from Chinese authorities. On 25 March 2025, he was arrested from his hotel room in Saigon, Vietnam, through a coordinated operation by local police and Chinese secret agents. He was subsequently transferred to the local public security office on 28 March, where he suspiciously passed away the same

day, raising serious concerns about cross-border security cooperation, transnational repression, and human rights violations that demand immediate and thorough investigation, as well as accountability from both Vietnamese and Chinese authorities.

On 1 April, the Administrative Office of Lungnon Monastery, Hungkar Rinpoche's monastery in Tibet, summoned relevant individuals to be presented with a Death Certificate of Tulku Hungkar, but they forbidden the individuals from keeping the document or taking photographs. On 5 April, five monks from the monastery, accompanied by Chinese government officials and delegates, traveled to Vietnam to retrieve his body. On the same day, a meeting was convened at the Chinese Embassy in Vietnam where Chinese officials attended, while five Tibetans from the monastery were not allowed to sit in the meeting. It remains unclear whether delegates from the monastery were able to view the actual body or transport it back to the monastery. Currently, the body is reportedly at Vinmec Central Park International Hospital in Ho Chi Minh City.

Tulku Hungkar Dorje, born in 1969 in Tibet's Amdo province, was a remarkable Tibetan spiritual leader whose life epitomized unwavering dedication to preserving Tibetan identity through education, healthcare, and cultural initiatives. Recognized as the reincarnation of Do Khyentse Yeshe Dorje, Rinpoche established the tuition-free Hungkar Dorje Vocational Technical High School serving over 1,000 students, founded the Hungkar Compassion Medical Clinic to provide healthcare to underserved communities, and created the Excellent Discourse Key Library to safeguard literary treasures. His philanthropic work extended to providing financial support, food, clothing, and medicine to thousands of elderlies, poor, and sick Tibetans. As an educator and author of more than twenty books, he consistently emphasized the critical importance of preserving the Tibetan language, Buddhist traditions, and cultural practices during his teachings across multiple countries. His contributions to environmental protection, social welfare, and moral education demonstrated his holistic approach to preserving not just Tibetan spiritual traditions but the complete cultural ecosystem necessary for Tibetan identity to thrive in the modern world, efforts that unfortunately made him a target of political persecution prior to his controversial death 12 days ago.

Last year, the Chinese government forced Hungkar Rinpoche to host the Chinese-appointed Panchen Lama, Gyaltsen Norbu at his monastery, which he did not comply wholeheartedly as per the Communist Party's wishes. In August 2024, high-ranking Chinese officials from Qinghai Province interrogated him extensively and forced him to provide fingerprints, alleging he had composed long-life prayers for His

Holiness the Dalai Lama and failed to implement Chinese government policies in his educational work in Golog, Amdo. These events precipitated his disappearance in late September 2024, followed by a period in hiding in Vietnam.

It is noteworthy that the suspicious death of Tulku Hungkar Dorje represents a troubling escalation in China's systematic targeting of influential Tibetan figures who promote Tibetan culture, language, and identity. His case highlights the ongoing suppression of human rights in Tibet, where people live under constant fear of arrest for the slightest expression of Tibetan identity.

The Central Tibetan Administration calls on the international community to condemn the sudden and mysterious death of Tulku Hungkar Rinpoche and demand transparency from Chinese and Vietnam authorities regarding the circumstances of his detention and death. More importantly, the body of Tulku Hungkar Dorje must be immediately handed over to Lungnon Monastery by the relevant officials, allowing for a proper funeral according to Tibetan tradition. This case further underscores the need for accountability and respect for the fundamental right and freedoms of the Tibetan people. We offer our sincere condolences to Rinpoche's family, friends and disciples and stand in solidarity.

Central Tibetan Administration
Dharamshala, HP, India

Tibetans call out China's language policy amid claims of cultural erasure and human rights violations

08 April 2025, [The Print](#)

Hundreds of Tibetans have flocked to social media to urge the Chinese government to reinstate Tibetan language education in schools, following Beijing's release of a white paper asserting that Tibetan language rights are guaranteed in the region, according to a report by Radio Free Asia (RFA).

In the report from March 28 discussing human rights in Tibet, China declared that Tibetan is frequently used in government documents, public announcements, media, and educational institutions, claiming that both Mandarin and Tibetan are taught in primary and secondary schools, according to RFA.

However, Tibetans argue that this statement is inaccurate and that China has deliberately sought to diminish the usage of their language, which they view as part of a broader effort to erase Tibetan cultural identity, as noted by RFA.

In 2020, Mandarin became the main language of instruction in all primary and secondary schools in Tibet, labeled as "bilingual" education; however, in

practice, Mandarin was predominantly used, as highlighted by RFA.

In 2023, China introduced a Mandarin-only policy for students taking the annual college entrance examination, placing many ethnic minorities, including Tibetan children who had previously been able to take the test in their native language, at a disadvantage, as cited by an RFA report.

Moreover, the title of the white paper, "Human Rights in Xizang in the New Era," utilized the Beijing-endorsed term "Xizang" to refer to Tibet, further indicating efforts to assimilate Tibetans into Han Chinese culture. According to RFA, access to Tibet for outsiders has been severely limited by China, making it extremely challenging to accurately depict the conditions on the ground.

China's assertions regarding human rights in Tibet do not align with the actual situation, and Maya Wang, associate China director at Human Rights Watch, urged Beijing to allow unrestricted access for external observers and independent researchers, as quoted by RFA.

"Over the last twenty years, the Chinese government has imposed increasingly tighter controls on Tibetans as part of its larger strategy to enforce the assimilation of minority groups," she stated. "This heightened level of oppression, long documented by human rights organizations and exile media, starkly contrasts with the Chinese government's claims about safeguarding human rights in Tibet," RFA reported. (ANI)

Dalai Lama "moved" as march retrace his historic escape route from Tibet

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

In a message to the 300 participants of the recently concluded 'Freedom Trail', Tibetan leader His Holiness the Dalai Lama expressed deep emotion as trekkers retraced his six-day journey from Khen-dza-mani on the border between Tibet and India to Pungteng-tse at Tawang in 1959.

The trail, which ended Saturday at Tawang Monastery in Tawang district of Arunachal Pradesh, commemorated the spiritual leader's escape from Tibet 66 years ago.

"I am very moved to know that 300 people have embarked on a Freedom Trail, retracing the six-day journey I made in 1959," the Dalai Lama wrote. "I clearly remember those days and the feeling of relief and freedom I felt as we reached India and how reassuring it was to be given such a warm welcome wherever we went."

Organised by the Tawang district administration under Deputy Commissioner Kanki Darang, the trek attracted a diverse group of participants, including monks, local leaders, security forces, tourists, and volunteers. The trail began at Kenzamani with monks and villagers

offering prayers for the Dalai Lama's long life, accompanied by traditional Monpa performances.

In his message dated April 4, 2025, the Dalai Lama reflected on his life in India since those momentous days: "Since those six days travelling from Khen-dza-mani to Tawang, India has become my second home. Living here, I have been able to meet all sorts of people I would not otherwise have done."

The trail featured several spiritual stops along the way, with the Indo-Tibetan Border Police presenting a ceremonial guard of honour to participants at Chudangmo. Trekkers journeyed through villages where the Nobel Peace Laureate had spent a night each during his journey in 1959, including Gorzom, Shardi, Lungla Tse, and Thonglek, before reaching Tawang.

Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu praised the event on social media, noting that while he wasn't a participant, he followed the journey "with admiration and respect". He expressed hope that the trail would develop into a meaningful destination for spiritual and cultural tourism.

The Dalai Lama concluded his message with gratitude: "I also take this opportunity to thank the people and government of India, especially the Mönpas of Arunachal Pradesh, for the deep friendship and support they have shown me and the Tibetan people over the last 66 years."

Lungla MLA Tsering Lhamu praised the trail organizers and participants, describing the event as "a collective act of devotion and unity" rather than a mere commemoration. "This initiative holds the power to transform Tawang into a global spiritual and cultural destination," she said, urging district residents to help "preserve this legacy and promote it for generations to come," she added.

The original journey in 1959 saw the then 24-year-old spiritual leader and an entourage of eighty people flee Norbulingka Palace in Tibet, travelling day and night before 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 and local residents.

China's hydropower push destroying heritage, suppressing Tibetan identity: TCHRD report

07 April 2025, [Hindustan Times](#), TCHRD

TCHRD's report highlights severe human rights violations in Tibet due to China's hydropower projects, including forced relocations and cultural suppression. The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) has raised alarm over widespread human rights violations and environmental impact resulting from China's rapid hydropower development in Tibet.

In its annual report released Friday, the Dharamshala-based non-profit detailed how dam construction has led to forced relocations, destruction of cultural heritage, and suppression of Tibetan identity.

The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) is a registered non-profit Tibetan human rights organisation based in Dharamshala, Himachal Pradesh.

According to the report, numerous villages were forcibly relocated in the past year, depriving Tibetans of the traditional agrarian way of life, and even monasteries razed to make way for energy projects.

The report accuses the Chinese government of disregarding both environmental and human rights concerns in pursuit of its energy goals.

TCHRD executive director Tenzin Dawa stated, "The report brings into light the dire situation in Tibet. It delves into various aspects of China's violation of international human rights standards, including freedom of religion and cultural repression, arbitrary detention, freedom of expression, education and language suppressions, environmental exploitation and forced relocation and China's transnational repression."

The report also criticised China's ongoing effort to sinicise Tibetan Buddhism. "The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has regulated all aspects of religious life... replacing images of the Dalai Lama with portraits of CCP leaders and translating Buddhist texts from Tibetan to Mandarin Chinese," it noted.

The report further pointed to the erosion of Tibetan language rights, citing that despite legal protections, Chinese policies prioritise Mandarin and promote a singular national identity. "Despite protection under China's Regional Ethnic Autonomy Law, authorities have prioritised a nation-building agenda that promotes a homogenised 'Zhonghua Minzu' identity – one centered on a single national language and allegiance to the Chinese state, "restricting Tibetan children's access to mother-tongue education and violating international human rights standards."

Tibetans in-exile rap China's whitepaper on human rights

07 April 2025, [The Sentinel](#)

The Tibetans in-exile strongly condemned China's recent white paper on human rights.

The Tibetans in-exile strongly condemned China's recent white paper on human rights. A new report published by the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) argues that Chinese authorities committed egregious human rights abuses that amount to crimes against humanity in Driru county, one of the most tightly controlled areas in Tibet.

The report titled 'If Gyalmo Ngulchu Could Feel: Crimes against Humanity in Driru' details widespread

and systematic human rights violations committed by Chinese authorities between 2012 and 2022. Executive Director of TCHRD, Tenzin Dawa told ANI, "The report presents extensive evidence of crimes against humanity, including persecution, arbitrary detention, torture and extrajudicial killings as part of a state-led policy to suppress resistance and identity."

The report highlights the violent crackdown that began on 28 September 2013, when local Tibetans in Driru dumped a five-starred Chinese flag into the Gyalmo Ngulchu (Nujiang/ Salween) river in protest against a coercive flag-flying campaign. The findings in this report make it clear that the situation in Driru is a human rights crisis that demands immediate international attention.

Tenzin Lekshay, spokesperson of Tibetan government in-exile told ANI, "China came up with the white paper on human rights this time and the so-called white paper is not a white paper actually because what they have been talking about, it's all about developments for the sake of China's stability. So if they are really concerned about the Tibetan people and their rights, they should have talked about the universal human rights as freedom of expression, freedom of movement, freedom of belief, which is not allowed to be seen in this so-called white paper."

"China is talking about developments and this development induced human rights which they have been talking about has so many things which were not been covered. We still say that there are so many political restrictions, civil rights are not being there, and we can say that the situation inside Tibet is more than critical right now under Xi Jinping's rule. So the white paper does not really talk about the rights for the Tibetan people, rather they talk more about their own stability," he added.

Tenzin Tsundue, a Tibetan activist in exile, has strongly criticized China's recent white paper on Tibet, calling it an attempt to legitimize China's 75-year occupation of the region.

He further argues that the document distorts the truth, claiming Tibetans benefit from Chinese development and human rights protection.

Tsundue said, "I went through the entire documents, there are eight chapters and all the eight chapters constantly try to do only one thing, tried to buy legitimacy of the 75 years of invasion and occupation of Tibet... They are talking about the developments in Tibet, and they keep on saying that Tibetans love those developments in Tibet. They are trying to say that they are protecting the human rights in Tibet. So the question is from whom? It's been a dictatorial regime for 75 years, if the Chinese government has to protect the human rights in Tibet, from whom? From Xi Jinping? Then they say that they are protecting the environment of Tibet, so again, from whom? From the

Chinese miners? From the Chinese government who is mining and cutting the trees and damming in Tibet."

"The whitepaper recently launched is saying that the United States government and his Holiness the Dalai Lama are making human right cases against China. But that's exactly what China has been doing. In 75 years of Chinese occupation of Tibet, more than 1 million Tibetans were killed by China, over 6000 monasteries were destroyed, the environment was plundered, and Tibetan monks and nuns were thrown out from their traditional monastic institutions. Tibetan nomads and farmers have been thrown out of their ancestral lands. These lands are being used by China for mining. Glaciers are melting in the Tibet in Himalayas so it's all because China is exploiting the natural resources in Tibet and with this white paper that China launched recently, China is only trying to protect its own skin," he added. (ANI)

Two new Justice Commissioners, auditor general of CTA sworn into office

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

In a ceremony held on Monday at the Sikyong Hall, Chief Justice Commissioner Yeshe Wangmo formally administered the oath of office to three key appointees of the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), marking a significant development in the exile Tibetan government's judicial and oversight institutions.

Former parliamentarian Dawa Phunkyi and former minister Phagpa Tsering were sworn in as the new Justice Commissioners of the Tibetan Supreme Justice Commission (TSJC), while Secretary Tashi Topgyal officially assumed the post of Auditor General of the CTA's Audit Office.

These appointments, made during the 2025 budget session of the 17th Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile (TPIE) on March 29 through a secret ballot, aim to reinforce the judicial integrity and financial accountability of the CTA.

The swearing-in ceremony was attended by senior CTA leadership, including Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel, Sikyong Penpa Tsering, Deputy Speaker Dolma Tsering Teykhang, and cabinet ministers Tharlam Dolma Changra, Dolma Gyari, and Norzin Dolma. Also present were Chief Election Commissioner Lobsang Yeshe, Public Service Commission member Tsultrim Dorjee, and members of the TPIE Standing Committee, along with Secretaries and senior staff from various CTA departments.

Dawa Phunkyi began his career at Delek Hospital as a Health Coordinator, later serving as Project Officer in the Department of Health, CTA. He rose through the ranks to become Secretary and later Chief Administrator of Delek Hospital. A seasoned parliamentarian, he has served in the 13th through

17th Tibetan Parliaments representing the U-Tsang province and currently remains Chief Administrator of Delek Hospital. He is also a board member of several organisations and an advisor to the U-Tsang Cholkha Association.

Phagpa Tsering joined the CTA in 1993 and served for over two decades at the Department of Security, steadily rising through the ranks. He was appointed Secretary of the Department in 2014 and later served as the Minister of Security during the 15th Kashag. He has also held a research position at the Tibet Policy Institute, contributing to analysis of the situation inside Tibet.

Tashi Topgyal began his service in the CTA in 1996 at the Office of the Auditor General and has held various key positions, including Joint Secretary and Acting Secretary. He also served briefly in the Office of Tibet in Taipei and the Department of Education, before returning to the Audit Office as Secretary in 2018. His career spans over two decades in financial oversight and administration within the CTA.

Secretary Dhondul Dorjee Attends Annual Graduation Ceremony of Ngagyur Nyingma Shugseb Nunnery Institute

07 April 2025, [CTA](#)



Participants of the 'Freedom Trail' holding His Holiness the Dalai Lama's portrait during the conclusion of the 6-day foot march at Tawang Monastery in Arunachal Pradesh (Photo/India today NE)

Secretary Dhondul Dorjee of Department of Religion and Culture, Central Tibetan Administration, attended the annual graduation ceremony of the Ngagyur Nyingma Shugseb Nunnery Institute on 5 April 2025 as its special guest and spoke to the gathering.

The event was graced by the presence of Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel, 17th Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile, and Kasur Rinchen Khando, a Special Advisor for the Tibetan Nuns Project, Kasur Rinchen Khando. It was also attended by Director of the Tibetan Nuns Project, Nangsa Choedon.

The dignitaries presented certificates to the recipients for their excellence performance during the ceremony followed by an address.

In his talk, Secretary Dhondul Dorjee spoke about the preservation and promotion of Tibetan religion and culture amidst the rising challenges from various dimensions. This sentiment was echoed by other guests in their respective addresses.

TCHRD releases alarming reports on Tibet, Driru abuses deemed crimes against humanity

05 April 025, [Phayul](#), Tsering Dhundup

Research and advocacy group, Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD) released two major reports documenting extensive human rights abuses in Tibet, particularly in Driru County under Chinese illegal occupation, released on Friday in Dharamshala.

The organisation's annual report for 2024 revealed that Tibet received a Global Freedom Score of 0 out of 100 from Freedom House, with a political rights score of -2/40. According to the findings, Tibetans face arbitrary detention for acts like possessing photos of the Tibetan spiritual Leader His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, and working to preserve their language, or engaging in peaceful protests.

One incident highlighted in the report involves approximately 1,000 Tibetans who were reportedly detained and tortured after protesting against the construction of the Kamtok Dam in Derge on February 23, 2024.

Alongside its annual assessment, Dharamshala-based TCHRD released a special 89-page report focusing on Driru County in the so-called Tibet Autonomous Region, an area under particularly severe repression. Titled "If Gyalmo Ngulchu Could Feel: Crimes Against Humanity in Driru", the special report documents abuses that amount to crimes against humanity, including persecution, arbitrary detention, torture, and extrajudicial killings between 2012 and 2022.

The report details a violent crackdown that began on September 28, 2013, when local Tibetans dumped Chinese flags into the Gyalmo Ngulchu river in protest against a coercive flag-flying campaign. Chinese security forces reportedly opened fire on unarmed protesters on October 6, 2013, injuring at least 60 people, with four critically wounded.

Speaking with Phayul, Tenzin Dawa, Director of TCHRD, stated that conditions in Driru constitute potential crimes against humanity under international law. "The information that we have documented since 2013 to this date, 11 human rights violations that have occurred. The TCHRD is calling for international intervention, urging governments, civil societies, and human rights organisations to pressure China to allow independent investigators and journalists into the region.

“With the launch of this report we want to pressure the Chinese government to allow independent researchers and experts, and also journalists, to investigate and tell the real story of the situation in terms of the human rights conditions in Driru,” Dawa said. The reports also highlight China’s alleged forced assimilation policies, including the separation of nearly a million Tibetan children from their homes and placement in state-run boarding schools, which critics say are designed to eradicate Tibetan identity.

China must open Tibet for world to see truth: Govt-in-exile

04 April 2025, [Hindustan Times](#)

The leaders of Tibetan exile-government welcomed the step by the US government; they said freedom of movement is restricted inside Tibet, even to Tibetans. After the United States imposed fresh visa restrictions on Chinese officials engaged in restricting access to Tibetan areas, Dharamsala-based Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) on Thursday said China must open Tibet to the ‘world to see the truth’.

The leaders of Tibetan exile-government welcomed the step by the US government. They said freedom of movement is restricted inside Tibet, even to Tibetans. On Monday, US secretary of state Marco Rubio announced the restrictions for Chinese officials involved in policies on access for foreigners to Tibetan areas. “China must restore reciprocity for our diplomats and others to access Tibetan areas in the same way that China’s diplomats enjoy broad access in the US,” he said in a post on micro-blogging platform X.

Sikyong (president) of the Tibetan government-in-exile Penpa Tsering said Rubio had long been a strong advocate for Tibet, even during his tenure in the US senate.

“He has taken this action in accordance with the Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act of 2018. When a US citizen visits China, they require special permission to enter Tibet. China is restricting access to Tibet while simultaneously claiming it is a socialist paradise. If that is the case, why don’t they allow people from other countries to visit and see for themselves? The flow of information from Tibet remains restricted,” he said.

Tibetan government-in-exile spokesperson Tenzin Lekshay said, “For foreigners, China gives excuses like medical reasons in view of Tibet’s high altitude. But it allows many Chinese visitors and settlers into Tibet,” he said.

“...it is not just US diplomats who should be allowed into Tibet, but all international communities, including media... this restriction came at a very right time,” he added.

The International Campaign for Tibet (ICT) group welcomed the move. “We commend the Trump (US

President Donald Trump) administration for asserting that China’s failure to adhere to the principle of reciprocity is unacceptable and will not be tolerated,” said ICT President Tencho Gyatso.

Tibet Policy Institute Hosts Book Discussion on the Release of the 11th Edition of the Tibet Policy Journal

04 April 2025, [CTA](#)



Tibet Policy Institute held a book launch event to celebrate the release of the 11th Edition of the Tibet Policy Journal in Tibetan and English. Photo / Tenzin Jigme Taydeh / CTA

The Tibet Policy Institute (TPI) of the Department of Information and International Relations, Central Tibetan Administration, hosted a book launch event this morning at its Library Hall to mark the release of the 11th editions of the “Tibet Policy Journal 2024” in both Tibetan and English. The event took place in the presence of TPI Director, Dawa Tsering.

The program commenced at 11:00 a.m., with TPI Deputy Director, Tempa Gyaltsen Zamlha, outlining the purpose of the gathering. He warmly welcomed the speakers, researchers, audience members, and media representatives for their presence and engagement.

The publication features research articles, with the Tibetan edition containing 12 articles and the English edition featuring 10, and were edited by Dr. Lobsang Thapka, while the English edition was overseen by Dr. Tenzin Desal, respectively.

In his opening remarks, Deputy Director Zamlha emphasised the objectives behind the publication and the importance of organising such events. He underscored the institute’s dedication to nurturing a culture of research within the Tibetan community, encouraged aspiring researchers to contribute to future editions, and aimed to raise public awareness. “This gathering highlights the significance of these publications in shaping the discourse surrounding Tibetan policy and contemporary issues,” he remarked.

Following the introduction, Phenthok, a research fellow specialising in Chinese language studies, provided an overview of the process involved in compiling the bilingual annual journals. She shared insights into the early stages of the project and the challenges it encountered.

Dr. Lobsang Thapka, a Tibetan researcher and the editor of the Tibetan-language edition of the “Tibet Policy Journal”, discussed the editorial process, which involved selecting and compiling research articles contributed by various scholars. He further provided an overview of the major content and its significance.

Dr. Thapka also addressed the challenges and responsibilities involved in developing the journal’s content, reflecting on the collaborative effort required to produce high-quality academic work, particularly in the Tibetan language. His remarks emphasised the growing importance of such scholarly contributions.

Dr. Tsewang Dorji, a TPI researcher and one of the contributing authors, presented a summary of his research. He shared key findings from his work and explained how it contributes to a broader understanding of the current situation in Tibet. Dr. Dorji also highlighted the role of academic research in preserving Tibetan identity and raising global awareness of Tibet-related issues.

In his closing remarks, Director Dawa Tsering praised the editorial team and all contributors for their hard work in bringing the bilingual journals to publication. He stressed the vital role academic research plays in enhancing understanding of Tibet’s political, social, and cultural matters.

“It is through such scholarly efforts that we can deepen awareness and stimulate meaningful dialogue on the critical challenges facing Tibet and its people,” he noted. Director Dawa Tsering also expressed his hope that the “Tibet Policy Journal” would continue to serve as a valuable platform for fostering informed debate. Highlighting the journal’s inclusive approach, he added, “This platform not only encourages Tibetan researchers but also welcomes Indian scholars to share their perspectives, enriching the depth and scope of discussions on Tibet-related issues.”

Scotland’s MP Ross John Greer Visits the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile

03 April 2025, [CTA](#)

On 3 April 2025, Ross John Greer MSP, Chair of the Scottish Cross-Party Group for Tibet, along with Eleanor Jane Byrne-Rosengren, Human Rights Professional, and Cameron E. William Garrett, Research and Policy Officer for the Scottish Green Group, visited the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile.

The delegation held a meeting with Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel and members of the Standing Committee. They were accompanied by

Representative Tsering Yangkyi from the Office of Tibet, London.

Upon their arrival, the Speaker welcomed the delegation, recalling his previous meeting with MSP Greer during his visit to Scotland. He expressed gratitude for the warm hospitality extended by MSP Greer. The Speaker emphasised that their visit to the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) provided a unique opportunity to observe the democratic functioning of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile. He elaborated on the composition, evolution, and operations of the Tibetan Parliament, including its bi-annual sessions, committees, and the electoral process.

The Speaker also highlighted the intensified restrictions in Tibet throughout March, especially on Tibetan National Uprising Day, 10 March. He strongly criticised the White Paper issued by China’s State Council Information Office on 28 March. The document, which asserted Chinese control over the reincarnation of Tibetan lamas, promoted “development in Tibet,” and accused the “Dalai clique” and Western nations of plotting to separate Tibet from China, was sharply rebuked. The Speaker condemned these claims as falsehoods and a calculated attempt to create division.

In closing, the Speaker thanked the delegation for their continued support of the Tibetan cause and appealed for their ongoing advocacy.

-Report filed by Tibetan Parliamentary Secretariat

German MP Michael Brand Visits Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile

03 April 2025, [CTA](#)

On the afternoon of 2 April 2025, MP Michael Brand, a member of the Bundestag (German Parliament), along with Kai Muller, Executive Director of the International Campaign for Tibet (Germany), visited the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile.

The German delegation met with Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel, Deputy Speaker Dolma Tsering Teykhang, and members of the Standing Committee, engaging in discussions on a variety of shared topics of mutual interest.

Welcoming the visiting guests, the Speaker expressed his gratitude to the delegation for their longstanding support of the just cause of Tibet, particularly for meeting with Tibetan parliamentary delegations during their visits to Germany.

The Speaker then provided an update on the recently concluded budget session of the Tibetan Parliament, which approved approximately 3,300 million Indian Rupees for the fiscal year 2025-2026. This figure reflects a reduction of around 300 million rupees from the initially proposed amount by the executive, largely due to the suspension of USAID funding.

The Speaker also addressed the increased restrictions in Tibet during March, especially surrounding Tibetan National Uprising Day on 10th March. He highlighted the White Paper released by China's State Council Information Office on 28 March of this year, which claimed that China holds authority over the reincarnation process of Tibetan lamas, emphasized "development in Tibet," and accused the "Dalai clique and Western countries" of conspiring to separate Tibet from China. The Speaker condemned these statements as entirely false, labeling them as a deliberate attempt to sow division.

The Deputy Speaker extended her congratulations to MP Brand on the Christian Democratic Union's victory in the recent election and expressed her hope for a strong partnership based on shared values.

Recognizing MP Brand's leadership roles – heading the German Parliamentary Group for Tibet, co-chairing the Inter-Parliamentary Alliance on China (IPAC), co-founding a Uyghur rights group, and serving as the conservative group's human rights spokesperson – the Deputy Speaker encouraged the MP to rally further support for Tibet within the German Parliament.

Speaking on the recently published White Paper by China, the Deputy Speaker emphasized that Tibet is the subject of the highest number of such papers, which she described as China's attempt to whitewash its wrongdoings in Tibet. These include the forced placement of Tibetan children in colonial boarding schools, the assimilation of Tibetan culture, and the indoctrination of communist ideology, among other violations.

In closing, the Deputy Speaker called on the visiting delegation to raise their voices for the voiceless Tibetans suffering under China's oppression.

The meeting then continued with an engaging discussion between the visiting delegation and the Tibetan parliamentarians.

-Report filed by the Tibetan Parliamentary Secretariat

Tibetan play highlighting repression in Tibet to do 34 shows across India

02 April 2025, [Phayul](#), Tenzin Nyidon

"A Fearless Voice," a Tibetan-language play highlighting the situation inside Tibet, organised by the pro-independence group Tibetan Youth Congress (TYC) and performed by Tibet Theatre artists, was inaugurated at the Tibetan Institute of Performing Arts (TIPA) on Tuesday.

The play depicts the journey of a young Tibetan girl named Sangmo, who is forced to leave her homeland. Her family, caught in the grip of Chinese repression, face devastating consequences—her brother, a monk, is killed by Chinese authorities for allegedly organizing a celebration of the 11th Panchen Lama, Gedhun

Choekyi Nyima, while she herself is taken away to government-run boarding school designed to erase Tibetan identity. Left with no choice, her parents make the heart-breaking decision to send Sangmo into exile, hoping to secure her freedom and preserve their culture beyond Tibet's borders. Through Sangmo's story, the play sheds light on the ongoing oppression faced by Tibetans under Chinese rule.



"A Fearless Voice", a Tibetan-language play highlighting the situation inside Tibet underway at TIPA hall in Dharamshala on April 1, 2025 (Photo/Sonam Topgyal)

The play is set to be showcased in 34 locations across India, including Tibetan settlements and schools, as the artists embark on a two-month tour across various cities to raise awareness about the ongoing human rights violations in Tibet. The TYC will fully fund the production, with the estimated budget for the tour amounting to approximately ₹20 lakhs. The final leg of this tour will culminate in Ladakh.

TYC General Secretary Sonam Tsering told Phayul that the play aims to raise awareness about Tibet, particularly in schools, where knowledge has gradually waned due to the declining arrivals of Tibetans from Tibet. "The initiative seeks to educate students on the worsening conditions inside Tibet. Additionally, it strives to instill a spirit of activism among Tibetan youth in settlements by shedding light on China's cultural genocide and ongoing atrocities," he said.

He further stated that another reason for inaugurating the play this year was to commemorate the 30th anniversary of Gedhun Choekyi Nyima's enforced disappearance on April 25, 1995, when he was just six years old. Recognized as the 11th Panchen Lama, Gedhun Choekyi Nyima holds the second-highest position in Tibetan Buddhism, following the exiled spiritual leader, His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

Speaking to Phayul, playwright Lhakpa Tsering shared the inspiration behind his work, stating that following the departure of the former TYC secretary in July last year, it was suggested that a theatrical production be used as a medium for advocacy. Lhakpa who has also been a former committee member of TYC noted that leveraging drama to raise awareness about Tibet and instill a spirit of activism among the youth was not a novel idea—it had been discussed since 2006, with

resolutions on the matter consistently passed during annual meetings.

"This long-standing aspiration was finally realized by the current committee members," he remarked. "Having actively engaged in Tibet's political cause, I hope to reignite a sense of activism among young Tibetans, and it was with this objective in mind that I wrote the play."

He further noted that while various programs were once organized to instill resilience and reinforce awareness of the Tibetan cause, such initiatives have dwindled in recent years. "Through this play, we aim to rekindle awareness among exile Tibetans, particularly targeting school-aged youth. As they study alongside students from the Himalayan region, many gradually lose their distinct Tibetan identity. By shedding light on the ongoing situation inside Tibet, this initiative seeks to reignite their sense of belonging, urging them to uphold the Tibetan cause while safeguarding their cultural and religious heritage."

RFA radio transmissions to China, Tibet halted

04 April 2025, [RFA](#)

Relay stations owned or leased by US government no longer carrying Radio Free Asia broadcasts

Radio Free Asia announced this week that its radio broadcasts have been drastically cut as transmissions were halted from relay stations owned or leased by the U.S. government.

RFA informed listeners on Thursday that shortwave radio broadcasts for its Mandarin, Tibetan and Lao language services have stopped entirely. The broadcaster, which is funded by the U.S. Congress, said a heavily reduced schedule remains in place for RFA Burmese, Khmer, Korean and Uyghur language services.

The U.S. Agency for Global Media, or USAGM, which oversees RFA, abruptly terminated its federal grant on March 15. RFA has since been forced to furlough most of its staff, and filed a lawsuit last week, seeking to restore the funding on the grounds that the termination violated federal laws.

The Trump administration has moved to slash news organizations funded by the U.S. Congress, including Voice of America and those funded through federal grants like RFA and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, as part of its drive to reduce government spending.

With its reducing staffing, RFA is still providing limited news updates on its website and social media in all nine languages it serves. The broadcaster was established in 1996, and sends news to countries and regions across Asia that have little or no press freedom, such as North Korea, China, Myanmar and Vietnam.

Monitoring of radio frequencies previously used by RFA indicates that transmissions from shortwave and mediumwave relay stations owned or leased by USAGM have halted in the past week, meaning the hours of radio broadcasts have been slashed from 63 hours in March to just seven hours now.

That is based on review of an online Remote Monitoring System that is maintained by USAGM that provides short audio samples of radio frequencies in regions served by the broadcasters it oversees.

In late 2023, RFA had 126 hours of transmissions per day, before an earlier slew of shortwave cuts.

The few remaining broadcast hours are based on transmissions from relay stations not owned or leased by the U.S. government.

'Lost a lifeline to the truth'

Audience research and anecdotal reporting by RFA suggests that over the past decade or more, use of shortwave and mediumwave radio has reduced but it remains an important option in regions where internet access is poor or subject to official censorship and scrutiny.

"For millions living in North Korea and China's Tibetan and Uyghur regions, RFA's exclusive news and content can only be accessed through shortwave transmissions. Now those populations are being cut off, as are people in Myanmar who are reeling in the wake of a devastating earthquake when radio is a crucial medium," said Rohit Mahajan, RFA's chief communications officer.

"They have lost a lifeline to the truth precisely at a moment when it's needed most," Mahajan said.

RFA Burmese has received growing requests since the March 28 earthquake in central Myanmar for more radio broadcasts because of disruptions to the internet since the 7.7 magnitude temblor that killed more than 3,000 people.

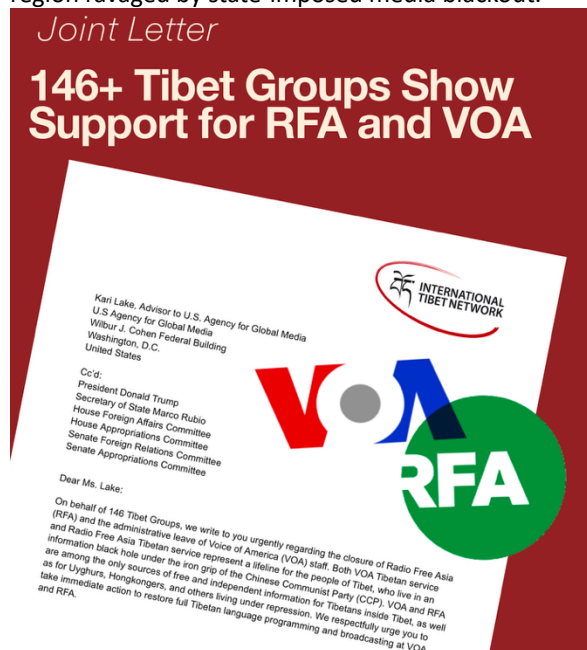
Kyaw Kyaw Aung, director of RFA Burmese, said that in the aftermath of the earthquake, the service had received requests for more shortwave broadcasts in Rakhine state, a conflict-hit area of western Myanmar which largely escaped the quake but has poor internet access.

"Only a few people with access to the military-run, state-owned MRTV shortwave radio knew about the disaster after it happened, and the reporting was heavily censored," said Kyaw Kyaw Aung, who has been anchoring a 15-minute RFA daily news broadcast since the earthquake. "Our followers were strongly requesting RFA radio."

Global Tibet Groups Urge US Government to Restore Vital Tibetan Broadcasts

04 April 2025, [Tibet Network](#)

A coalition of 146 Tibetan organisations worldwide has launched an urgent appeal to the U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM), calling for the immediate and full restoration of Voice of America (VOA) and Radio Free Asia (RFA) Tibetan language services. [1] These broadcasts represent a critical lifeline for millions of Tibetans inside Tibet, living under the Chinese Communist Party's oppressive regime, offering an indispensable source of uncensored information in a region ravaged by state-imposed media blackout.



Tenzin Yangzom, Campaigns Coordinator at International Tibet Network, said: “The shutdown of Radio Free Asia and the suspension of Voice of America’s Tibetan broadcasts isn’t just about lost news—it’s about cutting off a vital lifeline for Tibetans living under occupation. For millions, VOA and RFA aren’t just sources of information; they’re a lens to the world, offering hope, truth, and a reminder that they’re not forgotten. We urge the U.S. Agency for Global Media to restore these broadcasts without delay, showing the people of Tibet—and the world—that America stands firm in its support for freedom, truth, and human dignity.”

Dr Lobsang Yangtso, Asia Regional Coordinator at International Tibet Network, said: “The strategic importance of VOA and RFA Tibetan broadcasts cannot be overstated. For decades, they have served as a vital pillar in countering Beijing’s narrative and preserving Tibetan language and cultural identity in the face of relentless assimilation policies. Discontinuing these services not only isolates Tibetans but also weakens the international community’s understanding of the

true situation inside Tibet. Restoring these broadcasts is not just about providing news; it’s about safeguarding a people’s right to their own story and holding the CCP accountable for its actions.”

The joint letter underscores the alarming reality that the elimination of these services directly emboldens the Chinese government, dismantling America’s strategic efforts to combat disinformation and champion human rights in Tibet. These broadcasts serve as a potent counterforce to the CCP’s relentless propaganda, exposing the harsh realities of life under its iron-fisted rule and bolstering the resilience of Tibetans in their unwavering pursuit of freedom.

The global Tibetan movement calls upon the USAGM to act with immediate urgency, reinstating comprehensive Tibetan language programming at VOA and RFA. This decisive action is imperative to uphold America’s foundational commitment to freedom of expression and to demonstrate unwavering solidarity with the Tibetan people in their struggle for survival and self-determination.

Office of Tibet in Washington D.C. Hosts Sino-Tibet Youth Dialogue to Discuss Democracy in China and Tibetan-Chinese Relations

04 April 2025, CTA

On 28 March 2025, the Office of Tibet in Washington D.C. hosted a Sino-Tibet Youth Interaction at the Northern California Tibetan Association Community Center in California, USA.

The speakers at the conference included prominent Chinese democracy advocates Fang Zheng and Zhou Fengsuo, along with Ginger Duan, a member of an online platform named “Chinese Youth Stand 4 Tibet”, and Tsultrim Gyatso, the Chinese Liaison Officer at the Office of Tibet. They discussed the trajectory of China’s democracy movement, its future prospects, as well as Tibetan-Chinese relations and collaborative efforts with the participating local Chinese and Tibetan youth. Fang Zheng is a prominent Chinese democracy activist whose legs were crushed under a tank during the June 4th Tiananmen Square student incident. He briefly discussed the history of the Chinese democracy movement and emphasised the importance of connecting with the new generation of youth to exchange ideas and learn from each other.

Zhou Fengsuo shared his perspectives on the future course of democracy in China and noted that the new generation of Chinese youth, through initiatives such as the White Paper Movement, has already achieved significant milestones and will continue to engage in meaningful actions.

Ginger Duan who oversees the online platform “Chinese Youth Stand 4 Tibet,” recounted her

experience teaching at the recently closed Ragya Monastery in Tibet, which enabled her to connect with Tibetans. She underscored the importance of addressing Tibet-related issues in the Chinese language for the Chinese public. Together with some of her Chinese associates, she has been actively disseminating Tibet-related infographics in Chinese on various online platforms.

Chinese Liaison Officer Tsultrim Gyatso provided an overview of the evolution of both official and unofficial dialogues between Tibet and China since Tibet's occupation. He emphasised the importance of understanding that His Holiness the Dalai Lama has long advocated for a mutually beneficial approach to resolving the Tibet-China conflict. He also expressed the need for greater dialogue between the younger generations of Tibetan and Chinese youth.

Throughout the conference, Tibetan and Chinese participants were divided into groups to exchange their views, during which they also proposed ideas for future initiatives aimed at enhancing Tibetan-Chinese dialogue. Several Chinese and Tibetan university students from Northern California engaged in in-depth discussions regarding the organisation of talks focused on Tibet-China issues at academic institutions.

-Report filed by OOT Washington DC

Tibetan Buddhist leader missing for 8 months has died, monastery confirms

03 April 2025, [RFA](#), Tenzin Pema and Tenzin Tenkyong
Inside Tibet, people mourn the unexplained death of Tulku Hungkar Dorje, a renowned abbot and educator.



*Tulku Hungkar Dorje at a gathering to mark Tibetan Calligraphy Day
Seen here in April 2022. (Citizen photo)*

The death of an influential Tibetan Buddhist leader who went missing eight months ago shortly after he publicly called for the preservation of Tibetan language and culture was confirmed in a statement by his monastery.

Tibetans inside Tibet took to social media platforms on Thursday to mourn the loss of Tulku Hungkar Dorje, age 56. He was the 10th abbot of Lung Ngön Monastery in Gade (Gande in Chinese) county of

Golog in Qinghai province. He was renowned as a philanthropist, educator and religious teacher.

"As learned leaders depart like this, one after another, we are left behind like a flock of sheep without a shepherd," wrote one Tibetan netizen.

In an official statement dated April 3, Lung Ngön Monastery said Tulku Hungkar Dorjee died on March 29, 2025, in Vietnam's Ho Chi Minh City, adding that he had shown many signs of poor health.

The statement confirmed news of his death that Radio Free Asia reported Thursday based on two sources in Tibet, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

The sources said that Chinese officials on Wednesday summoned seven monks from the Lung Ngön Monastery and informed them about Tulku Hungkar Dorje's death. The officials provided no information about when or where he had died, nor the cause of his death, the sources said.

Forbidding public discussion about monk

Tulku Hungkar Dorje, whose title "Tulku" refers in Tibetan Buddhism to someone who has been reincarnated, disappeared shortly after a public teaching he gave on July 21, 2024.

Chinese officials subsequently imposed restrictions on the monks of the monastery and local Tibetans, forbidding any public discussions about the disappearance and prohibiting the sharing of his teachings in audio or video format, the sources said.

Fears for Tulku Hungkar Dorje deepened in December 2024 when a source told RFA Tibetan that Chinese authorities were detaining well-known Buddhist lamas from across Tibet for questioning and there were fears that he had died in Chinese custody.

When the monks on Wednesday were informed of his passing, they were made to sign an official government document confirming his death, but the Chinese officials failed to disclose what had happened to the abbot's remains, nor where he had been located during the months he had been missing, the sources said.

According to the monastery's statement, Tulku Hungkar Dorje had previously indicated his desire to stay in seclusion in a retreat, and that he had left detailed written instructions for the monastery about the execution of his final wishes before departing alone for spiritual practice to an unspecified location in August.

However, Tibetan sources said that if he had indeed gone for a meditation retreat, there would have been no reason for Chinese authorities to impose restrictions on people investigating or discussing his disappearance.

The notice also stated that under the auspices of the Chinese Communist Party, a group comprising the United Front Work members, monastery public affairs officials and family members had been formed to

handle the affairs and procedures as per Vietnamese law.

The notice also instructed disciples to conduct proper funeral rituals and religious ceremonies without financial waste or extravagance, as per Tulku Hungkar Dorje's wishes when he was alive.

Chinese authorities closely scrutinize prominent Tibetan Buddhist lamas and businessmen involved in philanthropy, as well as poets, writers, and religious teachers who advocate for the preservation and promotion of Tibetan language and culture.

Such figures often face strict surveillance and are vulnerable to arbitrary detentions and long prison terms.

Founded schools

In 2005, Tulku Hungkar Dorje founded the first Buddhist nunnery in Golog history and also established several schools and vocational centers of learning, including the Hungkar Dorje Ethnic Vocational High School and the Mayul Center of Studies, to provide free education to Tibetan children from local nomadic families, the two sources said.

The sources said most of these schools were shut shortly after his disappearance, although one was believed to have been shut in 2021.

The schools taught children Tibetan history and language, Chinese and English language, mathematics and moral education. They also offered vocational training in Thangka painting, Tibetan medicine, tailoring and carpet weaving.

During a visit to the United States in 2012, Tulku Hungkar Dorje wrote: "Tibet has a rich history and culture that could benefit the entire world. It is the responsibility of each successive generation to preserve this ancient tradition of knowledge. We are united in motivation and action in enthusiastically preserving and spreading our culture."

He also spearheaded many welfare programs for local Tibetans, including free distribution of food, clothes, and medicine to thousands of Tibetan people, including monks, nuns and the aged, through the Gesar Shenpen Foundation, which he founded in 2004.

His father, Padma Tumdag Dorje, also known as Orgyen Kusum Lingpa, was a master of the ancient Tibetan Buddhist sect of Nyingma, and was also reputed as dedicating his life to working for the benefit of others.

Tibetans on social media mourn loss

On Thursday, Tibetans inside Tibet took to social media platforms to mourn his loss and pen emotional tributes, recalling his contributions to preserving Tibetan culture, supporting thousands of underprivileged people and establishing private schools in Tibet.

"At a time when the red wind blows strongly and frequently, the news that the brightness of your being,

like the snow mountains, has dimmed fills us with great sadness," wrote the Tibetan netizen cited earlier in this article.

"As I heard about the passing of another person who wholeheartedly served the political and religious cause of Tibet, it pains (me) from the bottom of my heart," wrote another.

Others raised suspicions around the circumstances of his death.

"How is it possible for an individual as strong as gold to have died just of sickness?" wrote a third Tibetan netizen.

Born in 1969 to a nomadic family in Gade county, Tulku Hungkar Dorje grew up with five siblings and survived the Cultural Revolution in Tibetan under Mao Zedong in the 1960s and 1970s.

After completing his monastic education from Lung Ngon Monastery from 1980 to 1989, he pursued further education at Drepung Monastery in southern India where he received the prestigious title of Rabjampa, or scholar. He then studied in the United States for a few years before assuming responsibility as the 10th abbot of Lung Ngon Monastery in 2002.

Tulku Hungkar Dorje wrote several books, including "Tangkas in Golog: The Tangka Album of Lung Ngon Monastery" and "The Melodious Sound of the Laughter of the Vidyadharas of the Three Lineages."

Dalai Lama Centre for Indian and Tibetan Ancient Wisdom hosts inaugural conference in Bodhgaya

03 April 2025, [Phayul](#), Tsering Dhundup

The Dalai Lama Centre for Indian and Tibetan Ancient Wisdom convened its first All-India conference on ancient Indian and Tibetan knowledge systems and their enduring relevance on Thursday near the Mahabodhi Temple in Bodhgaya, Bihar.

The two-day event, hosted at the Buddha Heritage and Resort, has brought together approximately 40 scholars from diverse backgrounds to explore the intersection of ancient wisdom traditions and modern challenges.

Dr Thiyagarajan S.M., District Magistrate of Gaya, served as the chief guest at the inaugural ceremony, which was attended by several distinguished figures, including former Kalon Tripa Samdong Rinpoche, former cabinet minister Tenpa Tsering, and the Centre's Director, Geshe Tashi Tsering, who previously served as the abbot of Sera Mey Monastery.

In his message to the conference, the Dalai Lama expressed pleasure at the inaugural event taking place. He highlighted how Buddhist science, philosophy, and religion from India have shaped Tibetan thinking over generations, noting that Tibetans have been custodians of this ancient Indian wisdom for over 1,300 years.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama further stated the importance of integrating ancient wisdom with modern education and science: “The Centre’s plan is not to merely draw attention to the ancient Indian wisdom but to see how it can be merged with modern science and technology, through which we see much potential for contributing to a safer, happier, more harmonious world.”

The conference agenda covers a wide range of topics, including the relevance of ancient Indian and Tibetan wisdom in contemporary society, diverse philosophical perspectives on the nature of reality, consciousness studies, logic and epistemology, and the application of ancient psychological insights to modern challenges. Former Kalon Tripa Samdhong Rinpoche addressed the gathering with three critical questions regarding the preservation of Indo-Tibetan ancient wisdom, highlighting its potential value in addressing today’s environmental, social, political, and economic issues. The Cultural Division of the Indian Ministry of External Affairs also recognised the Centre’s significance in preserving and promoting the Nalanda tradition as a science of mind while enhancing research methodologies and providing educational opportunities to monks, nuns, and laypersons. Originally named the Nalanda Centre, the institution had its foundation stone laid by the Dalai Lama on January 3, 2023. It aims to serve as a transformative platform for adapting Tibetan and Indian philosophical traditions to contemporary needs through scholarly research, dialogue, and collaboration, with particular emphasis on applying ancient wisdom to foster compassion, ethics, and sustainability in the modern world.

Freedom Trail’ foot march retracing Dalai Lama’s 1959 escape to India underway

02 April 2025, [Phayul](#), Tsering Dhundup

A six-day foot march event “Freedom Trail” began on Monday, retracing the historic route taken by His Holiness the Dalai Lama when he fled Tibet and entered India 66 years ago in 1959. The trek commenced at Khinzamani (also known as Kenzamani or Khen-Dze-Mane) in Zemithang, Arunachal Pradesh, and will conclude on April 5 in Pungteng, Tawang. March 31, 2025 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.



Freedom trail participants carrying His Holiness the Dalai Lama's portrait in Arunachal Pradesh (Photo/Arunachal 24)

Organised by the Tawang District Administration under Deputy Commissioner Kanki Darang, the event has garnered support from local officials, including MLA Lungla Tsering Lhamu and Department of Karmik and Adhyatmik Affairs (DoKAA) Chairman Jambey Wangdi. Approximately 300 participants joined the first day of the trek, according to local news outlets, including village leaders, border security personnel, monks, and tourists.

The inaugural ceremony included long-life prayers for the Dalai Lama and cultural performances by monks and villagers. In her address, MLA Tsering Lhamu emphasised the spiritual and historical significance of the trek, noting that “our relationship with Tibet is centuries old, rooted in shared history, culture, and mutual understanding.”

Deputy Commissioner Darang highlighted Kenzamani’s historical importance as the location where the then 24-year-old Dalai Lama was first received by Indian officials after his long journey from Tibet’s Norbulingka Palace. A poignant moment during the ceremony occurred when ITBP (Indo-Tibetan Border Police) jawans received a portrait of the Dalai Lama and a branch from the holy tree at Chudangmo, offering a guard of honour.

The trek will follow the Dalai Lama’s original route through significant sites including Chudangmo, Gorzam Chorten, Shakti, Lungla, and Thongleng before reaching Tawang. Day two of the journey will take participants to Gorzam Choeten.

According to organisers, the Freedom Trail not only commemorates this pivotal historical moment but also aims to spread the Dalai Lama’s message of peace, non-violence, and compassion while highlighting the deep cultural ties between Tibet and Arunachal Pradesh. The District Administration has invited the public to join the culmination ceremony in Pungteng, Tawang, on April 5, 2025, marking the anniversary of His Holiness’s arrival in Tawang 66 years ago.

Tibetan Losar Celebrated in the UK Parliament on the Day of His Holiness Receiving the Prestigious Gold Mercury International Award

02 April 2025, [CTA](#)



Tibetan Losar Celebrated in the UK Parliament on the Day of His Holiness Receiving the Prestigious Gold Mercury International Award

The All Party Parliamentary Group on Tibet (APPGT) hosted the Tibetan New Year celebrations at the Churchill Room, House of Commons, UK Parliament on Monday evening, 31 March 2025. On the same day, His Holiness the Great 14th Dalai Lama was honoured at his residence in Dharamshala with the Gold Mercury International Award 2025 for outstanding leadership in peace, compassion, and environmental stewardship.

As the host for the event, Chris Law MP, Chair of the APPG Tibet, welcomed everyone to the event marking the Tibetan New Year of the Wood Snake explaining that this is a celebration of Tibetan identity, history and culture. He noted with pride that the APPGT had been reestablished and that it already had 20 members and is growing. He also expressed his hope to continue raising Tibet through this group in Westminster.

The event was co-organised with the support of Free Tibet, the Secretariat for the APPGT; the Tibetan Community in Britain and the Office of Tibet, London. Climate Minister and Member of Parliament for Bristol East, the Rt Hon Kerry McCarthy, joined the celebration to express her appreciation and support for the rich Tibetan cultural heritage. Sarah Champion MP, Jessica Morden MP, Alex Sobel MP, all from the Labour Party; and Pete Wishart SNP and Wera Hobhouse Liberal Democrats MP attended and expressed their best wishes to all Tibetans.

In his welcome speech, Tenzin Kunga, Secretary, Office of Tibet London, thanked everyone present for joining in the Losar celebration. Besides the parliamentarians, the guests included representatives from faith groups, former MPs, long-time Tibet supporters, allies from the Uyghur and Hongkonger groups, academics, V-TAG

members and Tibetans. One of the honoured guests was Gelongma Ani Pema Deki (Emma Slade), a British yoga and meditation instructor, author and charity founder.

Tenzin Kunga explained the significance of the date, 31 March, a day when His Holiness the Great 14th Dalai Lama reached the safety of India after a perilous journey across the border, and noted the lifelong contributions of His Holiness to humanity, and informed the gathering about the Gold Mercury International Award 2025 that was bestowed on His Holiness, drawing loud applause from the crowd. He noted the upcoming 90th birthday of His Holiness and how it would be celebrated as the Year of Compassion. Displaying His Holiness' new book, Voice for the Voiceless, Tenzin Kunga, noted that His Holiness has unambiguously stated that his reincarnation will be born in a free country. Acknowledging the UK's standing as a global leader in defending freedom of religion and belief, he called on the government to issue a clear statement affirming that the succession of the Dalai Lama is a matter solely for His Holiness to decide. He urged the parliamentarians present and friends with influence to extend their support on this important matter.

Delivering the keynote speech, Gelongma Ani Pema Deki, recalled the amazing moment of her audience with His Holiness the Great 14th Dalai Lama and highlighted his critical contribution in brilliantly extolling the virtues of love, compassion, peace and non-violence not just through words but in action, too. Gelongma underlined the great need for leaders like His Holiness in this otherwise conflict-ridden world.

The Tibetan Community in Britain's Cultural Secretary introduced the Tibetan cultural performances, which began with a remarkable Tibetan opera-style ode (Namthar) to wish His Holiness a long and healthy life. This was followed by an impressive dranyen-shabdro dance and a beautiful Tibetan group dance. These lively performances enthralled the guests, with some of them, including the MPs trying to match the Tibetan dance steps during the circle dance at the end.

Phuntsok, Chairperson of the Tibetan Community in Britain, delivered the vote of thanks, drawing the formal part of the evening to a close. The MPs and guests stayed on to listen to the V-TAG members explain about their campaign collecting handwritten birthday messages for His Holiness, and to experience the festive mood in the room. Two MPs agreed to join the APPG Tibet adding to the membership of the group. It was a memorable evening for everyone.

-Report filed by Office of Tibet, London

4 House approves budget of ₹330 crore for 2025-26 fiscal year

01 April 2024, [Phayul](#), Tenzin Nyidon

Following deliberations for 13 days, the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile (TPiE) on the final day of the ninth session unanimously approved a budget of ₹3,304,017,307 (38,870,791 USD) for the fiscal year 2025-26. The budget, which covers the expenses and operations of the exile Tibetan government known officially as the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), was passed following extensive deliberations during the session held from March 17 to 31.

This year's budget reflects a reduction of ₹2.7 crore (3,15,368 USD) compared to the previous fiscal year's ₹3,331,022,234 (4,01,49,908 USD). The cut was necessitated by the termination of US government aid, which the CTA had initially anticipated while drafting a proposed budget of ₹368 crore. With approximately 90% of its funding reliant on external aid, the CTA was compelled to revise its budget plans in response to the funding cut.

During the session, the Cabinet introduced a draft amendment to the official regulations concerning emergency government expenditures. The amendment outlines protocols for governance in cases where unforeseen circumstances render the Cabinet or both the Cabinet and Parliament non-operational. After in-depth discussions, the Parliament resolved to establish an ad hoc committee to refine the proposal. The committee, comprising two members of Parliament and one Cabinet representative appointed by the Speakers, will review the draft, implement necessary modifications, and present their recommendations during the 10th session of the 17th TPiE.

Concluding the ninth session, TPiE Speaker Khenpo Sonam Tenphel underscored the need for the CTA to work towards financial self-sufficiency, urging the Tibetan public to take greater responsibility rather than rely on external assistance. He also addressed the ongoing crisis inside Tibet, emphasizing the importance of sustaining Tibet's identity on the global stage. Additionally, he reiterated the need to fulfill His Holiness the Dalai Lama's vision and highlighted that the 9th World Parliamentary Convention on Tibet is scheduled to be held in Japan this June.

6 Indian lawmakers jointly declare Tibet-support on Dalai Lama reincarnation issue

01 April 2025, [Tibetan Review](#)

In what has been stated to be a profound demonstration of solidarity, a significant number of Indian Members of Parliament (MPs) have officially

signed a Joint Declaration, recognizing the fundamental and exclusive right of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan people to choose their religious leaders according to established religious and historical traditions in the wake of China's move to impose its own 15th Dalai Lama on the Tibetan people when the time comes.

The members, totalling 46 MP's, have expressed this as part of their support for safeguarding the human rights and the unique religious, cultural, linguistic, and national identity of the Tibetan people.

The move was stated to have been initiated by a group called Tibet Advocacy Alliance-India, a coalition of Tibetan NGO's, in a week-long advocacy campaign.

"We come together to send a resounding message to China: we stand with the Tibetan people in support of their right to religious and cultural freedoms," newindian.in Mar 31 quoted the Joint Declaration as saying.

It was stated to be meant to demonstrate the MPs' solidarity with the Tibetan people and convey a clear and unequivocal message: India supports the cultural and religious rights of the Tibetan people and does not tolerate external forces dictating the spiritual leadership and institutions of Tibetan Buddhism.

Along with the release of the Joint Declaration, several signatories have articulated their individual positions on the historical, traditional, and cultural rights of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan religious institutions to determine his reincarnation, free from Beijing's machinations.

These included Raju Bista, MP from West Bengal; and Dr Sasmit Patra and Sujeet Kumar, MP's from Odisha.

Dr Lobsang Yangtso, a representative of Tibet Advocacy Alliance-India, has said, "The enthusiastic and concrete support demonstrated by Indian MPs sends a clear message of support and solidarity to the Tibetan people. Their commitment to His Holiness the Dalai Lama's spiritual leadership is deeply appreciated and provides crucial strength in our ongoing efforts."

CHINA POLITICS

Investigation exposes China's global campaign of transnational repression

29 April 2025, [RFA](#), Jane Tang

RFA reporting with International Consortium of Investigative Journalists reveals how Beijing uses global institutions to silence critics abroad

An international investigation involving dozens of news organizations has revealed how Beijing is exploiting global institutions - from Interpol to the United Nations - to silence critics and expand its authoritarian reach worldwide.

Led by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ), the project, China Targets, brought together more than 100 journalists from 42 media organizations, including Radio Free Asia.

Over a 10-month period, reporters interviewed 105 individuals across 23 countries who had been pursued, harassed, or threatened by Chinese authorities - often for merely expressing dissent online or engaging in peaceful activism.

Targets include pro-democracy advocates from China and Hong Kong, as well as Uyghur and Tibetan exiles. Many described experiences of digital surveillance, threats to family members still in China and transnational pressure campaigns carried out through diplomatic or legal channels.

China Targets documents how protests were suppressed during Chinese leader Xi Jinping's foreign visits. Since 2019, at least seven of Xi's 31 trips saw local police detain or harass protesters.

The investigation also found that Beijing has weaponized international organizations such as Interpol - abusing its Red Notice system to target dissidents - and co-opted parts of the United Nations to surveil and intimidate human rights advocates, particularly those speaking out about abuses in Xinjiang and Tibet.

In one high-profile case, documents reviewed by RFA show that Chinese authorities enlisted billionaire Jack Ma to try to personally persuade a Chinese businessman whose extradition was being sought from France to return to China.

The revelations come amid mounting international concern over Beijing's efforts to reshape global norms and institutions in line with its political interests. Critics warn that these moves are undermining international frameworks originally designed to protect fundamental rights and the rule of law.

China deploys army of fake NGOs at UN to intimidate critics: media probe

28 April 2025, [France24](#)

Geneva (AFP) – China is deploying a growing army of organisations masquerading as NGOs to monitor and intimidate rights activists at the UN, a new

investigation by the ICIJ media consortium said on Monday.

China is deploying a growing army of organisations masquerading as NGOs to monitor and intimidate rights activists at the UN, a new investigation by the ICIJ media consortium said on Monday.

The number of Chinese NGOs registered with the UN has nearly doubled since 2018, an investigation found. Dubbed "China Targets", the fresh investigation involving 42 media organisations delves into the various tactics Beijing uses to silence critics beyond its borders.

One segment of the probe published by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ) deals with China's increasing offensive at the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva.

In particular, it focuses on the growing presence at the council of pro-China, government-organised non-governmental organisations, referred to as "Gongos". Such groups crowd into council sessions to praise China and present glowing accounts of its actions that are largely at odds with UN and expert findings of widespread rights violations and repression.

A bombshell report published by former UN rights chief Michelle Bachelet in 2022 for instance cited possible "crimes against humanity" against China's Uyghur minority in the western Xinjiang region.

Other reports have highlighted the separation of Tibetan children from their families and the targeting of democracy activists in Hong Kong.

But when legitimate NGOs raise such issues at the council, Gongos often strive to disrupt the session and drown out their testimonies, the ICIJ said.

'Corrosive'

An ICIJ analysis of 106 NGOs from mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan registered with the UN found that 59 had close links to the government in Beijing or the Chinese Communist Party.

The International Consortium of Investigative Journalists said China has aggressively targeted the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva.

During a regular review of China's rights record before the council last year, attended by AFP, more than half of the NGOs granted a speaking slot were pro-government groups.

"It's corrosive. It's dishonest," Michele Taylor, who served as US ambassador to the Human Rights Council from 2022 until January this year, was quoted as saying in the report.

She decried a broader effort by Beijing "to obfuscate their own human rights violations and reshape the narrative".

Increasingly, the Beijing-controlled groups are also used to monitor and intimidate those planning to testify about alleged abuses, the investigation found. The ICIJ and its partners said they spoke with 15 activists and lawyers focused on rights issues in China

who "described being surveilled or harassed by people suspected to be proxies for the Chinese government". Such incidents occurred both inside the UN and elsewhere in Geneva.

'We're watching'

The report highlighted how a group of Chinese activists and dissidents were so fearful of Beijing's swelling presence at the council that they in March last year refused to set foot inside the UN buildings.

The ICIJ said pro-China government-organised NGOs or Gongos are trying to shape the narrative against protests about Tibet and the Uyghurs.

"Instead, they gathered for a secret meeting on the top floor of a nondescript office building nearby" with UN rights chief Volker Turk, the report said.

But suddenly, four people claiming to work with the Guangdong Human rights Association showed up asking about the meeting, to which they had not been invited.

Staff from the International Service for Human Rights (ISHR) who were facilitating the meeting denied it was taking place.

The four left, but later, when two Uyghur participants left the office for a smoke, they reported that someone in a black car with tinted windows photographed them before people matching the description of the Guangdong group got into the vehicle and it pulled away.

Zumretay Arkin, vice president of the World Uyghur Congress, told ICIJ she believed the Guangdong group was sending a message from Beijing: "We're watching you... You can't escape us."

'Deadly reprisal'

The activists had reason to be fearful.

Over a decade ago, activist Cao Shunli was detained as she attempted to travel to Geneva ahead of a China rights record review at the UN.

After being held for several months without charge, she fell gravely ill and died on March 14, 2014.

ICIJ said her death "stood out as a powerful warning shot", determining that the "deadly reprisal" had discouraged other activists from engaging with the UN. A decade later, Chinese rights defenders are participating in UN activities at record low numbers, the investigation found. At the same time, the number of Chinese

Professors from Top Chinese University Allegedly Call to End CCP Rule

28 April 2025, [Chinascopes](#)

On April 28, a manifesto allegedly co-authored by Lin Ying, Dean of the School of Bioscience and Bioengineering at South China University of Technology, and Han Shuangyan, Dean's Assistant, circulated online, calling on Chinese citizens and young

students to “stand up against the regime that oppresses us and deprives us of our human rights, and fight for democracy and freedom!”

The manifesto made points about:

“Xi Jinping’s Reappointment: The Endless Continuation of One-Party Rule”

“Recent Events: Intensifying Hardship and Oppression Among the People”

“The Zero-COVID Policy and Public Anger”

“The ‘996’ Work Schedule and Youth Struggles”
{Editor’s Note: ‘996’ refers to a common abuse of Chinese white-collar workers, who have to work from 9am to 9pm for 6 days every week.}

The manifesto states “If you do not stand up today, you may become another victim of history tomorrow. Now is the time for your voices to be heard! You must not only call for freedom, democracy, and justice, but also fight for a future where you can think, choose, and speak freely.”

Demands from the document include:

Ending one-party rule and implementing democratic elections.

Restoring freedom of speech and ensuring freedom of the press.

Improving livelihoods and achieving a fair society.

Establishing the rule of law and protecting human rights.

The letter is signed by Lin Ying and Han Shuangyan, with their handwritten signatures, resident ID numbers, and a red official university stamp.

At this time, the authenticity of the manifesto and its claimed authorship has not been verified. Neither Lin Ying nor Han Shuangyan has publicly responded either.

About the China Targets investigation

28 April 2025, [ICIJ](#), Whitney Joiner and Scilla Alecci

An ICIJ investigation exposes how Beijing abuses international institutions, including Interpol and the United Nations, to terrorize its critics and extend its repressive tactics worldwide.

China Targets is a cross-border investigation led by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists that uncovers the sprawling scope and terrifying tactics of Beijing’s campaign to target regime critics living overseas.

The 10-month investigation also reveals how the United Nations has become a staging ground for China’s transnational repression under Xi Jinping’s regime — and how Chinese authorities abuse Interpol red notices for political ends.

ICIJ and 42 media partners interviewed 105 people in 23 countries who have been targeted by Chinese authorities in recent years for criticizing the government’s policies in public and privately. These individuals include Chinese and Hong Kong political

dissidents as well as members of oppressed Uyghur and Tibetan minorities.

Reporters took extraordinary security measures to protect the identities of the victims — many of whom asked to remain anonymous for fear of retaliation against them or their families — and to corroborate evidence of the state-sponsored harassment.

ICIJ and its partners studied internal government documents, examined secret audio and video recordings of police interrogations, and pored over confidential U.N. and Interpol records, court filings and intelligence reports to analyze Beijing’s authoritarian reach.

Previously unseen Chinese government records spanning from 2001 to 2020, including an internal police textbook and confidential security guidelines, provided a unique glimpse into China’s playbook for cracking down on dissent.

These closely guarded documents detailed — in the Chinese authorities’ own words — how domestic security officers should identify and control targets. The security guidelines established a template for repression that Chinese authorities use today on victims overseas, ICIJ found.

Half of the 105 targets interviewed by ICIJ and its media partners stated that family members in China had been intimidated and interrogated by police or state security officials. Several said the intimidation came just hours after the targets had participated in protests or public events overseas.

Sixty of the victims believed they had been followed or were being surveilled in their adopted country. Twenty-two victims said they received physical threats or were assaulted by civilians who openly supported the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Nineteen said they had received suspicious emails or experienced hacking attempts, including by state actors.

Previous ICIJ investigations exposed Beijing’s repressive policies against Muslim minorities inside China — part of the government’s sweeping program of mass surveillance and population control. China Targets documents how, under Xi, authorities have exported and expanded some of those repressive tactics, in an effort to neutralize individuals perceived as threats to national security even though they are outside the country’s borders.

ICIJ accepts information about wrongdoing by corporate, government or public services around the world. We do our utmost to guarantee the confidentiality of our sources. The disarming effect of this state-sponsored intimidation is so powerful that many activists and ethnic minorities overseas have stopped their advocacy, fearing their families back home could be harmed or imprisoned.

ICIJ discovered that not even Geneva — which the United Nations calls the “capital of peace” due to its role as the European headquarters of the U.N. and

international organizations dedicated to diplomacy and human rights — was beyond the Chinese government’s frightening reach.

Human rights activists and lawyers told ICIJ they had been surveilled, harassed or intimidated by people they believe to be Chinese diplomats or government proxies, including delegates from nongovernmental organizations. The U.N. grants thousands of NGOs “consultative status” — offering the groups certain privileges with the expectation that they act without government interference. But an ICIJ analysis of 106 such NGOs from mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan revealed that 59 are closely connected to the Chinese government or the Communist Party.

Chinese authorities also abuse Interpol, the world’s largest mechanism for police cooperation, ICIJ and its partners found. Through Interpol, China pursues dissidents, powerful businesspeople and Uyghur rights advocates, in apparent violation of Interpol’s rules. Many targets discovered they were wanted only after being stopped at a border control.

China Targets reveals the scope of crackdowns on protesters during Xi Jinping’s foreign travels. During at least seven of Xi’s 31 overseas visits between 2019 and 2024, local law enforcement infringed on dozens of protesters’ rights to shield the Chinese president from dissent, detaining or arresting activists, often for spurious reasons. In the cases ICIJ analyzed, the campaign to silence opponents of the Communist Party appears to have involved local law enforcement in host countries, revealing the extent to which China wields its political and economic power to pressure foreign governments and institutions to bend to its will.

At the U.N., China is deploying a growing army of puppet organizations to monitor and intimidate human rights activists

28 April, 2025, [ICIJ](#), Tamsin-Lee-Smith and Jelena Cosic

In the “capital of peace,” the palatial grounds of the United Nations Office at Geneva were meant to embody the 20th-century ideal of a postwar world — when countries might seek to avert conflict through diplomacy. During the thousands of meetings held at the Palais des Nations each year, delegates press openly and passionately for their convictions. And yet for 15 human rights activists in March 2024, the U.N. complex held risks.

Fearing retribution from the Chinese government against their families in mainland China and Hong Kong, several of the activists were no longer willing to set foot inside the diplomatic site. Instead, they gathered for a secret meeting on the top floor of a

nondescript office building nearby. They were there to discuss human rights abuses in China and Hong Kong with the U.N. high commissioner for human rights, Volker Türk.

“We took all of the necessary precautions,” Zumretay Arkin, vice president of the World Uyghur Congress, which advocates for the rights of the Turkic ethnic group native to China’s northwest Xinjiang region, told the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists.

Arkin and her colleagues were meeting in the offices of the International Service for Human Rights (ISHR), an independent organization that trains activists in U.N. advocacy. But minutes before Türk and his aides were due to arrive, two women and two men appeared outside the office. “How can I help you?” asked an ISHR staffer as he opened the door, according to an account he gave to ICIJ.

One of the women announced that she and the group, who claimed to be from the “Guangdong Human Rights Association,” had arrived for a meeting, though they weren’t invited. She pressed for information as her associates peered through the glass, but the staffer denied a meeting was taking place. “I just disengaged from the conversation, and they left,” the staffer told ICIJ. (ISHR says it submitted a statement to U.N. authorities a week later, and also reported the incident to Swiss authorities.)

Then two Uyghur activists left the office for a smoke. They later reported that a figure in the back of a black Mercedes-Benz van with tinted windows appeared to photograph them. People matching the description of the Guangdong group entered the same vehicle before it pulled away.

“This was an act clearly aimed at intimidating and clearly aimed at sending a message to everyone that was here,” said Raphaël Viana David, a program manager at ISHR. Arkin told ICIJ she believes the Guangdong group was sending a signal from the Chinese government: “We’re watching you. We’re monitoring you. You can’t escape us.”

The incident is one of dozens of similar examples ICIJ and its media partners have heard from representatives of the Chinese diaspora — pro-democracy activists, members of ethnic and religious minority groups and others — whom the Chinese government has tried to threaten into silence around the world. The findings are part of China Targets, an investigation by ICIJ and 42 media partners that explores how the long arm of the Chinese state targets critics of the government beyond its own borders — including at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, the heart of the U.N. human rights system.

ICIJ and its partners spoke to 15 activists and lawyers focused on human rights in China who described being surveilled or harassed by people suspected to be proxies for the Chinese government, including those

from Chinese nongovernmental organizations. These incidents occurred both inside the Palais des Nations and in Geneva at large. Some activists say their family members, who they believed were pressured by Chinese authorities, asked them to stop speaking out or warned them of the dangers of their activism. U.N. authorities have also reported activists and lawyers being threatened with physical assault, rape and death.

The Palais des Nations, near the shore of Lake Geneva, is where the U.N. Human Rights Council, a body of 47 member states, meets under a domed ceiling no less than three times a year. Geneva is also home to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, which investigates, monitors and condemns atrocities worldwide.

Members of nongovernmental organizations, or NGOs, can observe sessions and take to the floor of the Human Rights Council to make statements. It's a space where survivors and family members of victims can meet face-to-face with the representatives of perpetrators. NGOs provide essential facts and on-the-ground testimony to U.N. experts, officials and diplomats.

Over the past seven years, however, a growing army of Chinese NGOs has descended on the Palais des Nations. Their delegates seek to disrupt and drown out criticism of China, heaping praise on their government.

"It's corrosive. It's dishonest. It's subversive," said Michèle Taylor, who served as U.S. ambassador to the Human Rights Council from 2022 until earlier this year. Taylor said that China-backed groups "are masquerading as NGOs" as part of a broader effort by Beijing "to obfuscate their own human rights violations and reshape the narrative around China's actions and culpabilities."

And their presence is being felt.

"The impact of our work is not the same as if we could do all this openly and in person without fear of reprisals," said Renee Xia, who runs Chinese Human Rights Defenders, a U.S.-based coalition of advocates. "We don't know who is recording or videotaping or writing down."

Thousands of NGOs at the U.N. hold consultative status, granting them certain privileges with the expectation that they act free from government interference. But an ICIJ analysis of 106 of these NGOs from mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan reveals that 59 are closely connected to the Chinese government or the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Forty-six are led by people with roles in the government or the party. Ten accept more than 50% of their funding from the Chinese state.

In Geneva, government-organized nongovernmental organizations, like the dozens identified by ICIJ, are dubbed "GONGOs." "It's paradoxical," said Titus Chen,

an international relations professor at Taiwan's National Chengchi University. "An NGO is not supposed to be organized by the government."

Today, China is one of the most powerful member states at the U.N. It's one of the five permanent members of the Security Council, alongside the United States and Russia. China is also expected to fund one-fifth of the U.N.'s regular budget this year — more than any other country except the U.S. With the return of Donald Trump to the White House and the withdrawal of the U.S. from the Human Rights Council, a vacuum has opened — one China is poised to fill.

The Chinese government stands alone in the seriousness of the threat it poses to the global human rights system, according to Kenneth Roth, who ran Human Rights Watch for nearly 30 years. "To deter condemnation of its severe repression, foremost its mass detention of Uyghurs, Beijing has proposed to rewrite international human rights law," he told ICIJ.

China has used its clout to garner praise from other U.N. member states. It has also restricted independent experts' access to the country and stopped internal critics from leaving. And when exiled critics come to Geneva, China's representatives try to block and intimidate them.

"The U.N. is one of the only forums where we can raise our cause," said Arkin, who at 10 moved with her family to Montreal from Urumqi, the capital of China's Xinjiang region, to escape anti-Uyghur discrimination. But, she said, "it's become one of the places where these governments carry out their repression."

With autocracy on the rise globally, independent organizations at the U.N. carry a heavier burden to speak out about atrocities and persuade those who can to take action. If China's power continues to go unchecked by U.N. authorities, it threatens the credibility of the institution in its efforts to monitor and document violations and abuses not just in China, but all over the world.

A 'deadly reprisal'

More than a decade before the activists' meeting at the International Service for Human Rights, Cao Shunli, a prominent Chinese human rights activist, was abducted while traveling to the same offices.

Cao had pressed the government to let citizens contribute to a report Beijing was submitting to the Human Rights Council ahead of its 2013 review on China. That summer she staged a two-month-long sit-in outside the Foreign Affairs Ministry in Beijing. She had already been detained several times for her activism.

In September, Cao, 52, tried to board a flight from Beijing Capital International Airport to Geneva, where she planned to attend a training program on U.N. human rights advocacy. Instead, she disappeared. (Several other activists and lawyers from other Chinese cities were reportedly interrogated and

warned not to attend the same training program, U.N. authorities said.)

- It would be weeks before Chinese authorities confirmed to Cao's family that she was being held at Chaoyang District Detention Center in Beijing, and had been charged with "picking quarrels and making trouble." According to reports, Cao, whose health rapidly deteriorated, was denied adequate medical care. She died of multiple organ failure in March 2014 after being moved to a military hospital some days earlier.

During a 2015 session of the Human Rights Council, China said that Cao was "by no means a human rights defender." It has also said that "no one suffers reprisal for taking part in lawful activities."

But an internal government document leaked from the public security bureau of Tekes County, Xinjiang, issued eight months before Cao was blocked from leaving China, reveals tactics used to control any perceived threats to national security, including regime critics. The PowerPoint presentation for domestic security officers provides instructions on border control, including preventing citizens from taking part in events "such as an invitation for human rights training from human rights organizations abroad." The document was shared with ICIJ by Adrian Zenz, director of China studies at the Victims of Communism Memorial Foundation.

Cao's death stood out as a powerful warning shot. The "deadly reprisal" — as human rights groups referred to it — has discouraged other activists from traveling abroad to engage with the U.N. in Geneva. A decade later, the participation of Chinese human rights defenders in U.N. activity has dropped to a record low, according to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Meanwhile, ICIJ found, the number of Chinese NGOs with U.N. consultative status has almost doubled since 2018. That year, mounting evidence of detention camps in Xinjiang gained international attention, followed by Hong Kong security forces' brutal crackdown on pro-democracy protesters in 2019. ICIJ's analysis of the 106 Chinese NGOs shows that 59 aren't independent of the government or the Communist Party. Instead, they're GONGOs. In at least 46 of these organizations, directors, secretaries, vice presidents or other high-level staff also hold positions in government departments or with the CCP. In one extreme example, the current secretary-general of a ubiquitous NGO is also the human rights director at the CCP Central Committee Publicity Department, also known as the propaganda department. (A former secretary-general held both positions as well.)

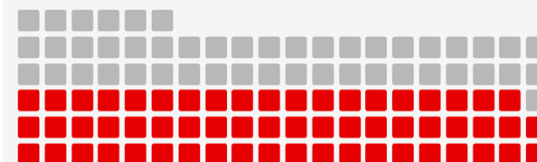
China's growing army of GONGOs

More than half of Chinese NGOs at the U.N. have links to the government or Communist Party.

Each square equals one NGO. Explore the connections below.

Is the NGO actually a GONGO? Is the GONGO's leadership tied to the government or CCP?
Has the GONGO made pro-China statements at the U.N.?
Is the GONGO majority-funded by the government?

■ Yes ■ No, but they are GONGOs ■ No, they are Chinese NGOs



Source: ICIJ analysis of ISHR data

ICIJ STORIES THAT ROCK THE WORLD

* A Flourish pictogram

Liu Pengyu, a spokesperson for the Chinese Embassy in Washington, D.C., did not directly respond to questions about Beijing's deployment of NGOs at the U.N. in Geneva. Instead, Liu wrote in an email to ICIJ that China had contributed "constructively to global human rights governance."

"At the international level, China has put forward a series of proposals at the UN Human Rights Council on promoting human rights through cooperation and development, and on advancing economic, social, cultural rights as well as the rights of specific groups," he said.

The U.N. Human Rights Office told ICIJ in a statement that it works to secure space for independent organizations but that it cannot start differentiating between "authentic" and "non-authentic" NGOs and that such a distinction was unworkable and potentially open to abuse.

The passage of Hong Kong's national security law in 2020, which criminalized "colluding with foreign forces," and further legislation in March 2024 has heightened the risks for activists there as well. One Hong Konger, now living overseas, told ICIJ that those who attend the U.N. are mostly in exile. "The situation is that many of us don't want to go inside the Palais, but there are still some who will. ... We have to be careful."

As these voices fade out, the ones doing China's bidding are increasingly dominant.

The CCP's smokescreen

The International Service for Human Rights told ICIJ it has identified the two women from the group that tried to attend the March 2024 meeting at its offices; ISHR said it recognized the women from details it saw online about their activities in Geneva at the time. The woman who spoke to the ISHR staffer is Zhou Lulu, a Chinese Communist Party branch secretary and vice dean of Guangzhou University's Institute for Human Rights, according to ISHR. Guangzhou is the capital of Guangdong, the Chinese province the group claimed

to be from. ISHR said she was accompanied by Wang Shuqi, who, according to China's Global Times, is an assistant researcher at the Human Rights Research Center at the Northwest University of Political Science and Law in Shaanxi province.

Asked in a telephone call whether she tried to attend ISHR's offices as a representative of the Guangdong Human Rights Association, Zhou said she couldn't recall: "I did so much since that journey," she said. "So I don't remember which one. I can't remember so clearly."

At the time of the meeting, Zhou was in Geneva with a delegation that included experts and lawyers specializing in "religious freedom, history, human rights and counterterrorism," according to a Chinese state-run broadcaster. They were seeking "to showcase China's achievements and best practices."

Raphaël Viana David, the ISHR program manager, said he encountered Zhou in the Palais des Nations one day after the meeting taking photos of panelists at an event where a Tibetan exile was among the speakers. Viana David said he asked Zhou to delete the photos and that, after some resistance, she eventually complied. Photography by NGO representatives is prohibited at side events inside the Palais des Nations without prior authorization.

Zhou had given a speech at the Human Rights Council just days earlier as a representative of the Chinese Society for Human Rights Studies, or CSHRS. The Beijing-based group describes itself as "China's largest non-governmental organization devoted to promoting human rights." According to ICIJ's analysis, the NGO qualifies as a GONGO because three of its top leaders hold positions with the CCP, and it made pro-China statements at the Human Rights Council.

Wang, who did not respond to questions from ICIJ, was also in Geneva in mid-March 2024, speaking at a U.N. side event. According to ISHR, she has previously spoken at the Human Rights Council as a delegate of CSHRS. The organization got a high-profile nod in a 2022 speech by Chinese President Xi Jinping when he spoke on human rights to some of the highest ranking figures within the Communist Party. Xi urged China to "play an active role in the human rights affairs of the U.N." and added that "full play" should be given to CSHRS in order to build China's influence.

Titus Chen, who in 2019 published an exhaustive analysis of speeches, declarations and announcements from the CSHRS website, calls the group a mouthpiece for Communist Party propaganda. "They are two sides of the same coin," Chen said.

CSHRS did not respond to detailed questions from ICIJ; however, a representative of the organization said over the phone: "We are simply an academic institution."

All Chinese NGOs must register with the Ministry of Civil Affairs and be monitored by a government

department or the CCP; this alone doesn't qualify them as GONGOs. But ICIJ's analysis shows the extent to which the government or the party interferes with the independence of some Chinese NGOs with U.N. consultative status. For example, 53 of these organizations publicly pledge loyalty to the Communist Party on their websites or in official documents. And 12 go even further, allowing the party to intervene in their decision making, which can include approving large donations or leadership appointments.

What is a GONGO?

"GONGO" is a term for government-organized nongovernmental organizations — groups that are expected to be independent but, instead, hold close ties to governments or political parties. Connections can be through funding or staffing, or reflected in public statements.

Read more

The U.N.'s Economic and Social Council awarded CSHRS consultative status back in 1998. NGOs with consultative status can present written and oral statements to the Human Rights Council, lobby in the corridors of power and host side events in the Palais des Nations. Reporters from ICIJ and its media partners attended several of these events and witnessed Chinese diplomats lambasting speakers — and NGO representatives doing the same.

For example, at a September 2024 panel event, speakers had just finished discussing the plight of Uyghurs detained in camps in Xinjiang when a woman from the audience asked a question: "Have you ever been to China?" She was from the U.N. Association of China, an NGO with U.N. consultative status — another GONGO, according to ICIJ's analysis. She then accused the panelists of being "full of lies and rumors," urging them to pay more attention to racism and gun violence in the U.S.

Of all the Chinese NGOs that spoke at the Human Rights Council sessions from 2018 to 2024, ICIJ found that CSHRS was the most active, appearing more than 300 times on speakers lists (both in person and online). The majority of its statements can be classified as pro-China, according to an ICIJ analysis of data collected by ISHR. Dozens of other Chinese NGOs also flooded the sessions with praise of the Chinese government — the vast majority of those were GONGOs.



China Society for Human Rights Studies holds a side event at which

experts detail the concept and practices of human rights in China during the 53rd session of the U.N. Human Rights Council in July 2023. Image: Lian Yi/Xinhua via Getty Images

After the March incident in Geneva, ISHR says it submitted photographic evidence to support its account of what happened — including the identities of the CSHRS associates — to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. Each year, the U.N. secretary-general publishes a report detailing alleged reprisals and acts of intimidation for cooperation with the U.N. in the field of human rights. The aim of the report, the office explained to ICIJ in a statement, is to promote accountability by calling out the perpetrators. But the Guangdong group episode went unmentioned in the secretary-general's report in 2024. The office told ICIJ "the information it received raised concerns but did not fully meet the standard criteria (threshold) for inclusion in the report."

The office also said it reviewed ISHR's statement and evidence and "then brought the situation to the attention of the Chinese Government, in accordance with our usual practice." It added that it had had no contact with the China Society for Human Rights Studies regarding the incident.

Creating an army of GONGOS

Chinese diplomats routinely implore U.N. authorities to bar China's critics. Letters provided to ICIJ by Emma Reilly, a former U.N. human rights officer, show persistent lobbying of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to refuse Tibetans and Uyghurs accreditation to the Human Rights Council, labeling them "secessionists." As early as 2001, the Chinese ambassador requested the then high commissioner to "avoid meeting with any member of organizations against the Chinese government, such as Falun Gong, Tibetan and the so-called exiled dissidents, just as you did in the last few years."

Since Xi's reelection as Communist Party general secretary in 2017 and president the following year, China has sought greater influence within the U.N. human rights system and become more aggressive in silencing dissent.

In 2017, the Chinese government first donated to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, giving \$100,000; that figure rose to \$4 million by 2023. These pledges are overshadowed by those of several other member states. (The U.S. gave more than \$36 million in 2024.) But unlike most of the leading donors, the Chinese government carefully earmarks all the money for specific causes, according to the office's annual report. Some of China's donations have gone to funding special rapporteurs for the right to development, rights of migrants as well as unilateral coercive measures — often referred to as sanctions (\$1.2 million in total between 2019 and 2023). The

special rapporteur on these measures visited China in May 2024 and then called upon states to lift sanctions imposed on the country, citing their disproportionate impact on parts of Xinjiang's economy.

Eleven countries abstained from voting, avoiding China's wrath. And several Muslim-majority countries sided with Beijing, including Indonesia, Pakistan and Qatar. On Twitter the spokesperson for Beijing's Foreign Ministry declared it a "victory for developing countries," adding that "human rights must not be used as a pretext to make up lies and interfere in other countries' internal affairs, or to contain, coerce & humiliate others."

With Bachelet gone, the fallout landed on the desk of her successor: Volker Türk. The Austrian human rights lawyer, U.N. careerist and long-term confidant of the secretary-general said nearly three months into the job that he felt duty-bound to follow up on the report's findings.

In August 2024, nearly two years after Bachelet's report, a spokesperson for Türk, who has led the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights since October 2022, said in a statement that "many problematic laws and policies remain in place" and that "allegations of human rights violations, including torture, need to be fully investigated." But the statement stopped short of characterizing such violations as possible crimes against humanity.

Since the Trump administration took office in January 2025, its sweeping foreign aid cuts have further plunged many China-focused human rights groups into a vulnerable position.

Kenneth Roth, formerly of Human Rights Watch, told ICIJ that while Türk has been outspoken on some issues, such as conflicts in Gaza and Ukraine, by pursuing quiet diplomacy with China instead of outright condemnation "he's playing into Beijing's game plan."

A spokesperson for Türk told ICIJ in a statement that he was committed to engaging in "frank discussions" with the Chinese government and publicly advocating for victims. The spokesperson said the office is "always guided by the goal of helping improve human rights protections for the people on the ground."

Among the world's autocracies

As the U.N. has struggled to stand up to China, its diplomats and their allies have become gatekeepers for NGOs seeking U.N. consultative status. An organization that isn't set up by a government or international agreement can be deemed an NGO, according to the rules set out in a 1996 U.N. resolution. The criteria for earning consultative status include transparent and democratic decision making.

Copies of NGOs' charters, certificates of registration and most recent financial statements must be submitted as part of the application process. NGOs also complete a questionnaire in which they must

disclose their links to governments, including whether any government officials are on their boards or executive teams. They need to state whether they receive government funding and how much. Applications are reviewed by a team of U.N. officials who perform some basic vetting before they are scrutinized by diplomats at the U.N.'s Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations in New York.

It's an unusual mix of member states mingling, said one diplomat who sits on the committee and spoke on the condition of anonymity. Over the past 10 years, half of its member states qualify as "authoritarian regimes," according to an ICIJ review using criteria from the Economist Intelligence Unit's 2024 Democracy Index. Cuba, Nicaragua and Pakistan have sat on the committee alongside China since at least 2015 — all authoritarian regimes according to EIU's index.

A delay tactic to block NGOs seeking consultative status is commonplace. Diplomats on the Committee, for example, can ask a trivial question, automatically deferring an NGO's application. China has consistently outpaced other committee members in its obstruction, according to a new analysis by ISHR — and sometimes they work together. China coordinates closely with its allies, each taking turns to block NGOs on behalf of other members, according to a U.S. diplomat familiar with the process.

NGOs that campaign against human rights violations in China and Hong Kong no longer stand a chance to achieve U.N. status, said Carmen Lau, of the Hong Kong Democracy Council. "Organizations like ours would never be able to apply for the [consultative] status in the U.N.," she added. "We always partner with [other] NGOs ... to advocate in the U.N."

There have been repeated calls for politicized deferrals to cease — including from the high commissioner's office in Geneva. But the practice continues, and the proportion of independent human rights NGOs participating in U.N. sessions is in danger of receding compared with groups that back the Chinese government.

'China's playground'

Before the sun had fully risen in Geneva on a January morning in 2024, a long line of Chinese NGO delegates had formed at the security office by the entrance to the Palais des Nations. They had arrived to secure a place to listen in on the Human Rights Council's first review of China in about five years.

At the session, Chinese Ambassador Chen Xu boasted that his government had lifted nearly 100 million people out of poverty and "eradicated absolute poverty once and for all." Another 161 countries spoke, each allocated 45 seconds. The division of allegiances was stark and predictable. The U.S. condemned China for "the ongoing genocide" in

Xinjiang. Russia, Iran and Venezuela lauded the Chinese government's achievements.

Mao Junxiang, executive director of the Human Rights Research Center at China's Central South University, wrote an essay after attending the review with the China Society for Human Rights Studies, in which he observed that a struggle with "foreign anti-China" NGOs over seating underscored the "politicization" of the day. He also accused them of submitting "false and defamatory materials" against China to the U.N. Topjor Tsultrim, a 25-year-old activist in New York of Tibetan heritage, said there was an "air of animosity" as he waited in line with other NGOs to enter the Palais des Nations. Once inside, as he approached the room where the review would take place, Tsultrim said at least one individual with NGO accreditation appeared to use a smartphone to photograph or record him and others, according to a report later filed with the U.N. In the report, Tsultrim, now communications director for Students for a Free Tibet, said security staff were initially dismissive, though one officer eventually spoke to the person with the phone.

Rushan Abbas, co-founder of the U.S.-based Campaign for Uyghurs whose sister was arrested in Xinjiang nearly seven years ago and remains in prison, made a similar claim. Nine days after the review in Geneva, Abbas submitted [testimony](#) to the U.S. Congressional-Executive Commission on China, writing, "Another pro-China attendee was taking pictures of Tibetan and Uyghur rights defenders as we were standing in the line to enter the hall, and unfortunately, it took repeated cries from activists to get the U.N. security to stop this individual."

Matthew Brown, a public information officer for the Human Rights Council, told ICIJ that U.N. staff alerted to such incidents "intervene directly and follow up with Security personnel if necessary," adding that "many times, photographs have been deleted from phones."

Abbas told ICIJ that "even after we got in, we were sitting there, those Chinese GONGOs were taking pictures of us."

"I got photographed when I was on the floor [of the chamber]," said Sophie Richardson, the former China Director at Human Rights Watch, who sat between two GONGO representatives. "The guy took a picture of the screen of my laptop [as she live-tweeted the session]. I said to him, 'You know this is public, anyway?' Then he just took a picture of my face."

For her part, Abbas told ICIJ, "I did not report [this] to the U.N. authorities because I lost faith in them, as China was acting ... like the U.N. was its playground."



Tibetan activists protest outside the U.N. Offices at Geneva during the review of China's rights record by the Human Rights Council in January 2024. Image: Fabrice Coffrini/AFP via Getty Images

China refines departure tax refund policy to encourage inbound consumption

27 April 2025, China.org.cn



In a fresh move to boost inbound spending, China unveiled a new set of measures on Sunday to further optimize its departure tax refund policy to improve the shopping experience of overseas travelers.

The minimum purchase threshold for departure tax refunds has been lowered, allowing overseas travelers to apply for a refund if they spend at least 200 yuan (about 27.75 U.S. dollars) at the same store on the same day and meet other relevant requirements, according to a circular jointly issued by the Ministry of Commerce and five other government departments.

While ensuring proper risk management, refunds will be made available through multiple channels, including mobile payments, bank cards and cash, to better accommodate the diverse payment preferences of overseas travelers. The upper limit for cash refund has been raised to 20,000 yuan.

The circular also outlines steps to expand the number of departure tax refund stores, enrich the supply of related goods and improve related services.

More departure tax refund stores will be set up in major shopping areas, pedestrian streets, tourist sites, resorts, cultural venues, airports, passenger ports and hotels, according to the circular.

Departure tax refund stores are encouraged to broaden product offerings to include time-honored

brands, renowned Chinese consumer goods, smart devices, intangible cultural heritage items, crafts and specialty products, among others.

A series of activities to promote shopping in China will be launched to support local efforts to cultivate and promote high-quality signature products, such as "city gifts" and "must-buy" items, in departure tax refund stores.

Speaking at a press conference on Sunday, Sheng Qiuping, vice minister of commerce, said that overseas travelers mainly purchased international brands when claiming tax refunds, with relatively few domestic brands available and limited shopping choices overall. The lower threshold not only reduces the entry barrier for tax refund shopping, but also allows more specialty stores, souvenir shops, and gift shops with lower average transaction amounts to join the tax refund network, helping promote the sales of Chinese brands, Sheng said.

Meanwhile, the regulations regarding departure tax refund have been revised to optimize related services and streamline the refund process to help overseas travelers more easily benefit from departure tax refund policies, according to the country's taxation authorities.

Earlier this month, China announced a nationwide shift from a refund-upon-departure model to a refund-upon-purchase model for departure tax refund, enabling foreign visitors to instantly claim value-added tax rebates at tax-free stores across the country.

"Providing overseas travelers with a greater variety of shopping options and more convenient tax refund services will help stimulate inbound consumption and support high-standard opening up and economic growth," said Chen Binkai, vice president of the Central University of Finance and Economics.

China started to implement the departure tax refund policy for overseas travelers in 2015. Since its implementation, the scale of departure tax refunds has grown year by year, benefiting an increasing number of overseas travelers.

Official data showed that last year, the sales revenue of goods eligible for departure tax refunds and the amount of tax refunded both posted strong growth, rising by 120 percent and 130 percent year on year, respectively.

Chinese Ministry of Education Issues Notice on Military Recruitment at Universities

27 April 2025, Chinascope

The Chinese Ministry of Education recently published a document titled "Notice on Promoting Military Recruitment Among University Students for 2025."

The notice said that “university students are considered a crucial talent pool for building a world-class military.” It encourages graduating students to enlist and requires local governments and universities to “enhance their political awareness and ensure effective implementation of such recruitment.”

Specific recruitment strategies listed in the document include:

Strengthening Specialized Information Sessions Universities and local conscription offices should collaborate to conduct extensive “Military Recruitment Promotion on Campus” activities. These include policy briefings, military open days, and experience camps to ensure comprehensive outreach. They should utilize veteran university students, form “Military Recruitment Lecture Teams,” and conduct personalized, face-to-face promotional campaigns.

Building an All-Media Communication Network Authorities should leverage official platforms such as the National Recruitment Network and use university websites, WeChat public accounts, and short video platforms to create engaging promotional content, including microfilms, animations, and live interviews. The creation of online cultural works reflecting military life is encouraged to enhance the impact of recruitment messaging.

Creating Immersive Promotional Environments Universities should set up dedicated recruitment promotion areas in key locations such as main campus roads, cafeterias, and dormitory areas. This includes broadcasting recruitment videos, displaying banners, posting posters, and distributing brochures to foster a strong recruitment atmosphere. Additionally, recruitment content should be integrated into freshman military training, campus job fairs, and graduation ceremonies for targeted mobilization.

{Editor’s Note: Some have said that the Chinese Communist Party is now promoting military enlistment to college graduates because graduates are having a hard time finding jobs in the current Chinese economy.}

China vows in Politburo meeting to support firms, workers affected by tariffs

25 April 2025, [Reuters](#)

China's top policymakers pledged to support firms and workers most affected by the impact of triple-digit U.S. tariffs and urged the country to prepare for worst-case scenarios, state media reported on Friday.

The ruling Communist Party's Politburo reiterated plans to accelerate debt issuance, ease monetary policy and vowed to support employers to safeguard

jobs as China hunkers down for a trade war with the United States.

No announcement of additional deficit spending beyond what was approved in March came out from the readout.

"It seems Beijing is not in a rush to launch a large stimulus at this stage. It takes time to monitor and evaluate the timing and the size of the trade shock," said Zhiwei Zhang, chief economist at Pinpoint Asset Management.

The state media Xinhua report on the Politburo's Friday meeting said the policy toolkit must be continuously refined to stabilize employment and the economy, with new measures introduced in a timely manner as circumstances evolve.

The meeting also called for comprehensive planning for "worst-case scenarios" and concrete steps to bolster the economy, Xinhua said.

The country will increase the proportion of unemployment insurance funds that can be returned to companies greatly affected by tariffs, in a bid to stabilise jobs, according to the readout.

"Multiple measures should be taken to help enterprises in difficulty. (We should) strengthen financing support and accelerate the integration of domestic sales and foreign trade," Xinhua reported.

"The Politburo meeting emphasized 'bottom line' thinking and adequate policy plans, showing a new round of stimulus may be smaller than expected... the significance given to stabilising jobs is higher than economic stabilisation," said Xing Zhaopeng, senior China strategist at ANZ.

The country will also cut interest rates and banks' reserve requirement ratio "in a timely manner" and develop consumption in the services sector, according to the readout.

Politburo meetings usually set policy tone rather than unveiling detailed implementation plans.

China's economy grew 5.4% in the first quarter, beating expectations, but markets fear a sharp downturn in the year ahead as U.S. tariffs pose the biggest risk to the world's second-largest economy in decades.

U.S. President Donald Trump and Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent struck a more conciliatory tone this week, saying the tariffs were unsustainable and signaling openness to de-escalating the trade war.

Beijing called on Washington to remove the tariffs to create space for talks while also granting some exemptions on U.S. imports from its 125% counter-tariffs.

Chinese President Xi Jinping has toured Southeast Asia and other officials have intensified diplomatic outreach to unite countries against Trump's tariff offensive. Beijing has also threatened retaliation against capitals siding with Washington.

At home, the government has promised to support exporters who try to shift their sales to the domestic market, in what analysts see as a political message, rather than economic policy, designed to project national pride to the domestic audience and show defiance to the U.S. administration.

Public messaging and diplomatic outreach aside, China's economy has entered the trade war more exposed than ever before to shocks to global demand, while flirting with deflation due to sluggish income growth and a prolonged property crisis.

China has set an ambitious 2025 growth target of though analysts believe it may be increasingly difficult to achieve in the face of hefty U.S. tariffs.

The IMF downgraded its forecast for China's economic growth to 4% this year and next, down 0.6 percentage points and 0.5 points, respectively, from its January outlook.

China's action on climate change will not slow despite global political changes, Xi says

23 April 2025, [Reuters](#)

China's actions to address climate change will not slow down despite global political developments, President Xi Jinping said on Wednesday, according to the official Xinhua news agency.

Xi made the remarks in a speech to a video summit initiated by the United Nations and Brazil to discuss climate change and the "just energy transition," Xinhua reported.

"Although some major countries are keen on unilateralism and protectionism, which have led to severe impacts on international rules and international order, history will always advance in twists and turns," Xi said.

"The more turbulent and chaotic the international situation is, the more solidly must we uphold the international system with the United Nations at its heart," he added.

Xi did not directly mention the United States, which is locked in a trade war with China and has sought to accelerate fossil fuel production under President Donald Trump.

Brazil will host the COP30 climate change negotiations this year, and is hoping to persuade China, the world's biggest energy consumer and greenhouse gas producer, to make stronger pledges to cut its emissions.

Countries were supposed to set new 2035 "nationally determined contributions" (NDCs) by February this year, but only a small number have released their plans. Xi said China would announce its new goals before climate talks in Belem in November.

The online meeting of heads of state, starting on Wednesday, is expected to address the climate ambitions of major economies, but China has repeatedly said its goals depend on its own requirements and capabilities.

"Going back to the fundamentals, there will be a gap between what is needed on China's NDCs and what Beijing is willing to put forward," said Li Shuo, director of the China Climate Hub at the Asia Society Policy Institute.

China warns of 'countermeasures' against any deals that harm its interests

21 April 2025, [NPR](#), John Ruwitch

As the Trump administration negotiates trade deals with other countries, China has issued a warning against any agreements that harm its interests.

China's commerce ministry says it respects the efforts of others to try to resolve trade disputes with the U.S. through consultation. But it warns that it will take "corresponding countermeasures" if any deals are struck at the expense of China's interests. It did not give details.

The comments come after reports that Trump is hoping to use tariff negotiations with other countries to isolate China. At the same time, Trump has said he wants to do a deal with Beijing. This month he raised the base tariff on Chinese imports to a dizzying 145%. China responded in kind, with high tariffs on U.S. goods.

The Chinese commerce ministry says seeking tariff exemptions by harming the interests of others will only lead to failure on both sides and ultimately hurt everyone.

People's Daily: Rewards and Honors Given for "Contributions to National Security"

16 April 2025, Chinascope

People's Daily, the official newspaper of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, recently ran an article stating that China's "national security organs have bestowed awards on more than 90 people who have made important contributions to maintaining national security during 2024 and 2025." Some examples of those who received commendation and/or rewards include:

"Old Person Kang", a taxi driver from a border region, who "courageously confronted a foreign espionage suspect at great personal risk and helped uncover a major espionage case. He was awarded for Outstanding Contribution."

“Young Person Wang”, a film industry worker from Shandong, who “reported a major security leak risk in time and received a Major Contribution award.”

“Young Person Lu”, a fisherman from a coastal region, who “retrieved a foreign spying device from the sea and received a Major Contribution award.”

“Young Person Xu”, a university student from Beijing, who “reported someone attempting to sell state secrets, helping eliminate a security threat, and received a Major Contribution award.”

“Young Person Liu”, a company employee from Liaoning, who “reported suspicious individuals secretly filming military facilities and received an Important Contribution award.”

“Old Person Shi”, a scholar from Zhejiang, who “discovered a foreign organization illegally stealing sensitive Chinese data and received an Important Contribution award.”

The article encouraged readers to “consciously stand against activities that endanger [China’s] national security.”

China: Police Arrest Tibetans for Internet, Phone Use

13 April 2025, [HRW](#)

government has arrested dozens of people in Tibetan areas since 2021 for politically motivated phone and internet-related offenses, Human Rights Watch said today. Tibetan journalists in exile report that these arrests typically target Tibetans accused of keeping “banned content” on their phone or contacting people outside China, including relatives.

The full scale of such arrests and prosecutions is unknown, as Chinese authorities do not disclose official data for political offenses. The more than 60 reported cases appear related to an increase in government surveillance during this period, including through mass phone searches and the use of mandatory phone apps with built-in government surveillance, as well as a tightened regulatory regime on data and religion.

“For Tibetans, simply using a cellphone has become dangerous, and everyday activities like posting a humorous video or contacting loved ones abroad can bring arrest, detention, and torture,” said Maya Wang, associate China director at Human Rights Watch. “Tibetans, particularly those living in remote areas, once celebrated the arrival of cellphones so they could stay in touch with friends and family, but their phones have effectively become government tracking devices.”

Human Rights Watch reviewed relevant cases since 2021 reported by Tibetan exile media, including Radio Free Asia and the Tibet Times, general media outlets, and official Chinese government sources. Human

Rights Watch also interviewed residents in Tibetan areas, and a retired official with direct knowledge of the situation.

In many cases, those arrested were accused of keeping “banned content” on their phones or sharing it online. Such “banned content” typically includes references to Tibetan religious figures, particularly the exiled spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, and expressions of pro-Tibetan sentiment. Chinese authorities have applied the ambiguous language of the law broadly: in one case, a man was arrested for setting up a WeChat group celebrating the birthdays of 80-year-old Buddhist monks. The police said it was “illegal” to form such a chat group “without permission.”

Tibetans have also been arrested for posting content online that the police deem to be promoting the use of Tibetan language and opposing the Chinese government’s language policy in primary schools, which replaces Tibetan with Mandarin Chinese as the medium of instruction. The authorities have closed down several Tibetan-language websites hosting cultural and educational content since 2020, including the popular Luktsang Palyon blog in April 2024, the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy reported. A leading Tibetan webmaster, Bumpa Gyal, was sentenced to seven years in prison in 2022 for engaging in unspecified “illegal activities,” after he offered technical support to Tibetan cultural and education websites.

Chinese authorities have also arrested Tibetans for using their electronic devices to contact people outside China and for sharing information about Tibet abroad. Those arrested have been prosecuted and received lengthy prison sentences for such activities. In 2021, Human Rights Watch documented the arrest of four monks in southwest Tibet who were sentenced to up to 20 years in prison for contacting Tibetan monks of the same monastic order living in Nepal.

It is often unclear what happened to people who have been arrested, given the extreme information controls in the region. However, in the few cases where information was available, some of those arrested were imprisoned, mistreated, and tortured. In a particularly egregious case, a 38-year-old monk named Losel from Lhasa’s Sera Monastery was beaten and died from his injuries in May 2024. He had been arrested for allegedly “collecting and sending information abroad,” Tibetan exile media reported.

Many Tibetans have relatives living in exile in South Asia, Europe, and North America. The Chinese government’s intensified security measures following the 2008 Tibetan protests, which put an end to unauthorized border crossings and its discriminatory restrictions on the issuance of passports to Tibetans since 2012, have made foreign travel impossible for most Tibetans. The restrictions and monitoring of internet use and the punishment of users suspected of

having contacts outside China mean that Tibetans in China and those in exile now have extremely limited contact.

Many of the Chinese government's tactics against Tibetans to cut off their communication with the outside world are similar to those being used against Uyghurs, Human Rights Watch said.

The Chinese government should respect Tibetans' rights to privacy and freedom of expression, peaceful assembly, association, and religion, Human Rights Watch said. The government should allow United Nations monitors, independent human rights researchers, and journalists unfettered access to the region to examine these cases and the general human rights situation.

"Tibetans have not only lost their rights to freely express themselves and to access information, but they are losing even their basic right to communicate with their loved ones," Wang said. "Even as global communications grow, the Chinese government increasingly seeks to close off and control entire populations."

Policing the Internet
The Chinese government's monitoring of people's online activity is not new. The Ministry of Public Security employs internet police personnel at provincial, prefecture, and county levels to censor and surveil internet users, while social media companies censor and monitor online content through teams of content moderators in addition to automated restrictions.

In addition, the authorities offer cash rewards to people for informing on one another. This became a formal policing method under the "Anti-Gang Crime" campaign that was adopted in 2018. The campaign has effectively criminalized and eliminated civil society activism in Tibetan areas. A retired senior official of the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) told Human Rights Watch in December 2019 that:

In Lhasa residential courtyards and neighborhood committees there are letter boxes, WeChat numbers, and notice boards for reporting people who say things that are not allowed to say, meet people they are not allowed to meet, spread "reactionary" talk they are not allowed to spread.... There are rewards ranging from RMB100 (US\$14) to RMB10,000 (\$1,400) according to the importance and the quality of the leads provided. The large rewards given to suppliers of major leads are announced in public for all to see.

A six-point public notice from the Qinghai Party Committee's Internet Information Office in November 2024 offers up to RMB100,000 (\$14,000) for tipoffs on anyone writing online who commits offenses from a list that is largely political, starting with "opposing the leadership of the Party."

In March 2022, the TAR Internet Illegal and Harmful Information Reporting Center received 1,395 reports,

of which 35 percent were "politically harmful information," 26 percent were "harmful information related to Tibet," and 12 percent were "socially harmful information." By comparison, "obscene and pornographic information" accounted for 6 percent of reports received.

Increased Manual Phone Searches
Intimidation and random searching of phones by police has been more frequent during security campaigns preceding sensitive anniversaries such as March 10 – the anniversary of the 1959 Lhasa uprising – or major political events in China such as the annual Chinese Communist Party meetings, based on reports. Police search people's phones either by using phone scanning devices (known as Universal Forensic Extraction Devices, or UFEDs) that allow access to data on people's phones or by forcing people to unlock their phones. Police have done this at checkpoints in Lhasa and other cities.

The first reports of Chinese police carrying out mass manual phone searches in rural areas of Tibet appeared in Tibetan exile media outlets in mid-2021. According to these reports, police in Sershul county, northwest Sichuan province, detained 117 Tibetans in 2021 for weeks of extrajudicial "political education" after the authorities claimed they had "banned content" on their phones. Since then, there have been several reports of manual phone searches to target Tibetans accused of sending news abroad:

In Drango county, Kandze prefecture, Sichuan province in February 2022, following the demolition of a giant Buddha statue by county authorities despite popular opposition, police conducted mass phone inspections searching for people who had reported this event online.

In Derge county, Kandze prefecture, Sichuan province in February 2024, when local protests against dam construction attracted international attention, the authorities shut down internet services and made mass arrests, and police checked people's WeChat and TikTok accounts to identify Tibetans who had posted reports of these events online.

At Taktsang Lhamo monastery, Dzorge county, Ngawa prefecture, Sichuan province in October 2024, after Tibetan monks messaged contacts to say that their monastery school had been closed by Chinese authorities, authorities checked the phones of the monks and confiscated some of them.

Human Rights Watch has independently confirmed reports of local police systematically searching cell phones for banned text and images in rural areas in Nagchu municipality, TAR, that were not connected to specific incidents. In November 2021, a rural Nagchu resident told Human Rights Watch that leaders of his village committee ordered residents to gather at the village center to have their cellphones screened by the township police, particularly those of young people

who might have “illegal” images of religious signs, content, or songs.

The police said if anyone is caught with such things, “the crime is more serious than killing,” as their family would also be affected. The resident said that this was not new but had been in place for several years, and some young men were detained for having such items in their phones.

Compulsory Download of Government ‘Anti-Fraud’ App

Media reporting on several Tibetan areas found that police have forced Tibetans to download a government app to their phones en masse at security checkpoints and during compulsory meetings, ostensibly to educate the public about online fraud. Official reports describe police and party members being mobilized to visit homes and businesses in Tibetan areas to “promote,” “guide,” and “assist” on the installation of the anti-fraud app, which China’s National Anti-Fraud Center created in 2021.

The research network Turquoise Roof conducted a technical analysis of the app that found that in addition to its stated purpose of countering online fraud and allowing them to report potential scams, the app “grants operators access to sensitive user data or control over key device functionalities, allowing for highly invasive surveillance.” When downloaded to a smart phone, according to the analysis, it can access a user’s data including sensitive personal information, activity logs, private messages, call records including time stamps and contact information, and browser history, all without the user’s consent and knowledge. The app requires a user to scan their face and their ID card to begin using it, utilizing facial verification technology to compare images, and capturing biometric data that can be networked with other data sources in a large government database with data analytics capabilities to track and monitor people at population scale.

The forced download of the “anti-fraud” app has been reported elsewhere in China. Party workers have publicly complained about having to meet monthly app installation quotas as part of their performance evaluation. Given the severe repression in Tibetan areas, Tibetans have found it more even difficult to refuse to comply with these police orders.

Increasing Online Restrictions on Religion
In March 2022, Chinese internet management regulations banned in the TAR all religious content not authorized by the government. Authorization is granted only to religious teachers considered politically reliable. Many ordinary Tibetans, both monastic and laity, rely on the internet and social media for access to religious teachings and materials, particularly as the government has closely managed physical access to religion.

While similar regulations have been applied nationwide to eliminate religious expression not sanctioned by the state, implementation is particularly strict in Tibetan areas, where Tibetan Buddhism is considered a direct threat to the Chinese Communist Party’s legitimacy.

Police routinely question, detain, and criminally prosecute lay believers for circulating religious teachings online, exile media reported. Two women from Sershul county, Sichuan province, known for participating in local prayer meetings and social service initiatives were reportedly forcibly disappeared by police in December 2023, and their whereabouts remain unknown. Also that month, a court sentenced Semkyi Drolma, a young woman from Damshung county, Lhasa city, to 18 months in prison for “leaking state secrets.” Sources said her only offense was participating in religiously oriented WeChat groups.

The retired senior TAR official told Human Rights Watch in December 2019 that the authorities have for years subjected monks and nuns to greater online surveillance:

The government monitors the WeChat and social media activity of monks even more strictly than that of ordinary citizens. From what I hear, the internet monitoring units read and listen to each monk or nun’s WeChat individually, and apart from religious services inside the monastery or greeting their relatives, they are not allowed to take or send any photos of monastery sub-police stations, work team personnel, political education meetings, etc.

International and Domestic Law
The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) – which China signed in 1998 but has not ratified – protect the rights to privacy, freedom of expression, association, peaceful assembly, and religion.

Both the Universal Declaration and the ICCPR state that “no one shall be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with their privacy, family, home, or correspondence,” and that “everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference.” Any interference with the right to privacy, including the collection, retention, and use of an individual’s personal data, must be necessary and proportionate, to pursue a legitimate aim, and subject to a clear and public legal framework.

For three decades since the introduction of the internet in China, the Chinese government has promulgated various laws and regulations that broadly prohibit a wide range of content on China’s internet, such as information that “incites subversion” or that “incites splittism,” including activities deemed to promote Tibetan independence. Such overbroad

provisions are inconsistent with international human rights protections.

Current Chinese national laws do not meet privacy requirements provided for in international human rights law. The Chinese government has developed an increasingly sophisticated data regulatory regime since 2017, with the enactment of China's Cybersecurity Law. It then promulgated various laws and regulations, including the Data Security Law in June 2021, and the Personal Information Protection Law in August 2021.

This evolving regime serves several purposes, which include regulating companies' collection of consumer data, but also tightening government information control under the guise of "protecting national security" – whatever the Chinese Communist Party deems affects its hold on power – without providing meaningful protections against unlawful or abusive government surveillance.

Rare Job Swap in CCP Leadership: Shi Taifeng and Li Ganjie Exchange Roles Amid Internal Power Struggle

14 April 2025, [Chinascope](#)

On April 2, 2025, the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP's) state media reported that Shi Taifeng, the former Minister of the CCP's United Front Work Department, and Li Ganjie, the former Minister of the Organization Department, had switched jobs. Both of are CCP Politburo members. There is no precedent for a position swap among CCP Politburo members. Chinese state media have been silent on the implications of this unusual exchange.

The CCP's Organization Department, which will now be led by Shi Taifeng, is a prominent department that appoints officials and evaluates their performance.

Shi Taifeng's background is particularly sensitive. He graduated from Tsinghua University, the alma mater of former Premier Li Keqiang and Hu Chunhua (who is a prominent figure in the Communist Youth League faction). Shi spent nearly 20 years at the Central Party School, serving as Vice President for nine years under three different Party School heads: Hu Jintao, Zeng Qinghong, and Xi Jinping. In March 2016, when the retired CCP General Secretary Hu Jintao visited Shi Taifeng's hometown in Taizhou, Jiangsu, Shi (who was then the governor of Jiangsu Province) made a special visit to meet Hu and his wife. From January 2016 to April 2017, Shi served as Deputy Secretary and Governor of Jiangsu Province, serving under Li Qiang, who was the Jiangsu Party Secretary from June 2016 to October 2017 and who is currently serving as the Chinese Premier.

Despite Shi's close ties to the Communist Youth League faction, he has been careful to align with Xi Jinping. Once Shi realized that Xi held an unfavorable opinion of Shi's schoolmate Hu Chunhua, Shi, then Party Secretary of Inner Mongolia, launched a so-called "20-year retrospective" anti-corruption campaign to effectively purge Hu's former allies. Hu had been party chief of Inner Mongolia (2009 – 2012). Shi's forceful suppression of the Mongolian language and his promotion of Mandarin in Inner Mongolia pleased Xi Jinping, and later Shi was promoted to be the party chief of Inner Mongolia (2019 – 2022).

The former Minister of the Organization Department, Li Ganjie, is a close associate of Xi Jinping. He had been recommended by Chen Xi, another Xi ally from Tsinghua University. Li is the youngest member of the CCP Politburo. His leaving the critical post at the head of the CCP's Organization Department suggests that he was no longer trusted and has most likely lost his shot at promotion to the Politburo Standing Committee in the CCP's 21st National Congress in 2027.

At 68 years old, Shi Taifeng is also unlikely to enter top CCP leadership. He may just play a key role in the political maneuver to prepare for the CCP's 21st National Congress. Many political commentators think this job swap is an indication of Xi Jinping's weakening grip on power.

RFA: Latest Chinese Internet Slang Reflects Youth Disillusionment and Economic Struggles

09 April 2025, [Chinascope](#)

Radio Free Asia (RFA) recently ran an article compiling a list of recent buzzwords and slang appearing on the Chinese internet. Some commentators reportedly believe that these trending phrases "reflect China's economic struggles, workplace anxiety, and shifting societal mindset."

"Let Things Rot" (摆烂) – Originally a basketball term, it refers to a team intentionally giving up games after poor performance to secure better draft picks. It now describes an attitude of passive resignation, inaction, and giving up efforts to improve one's situation.

"Ox and Horse" (牛马) – A term used to describe people who work tirelessly but receive little reward, similar in sense to the phrases "corporate slaves" or "exploited laborers." The term originates from the image of oxen and horses in traditional agricultural societies – animals that work hard yet lack freedom.

"Flexible Employment" (灵活就业) – Employment that is not tied to a fixed employer, offering freelance or gig-based income rather than a stable, full-time job.

The term is often seen as a euphemism used by the government to soften the reality of unemployment.

“Four-No Youth” (四不青年) – A label for young people who adopt a laid-back or passive approach to life and work. The “Four No’s” refer to:

Not Dating: Relationships are seen as too costly in terms of time, money, and emotional effort.

Not Marrying: Marriage pressures such as mortgages, dowries, and family responsibilities make it unappealing.

Not Buying Property: High housing prices and mortgage burdens deter them from homeownership.

Not Having Children: The high cost of raising children, including education, healthcare, and housing, discourages them from parenthood.

RFA wrote that “these terms highlight the growing sentiment of disillusionment and resistance among Chinese youth.”

Source: *Radio Free Asia*, April 9, 2025

Top China think tank shuts down research centre after questions of party loyalty

07 April 2025, [SCMP](#), Yuanyue Dang



Chinese Academy of Social Sciences abolishes entity, warns any activities carried out in its name would be illegal

China’s top think tank has shut down its public policy research centre amid a new round of ideological reinforcement, with any activities carried out in its name declared “illegal”, with immediate effect.

In a statement on Sunday, the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS) said the centre was closed in accordance with an internal regulation and its research projects transferred to the Institute of Economics.

Part-time researchers affiliated with other departments were returning to their original institutions while the remainder had been dismissed, according to the statement on the CASS website. The centre’s social media accounts and website have also been shut down.

“All activities carried out in the name of the former research centre are illegal and legal responsibility lies

with the perpetrators,” said the statement, signed by the Institute of Economics, which is a CASS entity.

The now-defunct centre was once headed by economist Zhu Hengpeng, who was also deputy director of the Institute of Economics. He was last seen in public at the end of April 2024.

Sources familiar with the matter said that Zhu had been investigated and removed from his post in May for criticising China’s economic policies in a group discussion on WeChat.

CASS, once home to many liberal academics who were vocal in their criticism of the authorities, is undergoing a major shift towards greater loyalty to the ruling Communist Party.

In August, the academy replaced the economic institute’s leadership, including the director and party secretary, without explanation. A few months earlier, CASS had initiated an academy-wide major study campaign on party discipline.

The campaign, which began in June, required researchers to “take absolute loyalty to the party as the starting and ending point of all their work”.

Top ideological officials, including CASS president and party secretary Gao Xiang, have said that the academy “is a scientific research institution, but first and foremost it is a political organ, with politics as its first attribute and politics as its first requirement”.

This message – that loyalty to the party should be placed above critical research and policy advice – has been stressed many times by Gao and other officials in recent years.

Last month, CASS signed a cooperation agreement with the Hong Kong and Macau Work Office to study, interpret and publicise General Secretary Xi Jinping’s important remarks on the work of Hong Kong and Macau, and work together to conduct good research on the theory and practice of ‘one country, two systems’.

This followed a similar agreement between CASS and Xinjiang in western China, intended to refine its theories on building a “sense of community for the Chinese nation” and implement Beijing’s policy in the Uygur autonomous region.

CASS is also expected to take on the task of writing a history of China’s last feudal dynasty, the [Qing](#), which came to an end in 1911. Gao, the academy’s head, is an expert on the period and CASS launched a centre in March for its study.

Beijing attaches particular importance to the study of the Qing dynasty’s history because of its relevance to the party’s legitimacy, as well as sensitive issues such as China’s ethnicity and borders.

However, since the founding of the People’s Republic of China in 1949, no official history of the Qing dynasty has been completed.

Former CCP Official Living in Belgium Introduces Lifeboat Plan Encouraging Other Officials to Break From the CCP

05 April 2025, [China Scope](#)

Former Inner Mongolia Official Du Wen declares “break with the Chinese Communist Party (CCP)” and vows to “overthrow the CCP.” He introduced a “Lifeboat Plan” for CCP Officials.

Du Wen calls on conscientious Party officials to escape the CCP’s grip, bringing their families, assets, and secrets abroad. His “Lifeboat Plan” consists of six steps:

Family Evacuation – Sending spouses and children abroad through legal channels such as family visits, studying abroad, or business trips.

Transferring Assets – Moving funds through legal financial channels, purchasing overseas property, or applying for investment immigration.

Securing a Legal Exit – Seeking opportunities to attend conferences, training, or visits abroad.

Exchanging Confidential Information – Providing CCP-related secrets, such as corruption scandals and human rights violations, to government authorities or international organizations through legal representatives.

Ensuring a Safe Landing – Integrating into the local society, obtaining legal status, and avoiding countries that have extradition agreements with China.

Moral and Sacrificial Considerations – Officials can choose to publicly expose the CCP system or live quietly in freedom while contributing in ways they can.

Du Wen was the former Executive Director of the Legal Advisory Office of the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region Government. He was sentenced to 12 years and 8 months in prison for alleged involvement in a bribery case involving government funds. After his release in January 2023, he fled to Belgium in October of the same year. Du Wen later revealed to the media that the bribery case was politically motivated, aiming to take down then Inner Mongolia Party Chief Hu Chunhua, Hu Jintao’s pick as Xi Jinping’s successor.

Source: Epoch Times, March 20, 2025

MILITARY AND INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

Is China's 6th-Gen an Unprecedented Hybrid Stealth Fighter-Bomber?

18 April 2025, [Warrior Maven](#)

China has a long and documented history of mirroring, copying or simply “stealing” US military weapons specs, designs and technologies, as it is something which dates back decades. As far back as 2014, Congressional reports cite numerous press stories suggesting that indeed Chinese cyber intrusions resulted in the theft of US F-35 designs. Sure enough, China's J-20 and early prototypes of what was called the PLA's J-31 carrier launched stealth fighter reveal distinct configuration similarities with the US F-35 and F-22. Within this established context, it is not likely to surprise anyone that China's recently emerging 6th-generation airframes reveal similarities with US industry renderings of 6th-Gen aircraft. Looking at China's recently revealed 6th-generation airframes, one appears profoundly similar to US renderings, and another appears as if it could be an entirely new design.

Hybrid Bomber-Fighter?

Could China have built an unprecedented 6th-gen hybrid-type stealth fighter-bomber? There is certainly no shortage of speculation following the social media appearance of what looks like a Chinese 6th-generation attack aircraft.

Images of the aircraft's design surfaced on social media showing glimpses of the shape, structure and underneath areas of a new stealth aircraft being escorted by a Chengdu Air Corporation PLA Air Force J-20 stealth fighter.

Interestingly, there were two Chinese 6th-generation aircraft models captured on social media, described by Forbes magazine as a Chengdu design escorted by a J-20 and a “Shenyang type” flying alongside a “Sukhoi Su-27 clone.”

Shenyang Aircraft

The Shenyang aircraft, according to mysterious photographs emerging on social media, appeared similar to previously released defense industry renderings of the US Next-Generation Air Dominance 6th-gen aircraft. The Shenyang aircraft also looks like 6th-generation images of a new Chinese aircraft released by Chinese state-owned Global Times newspaper. This 6th-gen rendering, published by the Global Times several years ago, was written about in Warrior Maven in an essay in February of 2023. This image of a 6th-gen fighter published in the Chinese paper looked very similar to previously published defense industry renderings of the US Air Force's 6th-gen NGAD. The actual configuration of the USAF NGAD fighter is not known or released for security reasons, yet demonstrators of the USAF secret aircraft were flown more than a year ago. Its not exactly clear that

the “Shenyang Type” 6th gen aircraft emerged from the PLA Air Force’s previously released image of a 6th-gen stealth fighter, yet the mysterious new aircraft does look like the rendering published in 2023.

Chengdu Model

The Chengdu aircraft appears to have a similar blended wing-body horizontal stealthy configuration, yet observers are raising questions about whether the Chengdu is a new hybrid 6th-gen fighter-bomber.

Very little is likely known about the propulsion, mission systems, weapons, computing, thermal management and materials of the fighter-bomber-like Chengdu model, yet the shape of the new aircraft raises critical questions to the naked eye. The most immediate feature most are likely to recognize is the tailless, finless, fully horizontal blended wing-body closely resembles earlier US defense industry renderings of 6th-gen aircraft. The Air Force’s Next Generation Air Dominance platform is a bit of a paradoxical mystery because it has already been flown, yet the program is now lingering in a haze of uncertainty regarding its future existence.

US 6th-Gen vs PLA 6th-gen

The tailless triangular stealthy shape of US 6th-gen renderings indicates that perhaps aerial maneuverability, drag, vectoring and speed technologies have now broken through to paradigm-changing levels. Can a stealth fighter maneuver without vertical tail and fin structures? Since the NGAD was widely discussed as an F-22 replacement, the discussion has centered upon a high-speed, stealthy air-supremacy fighter... yet the images show a fully horizontal tailless airframe. Could the US Air Force have built a stealthy, high-speed maneuverable fighter jet with bomber-like stealth capabilities? This would seem to be a distinct possibility.

Can the same be said of China’s new aircraft? Is it intended to function as a breakthrough kind of high-speed, lethal stealth fighter jet? Or could it perhaps be a hybrid aircraft intended to operate like a stealthy “tactical bomber,” something suggested in several interesting news reports in 1945 such as one from Kyle Mizokami. Mizokami points out that the Chengdu model does appear large and built with significant internal weapons bays for a wide range of missions, and it is also large with a rounded, well-sized fuselage. This would seem to indicate that perhaps the aircraft could function in a high-altitude bombing capacity.

Fighter-Bomber Hybrid

This raises the pressing and significant question as to whether this new Chinese 6th-generation aircraft is a “hybrid” of some kind, meaning it can function as both a stealth bomber and a high-speed maneuverable stealth fighter. These missions would seem somewhat at odds to a degree, as one is high-speed maneuvering air supremacy and one is high-altitude stealth

bombing, yet the new Chengdu platform manages to look like both a fighter and a bomber simultaneously. It is almost entirely horizontal, something which suggests it is maximizing stealth, as the absence of vertical structure minimizes the kinds of protruding angled shapes likely to generate a clear radar return signal. In this respect, the platform appears similar to a US Air Force B-2 or B-21 bomber, the stealthiest planes in the US force. A B-2 or B-21 bomber is designed to appear as though it is a small bird to enemy radar, yet the new Chengdu model also appears as a fighter jet, so there is likely much to be learned about this new aircraft.

China’s Military Buildup Threatens Indo-Pacific Region Security, Pentagon Officials Say

10 April 2025, [Eurasia Review](#), DoD News

China is undertaking an unprecedented military buildup, developing a large and advanced arsenal of nuclear, conventional, cyber and space capabilities, said John Noh, performing the duties of assistant secretary of defense for Indo-Pacific security affairs, who testified today at a House Armed Services Committee hearing in Washington.

China aims to dominate the Indo-Pacific region and displace the United States as the world’s most powerful nation, Noh said, noting Chinese President Xi Jinping has ordered the People’s Liberation Army to be ready to invade Taiwan by 2027.

Noh said to counter this growing threat, the U.S. must reestablish deterrence in the Indo-Pacific region with combat-credible military forces, rebalance burden sharing with allies and partners and invest in the U.S. defense industrial base.

“Stronger allies lead to stronger alliances, and stronger alliances deter aggression and create dilemmas for our adversaries,” he said.

Navy Adm. Samuel Paparo, commander of U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, said Indo-Pacom faces a confluence of challenges.

“Foremost among them is China’s increasingly aggressive and assertive behavior. Their unprecedented military modernization encompassing advancements in artificial intelligence, [hypersonic missiles], space-based capabilities, among others, poses a real and serious threat to our homeland, to our allies and to our partners,” he said.

In 2024, the PLA demonstrated growing capabilities through persistent operations against Taiwan, escalating by 300%, Paparo said. China’s aggressive military actions near Taiwan are not just exercises; they are rehearsals.

While the PLA attempts to intimidate the people of Taiwan and demonstrate coercive capability, these

actions can backfire, drawing increased global attention and accelerating Taiwan's own defensive preparations, Paparo said.

China is outproducing the United States in air, maritime and missile capability while also accelerating its space and counter-space capabilities, he said, adding that it poses real and serious challenges to U.S. military superiority but also presents opportunities for reform and for establishing enduring advantage.

There are also other threats in the region, Paparo said. "North Korea's development of advanced nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles — including a new intercontinental ballistic missile capable of reaching the United States — poses a direct threat to our homeland and to our allies," he said.

Regarding Russia's influence in the region, Paparo noted that North Korea is receiving military support and assistance to advance its own military capabilities, and the growing military cooperation between Russia and China has added another layer of complexity and created a compounding challenge.

He said that Indo-Pacom is tasked with deterring threats and aiding regional stability while ensuring the ability to prevail in conflict. Last year, the command conducted 120 joint exercises, 20 of which were significant exercises with allies and partners.

"Though we face serious challenges, the joint force remains confident, resolute and determined to prevail. Deterrence remains our highest duty," Paparo said.

Economic Watch: China edges closer to commercial nuclear fusion

07 April 2025, [Xinhua](#)

Armed with cutting-edge fusion energy technologies and bold venture backing, a generation of young Chinese innovators is betting to shrink the power of the sun into scalable, affordable and investable projects.

As artificial intelligence's insatiable energy demands threaten to outstrip global grids, nuclear fusion has emerged as an ultimate moonshot solution.

Now, in a high-stakes race, fusion tech leading nations, particularly the United States and China, are racing to translate their recent lab breakthroughs into know-hows in engineering.

OUT OF LABS

The bustling renovation at an industrial site in the southwestern Chinese city of Chengdu is underway. This is designed to be a compact fusion device base, pioneering linear Field-Reversed Configuration (FRC) technology, a novel approach to creating a flexible, modular "miniature artificial sun."

"Traditional approaches require sustained 'ignition of the sun'," explained Xiang Jiang, chairman of HHMAX-Energy, a startup founded in 2022. The linear configuration, also adopted by U.S. fusion firm Helion

Energy, serves to bypass the technical hurdles of prolonged stable operation in conventional fusion devices.

"If traditional tech is like a sprawling subway system, we plan to build a nimble, high-speed maglev train," added Xiang.

In Xi'an, located 700 kilometers north of Chengdu, a firm established by former members of Tsinghua University's fusion lab has achieved a remarkable feat. Not only did they build a fusion experimental device in just 279 days, they then doubled the plasma current within three months.

"We're not changing direction," said Chen Rui, founder of StarTorus Fusion. "We're redefining the approach."

In Shanghai, a team is pushing the boundaries of magnetic field strength for nuclear fusion. Energy Singularity, focused on high-temperature superconducting tokamak technology, realized a tech breakthrough in March: its magnet reached 21.7 tesla, surpassing the previous record held by Massachusetts Institute of Technology and CFS in the United States.

The company has announced ambitious plans to complete its next-generation tokamak by 2027, targeting a 10-fold energy gain -- a critical milestone for commercial fusion viability.

POLICY SUPPORT

In 2024, Chinese authorities prioritized support for breakthroughs in core technologies for future energy systems, with nuclear fusion as a focal point.

This top-tier directive has been widely hailed as "the starting gun for China's race to commercialize controlled nuclear fusion."

Shanghai is doubling down on its nuclear ambitions by forging a world-class hub for nuclear equipment manufacturing and cutting-edge fusion R&D, while locking in double-digit annual growth for its nuclear power sector through 2025.

"Commercial fusion could have become viable around 2050, but leaps in high-temperature superconductors (HTS), AI and advanced materials might accelerate this timeline," said Duan Xuru, chief fusion scientist at China National Nuclear Corporation (CNNC).

A significant catalyst for the swift advancement of commercial nuclear fusion in China is its robust and tangible achievements in nuclear fusion scientific experiments.

In January, the Experimental Advanced Superconducting Tokamak (EAST) in the eastern Chinese city of Hefei maintained a steady-state high-confinement plasma operation for a remarkable 1,066 seconds, setting a new world record and marking a breakthrough in the quest for fusion power generation.

Last month, HL-3, another "artificial sun" tokamak facility in Chengdu, reached a milestone by achieving atomic nucleus and electron temperatures both

exceeding 100 million degrees Celsius, marking a new phase of combustion experiments.

CHALLENGES AHEAD

Despite these ambitious plans, the industrialization of nuclear fusion still faces key technical challenges, according to industry insiders.

Current devices operate only at the hundred-second level, far below long term operation needs. The extreme fusion environment, such as high temperatures and intense neutron irradiation, requires state-of-the-art resistant materials, which remain underdeveloped. Also, achieving net energy gain demands higher device efficiency and better system coordination.

Xiang likened the challenges to building an "alchemy furnace." "Mastering fusion while engineering a reactor resilient to million-degree heat and sudden shocks is a task demanding industry-wide collaboration," said Xiang.

Despite growing venture capital interest in nuclear fusion, investment in China remains lacking. "Over the past five years, China's private funding in the sector totaled just 500 million U.S. dollars, far below the roughly 5 billion invested in the U.S. during the same period," said Chen.

Kang Jianshu, executive director of LightSilver Capital, acknowledged that nuclear fusion requires investors to adopt a long-term approach, suited for those investment institutions genuinely committed to deep-rooted hardcore technologies.

"Capital seeking short-term returns or rapid commercialization would find itself fundamentally incompatible with this sector," said Kang. LightSilver Capital is HHMAX-Energy's investor.

"Our investment horizon can span 8 to 10 years," Kang added. "Patience is the key."

Beyond its long-term goal, HHMAX-Energy has also adopted a "value-creation along the way" strategy to generate some returns for investors throughout the lengthy process.

This involves exploring commercial applications of neutron sources in medical and industrial fields, such as cancer radiotherapy, nuclear pharmaceutical isotope production, neutron imaging and nuclear waste treatment.

Chinese Military Opens New Overseas Base

07 April 2025, [NewsWeek](#)

China has opened a "joint logistics and training center" in Cambodia, which is its second publicly acknowledged overseas base, to sustain its military power in the contested South China Sea.

The United States has previously expressed serious concerns over China's involvement in construction at

Ream naval base, warning this could endanger Cambodia's sovereignty.

Newsweek has contacted the U.S. State Department for further comment via its website.

Why It Matters

China has described its relations with Cambodia as "rock-solid and unbreakable." Both nations agreed to enhance their military cooperation in areas such as capacity building, military training, logistics, and equipment, according to a joint statement released in 2023.

Ream naval base is located in Cambodia's southwestern province of Sihanoukville on the coast of the Gulf of Thailand, making it an outpost in the South China Sea, where Beijing has territorial disputes with a number of countries in the region, such as the Philippines.

In its assessment report on Chinese military power, the Pentagon said China is seeking to establish a more robust overseas logistics and basing infrastructure, which aims to enable the People's Liberation Army to "project and sustain military power at greater distances."

What To Know

The Chinese Defense Ministry said in a statement that the center, located at Ream naval base and established by the Chinese and the Cambodian militaries, officially commenced operations on Saturday. It will be jointly maintained by personnel from both countries.

"The center is designed to support the two militaries in conducting regional counter-terrorism, disaster prevention and mitigation, humanitarian assistance, joint training, and other operations," the statement continued, adding that it is not aimed at any third party.

Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet stressed that the Ream Naval Base remains fully under Cambodian sovereignty and control at an inauguration ceremony.

"I solemnly declare that the Royal Government of Cambodia...will never allow any foreign military base to be established in Cambodia—neither in the past, the present, nor the future," the prime minister said.

The naval base, which was closed in 2022 for re-fitting, is now open to warships of less than 20,000-tonnes from all "friendly countries," Hun Manet said. "We have nothing to hide. This is our stance to maintain friendship with all parties."

"This effectively rules out aircraft carriers, certain large [amphibious warships], and fleet auxiliaries," Collin Koh, a senior fellow at Singapore's Institute of Defense and Strategic Studies, wrote on X (formerly Twitter). China's aircraft carriers are all over 60,000 tonnes.

China and Cambodia on Saturday also launched a joint drill, code-named Golden Dragon 2025, the Chinese military reported. Warships from the two nations engaged in formation tactics, operation of maritime

communication equipment, and other forms of training.

In 2017, China inaugurated its first publicly acknowledged overseas military installation in Djibouti, augmenting its escort missions in the Gulf of Aden and off the coast of Somalia. The facility is officially known as the People's Liberation Army Support Base in Djibouti.

What People Are Saying

The Chinese Defense Ministry said in a statement on Saturday: "The construction and operation of the center reflect mutual respect and equal consultation between China and Cambodia. The initiative fully complies with the domestic laws of the two countries, relevant international laws, and international practices."

Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet said at a ceremony on Saturday: "No one can defend Cambodia's sovereignty better than Cambodia herself. Modernizing the armed forces and building the capacity to protect against all forms of warfare and crime is essential."

The Pentagon's Chinese military power report assessed on December 18, 2024: "A global [People's Liberation Army] military logistics network could disrupt U.S. military operations as the [People's Republic of China]'s global military objectives evolve."

What Happens Next

It remains to be seen whether China will station any warships at the Cambodian base on a rotational or permanent basis to enhance its military presence in the South China Sea.

Tibet's largest solar-storage project powers up at 4,500 m

07 April 2025, [PV Magazine](#), Vincent Shaw

China's Huaneng Group has switched on a 250 MW solar plant collocated with a 250 MWh energy storage system in Tibet, marking a milestone in high-altitude renewable energy deployment.

China Huaneng Group, one of the country's largest state-owned electricity generation enterprises, has announced that its Jiawa Phase I solar-plus-storage power plant in Qusong County, Shannan City, Tibet Autonomous Region, has been successfully connected to the grid. Situated at an elevation exceeding 4,500 m, the facility is now the largest solar-storage project completed in Tibet, with further expansion planned through subsequent phases.

The Phase I plant is located in Jiawa Village and comprises 250 MW of solar capacity alongside a 50MW/200MWh electrochemical energy storage system. The storage unit is designed to absorb excess solar power during daylight hours and release up to 200 MWh of electricity over four hours at night,

significantly improving local energy reliability and balancing power demand during peak periods.

The project was developed by Huaneng Yarlung Tsangpo Hydropower Development Co., Ltd., a subsidiary of Huaneng Group. Construction officially began in February 2024, and the plant was connected to the grid by the end of March 2025, following 13 months of intensive construction under some of the world's most challenging conditions.

The project site experiences oxygen levels just 60% of those at sea level, ultraviolet radiation two to three times higher, and temperature swings of nearly 30 C between day and night. The harsh environment limited the annual construction window to less than six months, requiring the team to overcome difficulties including altitude sickness, extreme weather, and reduced machinery efficiency.

Huaneng's construction team noted that the project yielded valuable experience in high-altitude engineering, laying the groundwork for future large-scale projects in Tibet, Qinghai, Xinjiang, and other similarly challenging regions.

Once fully operational, the Jiawa Phase I project is expected to generate approximately 370 GWh of electricity annually and play a vital role in alleviating power shortages during peak periods in Tibet.

The Jiawa plant also serves as a flagship project for Huaneng's Yalong River clean energy base, which is planned in three phases totaling 850 MW. Construction on Phases II and III is scheduled to follow as part of Huaneng's broader strategy to accelerate clean energy deployment in Tibet, the roof of the world.

Economic Watch: China edges closer to commercial nuclear fusion

07 April 2025, [Xinhua](#)

Armed with cutting-edge fusion energy technologies and bold venture backing, a generation of young Chinese innovators is betting to shrink the power of the sun into scalable, affordable and investable projects.

As artificial intelligence's insatiable energy demands threaten to outstrip global grids, nuclear fusion has emerged as an ultimate moonshot solution.

Now, in a high-stakes race, fusion tech leading nations, particularly the United States and China, are racing to translate their recent lab breakthroughs into know-hows in engineering.

OUT OF LABS

The bustling renovation at an industrial site in the southwestern Chinese city of Chengdu is underway. This is designed to be a compact fusion device base, pioneering linear Field-Reversed Configuration (FRC)

technology, a novel approach to creating a flexible, modular "miniature artificial sun."

"Traditional approaches require sustained 'ignition of the sun'," explained Xiang Jiang, chairman of HHMAX-Energy, a startup founded in 2022. The linear configuration, also adopted by U.S. fusion firm Helion Energy, serves to bypass the technical hurdles of prolonged stable operation in conventional fusion devices.

"If traditional tech is like a sprawling subway system, we plan to build a nimble, high-speed maglev train," added Xiang.

In Xi'an, located 700 kilometers north of Chengdu, a firm established by former members of Tsinghua University's fusion lab has achieved a remarkable feat. Not only did they build a fusion experimental device in just 279 days, they then doubled the plasma current within three months.

"We're not changing direction," said Chen Rui, founder of StarTorus Fusion. "We're redefining the approach." In Shanghai, a team is pushing the boundaries of magnetic field strength for nuclear fusion. Energy Singularity, focused on high-temperature superconducting tokamak technology, realized a tech breakthrough in March: its magnet reached 21.7 tesla, surpassing the previous record held by Massachusetts Institute of Technology and CFS in the United States.

The company has announced ambitious plans to complete its next-generation tokamak by 2027, targeting a 10-fold energy gain -- a critical milestone for commercial fusion viability.

POLICY SUPPORT

In 2024, Chinese authorities prioritized support for breakthroughs in core technologies for future energy systems, with nuclear fusion as a focal point.

This top-tier directive has been widely hailed as "the starting gun for China's race to commercialize controlled nuclear fusion."

Shanghai is doubling down on its nuclear ambitions by forging a world-class hub for nuclear equipment manufacturing and cutting-edge fusion R&D, while locking in double-digit annual growth for its nuclear power sector through 2025.

"Commercial fusion could have become viable around 2050, but leaps in high-temperature superconductors (HTS), AI and advanced materials might accelerate this timeline," said Duan Xuru, chief fusion scientist at China National Nuclear Corporation (CNNC).

A significant catalyst for the swift advancement of commercial nuclear fusion in China is its robust and tangible achievements in nuclear fusion scientific experiments.

In January, the Experimental Advanced Superconducting Tokamak (EAST) in the eastern Chinese city of Hefei maintained a steady-state high-confinement plasma operation for a remarkable 1,066 seconds, setting a new world record and marking a

breakthrough in the quest for fusion power generation.

Last month, HL-3, another "artificial sun" tokamak facility in Chengdu, reached a milestone by achieving atomic nucleus and electron temperatures both exceeding 100 million degrees Celsius, marking a new phase of combustion experiments.

CHALLENGES AHEAD

Despite these ambitious plans, the industrialization of nuclear fusion still faces key technical challenges, according to industry insiders.

Current devices operate only at the hundred-second level, far below long term operation needs. The extreme fusion environment, such as high temperatures and intense neutron irradiation, requires state-of-the-art resistant materials, which remain underdeveloped. Also, achieving net energy gain demands higher device efficiency and better system coordination.

Xiang likened the challenges to building an "alchemy furnace." "Mastering fusion while engineering a reactor resilient to million-degree heat and sudden shocks is a task demanding industry-wide collaboration," said Xiang.

Despite growing venture capital interest in nuclear fusion, investment in China remains lacking. "Over the past five years, China's private funding in the sector totaled just 500 million U.S. dollars, far below the roughly 5 billion invested in the U.S. during the same period," said Chen.

Kang Jianshu, executive director of LightSilver Capital, acknowledged that nuclear fusion requires investors to adopt a long-term approach, suited for those investment institutions genuinely committed to deep-rooted hardcore technologies.

"Capital seeking short-term returns or rapid commercialization would find itself fundamentally incompatible with this sector," said Kang. LightSilver Capital is HHMAX-Energy's investor.

"Our investment horizon can span 8 to 10 years," Kang added. "Patience is the key."

Beyond its long-term goal, HHMAX-Energy has also adopted a "value-creation along the way" strategy to generate some returns for investors throughout the lengthy process.

This involves exploring commercial applications of neutron sources in medical and industrial fields, such as cancer radiotherapy, nuclear pharmaceutical isotope production, neutron imaging and nuclear waste treatment.

People's Daily on Current and Future Trends in Military Counter-Drone Technology

05 April 2025, [China Scope](#)

People's Daily, the official newspaper of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, recently published an article on trends in military applications of drone and counter-drone technology. Below are some key points from the article.

In recent years, drones have frequently appeared in regional conflicts worldwide, making counter-drone operations a new battlefield in global offense and defense.

Currently, counter-drone technologies are categorized into two main types:

Drone detection and identification technologies: These include radio frequency analyzers, radar, visual/thermal imaging sensors, and acoustic sensors.

Drone countermeasure technologies: These include communication/navigation system jamming, signal intrusion, aerial interception and ground fire strikes, and laser weapons.

As technology advances, counter-drone technologies are expected to develop in the following directions:

Higher Intelligence – Artificial intelligence will enhance counter-drone systems' ability to detect, track, and neutralize drones more quickly and accurately.

Integrated Systems – Future counter-drone systems will prioritize integration, combining multiple detection and countermeasure technologies into a comprehensive defense system. By integrating radio frequency detection, radar, visual recognition, and laser countermeasures, these systems will provide multi-layered, full-spectrum drone defense. Additionally, integration will enable seamless connectivity with other air defense systems, forming a more robust defense network.

Improved Portability.

China flexes military muscles with rare, large-scale missile test in Gobi Desert

05 April 2025, [SCMP](#)

In a quiet demonstration of its technological prowess, China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) has conducted a missile defence test in the Gobi Desert where as many as 16 ballistic missiles were fired on a single target to test a cutting-edge radar system's ability to thwart saturation attacks.

The unprecedented scale of the test – rare even among global military powers – signals Beijing's growing confidence in its capacity to counter

advanced threats and project dominance in an increasingly tense geopolitical landscape.

According to a paper published on February 18, all missiles were successfully detected and tracked by a new dual-band (S/X) phased array radar system, before hitting the target with 100 per cent success.

The system achieved what the Chinese military scientists described as “early detection, precision measurement and accurate reporting” – critical metrics for neutralising advanced threats like hypersonic glide vehicles or missiles armed with decoys and multiple independently targetable re-entry vehicles (MIRVs).

The test, detailed in *Flight Control & Detection*, a Chinese-language journal, marks the first public disclosure of China's land-based early warning radar capabilities.

Its dual-band technology – similar to the US Navy's USNS Howard O. Lorenzen missile-tracking ship – combines wide-area surveillance (S-band) with high-resolution targeting (X-band).

While the Lorenzen is hailed for its unmatched capability, with the potential to track more than 1,000 targets simultaneously, the United States has never publicly demonstrated its performance under live-fire conditions.

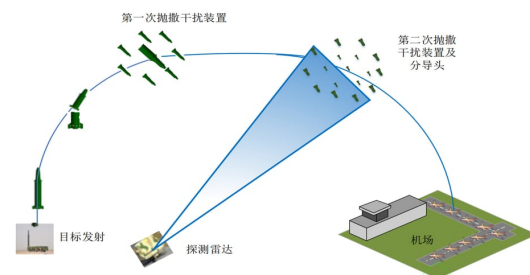


图7 目标突防场景
Fig. 7 Target penetration scenario

The large-scale missile defence test in the Gobi Desert saw 16 ballistic missiles fired, successfully tracked with the new phased-array radar system. Illustration: Handout

In October 2024, over 30 Iranian ballistic missiles penetrated US ally Israel's air defences, striking Nevatim Airbase and exposing vulnerabilities in even the most advanced missile shield networks. Israel's US-backed Arrow system, though formidable, struggled to prioritise threats during the saturation attack, according to some US media reports.

It is a scenario the Chinese military explicitly replicated in the Gobi Desert trial.

According to the paper, the PLA's system not only tracks conventional ballistic missiles but also helps to distinguish decoys from actual warheads, even with mid-flight countermeasures taking place like jamming or submunition dispersal.

“The radar's ability to maintain continuous tracking of 31 decoys and secondary targets, while simultaneously prioritising seven high-value threats”

shows a leap in anti-saturation capabilities, the paper said.

Also, with 16 ballistic missiles fired in a single exercise, the staggering cost of the test highlights

Ballistic missiles remain among the most expensive weapons systems, and such a volley is nearly unheard of outside wartime drills.

In 2023, state broadcaster CCTV released footage of an autonomous missile production line, which was widely interpreted as a message to the world, in particular the US, on China's growing stockpiles.

The fully automated facility, dubbed a "lights-out factory" by some military experts, suggests the PLA could rapidly replenish its arsenal at a reduced cost, altering the "calculus of deterrence" in potential conflicts over [Taiwan](#) or the South China Sea.

CYBER- SECURITY

DeepSeek is a 'profound threat' that collects Americans' data for China, House panel warns

17 April 2025, [Washington Post](#), Bill Gertz

The Chinese artificial intelligence chatbot DeepSeek poses a major national security threat to the United States through stealing Americans' personal data, according to a new report by a House panel on the Chinese Communist Party.

The investigative report by the House Select Committee on the CCP states that the user data is being covertly funneled to the ruling party and is used to manipulate information on the platform so it aligns with propaganda.

[DeepSeek](#) was also trained in the use of its automatic digital conversations using material obtained illegally from U.S. AI models, the report said.

House investigators also discovered that [DeepSeek](#) hardware utilizes "tens of thousands" of Nvidia microchips, including some that are restricted to export to China.

"This report makes it clear: DeepSeek isn't just another AI app — it's a weapon in the Chinese Communist Party's arsenal, designed to spy on Americans, steal our technology, and subvert U.S. law," said Rep. John Moolenaar, Michigan Republican and the panel chairman.

The 18-page bipartisan report was released together with ranking member Rep. Raja Krishnamoorthi, Illinois Democrat.

The report concluded that DeepSeek poses a "profound threat" to U.S. security and recommended tightening export restrictions to prevent U.S. technology from helping Chinese AI, and taking steps to prevent "strategic surprise" through the use of the app.

Mr. Moolenaar said DeepSeek reportedly is using Nvidia chips that should not be under CCP control.

"That's why we're sending a letter to Nvidia to demand answers. American innovation should never be the engine of our adversaries' ambitions," he said.

Committee investigators who studied DeepSeek activities found that 85% of the app's responses to chatbot queries were manipulated to block or alter content related to democracy, Taiwan, Hong Kong and human rights.

The manipulated software was not disclosed to app users.

DeepSeek is owned by a CCP-affiliated company and emerged earlier this year as a low-cost competitor to U.S. AI models. It is said to run on less powerful hardware.

The committee report said DeepSeek was founded by Chinese national Liang Wenfeng and controlled by him

through a company called Ningbo Cheng'en and several other firms.

"The company operates within the state-subsidized 'Hangzhou Chengxi Science and Technology Innovation Corridor,' a government initiative explicitly guided by Xi Jinping Thought, the guiding ideology of the CCP, that aims to create China's answer to Silicon Valley," the report said.

According to the report, Nvidia chief executive officer Jensen Huang ordered Nvidia to design a specially modified microchip that aimed to exploit a loophole in U.S. export controls that allowed sales to China of [AI](#) chips.

The Trump administration is seeking to close the export loophole. An Nvidia spokesman did not immediately respond to a request for comment. A DeepSeek spokesman could not be reached for comment.

On data collection, the report said DeepSeek gathers extensive personal data on Americans who use the chatbot, including their chat history, device details, and how a person types.

The data is then sent back to China creating what the report said is a "a pipeline of problematic foreign data access."

"All data uploaded to servers in [China] is subject to the country's sweeping cybersecurity and intelligence laws, which compel companies to share data with state authorities," the report said.

The app also integrated tracking tools from Chinese tech companies, including ByteDance, owner of TikTok, Baidu, and Tencent.

The companies have been identified by the U.S. government as raising national security concerns.

"This entangles DeepSeek's data harvesting architecture with PRC companies known for their roles in surveillance and CCP control, heightening the risk that foreign adversary entities could gain access to Americans' private information," the report said.

DeepSeek software is also linked to China Mobile, the state-owned telecommunications company that the Pentagon has designated as a Chinese military company.

China Mobile is tasked by the CCP to support large-scale information control and intelligence objectives, the report said.

The censorship activities of DeepSeek automatically filter and erase unwanted user responses before they can be posted. Internal directed biases also systematically distort overall behavior.

"The platform is designed to ensure the AI aligns with the CCP's ideological and political objectives," the report said, noting that those remain "core socialist values" — a euphemism for communism, and "correct political direction" on topics like Taiwan, Tibet and human rights abuses against Uyghurs.

Beijing Accuses US National Security Agency of Cyber Attack on 2025 Harbin Asian Winter Games

16 April, 2025, Chinascope

Chinese authorities have reported that the 2025 Harbin Asian Winter Games suffered significant foreign cyber attacks, triggering an investigation by Harbin's Public Security Bureau. With support from international partners, investigators claim to have traced these attacks to three NSA agents and two American universities.

According to Chinese technical experts, the cyber attacks specifically targeted crucial information systems including registration, arrival/departure management, and competition registration systems. These systems contained sensitive personal information of athletes and event personnel. The attacks allegedly intensified on February 3rd during the first ice hockey match, with attempts to disrupt event information publishing systems.

Chinese authorities have named three NSA operatives allegedly involved in the attacks: Kathryn A. Wilson, Robert J. Snelling, Stephen W. Johnson.

Investigators claim these individuals have previously carried out cyber attacks against Chinese critical infrastructure and companies like Huawei.

The report also implicates the University of California and Virginia Tech University in the cyber operations. It notes that both institutions have established connections to the NSA, with Virginia Tech being one of six advanced military academies in the US and a certified "Cyber Defense Research Center" and "Cyber Operations Research Center."

Harbin police have announced a reward for information leading to the three named suspects, as part of efforts to combat foreign cyber attacks against Chinese networks and protect national cybersecurity interests.

The attacks reportedly targeted specific systems and infrastructure using hundreds of known and unknown attack methods, including zero-day vulnerabilities, file-reading exploits, and high-frequency targeted detection attacks.

In Secret Meeting, China Acknowledged Role in U.S. Infrastructure Hacks

16 April 2025, [MSN](#)

WASHINGTON—Chinese officials acknowledged in a secret December meeting that Beijing was behind a widespread series of alarming cyberattacks on U.S. infrastructure, according to people familiar with the matter, underscoring how hostilities between the two superpowers are continuing to escalate.

The Chinese delegation linked years of intrusions into computer networks at U.S. ports, water utilities, airports and other targets, to increasing U.S. policy support for Taiwan, the people, who declined to be named, said.



The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China in Beijing©
Charle He/Getty Images

The first-of-its-kind signal at a Geneva summit with the outgoing Biden administration startled American officials used to hearing their Chinese counterparts blame the campaign, which security researchers have dubbed Volt Typhoon, on a criminal outfit, or accuse the U.S. of having an overactive imagination.

U.S. officials went public last year with unusually dire warnings about the uncovered Volt Typhoon effort. They publicly attributed it to Beijing trying to get a foothold in U.S. computer networks so its army could quickly detonate damaging cyberattacks during a future conflict.

The Chinese official's remarks at the December meeting were indirect and somewhat ambiguous, but most of the American delegation in the room interpreted it as a tacit admission and a warning to the U.S. about Taiwan, a former U.S. official familiar with the meeting said.

In the months since the meeting, relations between Washington and Beijing have sunk to new lows, locked in a historic trade war. Top Trump administration officials have said the Pentagon will pursue more offensive cyber strikes against China. Beijing has continued to mine its extraordinary access to U.S. telecommunications networks enabled by a separate breach, attributed to Salt Typhoon, U.S. officials and lawmakers say. The administration also plans to dismiss hundreds of cybersecurity workers in sweeping job cuts and last week fired the director of the National Security Agency and his deputy, fanning concerns from some intelligence officials and lawmakers that the government would be weakened in defending against the attacks.

Officials say Chinese hackers' targeting of civilian infrastructure in recent years presents among the most troubling security threats facing the Trump administration.

In a statement, the State Department didn't comment on the meeting but said the U.S. had made clear to Beijing it will "take actions in response to Chinese malicious cyber activity," describing the hacking as "some of the gravest and most persistent threats to U.S. national security." The Trump White House National Security Council declined to comment.

The Chinese embassy in Washington didn't respond to specific questions about the meeting, but accused the U.S. of "using cybersecurity to smear and slander China" and spreading disinformation about "so-called hacking threats."

During the half-day meeting in Geneva, Wang Lei, a top cyber official with China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, indicated that the infrastructure hacks resulted from the U.S.'s military backing of Taiwan, an island Beijing claims as its own, according to current and former U.S. officials familiar with the conversation.

Wang or the other Chinese officials didn't directly state that China was responsible for the hacking, the U.S. officials said. But American officials present and others later briefed on the meeting perceived the comments as confirmation of Beijing's role and was intended to scare the U.S. from involving itself if a conflict erupts in the Taiwan Strait.

About a dozen representatives from both countries, including senior officials from the State Department, the National Security Council, the Pentagon and U.S. intelligence agencies, attended the high-level meeting, which hasn't been previously reported. It was led by Nate Fick, then the ambassador-at-large for cyberspace and digital policy in the Biden administration, officials said.

In Geneva, Wang's comments came after the U.S. stressed that China didn't appear to understand how dangerous prepositioning in civilian critical infrastructure was, and how much the U.S. would view it as an act of war, the former U.S. official said. Additionally, the Biden administration wanted to convey doubts that China's political and military leadership, including President Xi Jinping, were fully aware of the activities of the hackers, the official said. Both the Biden White House and the Trump transition team were briefed about the meeting and provided detailed summaries afterward, the people said.

The Geneva summit occurred amid a cascade of revelations about the extent of China's far-reaching and unusually aggressive Salt Typhoon cyber operations into U.S. telecommunications networks, including those belonging to AT&T and Verizon. That campaign allowed hackers working for China's Ministry of State Security to spy on the unencrypted calls and texts of scores of top government officials and political figures, including those within the presidential campaigns of Donald Trump and Kamala Harris.

While that issue was also raised during the meeting in Geneva, it was largely tabled to focus on the separate hacking into civilian critical infrastructure by Volt Typhoon because it is considered an unacceptable provocation, the officials said. The telecom intrusions, while considered a historic counterintelligence failure, are viewed as more akin to traditional cyber espionage that the U.S. also conducts against adversaries.

A Chinese official would likely only acknowledge the intrusions even in a private setting if instructed to do so by the top levels of Xi's government, said Dakota Cary, a China expert at the cybersecurity firm SentinelOne. The tacit admission is significant, he said, because it may reflect a view in Beijing that the likeliest military conflict with the U.S. would be over Taiwan and that a more direct signal about the stakes of involvement needed to be sent to the Trump administration.

"China wants U.S. officials to know that, yes, they do have this capability, and they are willing to use it," Cary said.

PROTESTS, DETENTIONS AND OTHER NEWS FROM THE PRC

Protests by unpaid Chinese workers spread amid factory closures

29 April 2025, [RFA](#)



Shangda Electronics factory workers protest in Suining city, China. (@YesterdayBigcat)

Protests by workers demanding back wages are spreading across China in a sign of growing discontent among millions suffering the brunt of factory closures, triggered by steep U.S. tariffs on Chinese imports amid an economic downturn.

Across the country – from Hunan province’s Dao county in central China to Sichuan’s Suining city in the southwest and Inner Mongolia’s Tongliao city to the northeast – hundreds of disgruntled workers have taken to the streets to protest about unpaid wages and to challenge unfair dismissals by factories that were forced to shut due to the U.S. tariffs.

“Strike! Strike!” shouted workers outside a Shangda Electronics’ factory in Suining city on Sunday, in a video of the protest that was posted on social media by X user ‘@YesterdayBigcat,’ a prominent source of information about protests in China.

The workers said the Sichuan-headquartered company, which manufactures flexible circuit boards, had not paid them wages since the start of the year and social security benefits for nearly two years – since June 2023.

Analysts at U.S.-based investment bank Goldman Sachs estimated that at least 16 million jobs, across industries, in China are at risk due to U.S. President Donald Trump’s imposition of a 145% tariff on Chinese imports.

They expect the Trump administration’s tariff increases will “significantly weigh on the Chinese economy,” with slower economic growth likely to put further pressure on the country’s labor market, particularly in export-related sectors.

In China’s manufacturing industry, the communication equipment sector is likely to lose the most jobs, followed by apparel and chemical product sectors, Goldman analysts, including Xinquan Chen and Lisheng Wang, wrote in a note to clients on Sunday.

Earlier this week, more than a dozen migrant workers in Tuanjie village in Xi'an prefecture-level city in China's northwestern Shaanxi province complained at a local project department, saying they had not received their wages since February 2025.

Last week, on April 24, hundreds of workers of Guangxin Sports Goods in Dao county went on strike after the company's factory was shut down without paying employees their compensation or their social security benefits.

Workers at the company's factory, which produces sports protective gear and related accessories, said Guangxin Sports unfairly dismissed more than 100 female employees, aged over 50 years, in September 2024 on the grounds of "reaching retirement age," without paying them their wages or guiding them on retirement procedures.

When Radio Free Asia contacted Guangxin for a comment, a male employee at the company immediately hung up the phone on hearing the word "reporter." The Dao County Labor and Social Security Bureau told RFA that "Guangxin still has dozens of employees operating."

Elsewhere in Inner Mongolia, many construction workers gathered on the rooftops of Jincan Royal Garden Community in Tongliao city on April 25 where they threatened to jump off the building if they were not paid the back wages they were due, another video posted on the same X account showed.

Economic pressures

Experts say the growing number of worker protests in China reflect the current crisis of poor management at some Chinese companies and signal deepening economic troubles for the country amid trade tensions with the United States.

Beijing-based activist Ji Feng, who was among the student leaders of the 1989 Tiananmen Square protests, said many Chinese business owners he met recently have complained bitterly about the difficulties they face, including the lack of business activity and funds.

"Some bosses even said that they would rather go to jail than do anything," Ji told RFA.

"As long as there is a protest (by workers), the company must find a way to borrow money to pay wages. For example, if wages are in arrears for three months, they must be paid monthly even if they need to borrow money. If they cannot be paid on time, the government may arrest people (employers)," Ji said.

He noted, however, that worker protests are not a new phenomenon, with these increasing after the pandemic as China's economic environment deteriorated.

According to the U.S.-based nonprofit Freedom House's China Dissent Monitor, the majority of protests tracked in China during the third quarter of

2024 were led by workers, who accounted for 41% of in-person and online dissent events in the country.

About three-quarters of all protests recorded in China were linked to economic grievances, including workers demanding unpaid wages, homeowners facing stalled housing projects, and rural conflict related to land confiscation, Freedom House said.

Edited by Tenzin Pema and Mat Pennington.

Sichuan Airlines to launch first Chengdu-Madrid direct flight

12 April 2025, [Macau Business](#)

A new regular direct flight will be launched between Chengdu, capital of southwest China's Sichuan Province, and Madrid, the capital of Spain, starting April 27.

Sichuan Airlines will operate this route with four weekly round trips on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays. This marks the airline's first direct service to Spain, enhancing air connectivity between western China and Spain, according to the company.

Flights will depart from Chengdu Tianfu International Airport at 1:40 a.m. Beijing Time, arriving in Madrid at 8:50 a.m. local time. Return flights will leave Madrid at 11:05 a.m. local time, landing in Chengdu at 5:00 a.m. Beijing Time the following day.

The route will address the lack of direct post-pandemic flights from Chengdu to Spain, where travelers currently rely on transfers via Beijing, Shanghai or European hubs, said Sichuan Province Airport Group Co., Ltd.

A megacity with over 21 million residents and part of the fast-growing Chengdu-Chongqing economic zone, Chengdu has strong ties with Spain, notably establishing an international friendly cooperation partnership with Madrid in September 2022. These ties extend across cultural and educational spheres — from thriving Spanish language programs at Sichuan University to growing local demand for Spanish wines in Chengdu's vibrant market.

CHINA IN THE REGION

China-East Turkestan

Xinjiang conducts joint armed exercise on counterterrorism, deterrence

29 April 2025, [Global Times](#)



Xinjiang on April 28, 2025 conducted the joint armed exercise "Counterterrorism Deterrence-2025" in the Ili River Valley. Photo: screenshot from Xinjiang Daily

To implement the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC)'s deployment for advancing the counterterrorism and stability maintenance efforts in Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region under the rule of law and in a normalized manner, Xinjiang on Monday conducted the joint armed exercise "Counterterrorism Deterrence-2025" in the Ili River Valley, Xinjiang Daily reported on Tuesday.

The exercise aimed to strengthen armed deterrence, enhance combat readiness, and fully demonstrated Xinjiang's resolve to consolidate border defense and lawfully combat violent terrorist activities, resolutely safeguarding national political security and social stability in Xinjiang, the news report said.

The 4,000-strong task force consisted of military, armed police, border inspection, public security, and Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps personnel, supported by mobilized drones, armored vehicles, assault vehicles, and other equipment.

The exercise included operations such as joint border reconnaissance and apprehension, port interception of cross-border infiltration, urban residential area lockdown and capture, border interdiction of illegal crossings, and mountainous area search-and-destroy missions, all of which were successfully completed.

The exercise was meticulously organized and efficiently executed with strong coordination. It comprehensively tested the participating forces' capabilities in emergency command, intelligence gathering, perimeter control, apprehension operations, rapid reinforcement, and civil-military coordination, further enhancing Xinjiang's operational proficiency in combating violent terrorism and resolutely maintaining long-term stability and security.

Ma Xingrui, secretary of the Xinjiang regional committee of the CPC, fully affirmed the exercise's results. He emphasized the need to recognize Xinjiang's critical role in safeguarding national security, always prioritizing social stability while better balancing development and security, as well as openness and security, to build a strategic barrier for national geopolitical security, according to Xinjiang Daily.

Ma stressed maintaining relentless pressure on the "three forces" through lawful and stringent measures, continuously improving counterterrorism and stability maintenance mechanisms under the rule of law, and enhancing capabilities in early warning, preemptive judgment, and rapid response. Additionally, he called for vigilance against imported terrorist threats, strengthened port management, and reinforced border controls to safeguard frontier security, Xinjiang Daily reported.

EU refuses to lift sanctions on Chinese officials over ongoing Uyghur rights abuses in Xinjiang

28 April 2025, [The Tribune](#)

The European Union has refused to lift sanctions on Chinese officials over ongoing human rights abuses in Xinjiang, maintaining measures imposed in 2021 despite China's moves to ease counter-sanctions on EU lawmakers.

The European Union has decided not to lift sanctions imposed on Chinese officials linked to alleged human rights violations in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, even as Beijing prepares to ease some of its counter-sanctions on EU lawmakers, according to the South China Morning Post (SCMP).

Earlier reports by the Post indicated that China and the European Parliament were nearing a resolution concerning the removal of punitive actions against sitting members, with an announcement anticipated in the coming weeks, as stated by SCMP.

"The EU has not seen any changes in the human rights situation in China/Xinjiang. Thus, the Council continues to uphold the sanctions related to China/Xinjiang," said Anitta Hipper, spokesperson for foreign affairs and security policy, according to the SCMP report.

The exchange of sanctions began in March 2021, when Brussels joined the United States, Britain, and Canada in imposing visa bans and asset freezes on several Chinese officials and one entity.

At the time, the EU stated the sanctions were a response to involvement in "serious human rights violations in China, particularly large-scale arbitrary detentions and degrading treatment of Uyghurs and other Muslim ethnic minorities," as reported by SCMP.

The Uyghur people, a minority ethnic group in China's Xinjiang region, have faced severe persecution under Chinese government policies. Reports document mass arbitrary detentions in so-called "re-education" camps, forced labour, extensive surveillance, religious restrictions, and cultural erasure. Human rights organizations and international bodies have described these actions as crimes against humanity, and in some cases, genocide.

Uyghurs are often targeted for practising Islam, speaking their native language, or preserving their cultural identity. Despite mounting global condemnation, the Chinese government denies any wrongdoing, framing its actions as part of counter-terrorism efforts. The Uyghur community continues to call for justice, freedom, and sustained international pressure to end the abuses. (ANI)

China gives suspended death sentence to former Xinjiang official for corruption

22 April 2025, [The Hindu](#)

The court said that Li Pengxin, former deputy secretary of the Communist Party committee in the northwestern region of Xinjiang, had amassed "especially huge sums" by abusing various official positions.

China has handed down a suspended death sentence to a former Xinjiang official for taking \$112 million in bribes, a court announced on Tuesday (April 22, 2025). The court in Baoji, Shaanxi province, said that Li Pengxin, former deputy secretary of the Communist Party committee in the northwestern region of Xinjiang, had amassed "especially huge sums" by abusing various official positions between 1999 and 2023, state broadcaster CCTV reported.

He provided assistance to "units and individuals in mineral exploitation, business operations, cadre appointments, and other matters" in return for bribes, CCTV said.

The court found Li's crimes were "especially grave", while the "social impact was particularly vile".

His execution was stayed because of his confession and cooperation with investigators, but his life sentence will not be commuted.

Li served as deputy party secretary in the western Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region from 2016 to 2021 after stints in Qinghai province and Inner Mongolia.

He was first investigated for corruption in 2023.

President Xi Jinping has overseen a wide-ranging campaign against official corruption since coming to power more than a decade ago, with critics saying it also serves as a way to purge political rivals.

Li's time in Xinjiang coincided with a ramping up of surveillance and control aimed at the region's Uyghurs and other Muslim minorities.

Rights groups have accused China's ruling Communist Party of committing grievous human rights abuses in Xinjiang, in what the United States and lawmakers in some other countries have called a "genocide".

Beijing vociferously denies the allegations, arguing that its policies in Xinjiang have helped to curb religious extremism and boost economic development.

BASF exits Xinjiang ventures after Uyghur abuse reports

22 April 2025, [France24](#)

Berlin (AFP) – German chemicals giant BASF said Tuesday it had exited two joint ventures in China's Xinjiang region after its local partner was alleged to have participated in rights abuses against the local Uyghur minority.

BASF said in a statement it had completed the sale of its shares in Markor Chemical Manufacturing and Markor Meiou Chemical to the Singaporean group Verde Chemical.

The German group gave no financial details of the transaction, which was completed on Monday "following approval by the relevant authorities".

BASF had said in February 2024 it would accelerate its divestment from the joint ventures which manufacture the industrial chemical butanediol.

Plans to sell the shares had already been announced by BASF in 2023 in response to commercial and environmental concerns.

German public broadcaster ZDF and news magazine Der Spiegel had reported that staff of BASF's partner firm Markor were involved in rights abuses against members of the mostly Muslim Uyghur minority.

Employees were alleged to have spied on Uyghur families and filed reports with Chinese authorities.

BASF said at the time it had no indication that employees of the joint ventures were involved in rights violations, only staff of its local partner.

Rights groups have long accused Beijing of a widespread crackdown on minorities in Xinjiang, including through forced labour and detention camps. Beijing denies allegations of abuse and insists its actions in Xinjiang have helped to combat extremism and enhance development.

Despite the controversy surrounding the Xinjiang plants, BASF has been ramping up its presence in China while production costs in Europe are high.

The German group is in the process of building a new 10-billion-euro (\$11.5-billion) chemical complex in the southern province of Guangdong.

Chinese artist fined for filming Uyghur folk music in Xinjiang

17 April 2025, [RFA](#), Qian Lang

While Guo Zhenming is punished, performances by a state-backed Uyghur dance troupe in Europe are promoted on social media.



This combination of images shows a Uyghur musician performing as filmed by Chinese artist Guo Zhenming in Xinjiang, center, and social media images of state-sponsored displays of Uyghur cultural performances in Paris, left, and Budapest, right. Words in Chinese say "Welcome to Xinjiang" and "Xinjiang is a good place." (RFA)

A Chinese artist has been fined for "illegal filming" of folk music in Xinjiang - even as China promotes state-sponsored performances of Uyghur singers and dancers in Europe that have angered Uyghur activists. The Chinese artist, Guo Zhenming, who is known for his work commemorating the 1989 Tiananmen massacre, told Radio Free Asia he was fined 75,000 yuan (US\$10,300) and had all his equipment and materials confiscated over what he said was just a personal project not a film for distribution.

In one of the videos, there is a Uyghur girl playing a traditional stringed musical instrument known as a tambur. "This is one piece of evidence used by the Cultural and Tourism Bureau to accuse me," Guo told RFA Mandarin.

The Urumqi Municipal Bureau of Culture and Tourism in Xinjiang, which held a hearing in Guo's case last week, said the Yunnan-based film director and dissident artist had violated Article 13 of the 'Film Industry Promotion Law' that requires "legal persons and other organizations that intend to produce films" to send a screenplay synopsis to the relevant departments to be filed for their records.

But Guo told RFA in an interview Wednesday that his filming of folk music in cities and villages across Xinjiang in December 2024 and January 2025 was not intended for commercial use, and he had not scripted a film.

Instead, it is a personal art project with contemporary Chinese musician Wang Xiao to create and collect folk music while traveling and filming the landscape of Xinjiang, he said.

"The current shoot in Xinjiang is just a record of artistic music-collection field trips. I never said I would make a movie. There is no studio or trailer, only some filming equipment and materials," Guo said.

The Urumqi Culture and Tourism Bureau reasoned he was likely to turn the footage shot in Xinjiang into a film as he had previously screened a documentary - which was about artists haunted by the Tiananmen Square massacre - at the Berlin Film Festival in Germany, even though he had not obtained official permission to release that film.

In February, Urumqi authorities had raided Guo's house and seized all his equipment, including two cameras, one hard drive, two filters, a set of lights, and a recorder.

Chinese netizens and artists have criticized the punishment against Guo as government's suppression of artistic freedom and 'high-seas fishing,' a term used in legal circles to describe cross-provincial policing beyond a particular office's jurisdiction.

Uyghur anger over state-backed performances

The punishment of Guo for filming folk music in Xinjiang is in sharp contrast to Chinese state efforts to promote displays of Uyghur culture around the world - invariably portraying an image that Uyghurs embrace Chinese culture and live happily together with the Han ethnic majority.

Most recently, exiled Uyghur activists have objected to performances in Paris, France, and Budapest, Hungary, by the Uyghur 12 Muqam, a dance and music troupe under the Xinjiang Performing Arts Bureau.

Social media videos circulated by the troupe's lead show highly stylized female dancers twirling against the backdrop of the Eiffel Tower as bystanders clap along.

"It is a grotesque irony that China is showcasing Uyghur culture in Europe while erasing it in the Uyghur homeland," Rushan Abbas, chairwoman of the World Uyghur Congress, told RFA.

"The same regime staging dance performances abroad is the one that has criminalized Uyghur religious expression, bulldozed our mosques, banned our language, and detained our artists. This is not cultural preservation—it is cultural propaganda. Europe must not be complicit in this whitewashing campaign," she said.

China's communist government is accused of grave human rights abuses against the minority Muslim group in Xinjiang, with the U.S. government has determined amounts to genocide.

Anger in cultural circles

It's unclear whether Chinese authorities' decision to throw the book at Guo is motivated by his reputation

as a dissident, or by the fact that he was documenting Uyghur culture that Beijing is accused of erasing.

But the imposition of harsh penalties on Guo has angered those in China's legal and cultural circles, who say this is the first such case where authorities have meted out punishment for "individual or personal filming conduct" under the Film Industry Promotion Law, since its implementation in 2017.

"The Film Law regulates organized film production activities, not individual filming," said Li Xiongbing, the lawyer representing Guo, who argued at a hearing on April 11 that there were "serious problems in the application of the law" and that the Urumqi authorities were not the law enforcement body with jurisdiction on this case.

In a letter to the Urumqi Municipal Culture and Tourism Bureau, Guo's legal team pointed out that the bureau had clearly crossed its administrative authority and recommended that Guo's equipment and materials be returned immediately and the penalty decision be revoked.

RFA could not immediately reach the Urumqi Municipal Bureau of Culture and Tourism office for comment.

Impact on artistic freedom

Chinese netizens fear the move will have wider implications for China's creative ecosystem, beyond just the film and art industry.

"Film a movie in Hunan, and get fined by Xinjiang. It may sound utterly ridiculous, but it belies a serious problem: our ever-shrinking space for artistic freedom," wrote one WeChat blogger named Li Yuchen.

"If this nonsense continues, I fear that the next people punished for 'illegal filmmaking' will be you, and me, and everyone we know who has ever used a camera or a mobile phone," Li added.

Chinese artist He Sanpo, who now lives in Thailand, echoed a similar sentiment, calling the penalties "absurd" and reminiscent of an order by officials of Sanhe City in Hebei province, who had ordered that all the walls of the city be painted green overnight.

"They are as absurd as the political jokes of the former Soviet Union. Once public power overrides the law, it is like a tiger on the street, that can hurt people anytime and anywhere. Any absurd and terrifying incident may happen," He told RFA.

In December 2022, authorities in Dali in China's southwestern province of Yunnan placed Guo under 15 days' administrative detention for "picking quarrels and stirring up trouble," a charge frequently used to target peaceful critics of the ruling Chinese Communist Party, after he made some comments about the "white paper" protest movement.

Filming ethnic minorities inside China's borders can be deemed sensitive by authorities.

In 1995, China had sentenced Tibetan musician Ngawang Chopel to 18 years in prison for filming traditional Tibetan folk songs and dance, over a two-month period in Tibet. He was charged with “committing espionage crime” and for using the cover of filming Tibetan music to gather sensitive intelligence and engaging in “separatist activities.”

Senior CPC official urges sound implementation of governance policies for Xinjiang

14 April 2025, [China Daily](#)

Senior Communist Party of China (CPC) official Chen Wenqing has urged full and sound implementation of the Party's policies for the governance of Northwest China's Xinjiang Uyghur autonomous region in the new era.

Chen, a member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and head of the Commission for Political and Legal Affairs of the CPC Central Committee, made the remarks during an investigation and research tour in Xinjiang between Thursday and Sunday.

During the tour, Chen learned about local efforts to counter and prevent terrorism and maintain stability, among others.

He stressed the importance of advancing such efforts on a regular basis to ensure zero violent terrorist crime cases in the region and rooting out the breeding ground for religious extremism in accordance with the law.

He also urged efforts to guarantee sound employment for relevant groups, strengthen border management and control, and guide people from various ethnic groups to forge a strong sense of community for the Chinese nation, among other efforts.

US House committee passes Uyghur Policy Act, again

11 April 2025, [RFA](#)

Bipartisan bill is the latest U.S. legislative effort to pressure China and protect the rights of the persecuted Muslim minority.

The U.S. House Foreign Affairs Committee this week approved bipartisan legislation to support Uyghurs and other ethnic minorities subject to human rights abuses by China.

The Uyghur Policy Act is the latest legislative effort to protect the rights of persecuted Muslim minority. The U.S. government has determined that China's treatment of Uyghurs amounts to genocide.

The bill is co-sponsored by nine Republicans and Democrats led by Rep. Young Kim and Rep. Ami Bera,

who are the chair and ranking member respectively of the House sub-committee for East Asia and the Pacific. The legislation calls on the State Department to respond to abuses in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region – the Uyghur homeland inside China -- and push back on Chinese Communist Party efforts to silence Uyghur voices, and to develop a strategy to close detention facilities and political reeducation camps.

It also requires the U.S. secretary of state to oversee human rights-related policies to preserve Uyghurs' ethnic, religious, cultural, and linguistic identities.

The House Foreign Affairs Committee approved the bill on Tuesday. It faces various legislative hurdles before it becomes law, including passage by the full House and Senate.

The legislation was passed by the House of Representatives in both of the past two congressional terms without advancing further.

The last Congress renewed separate legislation, the Uyghur Human Rights Policy Act, that authorized sanctions against Chinese officials responsible for genocide against Uyghurs. Another law, passed in 2021 and which has had the most impact, makes it illegal to import products used Uyghur forced labor into the United States.

Also this week, the World Uyghur Congress, the main global umbrella group advocating for Uyghurs, said it had filed a legal complaint in Paris against three French subsidiaries of major Chinese companies: Dahua Technology France, Hikvision France, and Huawei France.

The submission, made by prominent French human rights lawyer, accuses the three Chinese companies of complicity in crimes against humanity perpetrated against the Uyghurs by allegedly helping to build and maintain a mass surveillance system.

RFA has reached out to three companies in France for comment.

China-Hong Kong

Hong Kong's oldest pro-democracy party is shutting down as Beijing leaves no room for dissent

19 April 2025, [CNN World](#), Chris Lau and Kristie Lu Stout

Hong Kong's oldest and largest pro-democracy political party is moving to disband as Beijing's sweeping crackdown on the city leaves even moderate opposition groups with no room to operate.

The Democratic Party, one of the leading voices of opposition in the semi-autonomous city for the past three decades, has started the process of dissolution following recent warnings from Chinese government officials, two of its veteran members told CNN.

"The message was that the party has to be disbanded or there will be consequences," said one of them, Yeung Sum, a former Democratic Party chairman.

Fred Li, a former lawmaker, said a Chinese official told him that the party should not remain until the end of this year, when an election will be held.

Founded by liberal lawyers and academics three years before the former British colony's 1997 handover to China, the Democratic Party had campaigned for universal suffrage and on matters from labor rights to conservation during a period when such issues were openly discussed in the city.

Widely seen as moderates willing to work with Beijing, Democratic Party leaders had spearheaded a significant voting bloc in the city's legislature and were regularly afforded space to critique local government policy, until mass pro-democracy protests in 2019 ushered in a new and more restrictive political era.

Beijing's crackdown in the years since, including the prosecution and jailing of pro-democracy leaders, has left the once-influential party rudderless as it contends with sweeping national security legislation and "patriots only" electoral reforms enacted in 2021 that make it nearly impossible for opposition candidates to stand for the city's legislature.

Democratic Party chairman Lo Kin-hei told a news conference last Sunday that 90% of about 110 party members had voted to delegate power to a committee to start the dissolution process, adding he hoped a final vote would take place in the coming months.

"I hope Hong Kong's political parties... will continue to work for the people," Lo said. "We have always hoped to serve the Hong Kong people, and to do things that are good for society."

The Democrats' move to disband demonstrates Beijing's unwillingness to allow even the mildest of dissenting voices to be heard in Hong Kong, say analysts.

John Burns, emeritus professor at the University of Hong Kong (HKU), said the party had "symbolized the promise of some kind of democratic development in Hong Kong, leading to universal suffrage as promised in the Basic Law," referring to the city's mini-constitution.

"A dissolution of the party reflects official Hong Kong's turn away from popular participation, locally accountable government, and increased transparency toward more authoritarian rule," Burns said.

Eric Lai, a research fellow at the Georgetown Center for Asian Law, said the Democrats' move "shows there are no more feasible ways for groups to exist as an opposition party."

"It's self-conflicting for the government to suggest that nothing has changed," he said.

In a statement to CNN, a city government spokesperson said decisions by individual groups "to disband or suspend operation are completely

unrelated to the freedom or rights enshrined in Hong Kong law."

Criticism of the government remains permitted in Hong Kong, "however strong, vigorous or critical" it may be, so long as it is "based on facts," the spokesperson said. The Hong Kong government would "continue to resolutely discharge the duty of safeguarding national security," they added.

No space for compromise

The Democrats had enjoyed relative political freedom following Hong Kong's return to Chinese rule, even holding more seats than any other party in the mostly pro-Beijing legislature until 2004.

The party's leaders were often the figureheads of major demonstrations, including an annual June 4 vigil to commemorate the Tiananmen Square massacre and a well-attended pro-democracy march held every July. (Neither event would be permitted on the Chinese mainland, and both are now effectively banned in Hong Kong).

But support for the Democrats plunged in 2010 after its leaders negotiated directly for universal suffrage with officials from Beijing's liaison office in Hong Kong – a move seen as a betrayal by other pro-democracy groups.

The party was then pushed further to the sidelines by the emergence of a new generation of pro-democracy leaders and student activists during months-long protests for universal suffrage in 2014.

However, when anti-government demonstrators returned to Hong Kong's streets en masse in 2019, the Democrats' popularity resurged as many of its leaders stood on the front lines of the massive – and sometimes violent – protests that rocked the financial hub.

Later that year, the Democratic Party was the biggest winner in local district council elections. But its participation in the protests also drew the ire of Hong Kong authorities and Beijing, paving the way for its demise.

"The party made mistakes when it failed to draw a clear line between itself and radical separatists calling for Hong Kong's independence from 2014-2020," said Burns, from HKU. "Authorities have punished the party, jailing and chasing out Democratic Party leaders."

Over the past five years, the space for the Democrats to maneuver has been increasingly squeezed by Chinese authorities.

In 2020, Beijing imposed a sweeping national security law on Hong Kong, introducing the maximum sentence of life imprisonment for four main crimes of secession, subversion, terrorism and collusion with foreign forces.

A year later, the Chinese government rewrote Hong Kong's electoral rules to require candidates to seek nomination from pro-Beijing groups, essentially

excluding the opposition from elections. A legislature filled with Beijing loyalists last year unanimously passed a law expanding the scope of national security offenses.

Beijing and the Hong Kong government argued that the electoral changes had enhanced democracy and have repeatedly defended the security laws as restoring order and returning prosperity to the city. But critics say they have curtailed freedoms and had a “chilling effect” on civil society, including independent institutions and the media.

Steve Tsang, director of the China Institute at SOAS University of London, said political and social protests seen as challenging state security are “becoming increasingly if not well-nigh impossible.”

“Many other elements of civil rights, including that of speech and organizing political parties have also been severely curtailed,” he added.

Last year, five former Democratic Party lawmakers were among 45 opposition figures sentenced to prison terms of up to 10 years after they were found guilty of subversion for taking part in an election primary in 2020.

National security police have also placed HK\$1 million (\$129,000) bounties on pro-democracy activists who fled overseas, including an Australia-based former Democratic Party lawmaker accused of secession, subversion and collusion with a foreign country.

Meanwhile, the trial of media tycoon and outspoken democracy supporter Jimmy Lai is ongoing, more than four years after he was detained on charges of colluding with foreign forces, which he denies.

The Democratic Party’s announcement last weekend follows the dissolution of almost 100 civil and pro-democracy organizations in Hong Kong in the wake of Beijing’s crackdown.

The party had tried to survive as a civic group in recent years but struggled to raise funds as multiple private venues canceled their events, often at the last minute. Former Democratic Party lawmaker Emily Lau said the party’s move to disband was “very sad.”

“We’ve been around for over 30 years, and we’ve got the support of many Hong Kong people,” she told CNN outside court in February, before another former party lawmaker was jailed on charges of rioting during the 2019 protests.

“I don’t know what they are thinking in Beijing. We have demonstrated, not just words, but by action, that we are reasonable. We are willing to talk, to negotiate, to compromise, reach a deal and go forward.”

China- Nepal

Nepali, Chinese police conduct joint patrol at Korala

27 April 2025, [The Rising Nepal](#)

To curb cross-border crimes at the Korala border areas, which lies in Lomanthang Rural Municipality-4 in Upper Mustang adjoining the Tibet Autonomous Region of China, Nepal Police, Armed Police Force of Nepal and Chinese Police conducted a joint patrol on Friday.

Following the operation of the Korala border point, the joint patrol was carried out to reduce possible illegal activities in the area, discuss prevailing issues at the border point, and assess the situation between Pillar No. 24 and Pillar No. 23 located westward, said Bishal Adhikari, information officer at the District Police Office, Mustang.

Adhikari said, “Joint foot patrols by the border forces of both countries take place as per the requirement. Such patrols are not conducted regularly.”

The police inspector further said that joint patrols are conducted by security personnel of both countries help in understanding the situation at the border and arranging necessary security measures.

On behalf of Nepal, the patrol included personnel from the Area Police Office, Lomanthang under the District Police Office, Mustang and the Border Outpost (BOP) of the Armed Police Force, while the Chinese team was mobilised from the Liji Police Office located at the border.

Mustang shares an international border of 134.16 kilometres with the Tibet Autonomous Region of China, marked by 16 border pillars numbered 18 to 33. The Korala border point is located at Pillar No. 24, at an altitude of 4,650 metres above sea level.

Temporary passes distributed for those going to neighbouring China

26 April 2025, [The Rising Nepal](#)

The District Administration Office has distributed temporary border passes for people going to Taklakot in neighboring China.

Chief District Officer Narayan Pandey said that temporary border passes were distributed and renewed to 374 people after reaching Tumkot, Yalwang, Hilsa, Yari and other areas to visit Taklakot in Purang county of neighboring China.

Temporary border passes were distributed in the site since it was difficult for citizens living in the border area to reach the district headquarters Simkot and obtain the border passes.

According to the District Administration Office, six new passes were issued while 64 were renewed at Hilsa checkpoint, six new and 86 renewals at Yari, 16 new and 34 renewals at Tumkot, 48 new and 114 renewals at Yalwang.

So far, 7,545 people have obtained border passes to visit Taklakot in China. (RSS)

Nepal Airlines seeks to send back rusting Chinese planes

19 April 2025, [The Kathmandu Post](#), Sangam Prasain

Five grounded aircraft cost NAC Rs200 million a year on insurance and parking fees.

Nepal Airlines has formally asked its Chinese supplier to take back five aircraft delivered around a decade ago.

The planes—four 17-seater Y12e aircraft and two 56-seater MA60 aircraft—were acquired between 2014 and 2018 under a deal that involved both grants and loans totalling Rs6.66 billion. One of the aircraft was lost in a crash in Nepalgunj.

Since 2020, the five remaining planes have been parked unused on the eastern edge of the runway at Tribhuvan International Airport in Kathmandu. According to airline officials, the aircraft are deteriorating from disuse, with most of them visibly rotting.

These grounded planes continue to cost the airline significantly, with insurance, parking, and maintenance cost amounting to an annual loss of Rs200 million.

The MA60, produced by Xi'an Aircraft Industrial Corporation, and the Y12e, a twin-engine turboprop manufactured by Harbin Aircraft Industry Group under the Aviation Industry Corporation of China (AVIC), have both proven unsustainable for operations.

In a meeting held on December 11, 2024, Nepal Airlines' Executive Chairman Yubaraj Adhikari requested that AVIC International take back the planes as a goodwill gesture, citing the close diplomatic ties between Nepal and China.

According to the meeting minutes obtained by the Post, Adhikari proposed returning two MA60s and three Y12es that had been grounded since July 2020.

As a backup proposal, Adhikari also suggested selling the aircraft in coordination with AVIC. He referred to a March 17, 2021 decision made by the Nepal government, which permitted the airline to dispose of the aircraft in collaboration with the supplier or manufacturer.

Nepal Airlines formally sought AVIC's consent to proceed with the sale.

However, AVIC representatives declined to provide immediate approval for disposing of the aircraft.

They clarified that, under the inter-governmental agreement, the aircraft had been transferred to the Chinese government before being handed over to Nepal Airlines. Specifically, one MA60 and one Y12e were delivered as grants, while one MA60 and three Y12e came through a soft loan arrangement.

Although AVIC did not give approval for the sale, the company agreed to help Nepal Airlines find potential operators for the planes. They suggested that many Y12e operators in China might be interested.

Additionally, AVIC representatives suggested that domestic agencies, such as the Nepal Army or the Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal, could use the aircraft.

The matter is now being considered for escalation to the government level in China, according to AVIC officials present at the meeting.

Still, AVIC emphasised that it expects all outstanding dues to be settled before any further steps are taken. Nepal Airlines acknowledged there were pending payments related to technical support and spare parts. AVIC agreed to resume customer and after-sales service, including spare parts supply and training, once dues are cleared.

The airline confirmed that it would clear training and technical support payments after proper verification. Discussions over invoices related to spare parts would be held separately to reach a mutual agreement. Nepal Airlines also requested the return of the spare parts and inventories supplied for the Chinese planes. Following the meeting, Nepal Airlines forwarded the minutes to the Ministry of Finance for guidance on next steps.

Subas Dangi, the airline's spokesperson, stated that both options—leasing and selling the aircraft—have already been unsuccessful.

The airline has now turned to the Ministry of Finance through the tourism ministry, its line ministry, for suggestions, said Dangi.

The decision to ground the Chinese aircraft was made in July 2020, following the board's conclusion that operational costs far outweighed revenues.

Since then, the aircraft have sat idle, but the airline continues to incur significant costs for parking, insurance, and maintenance charges, amounting to roughly Rs200 million a year.

Nepal Airlines attempted to lease the aircraft through a public notice on September 14, 2022, with a deadline of October 31, which was later extended to November 16. No interested bidders came forward.

The airline then tried to sell the planes. On January 19, 2023, it invited proposals for an independent appraisal of the two MA60s and three Y12es. An American firm valued the entire fleet at Rs220 million.

Concerned about public backlash and possible anti-corruption investigations due to the low resale value, the airline conducted its internal valuation.

Based on this in-house assessment, Nepal Airlines set the asking prices at \$8,225,501 for MA60 registered 9N-AKR, \$4,922,235 for MA60 9N-AKQ, \$2,412,671 for Y12e 9N-AKV, \$2,358,860 for Y12e 9N-AKT, and \$1,658,517 for Y12e 9N-AKS. Altogether, the total asking price for the five aircraft was \$19,577,784, far higher than the American company's estimate.

Despite these efforts, the second attempt to sell the planes also failed to attract any buyers.

The initial agreement to procure six aircraft—two MA60s and four Y12es—with AVIC was signed in November 2012. China provided a total of 408 million yuan (equivalent to Rs6.67 billion at the time), which included a 180 million yuan (Rs2.94 billion) grant for one MA60 and one Y12e, and a 228 million yuan (Rs3.72 billion) soft loan for an additional MA60 and three Y12es.

Under the loan terms, the Nepali government is obliged to pay an annual interest rate of 1.5 percent, plus a service and management fee of 0.4 percent. The Ministry of Finance, which took the loan, charges Nepal Airlines 1.75 percent annual interest on the disbursed amount.

The deal included a seven-year grace period, during which Nepal Airlines did not need to make interest or principal payments. This grace period expired in March 2021.

Now that the grace period has ended, officials admit that the Chinese aircraft have turned into liabilities rather than assets. They are often referred to as “white elephants,” with no realistic prospect of resale.

Nepal Airlines has acknowledged that the planes have become burdensome, plagued by frequent technical issues and a lack of trained personnel to operate them. The airline continues to struggle under the weight of nearly Rs50 billion debt, and the grounded aircraft have only deepened its financial woes.

Culture bridges Kathmandu and Guangzhou

17 April 2025, [Rising Nepal Daily](#)

Culture and civilisation have been time-tested elements connecting Nepal and China for centuries. In ancient times, physical connectivity between the two neighbours was constrained by the geographical difficulty. But nowadays, the interactions between the people and the governments of the two nations have grown by leaps and bounds thanks to modern means of communication and enhanced road and air connectivity.

On Tuesday, 'Charming Guangzhou Meets Nepal' city image exhibition was held in Kathmandu to foster cultural diplomacy and people-to-people ties, highlighting Guangzhou's vision as a global city bridging traditions and modernity. In recent years,

Guangzhou and Nepal have witnessed deepening cooperation in trade, culture, tourism and education.

The Guangzhou Culture Group delivered captivating performances, including the Cantonese opera White Dragon Pass and the acrobatic show Strength and Beauty. Over 30 iconic photographs depicting Guangzhou's transformation from a millennium-old commercial hub to a modern international metropolis were exhibited, while the participants also savoured Cantonese cuisine.

The event was hosted by the Information Office of Guangzhou Municipal People's Government, organised by China Centre for International Communication Development, Guangzhou Culture Group, Guangzhou Restaurant Group, and MINISO, and co-organised by the CIG Centre for Europe and Asia (China Pictorial Publications). The colourful function has added new vigour as this year marks the 70th anniversary of the establishment of China-Nepal diplomatic relations and the Nepal Tourism Year 2025. Binod Prakash Singh, Secretary of the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation, said that the event showcased Guangzhou's dynamism and Nepal's hospitality. "It is a bridge between our peoples highlighting the vibrancy of Guangzhou and the warmth, diversity and timeless beauty of Nepal."

Wang Xin, Deputy Chief of Mission at the Chinese Embassy in Nepal, said that China-Nepal relations had been rooted in the people, nurtured through mutual trust, and flourished through shared development. The event will further advance bilateral collaboration, open a new chapter of mutually beneficial development, and contribute wisdom and strength to regional and global peace and prosperity, said Wang.

Du Xinshan, Member of the Standing Committee and Director General of the Publicity Department of the CPC Guangzhou Municipal Committee, emphasised Guangzhou's role as a pivotal hub along the Maritime Silk Road, embracing the world with openness and inclusiveness.

He described Kathmandu as a vibrant crossroads of South Asian civilisations and called for Guangzhou and Kathmandu to "navigate with trust as the vessel and innovation as the sail", jointly crafting a new narrative of friendly exchanges.

China-built hydropower plant in Nepal put into operation

09 April 2025, [Xinhua](#)

The Sanjen Khola hydropower station in Nepal, built by a Chinese company, has been put into operation and connected to the national grid, contributing to efforts in alleviating local power shortage.

The project in Rasuwa district in central-north Nepal was invested and constructed by China Harbour

Engineering Company Ltd. It is a run-of-river power plant with a total installed capacity of 78 megawatts. "In this dry season, the power generated by this project is very important to us," said Hitendra Dev Shakya, managing director of the Nepal Electricity Authority.

Speaking at the launch ceremony held in Kathmandu on Wednesday, Shakya stressed that power generated round-the-clock from the Sanjen Khola power plant will help reduce load shedding in the industrial area.

The project will not only help optimize local energy structure and reduce electricity costs, but will also inject positive impetus into economic development, said Wang Xin, charge d'affaires at the Chinese Embassy in Nepal.

Dipak Khadka, Nepal's minister for energy, water resources and irrigation, said at the ceremony that the power plant started production in the dry season when the existing hydropower projects do not produce enough electricity, and it was completed when Nepal and China mark the 70th anniversary of diplomatic relations in 2025.

"Such collaboration is helpful in further strengthening the bond between us," the minister said.

China plotting to unite Nepal's communists to further its agenda with ouster of their current top leaders?

07 April 2025, [Tibetan Review](#)

After failing in repeated, at times hectic, efforts to unite the two major communist parties of Nepal, China is said to have embarked on a new drive. This is said to involve sidelining their current top leaders by propping up a new set of leaders amenable to uniting the parties to form the government and carry out Beijing's agenda. But success is by no means guaranteed, according to a swarajyamag.com report Mar 29.

The fact is, the two Communist parties have lost a lot of public goodwill and support, which has benefited the Nepali Congress (NC) and the pro-monarchists who want to restore Nepal's constitutional monarchy and 'Hindu rashtra' status, the report said.

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 have failed, despite the initial apparent success which saw them form the government as a single party in 2018, 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. There has been a merger, a breakup, an electoral alliance, a coalitions government

and a parting of ways to a succession of disappointments to China.

China has now realised that with Oli and Dahal as the heads of the parties, there is little chance of the communist parties of Nepal uniting. And unless these two parties unite, the NC, which Beijing views as pro-India, will continue to be a major player in Nepal's politics. The aim is stated to be to unite the communists to become a larger political force than the NC so that Beijing could push its agenda in Nepal with little hindrance.

For this purpose, China has 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 stated to be the growing unpopularity of Oli and Dahal, with both being widely perceived as power-hungry, corrupt and high-handed, completely intolerant of dissent and having propensity to bend principles to suit their ends. Beijing is said to be fanning the flames of dissidence against the two leaders. A number of senior leaders of both these parties who had gone to China over the past few months returned and spoken out openly against their chairmen (Oli and Dahal), the report noted.

It cited senior leaders of the CPN(UML), who did not want to be named, as saying China wants former President Bidya Devi Bhandari to replace Oli. She was a senior leader of the CPN(UML) before she became the country's President.

"She 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," which she did, an unnamed senior CPI(ML) leader who is also a minister, was quoted as saying.

"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) has said.

From the CPN(MC), China is said to like to see Nepal's former Vice-President Nanda Bahadur Pun (also known as Nanda Kishor Pun) take over the party leadership. He had 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 Aug 2008.

While Bhandari is widely expected to announce her return to active politics soon, Pun did so in Dec 2024, and participated in the CPN(MC)'s central committee meeting in January this year.

Pun and Bhandari, whose tenures as Vice President and President were coterminous (Oct 2015 to Mar

2023), have worked together amicably and have great regard for each other. “Both share the same temperament and have a good working relationship. Bhandari and Pun will make a great team,” CPN(MC) deputy general secretary Haribol Gajurel, who was once a close advisor to Dahal but had a fallout with him, has said.

Bhandari was stated to have publicly praised Pun at a press conference 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.”

But there are many hitches to Beijing’s plan from succeeding, primary among them being the ambitions of many senior leaders of the two parties who will surely challenge Bhandari’s and Pun’s rise and Oli and Dahal’s tight grip on their respective parties and their finances.

China-Pakistan

China vows support to Pakistan, calls for restraint after Pahalgam terror attack

28 April 2025, [Hindustan Times](#), Rezaul H Laskar

During a phone call with his Pakistani counterpart Ishaq Dar, Chinese foreign minister said China is closely following developments after the Pahalgam attack.

China on Sunday backed its close ally Pakistan in safeguarding its sovereignty and security interests, with foreign minister Wang Yi calling on New Delhi and Islamabad to exercise restraint in the aftermath of the terror attack in Pahalgam.

During a phone call with his Pakistani counterpart Ishaq Dar, Wang said China is closely following developments after the terror attack and backs an “impartial investigation” into the incident, according to a readout from China’s foreign ministry.

Wang’s comments came against the backdrop of heightened tensions between India and Pakistan following the terrorist attack on tourists near Pahalgam on April 22 that killed 26 people. The attack was claimed by The Resistance Front, a proxy for Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba.

India announced a slew of punitive measures against Pakistan, including the suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty and closure of the only operational land border crossing at Attari. Pakistan said any stopping of river waters will be seen as an “act of war” and unveiled counter-measures such as the closure of its airspace to Indian airliners and suspension of all trade.

“China has always supported Pakistan in its resolute anti-terrorism actions. As a staunch friend and all-weather strategic partner, China fully understands Pakistan’s reasonable security concerns and supports Pakistan in safeguarding its sovereignty and security interests,” Wang was quoted as saying in the Chinese readout.

China is closely following the “development of the current situation” and “supports an impartial investigation as soon as possible”, Wang said.

Conflict is not in the fundamental interests of India and Pakistan, or conducive to regional peace and stability, and both countries should “exercise restraint, meet each other halfway and promote the cooling of the situation”, he said.

Dar, who is also Pakistan’s deputy prime minister, briefed Wang on the tensions between Pakistan and India over the terror attack and said Islamabad has always been resolute in combating terrorism and “opposed taking actions that may lead to an escalation of the situation”, the Chinese readout said.

Dar said Pakistan is committed to managing the situation in a mature manner and will maintain communication with China and the world community. Pakistan’s foreign ministry said in a statement that Dar rejected India’s “unilateral and illegal actions” and “its baseless propaganda against Pakistan”.

Dar also expressed “appreciation for China’s consistent and unwavering support” and reaffirmed Pakistan’s strong commitment to the shared vision of an all-weather strategic cooperative partnership,” the statement said.

“Both sides reiterated their firm resolve to uphold regional peace and stability, promote mutual respect and understanding, and jointly oppose unilateralism and hegemonic policies,” it said.

There was no immediate response from Indian officials to the comments by the Chinese and Pakistani foreign ministers.

In a separate development, external affairs minister S Jaishankar spoke to his British counterpart David Lammy on Sunday and “discussed the cross-border terrorist attack at Pahalgam”. Jaishankar said in a social media post that he had “underlined the importance of zero tolerance for terrorism”.

Over the past few days, Jaishankar and Prime Minister Narendra Modi have spoken to several world leaders, including US President Donald Trump, French President Emmanuel Macron, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian and UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer, about the terror attack. The world leaders have condemned the attack and expressed solidarity with India.

Pakistan requests extra 10 billion yuan on China swap line, says finance minister

26 April 2025, [Reuters](#), Karin Strohecker

Pakistan has put in a request to China to augment its existing swap line by 10 billion yuan (\$1.4 billion), Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb said, adding he expected the country would launch a Panda bond before year-end.

Pakistan has an existing 30 billion yuan swap line already, Aurangzeb told Reuters in an interview on the sidelines of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank Group spring meetings in Washington.

“From our perspective, getting to 40 billion renminbi would be a good place to move towards ... we just put in that request,” Aurangzeb said.

China’s central bank has been promoting currency swap lines with a raft of emerging economies, including the likes of Argentina and Sri Lanka.

Pakistan has also made progress on issuing its first panda bond – debt issued on China’s domestic bond market, denominated in yuan. Talks with the presidents of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) and Asian Development Bank (ADB) – the two lenders who are in line to provide credit enhancements for the issue – had been constructive, he said.

“We want to diversify our lending base and we have made some good progress around that – we are hoping that during this calendar year we can do an initial print,” he said.

Meanwhile, Aurangzeb expected the IMF executive board to sign off in early May on the Staff Level Agreement on its new \$1.3 billion arrangement under a climate resilience loan program as well as the first review of the ongoing \$7 billion bailout program.

Getting the green light from the IMF board would trigger a \$1 billion payout under the programme, which the country secured in 2024 and has played a key role in stabilizing Pakistan’s economy.

Asked about the economic fallout from the tensions with India following the killing of 26 men at a tourist site earlier this month, Aurangzeb said it was “not going to be helpful.”

The attack triggered outrage and grief in India, along with calls for action against neighbour Pakistan, whom New Delhi accuses of funding and encouraging terrorism in Kashmir, a region both nations claim and have fought two wars over.

After the attack, India and Pakistan unleashed a raft of measures against each other, with Pakistan closing its airspace to Indian airlines and suspending trade ties, and India suspending the 1960 Indus Waters Treaty that regulates water-sharing from the Indus River and its tributaries.

Trade flows between the two countries had already fallen off sharply following past frictions and totalled just \$1.2 billion last year.

Aurangzeb estimated growth around 3% in the current financial year which ends in June 2025, and in the 4-5% range next year, with a view to hitting 6% thereafter.

(\$1 = 7.2864 Chinese yuan renminbi)

China rushes PL-15 missiles to Pakistan amid India tensions

26 April 2025, [Bulgarian Military](#), Boyoko Nokolov

In a region where the delicate balance of power is shaped by nuclear arsenals and cutting-edge air forces, a single delivery of advanced weaponry can tip the scales.

This week, reports surfaced on social media platform X, specifically from an account known as The STRATCOM Bureau, claiming that China has executed an urgent delivery of PL-15 very long-range air-to-air missiles to Pakistan for its JF-17 fighter jets.

The alleged transfer said to have occurred in response to escalating tensions between Pakistan and India, underscores China’s growing role as a swift and strategic ally in South Asia. While the claims remain unverified by official sources, they point to a broader pattern of Beijing’s ability to bolster its partners with critical military resources at pivotal moments. This capability could reshape regional dynamics and challenge global powers.

The STRATCOM Bureau’s post on X, which included a photograph purportedly showing a Pakistani JF-17 armed with the PL-15 missile, described the delivery as a rapid response to heightened regional friction. According to the account, the missiles were drawn from the internal stocks of China’s People’s Liberation Army Air Force, rather than the export-variant PL-15E, suggesting a transfer of high-capability weaponry typically reserved for China’s own forces.

The post praised China as a “gold standard” ally, highlighting the speed and strategic weight of the move. While such claims from social media demand cautious scrutiny, they align with China’s broader strategy of leveraging its military-industrial complex to support allies like Pakistan, particularly in moments of crisis.

China’s ability to deliver advanced weaponry with such apparent speed reflects a sophisticated logistical and industrial framework that few nations can match. Unlike traditional arms exports, which often involve lengthy negotiations and production timelines, this reported delivery suggests a pre-existing coordination between Beijing and Islamabad, enabling near-instantaneous support.

For context, the United States demonstrated similar agility during the early stages of the Russia-Ukraine

conflict in 2022, when it rushed Javelin anti-tank missiles to Kyiv within days of requests. China's actions, however, are less visible in Western discourse, yet no less significant.

Beijing's defense industry, bolstered by state-backed conglomerates like the Aviation Industry Corporation of China, has scaled up production and streamlined supply chains, allowing it to respond to allies' needs with remarkable efficiency. This capability positions China as a formidable player in global arms dynamics, challenging the dominance of traditional suppliers like the U.S. and Russia.

The PL-15 missile at the heart of this reported delivery is a cornerstone of modern air combat, designed to engage targets at extreme distances. Developed by China's Luoyang-based China Airborne Missile Academy, the PL-15 is an active radar-guided missile with an estimated range of 120 to 190 miles, powered by a dual-pulse solid-propellant rocket motor.

Its active electronically scanned array radar seeker, coupled with a two-way datalink, allows for precise targeting and mid-course corrections, making it a versatile weapon against agile fighters, bombers, and high-value assets like airborne early warning and control aircraft.

The missile's cropped fins enable it to fit within the internal weapons bays of stealth fighters like China's J-20, and its integration with the JF-17 Block III, equipped with the advanced KLJ-7A AESA radar, enhances Pakistan's ability to conduct long-range engagements.

The PL-15's range and maneuverability are said to rival or surpass Western equivalents like the U.S. AIM-120D AMRAAM, which has a range of approximately 100 miles and are comparable to the European MBDA Meteor, known for its ramjet propulsion and large no-escape zone.

For Pakistan, the integration of the PL-15 into its JF-17 fleet represents a significant leap in air combat capability. The JF-17 Thunder, a lightweight, single-engine multirole fighter jointly developed by Pakistan's Aeronautical Complex and China's Chengdu Aircraft Corporation, is a mainstay of the Pakistan Air Force, with over 130 units in service.

The Block III variant, introduced in 2020, features advanced avionics, a three-axis fly-by-wire system, and the aforementioned KLJ-7A radar, which can track 15 targets simultaneously and engage four. Armed with the PL-15, the JF-17 can now threaten high-value Indian assets, such as AWACS platforms or refueling tankers, from standoff distances, forcing India to rethink its air defense strategies.

This capability is particularly critical in the context of South Asia, where air superiority often determines the outcome of skirmishes along the contested Line of Control in Kashmir.

To understand the strategic implications, it's worth comparing the PL-15 to India's air-to-air missile arsenal. India's primary beyond-visual-range missile, the Astra Mk-1, has a range of approximately 68 miles, significantly shorter than the PL-15.

The Astra Mk-2, currently under development, aims to extend this to 100 miles, but it is not yet operational. India also fields the MBDA Meteor on its Rafale jets, a missile with a range of around 120 miles, and a reputation for its large no-escape zone due to its ramjet engine.

While the Meteor remains a formidable weapon, the PL-15's longer range offers Pakistan a potential edge in engaging targets before Indian jets can respond. If the STRATCOM Bureau's claim about non-export PL-15s is accurate, Pakistan may have received missiles with capabilities exceeding the PL-15E's reported 90-mile range, further tilting the balance.

This development could compel India to accelerate its missile programs or seek additional foreign acquisitions, such as Russia's R-37M, which boasts a range of up to 250 miles.

The reported delivery comes against the backdrop of renewed tensions between India and Pakistan, centered on the disputed region of Kashmir. A recent attack on tourists in Kashmir, which claimed 26 lives according to Bulgarian outlet Fakti.bg, has reignited hostilities. India responded by 118ulfil118d118g visas for Pakistani nationals and expelling diplomats, while Pakistan retaliated by closing its airspace to Indian airlines and halting bilateral trade.

These measures echo past flare-ups, such as the 2019 Balakot crisis, when Indian airstrikes on alleged terrorist camps in Pakistan led to a brief but intense air skirmish. During that incident, a Pakistani JF-17 reportedly used an older PL-12 missile to down an Indian MiG-21, though India disputed the claim, citing evidence of U.S.-made AIM-120 missiles fired by Pakistani F-16s.

The current escalation, while not yet at the level of open conflict, has raised fears of further military posturing, with both nations maintaining robust air forces equipped for rapid response.

Historically, the India-Pakistan rivalry has been a driver of arms races in South Asia, with both nations seeking technological parity. Pakistan's reliance on Chinese weaponry, including the JF-17 and now the PL-15, mirrors India's diversification of suppliers, from Russia's Su-30MKI fighters to France's Rafale jets.

China's role as Pakistan's primary arms supplier dates back decades, with the JF-17 program itself a product of this partnership. Since its first flight in 2003, the JF-17 has evolved from a modest replacement for aging Mirage III and F-7 jets to a capable platform for modern warfare.

Its affordability, with unit costs of around \$32 million for the Block III, contrasts with the \$80 million-plus

price tag of India's Rafale, making it an attractive option for Pakistan's budget-conscious military. The PL-15's integration further enhances this cost-effectiveness, providing near-elite capabilities at a fraction of the cost.

China's motivations for this reported delivery extend beyond its alliance with Pakistan. Beijing has its own tensions with India, particularly along the Line of Actual Control in the Himalayas, where border clashes in 2020 and 2022 underscored ongoing disputes.

By equipping Pakistan with advanced weaponry, China indirectly pressures India on a second front, diverting New Delhi's resources and attention. This aligns with China's broader strategy of countering India's growing influence in the Indo-Pacific, where New Delhi has strengthened ties with the U.S., Japan, and Australia through frameworks like the Quad.

The PL-15 delivery, if confirmed, serves as a reminder of China's ability to shape regional security dynamics, not through direct confrontation but through strategic support for allies.

The global implications of China's actions are significant. The U.S., which has long dominated the arms export market, faces increasing competition from China, whose weapons are often cheaper and come with fewer political strings.

The PL-15's development has already spurred U.S. efforts to counter it, with the AIM-260 Joint Advanced Tactical Missile program launched in 2017 to replace the AIM-120 AMRAAM. Expected to enter service in the mid-2020s, the AIM-260 aims to match or exceed the PL-15's range and performance, reflecting the ripple effects of China's advancements.

Similarly, Russia, another major arms supplier, has seen its influence wane as China captures markets in Asia and Africa, with countries like Nigeria and Myanmar also operating JF-17s equipped with Chinese missiles.

Operationally, the PL-15 enhances Pakistan's ability to conduct air denial missions, potentially disrupting India's air operations in a conflict. By targeting high-value assets from long range, Pakistan could force India to operate its AWACS and tankers further from the front lines, reducing their effectiveness.

This shift could alter the tactical calculus in Kashmir, where air superiority is critical for rapid response to cross-border incidents. However, the PL-15's impact depends on Pakistan's ability to integrate it effectively, requiring robust training and maintenance infrastructure.

Past reports have highlighted challenges with the JF-17 fleet, including engine reliability issues with the Russian RD-93 turbofan, though Pakistan has since secured direct supplies from Russia to address these concerns.

The STRATCOM Bureau's claim that this is the first public evidence of the PL-15 on a JF-17 adds intrigue

but also uncertainty. Social media platforms like X are valuable for real-time insights but prone to exaggeration or misinformation. Without official confirmation from Pakistan or China, the delivery's scale and timing remain speculative.

Nonetheless, the photograph shared on X, showing a JF-17 with what appears to be a PL-15, has sparked discussion among defense analysts, who note the missile's distinctive cropped fins and elongated fuselage.

If authentic, the image marks a milestone in Pakistan's air force modernization, building on its participation in multinational exercises like Victory Spear 2025 in Saudi Arabia, where the JF-17 Block III showcased its capabilities alongside Western jets like the F-15 and Rafale.

Looking ahead, the reported delivery raises questions about the trajectory of South Asian security. Will China continue to use rapid arms transfers to bolster allies in contested regions, from Pakistan to Myanmar? How will India respond, given its reliance on a mix of indigenous, Russian, and Western systems?

The Astra Mk-2 and potential acquisitions like the R-37M could restore parity, but development timelines and budgetary constraints may delay these efforts. Moreover, the risk of escalation looms large. Pakistan's enhanced capabilities could embolden it in future standoffs, while India's countermeasures could further intensify the arms race.

The absence of official confirmation about the PL-15 delivery underscores the challenges of navigating open-source intelligence, where unverified claims can shape perceptions as much as facts.

In a world where air power increasingly defines military dominance, China's reported delivery of PL-15 missiles to Pakistan is a stark reminder of its growing influence. By equipping its ally with a weapon that rivals the best in Western arsenals, Beijing is not just supporting Pakistan but signaling its ambition to reshape global security dynamics.

For the U.S. and its allies, this development highlights the need to adapt to a multipolar arms market, where speed, affordability, and strategic alignment are as critical as technological superiority.

Yet, as the dust settles over Kashmir and the skies above, one question lingers: in a region defined by mistrust and rivalry, can such advancements foster stability, or do they merely set the stage for the next crisis?

Pakistan seeks Chinese debt rollover

25 April 2025, [The Express Tribune](#), Shahbaz Rana
Wants size of \$4.3b currency swap agreement increased

Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb on Wednesday requested China to roll over the

guaranteed debt and to also increase the current size of the \$4.3 billion currency swap agreement aimed at cushioning the low foreign exchange reserves.

The requests were made to the Chinese Finance Minister Lan Fo'an, on the sidelines of the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) spring meetings, according to the Finance Ministry officials. The bilateral meeting remained "very positive and constructive", said the officials.

Aurangzeb also invited Chinese and Saudi Arabian finance ministers to visit Pakistan.

The high-level engagement focused on strengthening bilateral economic cooperation and reaffirming partner support for Pakistan's reform agenda under the IMF's Extended Fund Facility (EFF) programme, according to a press statement issued by the Finance Ministry after the meeting.

It added in his meeting with Lan Fo'an, Finance Minister of China, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb recalled their last meeting held in Beijing in July 2024 and thanked the Government of China for its unwavering support for Pakistan's socio-economic development and for its strong backing of Pakistan's economic reform program supported by EFF of the IMF.

China has assured the IMF to rollover Pakistan's \$4 billion cash-deposit.

The officials said that among the issues that Pakistan took with China were rescheduling of the Chinese Exim Bank debt maturing during the tenure of the IMF programme and increasing the size of bilateral currency swap agreement.

The Finance Minister had also made "thes' requests last year but so far the formal approvals have not been given by China.

The government is seeking the rescheduling of the Export-Import (Exim) Bank of China's debt that is maturing till September 2027.

The officials said that the issue of raising the limits under the Currency Swap Agreement was also taken up with the Chinese authorities. They did not disclose the additional amount that Pakistan sought in loan under the swap deal. Pakistan has already used the existing CNY 30 billion or \$4.3 billion Chinese trade facility to repay its debts.

In October last year, the Finance Minister had requested China to raise this limit by an additional CNY 10 billion, translating to \$1.4 billion at the current exchange rate. If Beijing accepts, the total facility will reach approximately \$5.7 billion.

Pakistan's gross official foreign exchange reserves remain low at around \$10.6 billion, which it wants to increase to over \$14 billion in next two months on the back of new loans and higher remittances. The rescheduling of the Exim Bank debt will also help bridging the external financing gap identified during the IMF programme period.

Pakistan's external financing gap projected in September last year should significantly reduce as the World Bank has projected a \$800 million current account surplus for this fiscal year compared to earlier estimates of about \$3.7 billion deficit.

The Minister also provided an update on the status of the Panda Bond and requested the support of the People's Bank of China (PBOC) to fast-track the issuance process, according to the Finance Ministry.

Aurangzeb also briefed the Chinese side on the key reforms being undertaken in the areas of taxation, energy, privatization, public finance, and state-owned enterprises (SOEs), said the Finance Ministry.

The Finance Ministry also released its monthly economic outlook, predicting gradual recovery in the large-scale manufacturing amid decline in the output during the past over two years.

The report noted that the outlook for large scale manufacturing may improve gradually in coming months, with recovery expected to be gradual amid continued yearly contraction and recent monthly decline.

It said that improvements in high-frequency indicators – such as rising automobile output, raw material imports, and a more accommodative monetary stance – indicates cautious optimism.

Improved weather conditions and increased water availability are likely to support higher crop yields and better farming conditions contributing to overall economic growth.

The Finance Ministry said that inflation is projected to remain between 1.5 – 2% in April, with a possible rise to 3 to 4% by May 2025.

The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund this week cut Pakistan's inflation projections to 5.1-5.5%.

The Finance Ministry said that exports and remittances are expected to maintain their upward trend in the coming months keeping the current account within manageable range. Remittances last month hit the record high level of \$4.1 billion.

Muhammad Aurangzeb also held an important meeting with the Saudi Minister of Finance Mohammed Aljadaan, in Washington, D.C, according to the Finance Ministry. The Minister thanked Aljadaan for Saudi Arabia's longstanding and strong support to Pakistan in its pursuit of economic development, including through support for the IMF programme, it added.

Saudi Arabia has agreed to rollover \$5 billion cash deposit for one more year.

China Could Block India's Water If India Blocks Pakistan's: Claims Pakistani Journalist

25 April 2025, [KKN Live](#)

On a provocative statement, prominent Pakistani journalist Mushahid Hussain warned that if India attempts to block Pakistan's water supply, China could retaliate by restricting India's water resources as well. Hussain emphasized the strategic vulnerability by pointing out that both the Indus River and the Brahmaputra River originate from Tibet, a region currently under Chinese control.

Pakistan Raises Alarm Over India's Water Strategy

Speaking to local media in Islamabad, Hussain stressed the critical dependency of Pakistan on the Indus River system and highlighted the geopolitical risks involved if water becomes a tool of conflict. "If India blocks our water, China has the capacity to block India's water too," he said. "The sources of both the Indus and Brahmaputra rivers lie in Tibet, controlled by China."

The Indus River, essential for Pak"stan's agriculture and drinking water, begins from a stream named Sênggê Zangbo (locally referred to as Sin-ka-bab) near Lake Mansarovar

in Tibet. Similarly, the Brahmaputra River also originates in Tibet and flows into India before reaching Bangladesh.

Indus Waters Treaty Under Strain

This statement comes at a time when the historic Indus Waters Treaty (IWT), signed in 1960 between India and Pakistan under the mediation of the World Bank, is facing renewed scrutiny. The treaty, considered a rare example of cooperation between the two neighbors, grants Pakistan control over the Indus, Jhelum, and Chenab rivers, while India controls the Beas, Ravi, and Sutlej.

However, tensions have escalated in recent years with India signaling intentions to utilize more of its share of the rivers, citing Pakistan's alleged use of cross-border terrorism as a breach of bilateral trust.

China's Strategic Leverage Over India's Water Sources
China's control over the Tibetan Plateau, known as the "Water Tower of Asia," gives it a unique strategic advantage. The region is the source of several major rivers, including the Brahmaputra and the Sutlej, which are vital for India's northeast and northern states.

There have been longstanding concerns within India about China's dam-building projects on the upper reaches of these rivers. Analysts warn that in the event of heightened tensions, China could leverage water as a weapon — a scenario that is rarely discussed but increasingly relevant given today's geopolitical climate.

Historical Context: Water as a Weapon

Water has been used historically as a tool of political pressure. In many global conflicts, control over water resources has either been a cause of conflict or a strategic advantage during warfare.

For South Asia, where water security is tightly linked to food security and livelihoods, any disruption to river flows could have catastrophic consequences.

Impact on Pakistan

For Pakistan, the situation is even more critical. The country is heavily dependent on the Indus River and its tributaries, with around 90% of its agriculture relying on irrigation fed by these water sources. A significant reduction in water flow could threaten food production, economic stability, and overall public health.

Pakistani officials have repeatedly raised alarms about India's projects on rivers allocated to Pakistan under the Indus Waters Treaty, accusing India of attempting to starve Pakistan of water.

India's Position: Treaty's Legal Boundaries

India has consistently maintained that all of its activities on the rivers, including dam construction and water diversion projects, are in compliance with the Indus Waters Treaty.

India argues that the treaty allows for "non-consumptive" uses such as hydroelectric power generation, provided it does not significantly alter the flow of water into Pakistan.

Indian authorities have also expressed frustration over Pakistan's frequent objections, viewing them as politically motivated and aimed at internationalizing bilateral issues.

China Factor: A New Dimension in Water Diplomacy

Mushahid Hussain's remarks bring a new dimension to the ongoing dispute — the involvement of China.

If Beijing were to restrict or alter the flow of rivers into India, it could create severe water shortages in key Indian states like Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, and West Bengal.

Experts note that while China has not explicitly threatened such action, its extensive dam-building along the Brahmaputra (called Yarlung Tsangpo in Tibet) could serve as a de facto control mechanism if relations with India deteriorate further.

Geopolitical Implications for South Asia

The intersection of water security, territorial disputes, and regional rivalries makes South Asia one of the world's most volatile zones concerning freshwater resources. The China-India-Pakistan triangle poses risks not only for bilateral relations but also for the broader stability of the region.

Analysts suggest that the threat of "water wars" is no longer theoretical but a growing reality if diplomatic mechanisms like the Indus Waters Treaty collapse under political pressure.

Global Concerns Over Water Conflicts

The international community has increasingly recognized water disputes as a major threat to peace and security.

Global institutions have called for cooperative water management agreements and transboundary river governance frameworks to avoid conflict escalation.

In this context, South Asia is often cited as a “flashpoint” for future water-based tensions if historical treaties are abandoned or militarized.

Mushahid Hussain’s controversial remarks may have been aimed at stirring domestic sentiment or pressuring India diplomatically. Nevertheless, they highlight a real and pressing challenge for the region: the urgent need for responsible water management and renewed diplomatic engagement.

As water scarcity deepens due to climate change and population growth, sustainable and peaceful solutions must be prioritized over threats and counter-threats.

IMF programme wasn’t possible without China’s support: PM Shehbaz

16 April 2025, [Dawn](#)

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday highlighted bilateral engagement with China, saying that the recent programme with International Monetary Fund (IMF) “was not possible” without Beijing’s support.

Pakistan has held strong bilateral relations with China which has supported it through many investments and development projects such as the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which was termed as a “lifeline” for the country’s economy.

Last month, China extended the repayment period of a \$2 billion loan to Pakistan by one year, offering much-needed financial relief and helping stabilise the country’s foreign exchange reserves.

The government is working to strengthen its finances after securing a \$7 billion IMF bailout in September 2024. Pakistan reached a staff-level agreement (SLA) with the global money lender in March after a successful review of first installment of the loan.

PM Shehbaz called China as the country’s “most sincere friend” at a ceremony in Islamabad regarding the government’s initiative for the capacity building of 1,000 graduates in the field of agriculture by sending them to China.

He reaffirmed the government’s commitment to transforming Pakistan’s agricultural sector, calling it essential for achieving sustainable economic growth. He said that that strengthening the agricultural backbone of the country would help ensure food security, boost exports, and improve livelihoods for millions of farmers.

The premier highlighted the urgent need to revive and modernise the country’s agricultural research institutions.

“We must focus on meaningful farming practices, digitalised crop management, and the development of climate-resilient seeds,” he said.

Under the government’s initiative, 300 selected graduates the field of agriculture were being sent to China for a three-month training programme during the first phase. In the second phase, 400 graduates will undergo a six-month training programme, followed by the remaining 300 graduates who will participate in a three-month training programme in the final phase.

The prime minister congratulated the 300 young graduates, who will fly to China for training in agriculture techniques and equip themselves with knowledge. He hoped that upon their return back to Pakistan, they will contribute towards agricultural economy.

Speaking about his visit to China, PM Shehbaz said that he was inspired by the research work in various fields of agriculture sector at the Chinese universities. He said, “I decided then to send 1,000 young Pakistani agriculture graduates to benefit from this great experience.”

Chinese Ambassador Jiang Zaidong said that he was much inspired by the government’s performance during one year where the country’s macroeconomic indicators had improved significantly.

He said the Chinese government stood ready to cooperate with Pakistan in promoting bilateral relations especially in the agricultural sector.

He emphasised that China’s President Xi Jinping always attached great importance to their relationship with the neighbouring countries.

Under CPEC, China had made a direct investment of around US\$35.4 billion, reflecting the strong relationship between the two countries, he added.

China becomes top education destination for Pakistanis as US tightens visa policies

15 April 2025, [Pakistan Today](#)

ISLAMABAD: China has emerged as the top education destination for Pakistani students, with more than 28,000 Pakistani nationals currently studying in Chinese institutions, official data revealed on Tuesday. According to a report published by Gwadar Pro, Pakistan now ranks third globally in terms of the number of international students in China. In 2023, 492,185 students from 196 countries were enrolled in Chinese universities, reflecting a 0.62% increase from the previous year.

Of the Pakistani students in China, around 7,034 are studying on scholarships, a result of growing

educational cooperation following the launch of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). The Chinese government has provided generous scholarships—particularly under the Silk Road Program—to attract students from Belt and Road Initiative countries, including Pakistan.

Breakdown of Pakistani student enrolment in China includes:

6,156 in PhD programs

3,600 in Master's programs

11,100 in Bachelor's programs

3,000 in short-term exchanges

Students are pursuing a variety of disciplines such as engineering, medicine, computer science, and Chinese language studies.

The contrast with the United States is stark. Amid tightened visa policies under former President Donald Trump's administration, over 500 Pakistani and other international students have had their U.S. visas revoked in recent months. The U.S. Department of State also announced the termination of the Global UGRAD program, which had been a key academic exchange initiative for Pakistani students for over 15 years.

Visa revocations have reportedly extended to students from top-tier institutions including Harvard, Stanford, and Columbia, often for minor infractions like traffic violations. Affected students have been asked to exit the U.S. and reapply, with no clear appeal process available, according to international education advocacy group NAFSA.

As uncertainty grows in U.S. academic circles, alternative destinations like Canada and European universities are seeing increased applications from Pakistani students.

Foreign Office spokesperson Shafqat Ali Khan expressed concern over these developments, stressing the importance of student exchange programs for diplomatic and cultural ties.

Universities and advocacy groups have called on the U.S. government for greater transparency, citing the \$43.8 billion contribution international students make to the U.S. economy and the 375,000 jobs they support.

Chinese defense minister meets with Pakistan air force chief

04 April 2025, [Xinhua](#)

China's Minister of National Defense Dong Jun met with Pakistan Air Force Chief Zaheer Ahmad Babar in Beijing on Tuesday.

Speaking highly of the cooperation between Chinese and Pakistani militaries in recent years, Dong said China is willing to work with the Pakistani side in strengthening strategic communication and cooperation, deepening practical cooperation, and

jointly safeguarding international and regional security and stability.

Babar said Pakistan highly values the traditional friendship between the two countries. The Pakistan Air Force is willing to strengthen exchanges and institutional cooperation with the Chinese side, maintain a high standard in joint exercises and training, and make positive contributions to jointly addressing the evolving security challenges, he added.

China-Taiwan

Taiwan on edge after Pope Francis's death, closely watching Vatican-China relations

27 April 2025, [Fox News](#), Eryk Michael Smith

The Vatican is the only European state that has diplomatic relations with Taiwan

Mourners from around the world pay their respects to Pope Francis at St. Peter's Basilica in Vatican City. Dr. Tim O'Donnell joins 'Fox & Friends First' to weigh in ahead of the funeral.

KAOHSIUNG, Taiwan – Some in Taiwan are watching with growing unease as the Catholic Church prepares to elect a new leader following the death of Pope Francis. The Holy See is the only European state that maintains diplomatic relations with Taipei, but some fear the growing ties between the Vatican and Beijing could change things.

Taiwan is home to fewer than 300,000 Catholics. By contrast, estimates put the number of Catholics in communist China at anywhere between eight and 12 million, with another 390,000 in Chinese-ruled Hong Kong. Despite these figures, the Holy See continues to recognize Taiwan as the sole "China."

After Pope Francis' death, Taiwan's President William Lai quickly said he planned to attend the funeral. A short time later, however, Taiwan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced that former Vice President and devout Catholic Chen Chien-jen will be Taiwan's envoy. According to Taipei-based lawyer and political risk analyst Ross Feingold, Taiwan will be disappointed that President Lai will miss this gathering of world leaders. "The precedent exists for Taiwan's president to attend a pope's funeral. In 2005, then-President Chen Shui-bian attended John Paul II's funeral, so," he claimed, "it's safe to assume President Lai's team inquired whether Lai could attend Francis' funeral, and equally safe to assume the Holy See's response was a negative one."

After Pope Francis took office in 2013, the Vatican began to build ties with Beijing. In 2018, it signed a controversial agreement with China on the appointment of bishops. The deal—renewed and

extended several times—gives both sides input on bishop selection, an attempt to bridge the divide between China's state-run Catholic Church and an underground church loyal to Rome. Vatican officials insist the agreement is pastoral, not political. Still, for Taiwan, it is seen as a warning sign.

China, which cut ties with the Holy See in 1951, demands that all countries end diplomatic relations with Taiwan before establishing relations with Beijing. Taiwan's official allies now number but 12, and the Holy See is its most symbolically significant diplomatic partner.

But Thomas Tu, a Vatican diplomacy expert at Taiwan's National Chengchi University, told Fox News Digital that fears of an imminent switch are overblown. "This isn't just about politics—it's about the global Catholic mission," Tu said. "The Vatican has survived empires. It's patient." Tu cited the Vatican's relationship with Vietnam as evidence of pragmatic patience. The Vatican and Vietnam do not have formal ties, but the Vatican maintains a high-level religious representative there.

Pope Francis believed that engagement with China, however imperfect, is preferable to nothing. Francis was the first pope to fly through Chinese airspace and famously sent greetings to President Xi Jinping in 2014. On his visit to Mongolia in 2023, the pontiff also sent a "warm greeting to the noble Chinese people."

Each overture to Beijing has drawn criticism from within the Church, particularly from outspoken China critics, such as 93-year-old retired Cardinal Joseph Zen of Hong Kong, who was arrested in 2022 after China imposed a National Security Law that criminalized almost every form of dissent in that supposedly autonomous special administrative region. Zen's passport was recently returned to him by authorities so he could attend the pope's funeral.

Zen and others view any warming of ties with Beijing as kowtowing to an officially atheist regime.

Pope Francis Travels To Mongolia

Pope Francis greets the people of China as he concludes Mass in the Hun Theatre on September 3, 2023, in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. (Vatican Media via Vatican Pool/Getty Images)

Since 1957, Beijing, via its Chinese Patriotic Catholic Association, has kept a tight leash on millions of Chinese Catholics. Pope Francis accepted some compromises with China, but the Vatican wants autonomy in spiritual matters, which may require a miracle to accomplish under China's one-party dictatorship.

Some observers suggest that Beijing may eventually allow more space for the Vatican, but any formal deal would require the Holy See to sever ties with Taiwan, a non-negotiable prerequisite for China.

With a new pope being elected in the next month, some in Taiwan are worried about a shift, but few

experts believe the next pontiff will make any hasty decisions. "There's no rush," said Dr. Chang Ching, a Senior Research Fellow of the ROC Society for Strategic Studies, "The Vatican knows how to wait, and China isn't willing yet to grant the Chinese Catholic community the same privileges Catholics enjoy in most other nations. This seventy-plus-year rift is just a tiny moment in the long history of the Church and the even longer history of Chinese civilization."

Taiwan cracks down on holders of Chinese ID amid fears over propaganda and espionage

27 April 2025, [The Guardian](#), Helen Davidson

Expulsion of people holding a Chinese passport or ID card prompts debate over identity, loyalty and freedom

Taiwan has launched a crackdown on holders of illegal Chinese identity documents, revoking the Taiwanese status of more than 20 people and putting tens of thousands of Chinese-born residents under scrutiny.

Under Taiwan law it is illegal for Taiwanese people to hold Chinese identity documents. In the past decade, hundreds of people have had their Taiwanese papers or passports cancelled for also holding Chinese ID, effectively revoking their citizenship.

But a renewed hunt for dual ID-holders has drawn controversy after the public expulsion of three women and threats to the permanent residencies of more than 10,000 Chinese-born people, including many who had built lives and families in Taiwan over decades.

The campaign has sparked a nationwide debate about identity, loyalty and how to balance the island's treasured political freedoms with its national security. The current furore began in December, with an online documentary revealing local Chinese authorities were secretly offering Chinese IDs to Taiwanese people.

Taiwan's mainland affairs council (MAC) denounced the scheme as "part of China's evil united front work that attempts to ... create an illusion that it has authority over the nation".

The documentary identified three recipients who had moved to the Chinese province of Fujian and applied for Chinese identity cards.

Su Shih-er was one of the three. He chose the coastal province for its large Taiwanese community and generous government subsidies for entrepreneurs opening "local" businesses. Soon after arriving, Su learned he could apply for a Chinese identity card.

"I thought it'd be more convenient for my company, so I applied," he told the Guardian.

What Su did was illegal under Taiwanese law, although he disputes this. To get his Chinese ID card, Su was legally required to have Chinese household registration (known as "hukou"), which is barred

under Taiwan's cross-strait relations act, alongside Chinese passports.

Su, who is still in China, said there are "loads" of Taiwanese with Fujian IDs, and that he felt "like a victim of their political games".

'A unique dilemma'

Tensions between Taiwan and China are dangerously high. China's Communist party (CCP) government claims Taiwan as a province and is preparing to take it militarily if it can't convince or coerce it to peacefully "unify". Espionage and infiltration by pro-CCP actors – including from Taiwan's society, government, and military – are real and ongoing dangers.

But there are still close ties between the two territories. Figures from 2022 show about 170,000 Taiwanese living in China. About 380,000 Chinese-born people live in Taiwan, many married to Taiwanese people, and about half of them hold permanent residency.

In March Taiwan's president, Lai Ching-te, announced new measures to counter China's malign efforts, which included increased scrutiny of cross-strait travel and resettlement.

In March, three Chinese-born women were accused of using their popular social media accounts to advocate for a hostile Chinese takeover of Taiwan. Taiwan revoked their residency visas and they were forced to leave Taiwan, as well as their Taiwanese husbands and children.

The opposition accused the government of deporting people without due process for views it didn't like. A statement signed by dozens of local academics said President Lai was "rapidly compressing the space for free speech".

But government figures said the posts were essentially enemy war propaganda, exempt from free-speech protection. Premier Cho Jung-tai told reporters: "There are limits to freedom of speech, and the limits are the country's survival." The deportations also seemed to have social support, and at a press conference held by one of the women, a crowd chanted "go home!".

The case highlighted "the unique dilemma of Taiwan's existence", wrote two local academics, Michelle Kuo and Albert Wu.

"Imagine a world where an ally of China expels a Taiwanese immigrant for advocating Taiwanese independence. We would fight to the death for that person to stay in the country," said Wu and Kuo.

But, they added: "Taiwan is under exceptional threat. Can we apply human rights principles around family unity and freedom of speech when facing such a massive danger?"

'My mother has become an international football'

The Taiwan government's next move proved even more controversial. As it became clear the number of

people holding or seeking Chinese IDs was larger than anticipated, authorities decided to sweep the island.

"If the identities of the people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait are not clearly distinguished, it will affect the national security and social stability of our country," it said.

In March the MAC sent questionnaires to public sector workers, university employees and military personnel, asking them if they ever held Chinese ID. The MAC described the survey as an opportunity to "demonstrate their loyalty".

Then, earlier this month, the National Immigration Agency (NIA) began contacting more than 10,000 Chinese-born spouses in Taiwan, claiming they had never provided proof they had given up their Chinese 125ulfi – a requirement for permanent residency.

Social media filled with angry posts from affected people and their families, saying they felt targeted and suddenly unwelcome. Among them were people who had moved to Taiwan decades ago, before such proof was required.

Rescinding hukou can only be done in person, in China. Some commenters pointed to the case of Li Yanhe, a Chinese-born, Taiwan-based publisher of critical books about the CCP. In 2023 Li was arrested in Shanghai, reportedly there to rescind his hukou. Convicted of unspecified acts of "inciting secession", he remains in a Chinese jail.

One woman posted to Threads a recording of a call between her mother and the NIA. Her mother told the NIA agent she had given proof to another agency when she arrived 22 years ago. But the agent said they had no record, and threatened to strip her Taiwanese rights and residency if she failed to cooperate.

"My mother has become an international football," her daughter posted.

In another case, a woman said her mother – who had lived her for 33 years – had also received a demand for proof.

"My mother has a Taiwanese ID card, a Taiwanese passport and has paid labour insurance and health insurance and taxes for more than 30 years. She is a Taiwanese!" the woman said.

The MAC deputy head, Liang Wen-chieh, said last week they were demonstrating "utmost leniency towards such individuals". But amid an outcry the government announced case-by-case exemptions, including for people who are elderly, haven't returned to China in more than 10 years, or feared persecution if they did.

The new campaign has so far resulted in at least 19 people being stripped of Taiwanese papers – and citizenship if they held it – for having Chinese ID.

The NIA, told the Guardian those who cancelled their Chinese hukou could apply for permission to "restore their [Taiwan] status" and come back

But critics worry that the crackdown is only further dividing Taiwan's already fractious society.

"It is obvious that a negative impact is to tear Taiwan apart and push people to the opposite side, which is of no benefit to Taiwan's security," said Prof Liu Meijun, of Taiwan's national Chengchi university.

During the furore over the deported influencers, academics Kuo and Wu warned that the government "may have inadvertently handed Beijing an easy propaganda victory".

China's state media has already seized on the cases, accusing Taiwan's ruling DPP of "tearing families apart". The Taiwan Affairs Office accused the DPP of bullying, and only applying the idea of "freedom" to those who supported Taiwan independence.

The Guardian's conversations with people in or close to the government have revealed a perplexity over the backlash, and a belief that any concerns are outweighed by the need to address any vulnerability China could exploit.

"More than 360,000 Chinese spouses live in Taiwan today," Kuo and Wu wrote in their essay. "While they may appear to be a demographic minority, their family networks make up a significant portion of society – one the government now risks alienating."

Taiwan detects one aircraft, 8 Chinese naval vessels around its territory

26 April 2025, [Business Standard](#)

This incident follows a recent pattern of escalated manoeuvres by China around Taiwan, sparking concerns over regional stability as Beijing continues to assert its claims over the island.

Taiwan's Ministry of National Defence (MND) on Saturday detected one sortie of People's Liberation Army (PLA) aircraft, eight People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) vessels and one official ship operating near Taiwan until 6 am (local time).

Sharing a post on X, MND wrote, "1 sortie of PLA aircraft, 8 PLAN vessels and 1 official ship operating around Taiwan were detected up until 6 a.m. (UTC+8) today. 1 sortie crossed the median line and entered Taiwan's southwestern ADIZ. We have monitored the situation and responded accordingly."

This incident follows a recent pattern of escalated manoeuvres by China around Taiwan, sparking concerns over regional stability as Beijing continues to assert its claims over the island. Taiwan has been governed independently since 1949. However, China considers Taiwan part of its territory and insists on eventual reunification, by force if necessary.

Last week, Taiwan's ruling party responded to growing fears about Chinese spying by requiring its members to declare their plans before visiting China, particularly

Hong Kong and Macau, according to a report by Radio Free Asia (RFA).

China and Taiwan have frequently accused one another of spying, and Taiwan has arrested several people it says Beijing has hired to get intelligence or sway public opinion. According to RFA, Beijing usually rejects any role in espionage operations against Taiwan, referring to the charges as "politically motivated" or "groundless."

Taiwan's President and Chairman of the ruling Democratic Progressive Party, or DPP, Lai Ching-te, declared on Wednesday that all party members are now required to report in advance and submit a follow-up report if they visit China or interact with individuals connected to the Chinese government.

"Any betrayal of the party's core values for personal gain must be met with strict disciplinary action and the harshest legal consequences," Lai told the party's weekly meeting, as quoted by the RFA report.

Lai announced steps, including enhanced internal education for party members to increase their knowledge of national security and legal responsibilities, as well as the requirement to disclose visits to China.

He also called for tighter control over parliamentary and local council aides, with party caucuses being entrusted with creating an flag certain procedures and training courses, according to the RFA report. The actions follow the DPP being the target of previous Chinese espionage investigations.

Marking 10 years of Xi's visit, Amb Jiang says CPEC has turned from vision to reality

21 April 2025, [Pakistan Today](#), Milan Abrar

Chinese Ambassador Mr Jiang Zaidong on Monday said that ten years back, Chinese President Xi Jinping visited Pakistan to launch the multi-billion-dollar project of China, Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) which over the past decade has turned from a vision into a reality.

Addressing the participants of a symposium titled "Jointly Build the China-Pakistan Community with a shared future" held here to mark the 10th anniversary of President Xi Jinping's landmark visit to Pakistan, Amb Jiang Zaidong said that President Xi Jinping's visit to Pakistan was a historical event and it would long be remembered for cementing China, Pakistan friendship.

Mr Shi Yuanqiang, Deputy Chief of Mission, Chinese Embassy was the moderator of the event while Foreign Secretary Ms Amna Baloch, former ambassador Naghmana Hashmi, Chairman Pakistan, China Institute (PCI) Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed and others also addressed.

He said there are rapid changes at the global landscape and President Xi Jinping recently visited the South East Asian countries and this trip was very important and was filled with hope and joy. He said that the main purpose of the visit was the developing relations with neighbors for profitable environment and exclusive ties with all neighbors of China including Pakistan. He said that abusive tariffs and its negative impact has reinforced China's focus on its neighboring countries.

He said that China would continue its high quality development especially with its neighboring countries. He said that China's market would remain fully open for its neighboring countries and we will fully implement the commitment made by President Xi Jinping.

"The 28-hour visit witnessed 18 events and the signing of 51 cooperation documents, it was intensive both in schedule and outcomes. President Xi Jinping, together with then President Mamnoon Hussain and then Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, decided to elevate our bilateral relations to a new height of 'all-weather strategic cooperative partnership', meaning that we will 'always move ahead together rain or shine'," he said.

He said President Xi Jinping also personally charted the overall layout for the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). These opened a new chapter in our traditional friendship and bilateral relations.

During the visit, Amb Jiang said that President Xi Jinping not only held meetings with leaders of Pakistan's government, parliament, military and political parties, but also warmly received representatives of Pakistani friends and awarded them the Friendship Award of Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence.

"Moreover, President Xi Jinping delivered an important speech at Pakistan's parliament, where he received over 50 rounds of applause (desk-thumping) in 30 minutes. In the speech, President Xi Jinping called for substantiating the China-Pakistan community with a shared future to lead the way in building a community with a shared future in Asia. This has been our fundamental guidance over the past decade, and we have taken solid steps in implementation," he said.

Firstly, he said, we have supported and helped each other, deepening our strategic cooperation and over the past decade, our heads of state and governments have exchanged visits and met on multilateral occasions for 20 times, with over a hundred other high-level visits and dialogues.

"These provided strategic guidance and strong impetus for the all-weather strategic cooperation between China and Pakistan. We have firmly supported each other on issues concerning our respective core interests and major concerns. Pakistan

has been an example for the international community in adhering to the One-China Principle, while China has consistently supported Pakistan in safeguarding its national sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity. We have been each other's most reliable partners," he said.

Secondly, he said, we have promoted shared benefits while upholding righteousness to achieve common development. Over the past decade, China has remained Pakistan's largest trading partner.

"The CPEC has turned from a vision into reality. The operational capacity of Gwadar Port has been comprehensively upgraded; power projects, including thermal, hydro, wind, and solar power plants, as well as key transmission grid project had helped Pakistan bid farewell to its power shortages. The Lahore Orange Line Metro had commenced operation, the Khunjerab Pass is now open year-round. The K2 and K3 nuclear power plants had been completed and put into operation, while the C5 nuclear power plant has begun construction. Our central banks have expanded the currency swap agreement, and an RMB clearing bank has started operation in Pakistan. The all-round cooperation between China and Pakistan continues to expand and deepen, significantly enhancing Pakistan's economic development capacity and resilience," he added.

"We have linked our hearts as one, and carried forward our traditional friendship. Over the past decade, the number of sister cities/provinces between China and Pakistan has increased from 8 to 19 pairs; their exchanges and cooperation have become more frequent. The number of Pakistani students in China has nearly doubled, ranking high among all countries. We had successfully held the China-Pakistan Friendly Exchange Year and the China-Pakistan Tourism Exchange Year, and celebrations for the 70th anniversary of our diplomatic relations were vibrant," he added.

Fourthly, he said we have stood together through thick and thin and jointly addressed security challenges. Over the past decade, we have held high-standard joint military exercises, including the "Warrior" series for the armies, "Shaheen" for the air force, and "Sea Guardian" for the navies.

"China's tri-service honor guard and the August 1 Aerobatics Team participated in Pakistan Day parade, while VT-4 main battle tanks, J-10CE fighter jets, and 054AP frigates have been commissioned into Pakistani armed forces. We joined hands to combat the once-in-a-century pandemic, protecting the lives of our people. To support Pakistan in responding to its worst floods in a century, China provided \$260 million in aid, ranking as the single largest contributor. The two governments signed the Memorandum of Understanding on Jointly Promoting Cooperation on the Global Security Initiative (GSI). Security

cooperation in various fields have steadily progressed and grown stronger,” he asserted.

Foreign Secretary Ms Amna Baloch said that the China, Pakistan partnership has weathered every storm and we have come a long way now. These interactions serve as a way to foster further collaboration. She said that President Xi's visit was instrumental in fostering China, Pakistan ties and CPEC has now become a strong bond.

She said that Pakistan stands committed to fostering China, Pakistan friendship. There is a shared understanding between two countries in today's turbulent times. She said we are looking forward to Xi's new visit to Pakistan as people and leadership stands ready to give him a warm welcome.

Mushahid Hussain Sayed, Chairman Pakistan, China Institute, said that President Xi Jinping's visit to Pakistan ten years back was instrumental in launching the multi-billion dollars project of CPEC which is flagship of Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

He said that the historic address of President Xi to joint parliamentary session of the parliament. In his 40-minute speech, President Xi received great applause. Today we are at a different epoch as global balance of power is shifting from left to the east and GDI, GCI and GSI, he said and added that there is no room for tariff war as using tariff or trade as a weapon is not wise.

Former Amb Naghmana Hashmi said that history of Pakistan is studied by historic events of China, Pakistan friendship. She said that the visit of President Xi to Pakistan put the dream of connectivity between Pakistan and China into practical shape. She said that it was also fulfilment of dream of development of western parts of China was due to CPEC's announcement.

She said that due to CPEC Pakistan has got rid of electricity and today Pakistan is energy rich country. She said that China has unwaveringly stood by Pakistan under Xi's watch in its hard times.

China commends Cambodia when asked about Taiwanese deportation

17 April 2025, [Reuters](#)

China on Thursday commended the Cambodian government for following the “one China principle” when asked to comment on their deportation of Taiwanese citizens to China earlier this week.

China “highly appreciates” Cambodia's handling of the issue, Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Lin Jian told a regular press conference.

Lin did not specify the citizenship of the individuals in his remarks.

Cambodia has deported an unknown number of Taiwanese citizens to China after they were arrested working in telecom fraud centres, the Taiwanese foreign ministry said.

China will continue to deepen law enforcement cooperation with Cambodia to crack down on online gambling and electronic fraud, Lin said.

Beijing says Taiwan is an “inalienable” part of China under its one-China principle, a claim that the democratically governed island rejects.

Taiwan reports Chinese military activity near its territory

16 April 2025, [The Tribune](#)

According to Taiwan's MND, 11 out of 17 sorties crossed the median line of the Taiwan Strait and entered Taiwan's southwestern Air Defence Identification Zone (ADIZ).

Taiwan's Ministry of National Defence (MND) said that 17 sorties of People's Liberation Army (PLA) aircraft, eight naval vessels, and one official ship were detected around Taiwan until 6 am (local time) on Wednesday.

According to Taiwan's MND, 11 out of 17 sorties crossed the median line of the Taiwan Strait and entered Taiwan's southwestern Air Defence Identification Zone (ADIZ). In response to Chinese activity, Taiwan's armed forces deployed aircraft, naval ships, and coastal missile systems to monitor the situation.

“17 sorties of PLA aircraft, 8 PLAN vessels and 1 official ship operating around Taiwan were detected up until 6 a.m. (UTC+8) today. 11 out of 17 sorties crossed the median line and entered Taiwan's northern and southwestern ADIZ. We have monitored the situation and responded,” Taiwan's MND posted on X.

This incident follows a recent pattern of escalated manoeuvres by China around Taiwan, sparking concerns over regional stability as Beijing continues to assert its claims over the island. Taiwan has been governed independently since 1949. However, China considers Taiwan part of its territory and insists on eventual reunification, by force if necessary.

Earlier on April 5, Taiwan began its largest annual military drills, the Han Kuang exercises, with experts suggesting that the extended 14-day war games are a response to China's growing “gray zone” actions and its potential for launching a full-scale invasion of Taiwan, as reported by Taipei Times.

According to Taipei Times, this year's drills began with continuous computer-simulated war games, utilizing the US-made Joint Theater Level Simulation platform. The live-fire segment of the exercises will take place from July 9 to 18.

The drills aim to simulate scenarios where the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) exercises escalate into an attack on Taiwan, according to Major General Tung Chi-hsing, director of the Ministry of National Defense's joint operations planning division.

The Han Kuang exercises would also replicate PLA “gray zone” activities, which are provocative or

aggressive actions that stop short of open conflict, Tung explained at a news conference on April 4, as cited by Taipei Times.

On April 4, Democratic Progressive Party Legislator Wang Ting-yu stated that the public once believed China's first strike would likely be a missile attack. However, it is now more realistic to expect a first strike involving maritime militia vessels, sand dredgers, and drones—tools commonly used in “gray zone” operations.

Wang, a member of the legislature's Foreign Affairs and National Defense Committee, emphasized that the military must be prepared to handle situations beyond traditional force-on-force conflicts. This includes responding to “gray zone” activities in accordance with international law, while preventing Chinese military drills from escalating into a full-scale invasion, Taipei Times reported. He noted that such complex scenarios require extensive planning and simulation, making the war games more time-consuming. (ANI)

Cambodia says arrested Taiwanese fraud suspects handed over to China

15 April 2025, [Reuters](#)

Cambodia said on Tuesday it had arrested a number of “Chinese criminals” in late March, including individuals from Taiwan, and days later handed them over to Chinese authorities, in deportations that have angered Taipei.

Taiwan's foreign ministry said on Monday that Cambodia had sent an unknown number of Taiwanese citizens to China after they were arrested working in telecom scam centres.

In a statement, a Cambodian foreign ministry spokesman said the decision to send the arrested people to China was in accordance with Cambodian law and adhered to Beijing's “one China” policy, which states that there is only one China and Taiwan is part of China.

Chinese President Xi Jinping is due in Cambodia this week on a Southeast Asian tour that began in Vietnam on Monday and will also include Malaysia.

“The individuals handed over to the Chinese authorities are criminals, not ordinary people, and the handover of these individuals to the government of the People's Republic of China is no different from the practice by some other countries adhering to the ‘one China’ policy,” it added.

The ministry did not say how many people had been deported to China.

China's foreign ministry said it had no information about the deportations.

Taipei says Cambodia arrested 180 Taiwanese suspected of working in fraud centres and that on Sunday and early on Monday almost 190 people were

deported to China at the Chinese government's request.

Cambodia is one of China's closest allies in Southeast Asia, and Taiwan does not have a de facto embassy there, unlike in many other parts of the region.

Hsiao Kuang-wei, Taiwan foreign ministry spokesperson, told reporters in Taipei earlier on Tuesday that the government was still trying to find out exactly how many Taiwanese had been deported.

“The foreign ministry again calls on our nationals not to take a chance and go overseas to engage in unlawful activities,” he added.

Taiwan has previously complained about countries including Cambodia, Kenya and Spain deporting its nationals to China following their arrest on suspicion of involvement in telecom fraud schemes.

China claims democratically governed Taiwan as its own territory. Taiwan strongly objects to China's sovereignty claims and says only the island's people can decide their future.

Taiwan says China using generative AI to ramp up disinformation and 'divide' the island

08 April 2025, [Reuters](#)

China is using generative artificial intelligence (AI) to ramp up disinformation against Taiwan to “divide” Taiwan's public, the island's National Security Bureau said.

Taiwan has accused China of stepping up military drills, trade sanctions and influence campaigns against the island in recent years to force the island to accept Chinese sovereignty claims. Taiwan strongly rejects China's sovereignty claims.

China staged two days of war games and live-fire drills near the democratically governed island this month, triggering concern by the United States and many of its allies.

In a report to parliament, a copy of which was reviewed by Reuters, the security bureau said it had detected more than half a million pieces of “controversial messages” so far this year, mostly seen on social media platforms including Facebook and TikTok.

Beijing has targeted sensitive moments such as President Lai Ching-te's speech on China last month or chipmaker TSMC's (2330.TW), opens new tab announcement of new U.S. investment to launch what the report said was “cognitive warfare”, adding such efforts were “designed to create division among our society.”

“As the application of AI technology becomes more widespread and mature, it has also been found that the Chinese Communist Party has been using AI tools

to assist in the generation and dissemination of controversial messages," the report said.

China's Taiwan Affairs Office did not respond to a request for comment.

The report said China has also ramped up its "grey-zone" tactics against Taiwan, with a sharp increase so far this year in the number of Chinese coast guard incursions as well as air balloons in Taiwan's waters and airspace.

Those moves have forced Taiwan to dispatch its own forces in response and depleted its resources, the report said.

Lai, who says only Taiwan's people can decide their future, in March labelled China a "foreign hostile force".

China has never renounced the use of force to bring Taiwan under Chinese control.

China demands compensation from Taiwan after collision of navy ship, trawler

04 April 2025, [Reuters](#)

China has demanded that Taiwan compensate Chinese fishermen for losses after a Taiwanese navy landing ship and a Chinese fishing boat collided outside restricted waters last week.

The Taiwanese vessel, the Chung Ho, collided with the Chinese trawler Minlianyu 61756 early on March 27 shortly after midnight around 45 nautical miles (83 km) off Taiwan's Taichung port, which sits on the Taiwan Strait, and nine nautical miles outside of "restricted waters", Taiwanese navy said last week.

"The responsibility for the accident lies entirely with the Taiwan ship, but the Taiwan ship had a bad attitude and evaded responsibility after hitting the fishing boat," Zhu Fenglian, spokesperson for China's Taiwan Affairs Office, said in a statement sent to Reuters on Friday.

Zhu said China's preliminary investigation showed that the Chinese trawler was anchored with its automatic identification system (AIS) signal and warning lights turned on.

It was hit by the Taiwanese ship that did not display its AIS signal or warning lights, Zhu said.

Taiwan's navy, responding to the demand for compensation, said an investigation led by Taiwan's coast guard was ongoing, and that after the probe "follow-up matters will be handled in accordance with the cross-strait consultation mechanism and relevant procedures". It did not elaborate.

The Taiwan Strait is the site of daily Chinese and Taiwanese military activities, though both sides normally maintain a respectful distance and there have been no exchanges of fire for decades.

China, which claims democratically governed Taiwan as its own territory, has ramped up its military drills around the island in recent years.

Taiwan rejects China's sovereignty claims.

The Chinese military staged two days of war games around Taiwan this week, in which it held long-range, live-fire drills in the East China Sea.

Beijing said the exercises were a response to what it views as provocations from Taiwanese President Lai Ching-te, who won an election last year and whom Beijing reviles as a "separatist".

Taiwan calls on democracies to condemn Chinese military drills

01 April 2025, [RFA](#), Alan Lu

Chinese drills came days after the Pentagon chief vowed to counter 'China's aggression' on his first visit to Asia.

Taiwan urged democracies worldwide to condemn China for being a "troublemaker" after Beijing launched military drills around the island.

China's military said Tuesday it had kicked off joint exercises involving its army, navy, air force and rocket force around Taiwan as a "stern warning," days after U.S. defense chief Pete Hegseth vowed to counter "China's aggression" on his first visit to Asia.

Forces from China's People's Liberation Army, or PLA, were approaching Taiwan from "multiple directions," according to a statement from the Eastern Theater Command, which oversees military operations in the region, posted on the command's official WeChat account.

It said the drills would focus on "combat readiness patrols at sea and in the air, seizing comprehensive control, striking maritime and land targets and imposing blockade controls on key areas and routes." Taiwan's defence ministry said it had detected 19 PLA ships around Taiwan by 6 a.m. on Tuesday, including the Chinese aircraft carrier Shandong. It deployed aircraft, Navy ships, and coastal missile systems in response.

"Taiwan's military vowed to remain vigilant and adhere to the principle of not escalating conflicts or provoking disputes while effectively countering gray-zone threats," the ministry said in a press release.

Taiwanese defense minister Wellington Koo Li-Hsiung said that the PLA's actions undermine regional peace and stability, making it evident that they are a "major troublemaker."

"Recent reports have exposed widespread corruption within the Chinese military, suggesting that they should focus on addressing their internal issues rather than engaging in activities that disrupt regional peace," he told journalists at a press conference Tuesday.

Joseph Wu, secretary-general of Taiwan's National Security Council under the chairmanship of the island's president, condemned the drills as "reckless" and "irresponsible" in threatening Taiwan as well as peace and stability in the region.

"It came without justification, violates international laws and is totally unacceptable. Democracies need to condemn China for being a troublemaker," Wu said in a post on the social platform X.

The latest Chinese military drills came days after Pentagon chief Pete Hegseth vowed to enhance America's military alliance with the Philippines to counter "China's aggression" in the Indo-Pacific region during his first trip to Asia last week.

He also called Japan an "indispensable partner in deterring communist Chinese military aggression," including across the Taiwan Strait.

Beijing asserts that Taiwan is part of its territory and is steadily developing the military capacity to take it by force. While analysts say China hasn't yet reached that point, it has made notable progress. In the meantime, it employs military pressure – such as drills – and other coercive tactics to try to compel Taiwan into submission.

China has conducted numerous military drills targeting Taiwan in recent years, typically in reaction to what it views as separatist or pro-independence actions.

Taiwan's President Lai Ching-te, elected last year to continue the leadership of the pro-sovereignty Democratic Progressive Party, has adopted a firm stance on cross-strait relations.

CHINA- US

China hits out at 'extreme selfishness' of tariffs

27 April 2025, [HongKongfp](#)

China and the United States, the world's two biggest economies, are locked in an escalating tit-for-tat trade battle triggered by Trump's levies on Chinese goods, which have reached 145 percent on many products.

China's foreign minister has hit out at the "extreme selfishness" of tariffs, hinting at the steep levies imposed on Beijing by US President Donald Trump.

Chinese foreign minister Wang Yi.

Chinese foreign minister Wang Yi. File photo: BRICS.

"Certain countries" resort to "pressure and coercion, and trigger unjustified trade wars... This extreme selfishness only harms their credibility," top diplomat Wang Yi told his Uzbek counterpart Bakhtiyor Saidov, according to a ministry statement released on Saturday.

This will "only undermine their credibility", added Wang, who was speaking on Friday on the sidelines of a foreign ministers' meeting in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

China and the United States, the world's two biggest economies, are locked in an escalating tit-for-tat trade battle triggered by Trump's levies on Chinese goods, which have reached 145 percent on many products.

Beijing has responded with 125 percent tariffs of its own on US goods.

US President Donald Trump on April 8, 2025, in the East Room of the White House. Photo: The White House, via Flickr.

US President Donald Trump on April 8, 2025, in the East Room of the White House. Photo: The White House, via Flickr.

Also on Saturday, China repeated that it had held no talks with the United States on trade issues, despite Trump's recent claim that he had taken a call from Chinese leader Xi Jinping.

In an interview conducted on April 22 with Time magazine and published Friday, Trump did not say when the call with Xi took place or specify what was discussed.

"He's called," Trump said. "And I don't think that's a sign of weakness on his behalf."

China's commerce ministry had already denied on Thursday that Beijing and Washington were conducting economic or trade negotiations.

In a statement posted on WeChat Saturday, Beijing's embassy in the US capital repeated that assertion, saying "there have been no consultations or negotiations between China and the United States on tariff issues, let alone any agreement".

The statement did not mention Trump or Xi by name or directly reference Trump's claim of a call, but said remarks by the United States that a dialogue on tariffs was ongoing were "nothing but misleading".

"This trade war was initiated by the US side," the statement said.

"If the US truly wants to resolve the issue through dialogue, it must first correct its mistakes, stop threatening and pressuring others, and completely remove all unilateral tariff measures against China."

Trade economy stock exchange

The Hong Kong Stock Exchange. File photo: Kyle Lam/HKFP.

Trump, meanwhile, suggested he will announce deals with US trading partners in the next few weeks.

"There's a number at which they will feel comfortable," Trump told Time, referring to China. "But you can't let them make a trillion dollars on us."

China says US Pentagon chief's remarks hype up 'China threat'

25 April 2025, [China.org.cn](https://china.org.cn)

A Chinese defense spokesperson on Thursday said the United States should discard its "persecutory delusion" about the Chinese military.

Zhang Xiaogang, a spokesperson for the Ministry of National Defense, made the comments in response to recent remarks by U.S. military and defense officials warning of China's growing military capabilities, including U.S. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth who reportedly said China's hypersonic missiles could destroy all U.S. aircraft carriers in 20 minutes.

"We have a sober understanding of our own development and hope that the U.S. side will cast away its 'persecutory delusion' and stop using others as excuses," the spokesperson said.

"Some people in the United States always view the Chinese military through tinted glasses of bias, cooking up the so-called 'Chinese military threat.' I believe this is precisely what obstructs exchanges between the two countries' militaries," Zhang said.

The spokesperson stressed that non-conflict, non-confrontation and peaceful coexistence are the most fundamental common interests between China and the United States, as well as a shared expectation of people around the world.

Apple to move assembly of US phones to India in shift away from China

25 April 2025, [Aljazeera](https://aljazeera.com), Andy Hirschfeld

Apple is in talks with its outsourcing partners in India to execute this plan amid soaring trade tensions.

As Apple grapples with United States President Donald Trump's tariff war with China, it has laid out plans to move to Indian assembly of the majority of iPhones it sells in the US by the end of 2026, a move that would

double its current output from the South Asian nation and away from China.

The tech giant produces in China 8% per cent of the 60 million iPhones sold in the US and this is a key step that would help it mitigate some of the costs it faces amid rising tariffs on China.

The Financial Times first reported Apple's plans on Friday.

Apple, a company worth more than \$3 trillion, is reportedly engaged in discussions with manufacturers it works with in India, including Foxconn and the Tata Group to execute this plan, according to the news agency Reuters, which cited an unnamed source.

The tech giant has already expanded production in India to counter tariffs imposed during the first Trump administration. The Silicon Valley-based tech giant shipped \$2bn worth of iPhones in March, accounting for roughly 600 tonnes of cargo from India to the US — a record for both Tata and Foxconn, according to Reuters.

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been pushing the country as a hub for global smartphone manufacturing. Earlier this year, the country removed import taxes for some components for mobile phone production — a boost for companies like Apple.

"If you're charging import tax for intermediary goods, then you cannot actually be competitive versus somebody who does not. Their objective is to be as competitive as they can be to become the leading manufacturing hub," Babak Hafezi, chief executive officer at Hafezi Capital, an international consulting firm, told Al Jazeera.

Apple has assembled roughly \$22bn worth of iPhones in India during the 12-month period ending March 2025, a 60 percent increase from the year prior, per a Bloomberg report. Even with the growth, only 20 percent of the world's iPhones are made in India.

Roadblocks

The shift in production will cost Apple. According to a Reuters report citing an unnamed source, manufacturing iPhones in India is 5-8 percent more expensive than in China.

"India will help, but it's not moving the needle on China's dependence for Apple. It will take years to make this move, as Apple is caught in the tariff storm," Dan Ives, analyst at Wedbush Securities, told Al Jazeera.

Earlier this week, the tech outlet The Information reported that Chinese authorities have created roadblocks for Apple suppliers to move operations from China to India. They have delayed shipments or blocked equipment shipments without explanation. In some cases, Foxconn had export applications denied and others delayed up to four months.

"In terms of core iPhone production, it would take years to move a significant piece from China to India," Ives added, referring to the phone's components that

are made in China and shipped to India to be assembled into the final product.

Ives also said Apple's plans to move assembly for US phones completely to India could cost the company \$30bn-\$40bn.

There are concerns if India's infrastructure can handle the surge in production, as well.

"They have massive amounts of infrastructure problems in terms of traffic and mobility, and all these different variables that make the cost of the production longer, which eventually cost more money for the company," Hafezi added.

"You need secure, continuous, and productive infrastructure to maximise manufacturing as best as you can and be globally competitive," he continued.

Apple's move comes as the Trump administration has signalled a willingness to ease trade tensions between the US and China, amid concerns about the economic fallout from the tariff war.

On Friday, Trump claimed he had spoken to Chinese President Xi Jinping but did not say when the two leaders last talked. In a TIME magazine interview conducted earlier this week, Trump said that his administration has been talking with Beijing to strike a tariff deal. China has denied any trade talks with the US.

But trade talks with India are under way. Earlier this week, US Vice President JD Vance met India's Modi, during which Vance said the two countries made "good progress" amid an expected bilateral trade agreement.

The news of Apple's shift to India comes in advance of Apple's earnings report, which is slated to be released on Thursday.

Former top US official on Hong Kong trip slams Trump's China 'miscalculation'

24 April 2025, [SCMP](#), Lam Ka-sing

Kurt Campbell, ex-deputy secretary of state in Biden administration, says Trump team lacks clear policy on China and makes 'dangerous assumptions'

A former high-ranking US official on a trip to Hong Kong has accused the Trump administration of miscalculating Beijing's power and called on the country to open up communications amid escalating trade tensions.

Kurt Campbell, former US deputy secretary of state in the Biden administration, told a conference hosted by the American Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong (AmCham) on Thursday that the incumbent government lacked a clear, unified policy platform on China, marked by internal divisions between hardliners and some advocating for working more constructively.

"Our biggest risks are inadvertence and miscalculation, whether militarily or in the trade

agreement, which suddenly begins to escalate, and there are not appropriate lines of communications or channels that can mediate some of those interactions," he said.

Campbell's visit to Hong Kong was his first overseas trip since leaving the White House in January. He rejoined the Washington-based strategic advisory firm he co-founded, the Asia Group, as its chairman in February.

Campbell's recent analyses in US media have emphasised the importance of American alliances and cautioned against underestimating China's power.

On Thursday, he delivered a speech at the AmCham China Conference 2025, discussing the evolving business landscape between the two superpowers amid the ongoing geopolitical turbulence.

China pushes for tariff cancellation to end US trade war

24 April 2025, [Reuters](#), Yukun Zhang, Jing Xu and Lewis Jackson

China called for all "unilateral" U.S. tariffs to be cancelled on Thursday, as signs emerged that the Trump administration may de-escalate its trade war with Beijing.

China also clarified it has not held trade talks with Washington despite repeated comments from the U.S. government suggesting there had been engagement.

U.S. President Donald Trump has repeatedly said that the U.S. will have a deal with China and on Wednesday said there was "direct contact" between both countries. Trump, who calls his tariffs "reciprocal", says the duties aim to correct unfair trade imbalances with the U.S.

The U.S. should remove all "unilateral tariff measures" against China "if it truly wanted" to solve the trade issue, Commerce Ministry spokesperson He Yadong said on Thursday.

"The person who tied the bell must untie it," he told reporters at a regular press conference.

The Trump administration would look at lowering tariffs on imported Chinese goods from their current level of 145% to possibly between 50% and 65%, pending talks with Beijing, Reuters reported on Wednesday, citing a source familiar with the matter.

China's He also urged the U.S. to pay attention to the "rational voices" of the international community and domestic parties.

"China and the United States have not conducted consultations or negotiations on tariffs, let alone reached an agreement," Foreign Ministry spokesperson Guo Jiakun said at a separate news briefing, calling reports of such information "false news".

At home, China held a roundtable on Wednesday to address concerns of more than 80 foreign firms and

chambers over the impact of U.S. tariffs on their investments and operations in China, according to a commerce ministry readout.

"It is hoped that foreign firms will...turn crises into opportunities," Vice Commerce Minister Ling Ji said at the roundtable, promising to work on resolving problems faced by foreign firms.

In Washington D.C., China's central bank Governor Pan Gongsheng said China will firmly support free trade rules and the multilateral trading system, in remarks made at a G20 meeting on the sidelines of the IMF-World Bank Spring Meetings.

China to sanction US lawmakers, officials, NGO leaders for Hong Kong democracy support

21 April 2025, [Tibetan Review](#)

China has responded to the US sanctioning of six of its officials on the mainland and Hong Kong last month by announcing Apr 21 sanctions on some US congress members, government officials as well as heads of non-governmental organisations for what it called "egregious behaviour on Hong Kong-related issues".

In a similar vein earlier, China had on Apr 1 announced sanctions on US officials for allegedly interfering in Tibet and China's affair. This was after Secretary of State Marco Rubio had announced the day before visa restrictions on unspecified Chinese officials responsible for denying reciprocal access to the Tibetan territories under its rule.

China's latest sanctions decision, announced by its Ministry of Foreign Affairs, came after Washington imposed sanctions on six local and mainland officials for their involvement in "transnational repression" targeting Hong Kong pro-democracy activists.

Announcing the sanctions, China's foreign ministry spokesman Guo Jiakun has described the US sanctions as a "grave violation of the principles of international law and the basic norms of international relations".

China "strongly condemns" the US decision and will sanction "Congress members, officials and heads of NGOs who acted egregiously on Hong Kong issues", the scmp.com Apr 21 quoted Guo as saying in a regular press briefing, without offering further details.

"Any wrong action taken by the US side on the Hong Kong-related issue will be met with resolute and reciprocal counteraction by the Chinese side," investing.com Apr 21, likewise, quoted Guo as saying. Earlier, in its Mar 31 decision, Washington announced sanctions on national security and other high-ranking officials who were believed to have used the semi-autonomous city's national security laws "extraterritorially to intimidate, silence and harass 19 pro-democracy activists".

The report said the six targeted in last month's US sanctions were: Hong Kong Secretary for Justice Paul

Lam Ting-kwok; then commissioner of police Raymond Siu Chak-yee; assistant police commissioners Dick Wong Chung-chun and Margaret Chiu Wing-lan; Sonny Au Chi-kyong, secretary general of the Committee for Safeguarding National Security in Hong Kong; Dong Jingwei, director of Beijing's Office for Safeguarding National Security in the city.

They were accused of "engaging in actions or policies that threaten to further erode the autonomy of Hong Kong in contravention of China's commitments, and in connection with acts of transnational repression", according to a statement by the US Department of State.

Trump tariffs making China friendlier towards other countries, India

13 April 2025, [Tibetan Review](#)

As US President Donald Trump's tariffs target China much more severely than any other country, Beijing is acting with a "sense of urgency" about shoring up ties with its neighbours and other major trading partners of the US. But most of the other countries also targeted by Trump's tariffs, including India, themselves have severe trade imbalances with Beijing.

This week saw the ruling Communist Party's first central conference since 2013 dedicated to neighbourhood diplomacy, just days ahead of President Xi Jinping's first overseas trip of the year – a Southeast Asian tour of Vietnam, Malaysia and Cambodia – reported the scmp.com Apr 12.

At the conference, Xi called for the "breaking [of] new ground" in China's relations with neighbouring countries, which he said were at a "critical phase" amid global uncertainties, the report cited state news agency Xinhua as reporting on Apr 9.

Despite China's ongoing territorial disputes with multiple countries – including Japan, the Philippines, Vietnam and India – an official statement published after the meeting claimed that relations with neighbouring countries were "at their best in modern times", while entering "a critical phase of deep linkage between the regional landscape and the world changes", the report noted. "It is necessary to view neighbouring regions through a global perspective."

China would foster "an amicable, secure and prosperous neighbourhood", using high-quality Belt and Road Initiative cooperative projects as the main platform and "seeking common ground while shelving differences", it was stated to have added.

This week's central conference was attended by all seven members of the party's Politburo Standing Committee – just like the 2013 seminar on periphery diplomacy, convened shortly after Xi assumed power, the report noted.

Meanwhile, Chinese Premier Li Qiang's call with European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen

was described by Chinese state media as a “positive message”, aimed at strengthening China-EU trade ties, reported the timesofindia.com Apr 10.

Also, China on Apr 11 called on the EU to join hands to resist “unilateral bullying” by the United States, referring to the 145% tariffs imposed by the US on imported Chinese goods and the 20% tax (suspended for 90 days after the EU retaliated) on goods from the bloc.

Besides, while commerce minister Wang Wentao declared that “China will fight to the end” against the US tariffs, he also reached out to Southeast Asian nations and held talks with ASEAN members, while Li met business leader.

However, the outreach is being met with mixed responses, the report noted. Australian PM Anthony Albanese, for example, brushed off calls for a united front, saying, “We stand on our own two feet.”

Australia has had a strained relationship with China since 2020, when it called for an independent probe into Covid-19’s origins — leading to Chinese trade restrictions, the report noted.

With regard to India, China has sent feelers on addressing the former’s concerns on the trade deficit through higher imports of goods from it by removing tariff and non-tariff barriers, reported the hindustantimes.com Apr 11.

While India was doing all the talking on this issue previously with little response from Beijing, China has now signalled its intention to address the record \$100 billion trade imbalance between the two countries in FY25, the report said, citing people close to the development. The move comes at a time when China is grappling with US tariffs of 145% on all Chinese goods, although smart phones, laptops, chips and other electronic goods and components have since been exempted from it.

This step follows China’s earlier call on India to join it in the fight against Trump’s tariffs. China enjoyed a trade surplus of more than \$91 billion with India in the first 11 months of FY25. It is estimated this number may touch \$100 billion for the full financial year 2024-25, the report noted.

India hasn’t taken any formal position on the matter as yet because such bilateral talks involve the principle of reciprocity. New Delhi fears that easing trade barriers bilaterally could further aggravate the dumping of Chinese goods in India, the report said, citing at least three Indian sources aware of the matter as saying, speaking on condition of anonymity.

The Chinese move is also aimed at getting more access to the Indian market and to attract more investments from it in the face of Trump’s tariffs. Chinese ambassador Xu Feihong recently spoke of the possibility of China buying more Indian goods and attracting investments from Indian firms. In an interview with state-run Global Times just before

Trump unveiled his reciprocal tariffs, Xu noted that India-China ties are at a crucial juncture and New Delhi should create a fair and transparent business climate for Chinese companies, the report noted.

However, India remains concerned that any easing of tariff and non-tariff barriers may benefit China more than India because it would allow direct imports of Chinese goods that are currently illegally routed through a third country with which India has a free trade agreement (FTA), such as India’s trade deal with the 10-member ASEAN bloc.

“China dominates global trade with about \$1 trillion surplus at the expense of major economies such as the EU, the US, Japan and India. It adopts unfair means and resorts to predatory pricing through tacit subsidies to its exporters, aiming to kill competitors,” one source was quoted as saying.

“The trade deficit was the main reason why the US imposed 125% retaliatory tariffs on Chinese imports,” the source has added. With two-way trade in goods between the US and China worth \$582.4 billion in 2024, US faced a deficit of \$295.4 billion.

China raises duties on US goods to 125%, calls Trump tariff hikes a ‘joke’

11 April 2025, [Reuters](https://reuters.com)

China hiked its levies on imports of U.S. goods to 125% on Friday, hitting back at Donald Trump’s decision to single out the world’s No.2 economy for higher duties, while dismissing the U.S. president’s tariff strategy as “a joke.”

Investors had been waiting to see how Beijing would respond to Trump’s move on Wednesday to effectively raise tariffs on Chinese goods to 145% while announcing a 90-day pause on duties on dozens of other countries’ goods. The yuan slipped to levels last seen during the global financial crisis on Thursday but rebounded slightly on Friday.

“The U.S. side’s imposition of excessively high tariffs on China seriously violates international economic and trade rules, runs counter to basic economic principles and common sense, and is simply an act of unilateral bullying and coercion,” China’s Finance Ministry said in a statement.

The tit-for-tat increases stand to make goods trade between the world’s two largest economies impossible, analysts say, with import duties above around 35% wiping out Chinese exporters’ profit margins and making American offerings in China similarly overly expensive.

Beijing indicated on Friday that this would be the last time it matched the U.S., in the event that Trump takes his tariffs any higher.

“Even if the U.S. continues to impose even higher tariffs, it would no longer have any economic significance and would go down as a joke in the history

of world economics," the Finance Ministry's statement added.

"If the U.S. continues to play a numbers game with tariffs, China will not respond," it added. However it left the door open for Beijing to turn to other types of retaliation, reiterating that China would fight the U.S. to the end.

On Thursday, Beijing said it would immediately restrict imports of Hollywood films in response to Trump's tariff increases. Earlier this week, China focused its sights on U.S. services exports, issuing a travel advisory for citizens visiting the U.S. and an alert for students considering studying in the U.S. state of Ohio.

UBS analysts said in a note that China's declaration that it would not retaliate in kind against any further tariff increases was "an acknowledgement that trade between the two countries has essentially been completely severed".

Both sides now tax 100% of each other's goods, after China increased the percentage of two-way trade it subjects to taxes from 63% on April 9, following the U.S. broadening the scope of its duties from 67% in February.

Average U.S. tariffs on Chinese exports now stand at 135%, according to the Peterson Institute for International Economics, more than 40 times higher than before the first U.S.-China trade war kicked off in 2018.

SEEKING TO BUILD ALLIANCES

Beijing is seeking to rally trading partners to its cause. In his first public comments on the tariffs, President Xi Jinping told Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez during a meeting in Beijing that China and the European Union should "fulfill their international responsibilities... and jointly oppose unilateral acts of bullying", China's state news agency Xinhua reported. Xi begins a three-nation tour of Southeast Asia next week, aiming to consolidate ties with some of China's closest neighbours as trade tension escalates with the United States.

Eric Orlander, co-founder of the China-Global South Project, said improved market access in areas like agriculture would likely be on the table when Xi meets his Vietnamese, Malaysian and Cambodian counterparts rather than "big free trade deals".

"China's best offer to Vietnam is stability. Don't underestimate how important that is at a time like this," Orlander added.

Chinese Commerce Minister Wang Wentao has sought to get ahead of U.S. negotiators, holding video calls this week with his counterparts from the EU and Malaysia, which is chairing ASEAN this year, as well as Saudi Arabia and South Africa, by way of reaching out to Gulf countries and the Group of 20 and BRICS nations.

Beijing and Brussels agreed on Thursday to restart talks on trade relief and to immediately carry out

negotiations on electric vehicle price commitments, according to a readout of his meeting with European Commissioner for Trade and Economic Security Maros Sefcovic, meaning a truce to a longstanding spat could be forthcoming.

A rapprochement with Europe would take China's trade war with the West back to a single front -- the U.S.

"China remains open to negotiations with the U.S., but threatening and pressuring are not the right way to engage with China," the country's Commerce Ministry said in a separate statement.

China says it complains to US about Taiwan delegation's Washington visit

07 April 2025, [Reuters](#)

China's foreign ministry said on Monday the country had lodged representations with the United States over reports that a Taiwan delegation was in Washington to meet with the Trump administration. China opposes any form of official exchanges between the U.S. and Taiwan, and urges the U.S. to abide by the one-China policy, a ministry spokesperson said at a regular press briefing.

Beijing views democratically governed Taiwan as its territory, a claim rejected by Taipei.

China vows countermeasures for US sanctions on its officials responsible for Tibet violations

02 April 2025, [Tibetan Review](#)

Without addressing the underlying issues, China on Apr 1 condemned the United States for allegedly interfering in Tibet and China's affairs after Secretary of State Marco Rubio had announced the day before visa restrictions on unspecified Chinese officials responsible for denying reciprocal access to the Tibetan territories under its rule.

In his statement announcing the imposition of sanctions, Rubio said China had refused to afford US diplomats, journalists, and other international observers access to Tibet Autonomous Region and other Tibetan areas under Chinese rule and hence announced the imposition of additional visa restrictions on Chinese officials involved in the formulation or execution of policies related to access for foreigners to these areas, pursuant to the country's Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act.

Responding to Rubio's statement, Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Guo Jiakun has said Apr 1 that the actions of the US are what he has called a "blatant interference in Xizang affairs and China's internal affairs, seriously violating international law and the basic principles of international relations," using the Sinicized name for Tibet.

“China expresses strong dissatisfaction and firmly opposes this,” China’s official globaltimes.cn Apr 1 quoted Guo as saying.

Guo has maintained that “Xizang is open” and China “has never imposed restrictions on foreign access”, which everyone knows is simply not true.

Xizang receives a large number of foreign tourists and visitors from various sectors annually, with 320,000 foreign tourist visits recorded in 2024, Guo has said.

However, any non-Chinese tourist visiting Tibet has to obtain a special permit and must travel in a strictly supervised group. Journalists, human rights activists, researchers diplomats and others, including UN human rights experts are banned from accessing Tibet.

Justifying those restrictions, Guo has sought to explain: “considering Xizang’s unique geographical and climatic conditions, the Chinese government has implemented certain management and protective measures for foreign visitors to Xizang in accordance with the law, which is entirely necessary.”

Guo has claimed, “China welcomes friends from afar to visit and do business in Xizang.”

He has then sought to justify the exclusion of visitors such as journalists, researchers, human rights activists and others it does not approve of by saying, “the prerequisite is that necessary procedures are duly observed in accordance with Chinese laws and regulations.”

He has then continued: “We oppose the baseless smear campaign against the current state of human rights, religion, and cultural development in Xizang, and we reject the actions of foreign officials who, under the pretext of fulfilling their duties in Xizang, engage in interference and sabotage.”

China considers any criticism of its human rights record in Tibet as support for Tibet’s independence and interference in its internal affairs. In keeping with it, Guo has sought to urge the US to “honour its commitments regarding the Xizang issue, stop condoning and supporting ‘Xizang independence’ forces, and cease interfering in China’s internal affairs under the guise of Xizang-related issues.”

Guo has vowed that “China will take necessary measures to firmly counteract the erroneous actions of the US with resolute reciprocal responses.”

US announces stricter visa restrictions for Chinese officials over Tibet access

01 April 2025, [Phayul](#), Tsering Dhundup

United States Secretary of State Marco Rubio announced Monday that the U.S. government will impose additional visa restrictions on Chinese officials, in response to China’s ongoing restrictions on foreign access to Tibet.

This action enforces the ‘Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act of 2018’, which aims to pressure China to lift its restrictions on foreign access to Tibet, specifically for diplomats, journalists, and tourists. It mandates the denial of U.S. visas to Chinese officials who are responsible for or involved in restricting such access, thereby highlighting human rights issues in the region. The act seeks to promote greater transparency and international scrutiny of China’s policies in Tibet, including concerns about cultural repression, religious persecution, and the treatment of the Tibetan people. Secretary Rubio emphasised that the new restrictions will target Chinese officials responsible for blocking U.S. diplomats, journalists, and international observers from entering Tibet. In a statement released on Monday, he said, “For far too long, the Chinese Communist Party has denied U.S. diplomats, journalists, and others access to Tibet, while China’s diplomats and journalists enjoy broad access to the United States.”

He called this lack of reciprocal access unacceptable, noting that the U.S. government cannot provide adequate consular services to American citizens travelling in Tibet due to these restrictions. Rubio urged China to allow unrestricted access to Tibet for U.S. officials and citizens.

This move is part of a long history of U.S. efforts to promote human rights and religious freedom in Tibet. Several U.S. laws have aimed at pressuring China on these issues. The Tibetan Policy Act of 2002 created the position of Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues in the U.S. State Department and called for the preservation of Tibet’s cultural identity. The Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act of 2018 directly addresses China’s restrictions on foreign access by imposing travel restrictions on Chinese officials.

The Tibet Policy and Support Act of 2020 opposed China’s interference in selecting Tibetan Buddhist leaders and strengthened environmental protections in Tibet. The Promoting a Resolution to the Tibet-China Dispute Act, passed in 2024, rejects China’s historical claim over Tibet and advocates for renewed negotiations between Tibetan representatives and China.

In December 2024, the US Congress extended the Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act for another five years, reinforcing these measures in the National Defence Authorisation Act. This extension ensures continued enforcement of the travel restrictions and mandates reports on China’s influence in Tibet, including the impact of the closure of the U.S. consulate in Chengdu, which previously monitored developments in Tibet. The responsibility for Tibet-related monitoring has since shifted to the U.S. Embassy in Beijing.

While the number of Chinese officials affected by the visa restrictions has not been publicly disclosed, the

U.S. has targeted officials involved in limiting foreign access to Tibet.

Secretary Rubio, a long-time advocate for human rights, especially in Tibet and East Turkestan, has played a key role in shaping U.S. policy on Tibet. He was one of the original sponsors of the Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act in 2017. His outspoken criticism of China's human rights violations has led to political sanctions against him by China in 2020 and 2021.

SINO-INDIAN RELATIONS

India, China move to normalise ties, Kailash Mansarovar Yatra to resume in June after 5 years

27 April 2025, [The Indian Express](#), Shubhajit Roy

This year, 5 batches of 50 pilgrims each are scheduled to travel through Uttarakhand and another 10 batches will go through Sikkim.

The Kailash-Mansarovar yatra through the Lipulekh pass was closed in 2019 after the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic. Kailash peak.

In a significant step towards normalising India-China ties since the border standoff began in 2020, New Delhi announced on Saturday that it will resume the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra from June this year.

The resumption of the yatra after a gap of five years is an important measure towards rebuilding the trust deficit that emerged since the border standoff in which 20 Indian soldiers were killed in Galwan.

This is the first move taken after the disengagement process was completed in eastern Ladakh, where 50,000 to 60,000 troops are still stationed along the India-China border.

The Kailash Mansarovar Yatra was on top of India's wishlist since the talks to normalise the ties began in November this year.

On Saturday, the Ministry of External Affairs said, "Kailash Mansarovar Yatra organised by Ministry of External Affairs is set to take place during June to August 2025."

"This year, 5 batches, each consisting of 50 Yatris, and 10 batches, each consisting of 50 Yatris, are scheduled to travel through Uttarakhand State crossing over at Lipulekh Pass, and through Sikkim State crossing over at Nathu La Pass, respectively," the ministry said.

"The website at kmy.gov.in has been opened for acceptance of applications. The Yatris will be selected from among applicants through a fair, computer-generated, random and gender-balanced selection process."

Considering that the route has been largely unused for civilians for the past five years, it will be a challenge to organise that pilgrimage.

The pilgrimage to Mount Kailash and Mansarovar Lake in China's Tibet Autonomous Region holds religious significance to Hindus as well as Jains and Buddhists.

The yatra was suspended initially in 2020 because of the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequently because of the military standoff between the two sides on the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh.

The negotiations for the yatra picked pace after Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri's visit to China in January, where the two countries agreed in principle to resume it.

The resumption of the yatra was officially discussed for the first time when External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar met Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi in

November 2024 on the sidelines of the G-20 leaders' summit in Brazil's Rio de Janeiro. It was again discussed at the Special Representatives meet in Beijing between National Security Advisor Ajit Doval and Chinese State Councillor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi in December.

With the yatra beginning in June, the focus will now shift to the remaining items on the wish-list, that includes the sharing of data on trans-border rivers, direct flights, easing of visas and exchange of media and think tanks between the two countries.

China opens doors to Indians, issues 85,000 visas in four months

16 April 2025, [The Federal](#)

Chinese embassy offers visa relaxations for Indian travellers, promotes people-to-people ties, and urges unity amid Trump's tariff threats.

The Chinese Embassy in India has issued over 85,000 visas to Indian citizens between January 1 and April 9, 2025, marking a significant step towards boosting stronger people-to-people ties between the two countries.

Chinese Ambassador Xu Feihong, in a social media post, welcomed more Indians to explore China's vibrant culture, calling it an "open, safe, sincere, and friendly" destination.

Visa boost for Indians

In a bid to promote tourism and people-to-people diplomacy, China has announced major visa relaxations for Indian travellers:

1. No prior appointment is needed to submit applications at visa centres
2. Biometric exemption for short-term visits
3. Lower visa fees, making travel more affordable
4. Faster processing times, benefitting business and leisure travellers

These steps aim to make China more accessible for Indian students, tourists, and professionals, especially after years of pandemic-related travel hurdles.

China is also actively inviting Indian tourists by showcasing its cultural richness, seasonal attractions, and popular festivals and destinations.

Economic solidarity

Amid escalating trade tensions with the United States, especially under Donald Trump's renewed tariff threats, China has been pushing for greater cooperation with India.

Chinese Embassy spokesperson Yu Jing emphasised the importance of India-China economic and trade relations and called on both nations to resist unilateralism and protectionism.

She emphasised that "trade and tariff wars have no winners", promoting the idea of joint resistance to US-imposed tariffs.

Trust-building efforts

Despite border tensions along the Line of Actual Control (LAC), Beijing's move is seen as a soft-power strategy to rebuild trust at the ground level even as officials are trying to resolve the larger border and trade issues.

Strengthening cultural and academic ties, particularly as Indian students return to Chinese universities, is part of this broader engagement.

The increase in visa approvals also highlights a renewed dedication by India and China to foster exchanges in culture, education, business, and tourism.

China has remained a favoured destination for Indian students, especially those studying medicine, with thousands enrolled in its universities.

The return of student travel has been widely appreciated, as many Indian students faced obstacles in continuing their education due to pandemic-related travel restrictions.

Path forward may be difficult, we are prepared to walk: Vikram Misri on China ties

02 April 2025, [The Indian Express](#), Shubhajit Roy

Last week, officials reviewed the situation along the LAC and worked on advancing effective border management, and explored various measures to implement the decisions made after the last meeting of the Special Representatives.

Path forward may be difficult, we are prepared to walk: Misri on China ties Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri (File) Setting the stage for a "path forward" after a bitter military standoff along the Line of Actual Control, Chinese President Xi Jinping exchanged congratulatory messages with President Droupadi Murmu on Tuesday, the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and India.

Premier Li Qiang also exchanged congratulatory messages with Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The messages were released by Beijing, not Delhi where there is cautious optimism — the Chinese outreach is the latest ever since Modi and Xi met last October on the sidelines of the BRICS Summit in the Russian city of Kazan.

The two leaders are expected to meet on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation meeting in Tianjin in China later this year.

These congratulatory messages are intended to create a positive atmosphere for the two leaders to meet though the standoff along the LAC in eastern Ladakh is yet to end.

Also Tuesday, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri attended the 75th anniversary celebrations organised by the Chinese Embassy in New Delhi. This is the first time

since 2019 that the Foreign Secretary has attended such an event – Gourangalal Das, Joint Secretary, in charge of China, in the Ministry of External Affairs, had attended the earlier events.

The Tianjin window

The meeting between Xi and Modi in Kazan last year set the stage for disengagement at two key points along the LAC, and all eyes now are on a possible meeting this autumn during the SCO summit in Tianjin. Misri said, “In past few years, since our relations have gone through a difficult phase, but largely due to the guidance by our leaders and untiring efforts by political leadership, by our military leaders and by our diplomats, who maintained communications throughout this time, our two countries have resolved several issues along the border areas. This too holds the message for us, which is that peace and tranquility on the border areas is critical for the smooth development of our overall bilateral nations. And it is on the basis of this fundamental understanding, which was shared in a meeting between Prime Minister Modi and President Xi Jinping in Kazan, that both of us are now working together to chart a roadmap for our bilateral relations to return to a stable, predictable path, as agreed by our leaders.”

He said “a durable basis for rebuilding these ties is the three-fold formula of mutual respect, mutual sensitivity and mutual interests... path forward may be a difficult one, but it is one that we are prepared to walk, and it is on the basis of the steps that we have already taken in the last five months that we have seen promising beginnings.”

In his message, President Xi pointed out that China and India are both ancient civilizations, major developing countries and important members of the Global South.

“Both countries are at a critical stage in their respective modernization drive. The development of China-India relations demonstrates that it is the right choice for both sides to become partners for mutual success and realize a cooperative *pas de deux* (tango) of the dragon and the elephant, which completely serves the fundamental interests of the two countries and peoples. Both sides should view and handle China-India relations from a strategic and long-term perspective, and seek ways for neighbouring major countries to get along in peaceful coexistence, mutual trust and mutual benefit, and common development, and jointly push forward world multipolarization and democracy in international relations”, Xi said, in the message that was shared by Xu Feihong, Chinese Ambassador to India.

“President Xi expressed his readiness to work with President Murmu, taking the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries as an opportunity, to promote strategic mutual trust, strengthen exchanges and cooperation

in various fields, deepen communication and coordination on major international affairs, jointly safeguard peace and tranquility in China-India border regions, advance China-India relations on the track of sound and stable development, so as to contribute to world peace and prosperity,” it stated.

According to the Chinese envoy’s post, “President Murmu said that India and China are two large neighbours, who represent a third of humanity. Stable, predictable and amicable bilateral relations will bring major benefits to us both, as indeed to the world. Let us utilize the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations to work towards the healthy and stable development of India-China bilateral relations.”

In a separate post on X, Ambassador Xu posted about Premier Li Qiang’s congratulatory messages with Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

“Premier Li stated that China stands ready to work with India, taking the 75th anniversary of China-India diplomatic relations as an opportunity, continue to enhance strategic mutual trust, promote exchanges and cooperation in various fields, properly handle the boundary question, advance China-India relations on the track of sound and stable development, so as to bring more benefits to the two peoples,” it said.

“Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that India and China are two ancient cultures and civilizations. We have played a significant role in shaping human history and bear a significant responsibility now to promote peace and development. Progress in our bilateral relations will contribute not only to global stability and prosperity but also to the emergence of a multi-polar world. The 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations may usher in a period of healthy and stable development in India-China bilateral relations,” the post said.

Last week, officials reviewed the situation along the LAC and worked on advancing effective border management, and explored various measures to implement the decisions made after the last meeting of the Special Representatives.

China, India discuss restarting direct flights after five-years

14 April 2025, [The Express Tribune](#)

India-China ties worsened after 2020 border clash in Himalayas that killed 20 Indian and 4 Chinese soldiers India and China have held one round of talks on resuming direct passenger air services, but no dates have been fixed yet, New Delhi said on Monday, as relations continued to thaw five years after a deadly border clash.

The neighbours agreed in January to work on resolving trade and economic differences, in a move expected to boost their aviation sectors, particularly China's which has lagged other countries' in rebounding from the COVID pandemic.

"The civil aviation ministry and our counterpart in China have had one round of meetings," Civil Aviation Secretary Vumlunmang Vualnam said at a conference organised by the Indian Chamber of Commerce in New Delhi.

There were still some issues to resolve, he added, without going into detail.

Relations soured between India and China in the wake of the 2020 clash between troops along their border in the Himalayas, which killed at least 20 Indian soldiers and four Chinese.

India imposed restrictions on Chinese companies investing in the country, banned hundreds of popular apps and cut passenger routes, although direct cargo flights continued.

Relations have improved since an agreement in October to ease a military standoff on the mountainous border, the same month that President Xi Jinping and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi held talks in Russia.

India overhauls teaching in Himalayan Buddhist monasteries to counter China

08 April 2025, [Reuters](#)

India is preparing to roll out its first school curriculum for Buddhist monasteries this month, aiming to unify education programmes and foster patriotism in Himalayan religious centers near its border with China. Home to many ancient monasteries as the birthplace of Buddhism, India received an influx of Tibetans in the 1950s that led to many new institutions being set up, but now it seeks to insulate religious learning from China's influence.

"We are trying to inculcate Indian identity through education along with Buddhism to make sure China can never control our monasteries in the Himalayas," said Maling Gombu, a Buddhist worker of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

"Thousands of children living and studying in remote monasteries deserve education recognised and certified by India," added Gombu, one of a team promoting Indian Buddhist traditions and national education in Arunachal Pradesh.

The border state is claimed by China, but New Delhi rejects this.

About 600 monasteries scattered across the northern states of Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and the regions of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh offer training in four types of Tibetan and Indian Buddhist traditions.

They also teach modern subjects and English, but the courses lack consistency outside a national education effort that aims to weld an overarching identity from India's patchwork of languages and religions.

"The non-religious education taught by monks or nuns is not acknowledged outside monasteries," said Rajeev Kumar Singh, a director of the education ministry's National Institute of Open Schooling.

Singh, who has worked on the new curriculum that caps a five-year assessment effort, said it hoped to prepare Indian and Tibetan students for academic life in India.

"They (Tibetans) are free to learn Tibetan history and their tradition, but they should learn about India as they reside here and require proper education to secure jobs outside monasteries."

A government document reviewed by Reuters showed that 20 monasteries near the 3,000-km (1,860-mile) border with China have agreed to adopt the new curriculum, with the rest to be phased in later in the year.

MORE TIME NEEDED

While authorities negotiate individually with monasteries to take up the syllabus, they also need time to print up new textbooks and locate teachers to staff the schools, most in sparsely-populated areas, officials said.

But monks in some monasteries, such as the Gontse Garden Rabgye Ling in Arunachal Pradesh, say their syllabus focused on Buddhist philosophy, along with modern education, is carefully curated to meet the needs of children who may become preachers.

"We don't think introduction of government-mandated syllabus is required in our monastery as it can break the rhythm designed since the 1970s," said Geshe Dondup, a religious teacher at the monastery, home to about 300 students this year.

Tens of thousands of Tibetans sought refuge in India where their spiritual leader and Nobel Peace laureate, the Dalai Lama, fled as Chinese troops crushed an attempted uprising in their homeland in 1959.

About 75,000 Tibetan refugees now live in settlements managed by the Dalai Lama's government-in-exile, the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA), which controls some monasteries directly, though not those outside the Tibetan tradition.

Reuters reviewed the first batch of textbooks prepared for monasteries by education ministry officials and Indian Buddhist scholars, which delve into India's modern and ancient history, and the nation's role in Tibet's freedom struggle.

The texts also emphasise mathematics, science and computer training, besides mandatory studies in English, Hindi and the native Bhoti language.

The CTA's education minister, Tharlam Dolma, said monastery schools have historically been managed by monks and nuns based on their funding, and the CTA

lacked governance rights over them. An official in the Dalai Lama's office did not comment.

India will begin offering funds to monasteries, run for decades by different sects of Buddhism with the help of foreign aid, to recruit teachers, pay stipends to monks and pave the way for annual examinations.

In its effort to unify school programmes, a court essentially banned Islamic schools in India's most populous state in March last year, saying they violated constitutional secularism and ordering students moved to conventional schools.

Speaking on condition of anonymity, a home ministry official said streamlining education in monasteries in far-flung strategic areas was part of a larger plan to fence off religious institutions from China's influence. A home ministry spokesperson did not respond to an email seeking comment.

Last year the Asian giants began unwinding a military standoff on their disputed border since clashes in 2020 killed two dozen troops, but India aims to spend more to develop border areas amid the slow thaw in ties.

China, India should stand together in face of U.S. tariffs, says Chinese Embassy in India

08 April 2025, [Reuters](#)

India and China should stand together to overcome difficulties in the face of tariffs imposed by U.S. President Donald Trump's administration, the spokesperson of the Chinese Embassy in India said on Tuesday.

"China-India economic and trade relationship is based on complementarity and mutual benefit. Facing the U.S. abuse of tariffs... the two largest developing countries should stand together to overcome the difficulties," spokesperson Yu Jing said in a post on X.

China's mega dam will be 'water bomb': Arunachal MP

08 April 2025, [The Hindu](#)

Experts expressed deep concern over the proposed Great Bend Dam on Yarlung Tsangpo, the Brahmaputra's upstream in Tibet

China's proposed 60,000 megawatt hydropower project on the Yarlung Tsangpo, the upstream of the river Brahmaputra in Tibet, will not be a dam but a 'water bomb' to be used against India and other lower riparian countries, Arunachal Pradesh MP Tapir Gao said on Tuesday.

Speaking at a seminar highlighting the possible devastating impact of China's Great Bend Dam, he reminded global water experts about the June 2000 floods caused by a "similar water bomb" that washed

away more than 10 bridges on the Siang River in the central part of his State.

The Great Bend is beyond the India-China border, so named because the Yarlung Tsangpo takes a sharp southward bend to flow into Arunachal Pradesh as the Siang, which meets two others – Dibang and Lohit – in Assam to form the Brahmaputra.

"India needs to build a dam on the Siang to prevent disasters downstream due to the possibility of sudden release of water from the proposed dam at the Great Bend," Mr. Gao, who represents the Bharatiya Janata Party from the Arunachal East constituency, said at the seminar in Guwahati.

Villagers and NGOs have been opposing the 11.2 gigawatt Siang Upper Multipurpose Project planned near Geku village in the Upper Siang district. In April 2022, the Centre directed the NHPC to carry out a pre-feasibility survey to understand the project's technical, economic, social, and environmental feasibility.

Author and Tibetologist Claude Arpi said China not only wants to become a power giant by building the dam in Medog county, but it also has plans to divert the water of Yarlung Tsangpo to the Yellow River through numerous tunnels.

Control of river sources

Bertil Lintner, an expert on Asian politics and history, said China invaded Tibet in the 1950s primarily to control the mega rivers originating in the 'Roof of the World', as the Tibetan Plateau is called for its altitude and vastness.

"China has constructed 11 mega dams only on the Mekong River, which is the lifeline of five other countries," he said, underlining the need for India to have a water-sharing agreement with China, the lack of which may lead to bilateral conflicts between the major nations.

Chairman of the Brahmaputra Board, Ranbir Singh, pointed out that the Brahmaputra Basin is the only water-surplus river basin in India, with the rest being water-deficient.

"With this dam in China, are we looking at a water-deficient Brahmaputra river basin?" he asked, calling for a multi-pronged strategy, including garnering international support against the Great Bend Dam and collaborations.

Experts from Nepal and Bhutan aired their concerns about dams being built in the Tibetan Plateau. Specialists in ecology, water resource management, international relations, environmental law, engineering, policy formulation, governance, and economy discussed water security, ecological integrity, and disaster resilience in the sub-Himalayan region in the context of the Brahmaputra.

A key takeaway of the event organised by Asian Confluence was the need for more scientific studies to be initiated by India to develop solid ground for international support against China's proposed dam.

Communist Party of China for strengthening ties between India and China

04 April 2025, [The Hindu](#), B. Kolappan

"The CPC and the CPI(M) have long maintained friendly exchanges, which played a significant role for facilitating mutual understanding and practical cooperation between our two sides," says International Department, Central Committee, CPC. An improving China-India relationship serves the common interests of both countries and the region at a time the international landscape and world order are now in a new round of transformation, the Communist Party of China (CPC) said in its message to the 24th Congress of the CPI(M) taking place in Madurai.

"The CPC and the CPI(M) have long maintained friendly exchanges, which has played a significant role for facilitating mutual understanding and practical cooperation between our two sides," read the message of the International Department, Central Committee, CPC.

The CPC said in the new circumstances it was ready to strengthen exchanges and strategic communication as well as experience sharing of party and state governance with the CPI(M) and other Indian political parties, so as to promote continued progress of China-India relations as well as peace and stability of the region.

One of the important aspects of the CPI(M) Congress in the past was visit of delegates from Communist countries and representatives from communist parties across the world. Their visit is no longer taking place. Instead the parties are sending their greetings, Communist parties from 34 countries have sent their messages.

Communist Party of Brazil (PCdoB) in its message pointed out that while the far right is gaining political ground worldwide, there is a growing resistance from peoples and nations against the hegemonic power of the declining U.S. imperialism. "Inter-imperialist contradictions are also intensifying, creating opportunities for the forces of national sovereignty, justice, and world peace to raise their banners," said Ana Prestes, Secretary of International Relations of PCdoB.

She expressed the hope that the resolutions and guidelines resulting from the Congress debates would be of great value to our common fight against fascism, always with the goal of building socialism and communism on the horizon.

The Communist Party of Vietnam said the friendship and excellent cooperation between the two parties, the people of Vietnam and India as well as the State of Kerala and provinces of Vietnam would be further consolidated.

The Workers Party of Korea (DPRK) reiterated its conviction that the long-standing friendship and cooperation between the two parties would further develop in the future.

Xi Jinping Exchanges Congratulatory Messages with Indian President Droupadi Murmu on the 75th Anniversary of the Establishment of China-India Diplomatic Relations

01 April 2025, [US China Embassy](#)

On April 1, 2025, President Xi Jinping exchanged congratulatory messages with Indian President Droupadi Murmu to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Xi Jinping noted that China and India, both ancient civilizations, major developing countries and important members of the Global South, are both at a critical stage of their respective modernization efforts. The development of China-India relations demonstrates that it is the right choice for the two countries to be partners of mutual achievement and realize the "Dragon-Elephant Tango", which fully serves the fundamental interests of both countries and their peoples. Both sides should view and handle China-India relations from a strategic height and long-term perspective, seek a way for neighboring major countries to get along with each other, which features peaceful coexistence, mutual trust, mutual benefit and common development, and jointly promote a multipolar world and greater democracy in international relations.

Xi Jinping stressed that he is ready to work with President Droupadi Murmu to take the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries as an opportunity to enhance strategic mutual trust, strengthen exchanges and cooperation in various fields, deepen communication and coordination in major international affairs, jointly safeguard peace and tranquility in the China-India border area, steer China-India relations forward along a sound and steady track, and contribute to world peace and prosperity.

Droupadi Murmu said that India and China are two neighboring major countries that are home to one-third of the world's population. A stable, predictable and friendly bilateral relationship will benefit both countries and the world. She proposed to take the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and China as an opportunity to jointly promote the sound and steady development of India-China relations.

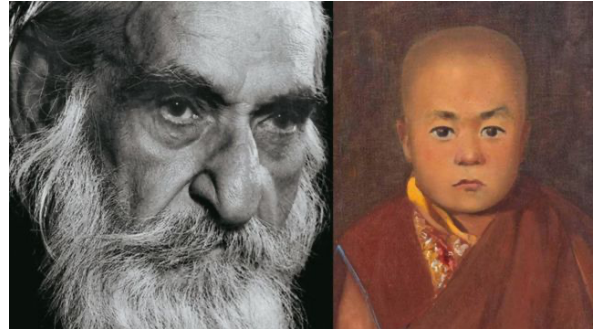
On the same day, Premier Li Qiang of the State Council exchanged congratulatory messages with Indian Prime

Minister Narendra Modi. Li Qiang said that China is ready to work with India to take the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries as an opportunity to continuously enhance strategic mutual trust, promote exchanges and cooperation in various fields, properly handle the boundary question, steer bilateral relations forward along a sound and stable track, and bring more benefits to the two peoples.

Narendra Modi said that India and China, as two ancient civilizations, have played an important role in shaping the course of human history, and now shoulder the heavy responsibility of promoting peace and development. The development of India-China relations is not only conducive to the prosperity and stability of the world, but also contributes to the realization of a multipolar world. The 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and China will usher the bilateral relations into a stage of sound and stable development.

An Auction in London Highlights the Truth on the Reincarnation of Dalai Lamas

30 April 2025, [Bitter Winter](#), Lopsang Gurung
Bonhams auctions the collection and archives of Sir Basil Gould, a British diplomat who was there when the 14th Dalai Lama was enthroned in 1940.



Painter Kanwal Krishna in his later years (from Facebook) and his 1940 portrait of the 14th Dalai Lama (from Bonhams' auction catalogue).

Tibetans who access the Internet freely via VPN are interested in an auction at Bonhams in London scheduled for June 4. The URL is being passed by word of mouth from one Tibetan to another, and the Chinese authorities have promptly blocked the auction's site.

Why does an auction in London scare the CCP? The answer is that it documents how, traditionally, the reincarnations of deceased Dalai Lamas were identified. No consultation with the Chinese authorities, no "Golden Urn" (do not believe Wikipedia, which is often manipulated by "friends" of Beijing), no lottery between various candidates (a system only used in the 19th century for the 11th Dalai Lama and to confirm the 12th, who had already been selected through traditional methods).

Sir Basil Gould with the Tibetan Prime Minister Lonchen Langdun in 1936. Credits.

Sir Basil Gould with the Tibetan Prime Minister Lonchen Langdun in 1936. Credits.

Bonham's auction is about the collection and archives of Sir Basil Gould (1883–1956), a British diplomat who served in Tibet, in various missions and positions, between 1912 and 1940. He was there when the current 14th Dalai Lama was enthroned in 1940.

It was a stroke of genius to ask a gifted Indian painter, Kanwal Krishna (1910–1993), to come to Lhasa and record the events in his paintings. Now, these historical paintings are auctioned together with several documents from Gould's private archive and works of art he collected in Tibet.

Gould noted that the enthronement was preceded by a careful search that began soon after the 13th Dalai Lama died. Following Tibetan customs, various signs and omens led high lamas to the remote village of

COMMENTARIES

Taktser in the northeastern Amdo province of Tibet, where they found young Lhamo Dhondup, the Dalai Lama's birth name.

The search party performed several tests, including prompting the child to identify items belonging to the former Dalai Lama, which he is said to have done successfully.

The auction is an opportunity to celebrate the 14th Dalai Lama, who will turn 90 on July 6, and to remember that it was not the Chinese government that recognized him as the reincarnation of his predecessor—no matter how much propaganda and fake news it spreads today.

SUFFOCATE

29 April 2025, [Tibet Express](#), Gabriel Lafitte



Cancellation of schooling in Tibetan language, culture, civilisation as lived, embodied realities in the lives of Tibetans, has been the policy core of China's ethnic policy 2.0 for the past 15 years. Yet China finds it hard to shift the mentality of those stubborn red-faced Tibetans. Suffocating Tibetan identity, social engineering of Tibetans so they identify first and foremost as Chinese, is proving difficult.

In April 2025 China moved decisively to close the last vestige of respect for Tibetan language and culture in the education system, decreeing that all the minority nationality minzu universities from now on must teach -across all disciplines- a Han centric caricature of the

histories and destiny of both China and Tibet. From age five to 25, in primary, secondary schools and now university, conformity to China's racist assimilation agenda is now compulsory.[1]

THE ZHONGHUA CHINESE RACE AS THE TOP OF THE PYRAMID OF CIVILISATION

Ethnic policy 2.0 is unapologetically assimilationist, full of rhetorics of all of China as a singular people, with a unique and common culture and destiny. Belonging to an ethnic group is merely a personal choice, with no legal status or territorialised autonomy, and no role in public life beyond essentialised ethnic dress to be compulsorily worn on official occasions requiring displays of diversity.

A relentlessly assimilationist turn resulted in the new boarding school system, which takes children much younger than did the Neidi Xizangban hinterland schools, in the expectation that a deep shift in identity can be engineered.

However, that left, until 2024, the ongoing problem of Tibetan students enrolled in the Minzu University system, continuing to seek to reconnect with cultural roots denied to them in their Neidi Xizangban schooling. If assimilation must succeed, the minzu universities must also be made to shift to the master narrative of there being only one China, one Chinese race, one Chinese language, history, culture, heritage. Fortunately for the assimilationists, there is now, at the top of the system, a relentless driver of this assault on the minzu universities, an insistent demand that they teach, to all students, a greatly simplified history of China that incorporates all ethnic minorities as variants of the singular triumphant story of unbroken continuity for 5000 years.

Pan Yue is the man. Pan Yue is a warrior, energetically and relentlessly pushing ahead in the long battle to make China unitary, all ethnic identities absorbed into one over riding loyalty, to the party-state and the Zhonghua minzu, the one Chinese race.

As a senior leader Pan Yue took on the work of building "ecological civilisation", a policy shift at first announced, in 2007, as a feelgood but empty slogan, given teeth later with the backing of Xi Jinping, pushing for China to be seen afresh as a global leader in designating protected areas and promoting the technologies of decarbonisation. During his time as vice-minister of environmental protection from 2008 to 2015, Pan noted that local and provincial governments often subverted environmental laws and openly protected their biggest corporate polluters. Pan Yue was the teeth, unafraid to bite provincial protectionists defending their vested interests in owning polluting factories and power stations, seizing natural lands and profiting from classifying them as urban, for their developer friends.

Pan Yue was such an effective attack dog, environmentalists worldwide heaped praise on

him.[2] In hindsight, their plaudits took rather too literally China's pledging "arduous struggle to construct ecological civilisation" as signifying a recognition of limits to growth, when Xi Jinping was actually demanding "mobilizing hundreds of millions of workers to build a great country and advance national rejuvenation." [3]

COMPLETING THE ASSIMILATIONIST MAKEOVER

Now that almost all Tibetan children, from a very young age, must live in boarding schools which 24/7 push the superiority of all that is Han Chinese, and the inferiority, irrelevance, backwardness, uselessness of all that is Tibetan, the system is still not complete, if in university Tibetans yearn and search to reconnect to Tibet. That is a failure, and it much be rectified.

Henceforth, there is to be no backsliding. From age five to 25, from preschool to university graduation, the messaging must be consistent, insistent, assimilated into the values and beliefs of every student. This is ethnic policy 2.0.

Pan Yue is now Vice Minister of the United Front Work Department of the CPC Central Committee, Director and Party Secretary of the National Ethnic Affairs Commission. He now deploys his energies to collapsing ethnic identity. On 24 June 2022, he was appointed as the director of the National Ethnic Affairs Commission (NEAC), which since 2018 is within the CCP's United Front. He was promoted to become a full member of the CCP Central Committee after the 20th CCP National Congress in October 2022.

Forcing the pace of assimilation requires arduous struggle; Pan Yue is a busy man. If everyone must identify first and foremost as Chinese, belonging to the Zhonghua minzu Chinese race, there must be a master narrative of how to define essentialised Chineseness, a textbook that oversimplifies the history of China, editing out all the conflicts, failures, breaks and discontinuities, reducing all to a straight line of 5000 of continuous, unbroken Chinese civilisation, unique.

Pan Yue wrote the textbook, and now pushes energetically for it to be studied by all university students, especially those enrolled in the many universities specialising in training ethnic minority students.[4]

The price of imposing a narrow, rigid, chauvinist travesty of Chinese and Tibetan identity, history and relations will be enormous. Four or more decades of minzu universities across China enabled students and teachers, within limits, to explore and publish curricula, training programs, research reports and dissertations honouring ethnic diversity, differing historic arcs, the rich variety of identities and cultures of the many ethnic minorities.

From now on, all teaching, all texts, all products of the minzu university system must conform to Pan Yue's narrow, Han triumphalist agenda, a great loss.[5]

A WARRIOR OF RECTIFYING MINDS

Pan Yue is a busy man, doing inspection tours of the universities controlled directly by the National Ethnic Affairs Commission, demanding his textbook be taught to all students, whatever their academic discipline, a compulsory course in the correct line, with exams. This is the culmination of a 20-year assimilation trajectory program that starts at age five, to ensure no more divided loyalties within the hearts of the Tibetans who must administer Tibet, since so few Han want to stay in Tibet for long.

Minzu University of China (MUC), གུང་ཉི་མེ་དམངས་ཁྱུ་མཐུན་ཕྱུ་ཁབ་ཀྱི་ཕྱུ་ཁབ་མི་རིགས་དོན་གཙོ་ལྷན་ཁང་ in Beijing, is Pan Yue's operational base.

Pan Yue has designed what he calls the 1+15 method of ensuring compliance. The 1, is MUC, in the lead, setting the example, commanding a batch of 15 ethnic minority universities to fall into line. The first iteration was in 2024, the second batch was announced 21 April, 2025, including all three of the top universities for Tibetans, on the fringes of Tibet, in Gansu Lanzhou Northwest University for Nationalities, 西北民族大学 ; in Sichuan Chengdu Southwest University for Nationalities; and in Yunnan Kunming Yunnan University for Nationalities 云南民族大学.

In his inspection visits of these core enforcers of assimilation Pan Yue has made clear what is required. In 2023, at the Lanzhou campus so many Tibetans had studied in, he headlined a symposium, bluntly demanding compliance with "forging the consciousness of the Chinese national community. It is necessary to establish a correct view of the country, history, ethnicity, culture, and religion, strengthen the "baton" role of the national outlook assessment index system, and integrate the sense of forging the Chinese national community into the whole process of running schools, governing schools, teaching and educating people. It is necessary to give full play to the advantages of disciplines and talents, deepen the study of the history and culture of the northwest region, especially the sinicization of religions in our country, thoroughly publicize and explain the five outstanding characteristics of Chinese civilization, vigorously carry forward the excellent traditional Chinese culture, and guide teachers and students of all ethnic groups to enhance the "five identities". It is necessary to consciously serve the overall situation of the party's ethnic work, and take the initiative to participate in the construction of a theoretical research system, a system of policies and regulations, and a propaganda and education system for forging the consciousness of the Chinese national community. It is necessary to strengthen the party's overall leadership and strengthen the political and organizational functions of party organizations at all levels in forging a firm sense of the Chinese national community." [6]

RECTIFICATION ENFORCEMENT

In August 2024 Pan Yue inspected the Southwest University for Nationalities in Chengdu, a magnet for aspirational Tibetans, where he “held a symposium to listen to the school’s work report and opinions and suggestions from all parties” before issuing his demands: “Pan Yue emphasized that, facing the future, Southwest University for Nationalities should not only run higher education well, but also highlight its special role in forging a strong sense of community of the Chinese nation. It is necessary to actively promote the construction of the theoretical system of the Chinese nation community, focus on studying and interpreting the history of exchanges and integration of ethnic groups in the southwest region with the direction of enhancing commonality, and tell the story of the Chinese nation community well both internally and externally. It is necessary to accelerate the optimization and adjustment of disciplines, focus on accelerating the construction of the Chinese nation community.... focus on creating special disciplines such as governance of the southwestern border areas, exchanges and integration of ethnic groups in the Han-Tibetan-Qiang-Yi corridor, and conduct in-depth research on the sinicization of Tibetan Buddhism..... focusing on forging a strong sense of community for the Chinese nation, adhering to the fundamental task of cultivating morality..... Southwest University for Nationalities has inherited the red gene of “loyalty and dedication to the Party and the country”[7]

These ethnic universities were originally intended to chart a middle way between mother tongue and conformity to Han centric party-state nation-building policies. Now their mission is a one-way mandatory transition of students, cancelling inherited identity, to be replaced by the innumerable slogans of forging the consciousness of the single Chinese national community.

If these colleges fail to comply, do they, in Beijing’s eyes, serve any purpose? They have now quickly complied. The journals of these prestigious minzu collages all now begin with a section on forging the consciousness of the Chinese national community. That means repetitive regurgitation of official slogans, performative declarations of being aligned with the new correct line, and little other content. Deadening. A closing of minds, a loss of fresh ideas.

An example: a 2024 report focussed on the remote, mountainous Myanmar/China border, where Burmese minorities try to flee being shot by the attack aircraft China supplies to the Burma military. There is now an effort (as with border villages in Tibet) for “construction of a community of responsibility of “guarding the territory, defending the territory and protecting the territory” by the special border-guarding team in Lushui City so as to promote the border residents to focus on the construction of a

community of a shared destiny through a shift from “pursuing the personal interests” to “safeguarding the national interests.”[8] Assimilating to embrace the party-state agenda is what is now required everywhere.

OPPOSE HISTORICAL NIHILISM, OPPOSE WESTERN THEORIES

Assimilation czar Pan Yue has other battles to fight as well. He is insistent that China’s unique approach repudiates Western ideas about ethnic groups, concepts that cannot be applied to China. And he also must battle any suggestion China’s unbroken 5000 years of continuity were broken by the Manchu invasion and conquest of China in the 17th century, resulting in the 270 years of alien rule: the Qing dynasty. More on that wicked problem later.

China’s Communist Party has since its formation adopted many Western ideas, notably Marxism and the Soviet model. Ethnic policy, in the 1960s, was based on Soviet-style territorial autonomy privileging specified ethnicities, foundational to 20th century ethnic policy 1.0.

Ethnic policy 2.0, in this century, is based on standard Western urban melting pot multiculturalism sociology, that refuses territorialised legal autonomy, instead depicting ethnic identity as merely the arbitrary personal choice of individuals, with no role in the public sphere. For China, this is a way of trivialising ethnicity, removing it from any legal status; a move reinforced throughout Tibet by reclassifying what had been designated Tibetan autonomous prefectures and counties, to become municipalities, which by definition provide no special status to any particular ethnicity.

Yet Pan Yue is insistent that China is unique, owing nothing whatever to Western concepts. This fits the wider nationalist agenda that insists China owes nothing to anyone. This narrow closing of minds is critiqued by some Chinese scholars: “The rhetoric of ‘self-confidence’, heavily promoted by official media; the stream of aggressively nationalistic online commentary; the relentless expansion of the ‘competition first’ mindset; the near-systemic indifference to vulnerable groups across society—all this suggests that our society has gone a long way down the road of narrow market utilitarianism.

“We might come to believe that learning from the West was a mistake and that we should return to ‘the East’; that our own system is best after all. We might conclude that notions like international justice and world peace are all nonsense; that the unchanging pattern of world power since ancient times has been the law of the jungle, where the strong prey on the weak. If that’s the case, shouldn’t we strive to become the dominant force in the jungle? And if that means baring our teeth and roaring at weaker neighbours, why should we hesitate? This way of thinking could

extend into domestic questions. If international relations are governed by the survival of the fittest, then isn't it natural for our own society to be rigidly hierarchical, with the winners taking all? If that's how things have always been, and always will be—just as the sun rises every day in the east—then what reason could there be to criticize it?"[9]

However, Pan Yue now fights to repudiate any suggestion of Western influence. In a March 2025 article in the CCP's top journal of ideology, *Qiushi*, Vice Minister Pan Yue explains: "Strengthening the consciousness of the Chinese national community is an important part of Xi Jinping's cultural thought and the core essence of Xi Jinping's important thoughts on strengthening and improving ethnic work, pointing the way forward for the Party's ethnic work in the new era... clearly proposing the major original thesis of strengthening the consciousness of the Chinese national community. This thesis has been established as the main line of the Party's ethnic work and various tasks in ethnic regions in the new era, enriching and developing Marxist ethnic theory, and consolidating and expanding the correct path of solving ethnic issues with Chinese characteristics."

But there is much more that must be accomplished if the historic inevitability of assimilation is to be a uniquely Chinese theory generated by China's uniqueness. Pan Yue tells us "to accelerate the formation of China's own historical, discourse and theoretical system of Chinese national community, in recent years, the State People's Committee, in conjunction with the Ministry of Education, has guided the commissioned universities to solidly push forward the comprehensive integration of General Secretary Xi Jinping's important ideas on strengthening and improving national work into discipline construction, especially to break through the limitations of knowledge of a single discipline, comprehensively applying the theories and methods of multiple disciplines such as Marxist theory, philosophy, history, ethnology, sociology, etc., and focusing on the construction of the theoretical system of the Chinese national community, and achieving positive results in theoretical research, education and teaching, and talent training."

Talent training means training a new cohort of teachers to teach the new assimilationist curriculum, which will take years. The assimilationist agenda is yet to reach high gear.

HOW ETHNIC POLICY 1.0 ACTUALLY WORKED, IN THE SCHOOLS

Until this decree it seemed the master stroke for radically disrupting the transmission of Tibetan culture and language, from one generation to the next, was the calculated splitting of Tibetan families, with compulsory education for all Tibetan children,

dislocated to urban boarding schools where tuition in almost all subjects is in standard Chinese.

Not only were many big new boarding schools built in county and prefecture towns and cities, from about 2010 on village schools were closed, and enforcement of China's compulsory education policies intensified. The bold aim was to produce a new generation schooled not only in putonghua Chinese fluency, but in contemporary, consumerist, aspirational Han Chinese identity, seeing Chinese culture as dynamic, forward looking, full of opportunity to get rich, window to the world; with Tibetan culture and language at best an archaic window to the past, of little practical use.

In practice, this calculated splitting of families had the predictable outcome, recognisable from the sad histories of Canada's residential boarding school system for indigenous peoples, Australia's stolen generations, US Indian reservation system, of emotional stunting. Children spending their earliest years in not only their immediate nuclear family but in the wider care of grandparents and villages, experience plenty of responsiveness to their many emotions.

Not so in institutionalised boarding schools staffed by Han Chinese whose civilising mission is to inculcate more than a new language, nothing less than a new identity which is to be absorbed, accepted, believed, embraced by the child. In any such total institution, there is neither sufficient staff, nor focus on ameliorating loneliness, isolation, confusion, withdrawal, alienation leading to editing out, shutting out emotions, because they become traumatically painful when routinely ignored or trivialised. Dislocation results in a heavy price.

A new generation grows up unable to connect, unable to form deep relationships, unable to experience deep feelings. This has been amply researched in Canada, Australia and the US, where a lasting legacy of intergenerational silences and denial repeats and repeats. Increasingly, ethnographic fieldwork in China shows the same dehumanising trend.[10]

It is not only a very different language taught in these centralised schools. The entire curriculum is inflected with current jargon and propaganda slogans of China's growth, dynamism, wealth creation opportunities, and children quite young are expected to memorise and performatively reproduce many of the vague slogans of Xi Jinping Thought.

Even during school holidays, when children can briefly return to family, children don't know how to talk to parents, and parents dare not question what children say for fear of being innocently reported when the children return to school. To expect five-year-olds to negotiate two radically differing world views expects too much. This is much more than code switching between languages. These days, in village life when

ENGINEERS OF THE HUMAN SOUL

Partly this is because previous civilising missions, over several decades, largely failed to effectively make Tibetan language and culture irrelevant, obsolete. The intimate bonds within families are irreplaceable. It is not hard to notice how Han Chinese deal with each other instrumentally, transactionally; while Tibetan culture manifests greater priority for kindness, compassion, tolerance, flexibility.

The highest scoring young Tibetans could go on to further elite training, at one of the universities for minority nationalities, in capital cities of many provinces.

For decades, the slogans of ethnic policy emphasised bilingual education, and in the 1980s and more so in the 1990s it was possible to graduate from a Normal University teacher training college, as a professional teacher of Tibetan language, having done your studies almost entirely in Tibetan.

This shift was backed by the law of 2000 mandating standard Chinese as the common tongue everyone must learn and speak; reinforced by the dominance of Mandarin in wealth creation and popular culture.[13] So sociology fieldwork done early in the second decade of the 21st century took up a distinction, made clearly and straightforwardly in Chinese, between min kao min meaning “minority students who had some form of bilingual instruction prior to entering the university” and min kao han, meaning “minority students who had been educated through a Chinese-only curriculum prior to entering the university.” Within the min kao min, there were three distinct trajectories that had led to Tibetans enrolling in the elite Minority Nationalities University in Beijing (now officially Minzu University of China, MUC).

ELITE YET INFERIOR

152

consequences embedded in the attitudes of Han teachers and Han students, reinforced yearning to return to Tibet and to Tibetan culture.

Sociologist Yang Miaoyan in 2017 published her findings: "For most of the min kao min students and the inland Tibet school graduates, the four-year stay at MUC is not only a process of professional knowledge learning, but also a process of ethnic identity searching. In this specific context where ethnic cultures are appreciated and ethnic differences are stressed, the minority students are constantly reminded and made aware of their distinctive cultures and differences from other ethnic groups. These students are actively engaged in different kinds of activities, programs, and events, to learn their ethnic culture, as a way to search for their ethnicities, to empower themselves academically, or to make up for their past loss of Tibetan culture. In addition, they are consciously sending out messages on occasions to call for the attention and cooperation of their "ethnic compatriots," to develop the Tibetan culture and build a better future for the Tibetan regions.

"Different patterns of ethnic identity construction have been found among these students based on their tracks of schooling in pre-university education. For the Tibetan studies min kao min students, being a Tibetan means assuming an ethnic mission of promoting Tibetan language and culture. These students come from a diversity of Tibetan regions. The educational trajectory of these students reflects a strong link with Tibetan language and culture. Ever since primary school, they have taken Tibetan as a main subject. Their pathway at MUC is much clearer as they are expected to "assume teaching and research work in Tibetan language and literature," or "work in departments or offices of the party and government, news propaganda, culture and arts, and religious management." (Undergraduate Training Scheme, 2010 version) All the professional courses that they have taken at MUC are closely related to their Tibetan ethnicity.

"Hence, the four-year study at MUC has cultivated a deep understanding of their ethnic cultural heritage. Students with good academic performance are highly appreciated by their classmates and other ethnic compatriots because they are considered to have acquired rich knowledge of and solid understanding about Tibetan culture. The mentality that has been fostered during their education at MUC can be described as, "We are learning our own culture and it is relevant to our future work." These students are actively engaged in activities to promote the learning of Tibetan language and culture among their Tibetan compatriots. They are the main initiators, organizers, and coordinators of many Tibetan student activities, programs, and events at MUC. They are learning to be Tibetan cultural preservers and promoters at MUC.

"For the non-Tibetan studies min kao min students, being a Tibetan embodies having a different physical appearance, wearing different clothing, engaging in different religious practices, holding different cultural beliefs, and generally underachieving academically in Han-dominant settings. These students are all from TAR. Since they were secondary school students when the Lhasa Unrest occurred, their ethnic consciousness was awakened in Tibet. However, it is at MUC that their Tibetan identity has become increasingly salient and reinforced.

SUCCEED AND BE DAMNED

"These students have been assigned to classes with the Han Chinese. Their daily communications are mostly with the Han students, although their reported good friends are usually Tibetans. These students are constantly reminded of the distinctions between the Tibetans and non-Tibetans in their everyday communications and interactions. In the Han-dominant classes where Tibetan culture is marginalized and the value of the Tibetan language is downplayed, the lack of relevant cultural and linguistic capital has resulted in their generally poor academic performances.

"Differing from the Tibetan studies min kao min students, no positive link has yet been built between "Tibetan ethnicity" and "good academic performance." In contrast, Tibetan students with better academic performance may be discriminated against by their [Tibetan] ethnic compatriots, as good academic performance is easily interpreted as "acculturation or assimilation to Han Chinese culture." As a way to empower themselves and also to search for their own ethnic identities, these students select some courses that are related to Tibetan language and culture. Their general high scores in these courses may further confirm that the lack of cultural relevance is the main reason for their poor performance in other courses.

"Strong ethnic identity" and "poor academic performance" are two frequently made external categorizations assigned by the non-Tibetan teachers and students. At MUC, these students learn a different identity, that of Tibetans who are not capable of competing with the Han students. For most of the inland Tibet school graduates, being Tibetan means having a reflective awareness of their cultural and language loss due to their dislocated schooling and a determination to make up for the past by innovatively initiating, organizing, or participating in Tibetan cultural programs. Since many of them were selected among the best primary graduates in Tibet between the ages of twelve and fourteen to accept secondary education in inland cities in China, a different categorical identity as a Tibetan has been fostered in the alien context. Students reported uncomfortable

and unpleasant experiences of prejudice and being discriminated against during dislocated schooling, although they received a superior education and they appreciated their teachers' care.

"Since these students have stayed in inland longer, they generally know the Han Chinese culture better than the min kao min students do. Yet as the subject of Tibetan was downplayed inland education, these students' Tibetan was generally poorer than that of the min kao min students. They hold quite reflective attitudes concerning both Tibetan and Chinese culture. The identity as inland Tibet school graduates is entrenched in their self-ethnic identification. The dislocated inland schooling has not cultivated attachment to inland cities and nevertheless has activated strong nostalgia for Tibetan home regions. Being aware of their past losses in Tibetan language and culture, these students are innovatively establishing programs by integrating technology and the Internet to promote Tibetan culture and language, often with the coordinated efforts of the min kao min students. The inland Tibetan student network is very important for the formation of unity within the Tibetan group in Beijing. For most of the min kao han students, being a Tibetan is simply a symbolic identity that they sometimes utilize to gain preferential treatments. These students are the most assimilated. As they have been immersed in Chinese culturalism since they were small, they are quite estranged from the Tibetan culture. The majority of them neither speak nor write Tibetan." [15]

This grouping of Tibetans enrolled at Minzu University tells us the only Tibetan students not yearning to deepen their heart-to-heart, mind-to-mind connections with Tibetan culture are the min kao han, those who had a completely Han education throughout childhood. The other three groups had at least some embodied experience of the embrace of Tibetan culture and yearn for more.

This is the lesson well learned by the designers of the new Ethnic Policy 2.0, a brutal tearing apart of family at an early age is a necessity, now compulsory for all Tibetan families except the few living in towns where a centralised school is nearby.

There is much we can learn from understanding the aspirations and anxieties of the min kao min, drawn to the promise of modernity and wealth if they identify as Chinese, yet also experiencing racist disdain and jealousy from the Han who surround them; while at the same time yearning to reconnect to Tibetan family life, and a culture that values compassion more than competition.

The designers of the new assimilationist curriculum intensely studied the successes and failures of the various min kao min graduates from Neidi Xizangban hinterland schools, and from the minority nationality universities. They didn't need sociologists of education

to tell them the elaborate system for persuading bright young Tibetans to see themselves as Chinese had largely failed, especially in crucial moments such as 1987 or 2008, when it was not possible to juggle both identities.

Ethnic policy 2.0 is a complete reset, sweeping aside programs intended to incentivise and seduce Tibetans to become an elite, a new ruling class, once back in Tibet and in command but always under Han Chinese control. There are plenty of Tibetans in senior positions in the system of governmentality China imposes on Tibet, who do benefit in the short term, as bricks in the wall of Chinese power. They have privileged access to wealth creation, both salaried and corruptly. George Schaller writes of a ranking Tibetan cadre who, in his office, performs the right words on the necessity of protecting wildlife, whose SUV parked outside the office, is filled with just-slain antelopes. Woeser describes Tibetan cadres who expel the nuns who for centuries have maintained a hot spring as a refuge health spa for the chronically ill, turning it into an exclusive resort for the rich. Just two of countless examples.

Yet the Neidi Xizangban senior schools for Tibetans in the Chinese hinterlands, and the minzu daxue universities had a flip side: overt Han racist contempt, resentment and jealousy of the favoured treatment for Tibetans provided by the party-state's ethnic policy 1.0. Any Tibetan cadre or entrepreneur graduate of this system, once back in Tibet, always knew they were never fully trusted, and were kept under humiliating surveillance for any overt sign of still being Tibetan at heart; hence the many rules forbidding belief in Buddhism, doing kora circumambulation of sacred places etc etc.

For graduates of the Neidi Xizangban/minzu daxue system the balancing act was always precarious, as it was also for Buddhist teachers who found Han devotees flocking to them. How to be both Tibetan and Chinese, amid suspicion from both directions that you are selling out? It was always a juggle, always provisional, always a sacrifice requiring deferred fulfilment, for example the dream that when I reach cadre retirement age, with money in the bank, I can devote my old age to wholly Tibetan pursuits, a religious life of preparation for the next. Yearning postponed.

At crucial moments, as in 1987 and 2008, juggling was no longer possible, everyone had to take a side. Han suspicions were confirmed: when it comes to the crunch, you can't trust a Tibetan who has worked loyally for the party-state to stay loyal. At heart, Tibetans who have embodied experience of Tibetan family life and childhood, will revert to being first and foremost Tibetan, when circumstances make choosing a necessity. This is what generated ethnic policy 2.0.

FIVE THOUSAND YEARS OF EXCELLENT CHINESENESS

The assimilation campaign may struggle, because the textbook Pan Yue has written, which must be compulsorily digested by all minzu university students, is a grossly oversimplified cartoon caricature of not only Han-Tibetan relations, but of core Han history. Pan Yue is so determined to portray China's unbroken, globally unique 5000 years of continuity, he must erase, elide, slide past the many ruptures, catastrophes, invasions, conquests, civil wars and discontinuities between dynasties. Using the past to serve the present is a Chinese tradition, but when the past is packaged into a travesty, it is not only Tibetans who are impoverished, so too the Han, starting with the foundational but mythical Yellow Emperor, who is now presented as a historic personage.

Pan Yue's biggest obstacle is the Qing dynasty of alien Manchu rulers for 267 years, until in 1911, the dynasty collapsed. In the master narrative of official histories of all the dynasties, written and promoted by the official annalists of the court, the Qing are China's 25th dynasty, and all previous dynasties do have an officially approved history.

The custom is that the successor dynasty writes the history of its predecessor, which it overthrew. The present CCP dynasty has struggled for decades to write its authoritative history of the Qing. More than a century after the Qing collapse, there is still no official version of the rise and fall of the Manchu Qing nomadic horsemen who swept in from the north and conquered China, sweeping on into Tibet and Mongolia and the Islamic far west that then became Xinjiang.

Discerning a yangsi reincarnation of a great lama: Tibetan monastics and Qing court officials together
Inherent in any dominant discourse defining the Qing is a deep dilemma. It is essential that the mythos of unbroken continuity be perpetuated, which is achieved by denying the Manchu warriors on horseback were alien, insisting they were so dazzled by the magnificence of Chinese civilisation, they quickly became wholly Chinese in every way. This move requires contortions and total amnesia towards sources that complicate, notably the deep historical records of the Manchu, the Mongols and the Tibetans, all literate civilisations that have their own archives, their own version of history.

A major part of the CCP's problem is the imperative of emphasising continuity across successive regimes. The triumphant new regime could enact the dictum that history is written by the winners, but in China it is also important to emphasize those 5000 unbroken years. It may be true that the mysterious, impersonal heaven withdraws its mandate and a dynasty falls, then the heaven confers its mandate of legitimacy on the incoming dynasty, but continuity matters most of all. Tricky. Was 1911 an anti-Manchu revolution? Were the Manchu, backed by their all-Manchu armies, hated

foreigners toppled in 1911? If so, revolutions are justified, both in 1911 and 1949 and in the future? Despite the historic evidence, that is not a narrative the CCP regime wants. No scenario of China's future terrifies the CCP regime more than the possibility of a popular uprising against corruption and concentrations of wealth, that legitimates itself by claiming 1949 and 1911 as its lineage. Were the Manchu actually Chinese, in every way? Much more palatable.

This creates enormous difficulties for the Tibetans, obscuring the delicate diplomatic dance between Qing emperors and charismatic Tibetan lamas, over centuries, a game played not by modern concepts of game theory statecraft and geopolitics.[16]

FIRING THE MESSENGERS

Not only has the CCP regime struggled to find ways of fulfilling its dynastic obligation to write the official version of its predecessor, Pan Yue has been forced to sack the historians, and the prestigious institution that for decades has wrestled with the Qing paradox, and start over again with a new, safer pair of hands.

In 2023 a pro-CCP newspaper Sing Tao, under the headline "Failed to pass political review, 'History of Qing Dynasty' hits a snag" reported: "In 2002, the central government decided to compile 'History of Qing Dynasty', which was presided over by the National Qing History Compilation Committee.

"This is a major academic and cultural project, with thousands of experts and scholars participating, In September 2018, the draft of 'History of Qing Dynasty' was submitted to the central government.

"In 2019, the central government entrusted the newly established Institute of Chinese History of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences to review it and set up a review work leading group. In June this year [2023], CCTV reported that the review of the 106 volumes of 'History of Qing Dynasty' with a total of 32 million words has been completed after nearly two years.

"However, Chinese-American professor Zhang Taisu of Yale Law School recently saying, 'The complete manuscript of the Qing History Project did not pass the political review because it was 'too much influenced by the new Qing History abroad.'

"In 2019, the People's Daily, a Chinese Communist Party media outlet, published a long article criticizing the New Qing History for "introducing the theoretical variant of foreign historical nihilism in the field of Qing history research into China."

Commanding researchers to close their minds to multiple perspectives is chauvinist, reactionary. Some day, like the Cultural Revolution decade, this time will be seen as a period of rigid imposition, from above, of ideological narrow mindedness that stifled originality, complexity, real world recognition of how past and present actually are.

Right now, no-one dares say this, but a few brave voices are speaking up.

In Grief And In War: How Tibetans Have Always Stood With India In Her Darkest Hours

29 April 2025, [Tibet Rights Collective](#)

On April 20, 2025, a devastating terrorist attack in Pahalgam, Kashmir, claimed the lives of seven brave Indian soldiers, shaking the nation to its core. As India reels from this gut-wrenching tragedy, an outpouring of grief, solidarity, and prayers has swept across the country. Among those mourning deeply are members of the Tibetan community, who, once again, stand shoulder to shoulder with India in pain, as they have for decades - in every war, every attack, every tragedy. For over 60 years, India has been a sanctuary for Tibetans in exile. But more than just a place of refuge, India has become their second motherland. Time and again, Tibetans have shown that their loyalty to India is not born of diplomacy - it is born of love, history, and a shared destiny.

A History of Standing Together

When the Kargil War erupted in 1999, Tibetan soldiers of the Special Frontier Force (SFF), also known as "Establishment 22," fought bravely alongside Indian troops in the icy, treacherous mountains. Few know that Tibetan commandos played a pivotal role in the covert capture of strategic peaks, scaling cliffs under moonless skies to secure victory. Their silent sacrifices were acknowledged years later - not with medals, but with the quiet gratitude of a nation that knew who its true friends were.

Decades earlier, during the Bangladesh Liberation War of 1971, Tibetan soldiers were deployed to safeguard India's borders and execute daring missions under the Indian Army's command. In every conflict, these unsung heroes have risked their lives for the country that gave them shelter, proving their allegiance with blood and courage.

When terror struck Mumbai on 26/11 in 2008, Tibetans across India - from the snowy peaks of Ladakh to the serene settlements of Bylakuppe - held candlelight vigils, their flames flickering in the winter night. Monks chanted prayers, and communities raised funds for the victims' families. His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, spiritual leader of the Tibetan people, condemned the attack unequivocally, stating, "Violence can never be the solution to problems. I offer my prayers for those who lost their lives, and for the bereaved families."

The Dalai Lama's Steadfast Support for India

His Holiness the Dalai Lama has consistently expressed his deep respect and affection for India, often calling himself a "son of India." After the Pulwama terror

attack in 2019, he wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi:

"I offer my prayers for the brave personnel who have lost their lives. I would like to convey my heartfelt condolences to the families of those who have died and wish a speedy recovery to the injured."

The Tibetan spiritual leader has long noted that Tibetan culture, language, and Buddhism itself are deeply rooted in India's ancient traditions. In times of crisis, he has urged Tibetans to pray for India and stand united with its people, reinforcing the India-Tibet solidarity that binds these communities.

Today, We Mourn with India Again

The Pahalgam attack has reopened wounds that never fully heal. Yet, amid the horror, the Tibetan community stands firm in solidarity with India. In Dharamshala, monks clad in maroon robes chant Om Mani Padme Hum under flickering butter lamps, praying for the departed souls. Across Tibetan settlements, from Mundgod to Dehradun, prayer wheels spin, carrying wishes for peace. Tibetan youth are voicing their outrage and sorrow online, condemning violence and calling for unity.

This is not new. This is not strategy. This is sewa - heartfelt service - rooted in gratitude and a sense of kinship that transcends nationality. Alongside Tibetans, communities across India - from Punjab to Tamil Nadu - are uniting in grief and resolve, weaving a tapestry of solidarity that strengthens the nation.

A Bond Forged in Struggle and Sacrifice

Today, as India battles external threats and internal divisions, the Tibetan community reminds us of an older, quieter alliance - one built on moral clarity, shared values, and mutual respect. Their contributions, often unspoken, are a testament to the enduring India-Tibet history of standing together.

Let us remember that Tibetans are not guests anymore. They are family. And in times like these, family stands together - not with words alone, but with prayer, action, and sacrifice.

As the flames of terror try to shake India's spirit, the Tibetan community's unwavering love stands as a quiet beacon. It tells us: You are not alone. Let us honor these sacrifices by fostering peace and unity.

UN a playing field for China's rights repression policy?

29 April 2025, [Tibetan Review](#)

China has been flooding the UN, including its Human Rights Council in Geneva, with an army of fake NGOs to monitor and intimidate rights activists as well as to defend and heap glowing praises on Beijing's human rights record, reported the AFP Apr 28, citing a new investigation by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ) published Apr 28.

The investigation, dubbed as “China Targets”, involves 42 media organisations and delves into the various tactics Beijing uses to silence critics beyond its borders, the report said.

One segment of the investigation’s probe deals with China’s increasing offensive at the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva, with focus on the growing presence there of pro-China, government-organised non-governmental organisations, referred to, often derisively, as “Gongos”.

Such groups are found to crowd into council sessions to praise China and present glowing accounts of its actions that are largely at odds with UN and expert findings of widespread rights violations and repression.

For example, a bombshell report published by former UN rights chief Michelle Bachelet in 2022 for instance cited possible “crimes against humanity” against the Uyghur minority in Xinjiang (East Turkestan), the report pointed out.

Other more recent UN expert reports have highlighted the forced separation of Tibetan children from their families with a view to Sinicize them and the targeting of democracy activists in Hong Kong.

But when legitimate NGOs raise such issues at the council, Gongos often strive to disrupt the session and drown out their testimonies, the ICIJ report is cited as saying.

An ICIJ analysis of 106 NGOs from mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan registered with the UN has found that 59 had close links to the government in Beijing or the Chinese Communist Party.

The report points out that during a regular review of China’s rights record before the council last year, more than half of the NGOs granted a speaking slot were pro-government groups.

“It’s corrosive. It’s dishonest,” Michele Taylor, who served as US ambassador to the Human Rights Council from 2022 until January this year, was quoted as saying in the report.

She has decried a broader effort by Beijing “to obfuscate their own human rights violations and reshape the narrative”.

Increasingly, the Beijing-controlled groups are also found by the ICIJ report to be used to monitor and intimidate those planning to testify about alleged abuses by China.

A total of 15 activists and lawyers focused on rights issues in China spoken to by ICIJ have “described being surveilled or harassed by people suspected to be proxies for the Chinese government”.

Such incidents were stated to have occurred both inside the UN and elsewhere in Geneva.

On one occasion, four people claiming to work with a “Guangdong Human rights Association” tried to barge into a secret meeting a group of intimidated Chinese activists and dissidents had with the UN rights chief

Volker Turk in March last year, facilitated by a group called International Service for Human Rights (ISHR). Though turned away, the four waited outside to take photo of those who later came out of the meeting before leaving in a black car with tinted windows, the point being to intimidate the activists, the report said. Over a decade ago, activist Cao Shunli was detained as she attempted to travel to Geneva ahead of a China rights record review at the UN. She was held without charge until she fell gravely ill and died on Mar 14, 2014.

A decade later, Chinese rights defenders are participating in UN activities at record low numbers, the investigation has found.

At the same time, the number of Chinese NGOs registered with the UN has nearly doubled since 2018, the report is cited as saying.

As President Xi Jinping traveled the world, police swept peaceful protesters off the streets

29 April 2025, [ICIJ](#), Nicole Sadek, Carmen Molina Acosta and Sam Ellefson

In country after country, local authorities detained and silenced activists to shield the Chinese leader from dissent.

Pohan Wu, a Taiwanese exchange student in Paris, stood behind barricades on Boulevard Saint-Germain, his eyes trained on the road where Chinese President Xi Jinping’s motorcade would soon pass. It was March 26, 2019, and Xi was in the French capital to discuss trade with European leaders.

Pohan Wu shouts “Taiwan independence. No to ‘one country, two systems,’ ” in Chinese as a French National Gendarmerie officer attempts to subdue him in Paris on March 26, 2019. Video: Facebook

Armed with a teal cloth sign that read, “I am Taiwanese. I stand for Taiwan’s independence,” Wu planned to protest Beijing’s policy that asserts Taiwan is part of China. He waited patiently until he saw the president’s custom Hongqi, a luxury Chinese car, and unfolded his banner. Within seconds, a French military officer grabbed Wu and stripped him of the sign. In a video he posted online, Wu can be heard shouting “Taiwan independence” in Chinese as the officer attempts to subdue him.

“They didn’t give me any warning,” Wu told the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists. “They just tried to rip off my flag.”

French police held Wu in a van while Xi’s motorcade passed, he said, releasing him after more than an hour. According to Wu, officers told him that people in France can normally protest freely but they had been

given orders from “high-level officials” to prevent any demonstrations that day.

France’s Ministry of the Interior, which oversees the French Gendarmerie, a branch of the armed forces, did not respond to multiple requests for comment about the incident.

It was not the only time a policing body outside China’s borders suppressed voices critical of the Chinese Communist Party, according to a new global analysis by ICIJ. During at least seven of Xi’s 31 international trips between 2019 and 2024, local law enforcement infringed on dozens of protesters’ rights in order to shield the Chinese president from dissent, detaining or arresting activists, often for spurious reasons. Across the seven visits, these activists were silenced for reasons including requesting permission to protest, practicing a spiritual movement banned in China or, like Wu, peacefully holding a sign on a city street. Experts characterized the incidents described to ICIJ as police overreach.

The arrests and detentions give a window into how China wields its extensive political and economic power to pressure foreign governments and institutions to bend to its will.

ICIJ and its media partners collected protest-related photos, videos, police records and court filings, and interviewed more than a dozen activists who were detained during Xi’s trips. Almost all said they were subjected to extreme police responses, fabricated charges or preventive detentions. In several cases, law enforcement detained or arrested protesters after peaceful actions: for example, holding up a bag marked with the words “Free Tibet” and marching with a sign calling on Xi to “put an end to dictatorship.” Detentions identified by ICIJ ranged from one hour in a police van to more than two months in an immigration prison. In four countries, ICIJ found, police detained activists before they had a chance to protest. All seven Xi visits included incidents, detailed below, in which police violated protesters’ rights to freedom of assembly and expression under international standards. And there were likely many unreported incidents, said Maya Wang, the associate China director at Human Rights Watch. “Often the Chinese government themselves would be threatening people not to protest before you even see them in the news,” she said.

Wang and others warned that the arrests also deter people from protesting. “What the Chinese government wants is that when they visit these governments, nobody ever actually says anything,” she said.

These findings are part of China Targets, a cross-border investigation based on interviews with more than 100 targets of China’s transnational repression in 23 countries, as well as secret video and audio recordings of police interrogations and internal Chinese

government documents that together lay out China’s playbook for suppressing dissent worldwide.

Liu Pengyu, a spokesperson for the Chinese Embassy in the U.S., told ICIJ in a statement that “the notion of ‘transnational repression’ is a groundless accusation, fabricated by a handful of countries and organizations to slander China.”

“When it comes to international judicial cooperation, the Chinese government strictly abides by international law and the sovereignty of other countries,” he said.

The Chinese Embassy in France echoed those comments in a separate statement, labeling the investigation’s findings “fabricated lies,” adding that China “has always been committed to the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries.” Aside from France, Chinese embassies in countries where the detention incidents occurred did not respond to ICIJ and its partners’ requests for comment.

Since 2013, Xi has turned national security into a linchpin of his regime, cracking down on all forms of political dissent that “subvert state power.” During Xi’s foreign travels, his supporters, Chinese security officials and embassy-sponsored groups regularly prevent displays of resistance by blocking, drowning out, intimidating or even assaulting dissidents. Those efforts primarily target pro-democracy activists from mainland China and Hong Kong; Tibetan and Taiwanese independence advocates; practitioners of the anti-communist Falun Gong spiritual movement; and Uyghurs, a mostly Muslim Turkic ethnic group.

But the regime doesn’t act alone. In the cases ICIJ analyzed, the push to silence opponents of the Chinese Communist Party involved local law enforcement in host countries. International law enforcement collaboration is common, but China has exploited such partnerships to expand its global reach. When Xi visited Nepal in 2019, Chinese security had a direct role in the surveillance and detention of dissidents, a former senior Nepali police officer told ICIJ partner Online Khabar.

“If anybody actually said, ‘I’m going to kill Xi Jinping right this moment on this route,’ yes, the police should be doing something about that, no question,” Wang said. “But if somebody’s just saying ‘Free Tibet’ or ‘Free Uyghurs,’ standing on the side of the road, no way it would meet that kind of criteria for a restriction of people’s peaceful right to express themselves.”

It is alarming that fundamental rights like freedom to peacefully protest or freedom of speech is being threatened or sacrificed on the altar of economic gain.

— Audrye Wong, an assistant professor at the University of Southern California

The incidents occurred in both democratic and undemocratic countries that are party to the United Nations’ International Covenant on Civil and Political

Rights, a treaty requiring governments to respect certain human rights, including freedom of expression and the right to peaceful assembly. Most of the countries also have those rights enshrined in their constitutions.

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Despite those commitments, some countries are willing to put people’s rights “on the back burner” to foster good relations with China, according to Audrye Wong, an assistant professor

Brewing Discontent in Kathmandu: China’s Strategic Hand in Nepal’s Political Unrest?

29 April 2025, [Khabarhub](#)

In Kathmandu, a wave of protests has once again stirred the dust of Nepal’s political past. With chants for the return of former King Gyanendra and demands to re-establish Nepal as a Monarchy, the rallies have drawn thousands of frustrated citizens.

In an unusually sharp escalation, some rallies have turned confrontational, with demonstrators clashing with security forces and accusing the political elite of selling out Nepal’s sovereignty.

However, while the headlines focus on Nepal’s internal strife and dissatisfaction with democratic governance, a subtler, more strategic force may be at play, one that is tracing its roots back to Beijing.

Despite signing a Memorandum of Understanding with China under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in 2017, Nepal has seen virtually no progress on the ground.

In a telling display of overreach, Chinese diplomats have routinely attempted to rebrand unrelated infrastructure initiatives as BRI projects, forcing Nepal’s officials to repeatedly clarify the country’s actual standing in the framework.

This deliberate conflation by Chinese representatives has not just been a diplomatic faux pas but has become a part of Beijing’s larger strategic playbook.

Frustrated by Kathmandu’s growing reluctance to accept Chinese loans, especially after several feasibility studies exposed the economic risks of Beijing’s funding model, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) appears increasingly uneasy with Nepal’s sovereign choices.

These studies have highlighted how high-interest loans, short repayment terms, and excessive collateral demands, hallmarks of Chinese financing, threaten to drive Nepal into a debt trap.

The CCP’s refusal to offer grants instead of loans has further stalled projects, suggesting that China’s economic overtures are focused more towards

strategic gains than genuine development partnerships.

The Pokhara International Airport is a case in point. Funded by a Chinese loan of over \$215 million, the project has become a symbol of China's problematic investments: high in cost, low in returns, and laden with safety concerns. It also exemplifies how infrastructure diplomacy can morph into infrastructure dependency.

It is against this backdrop of economic anxiety and geopolitical tug-of-war that the pro-monarchy protests must be evaluated. Many of the groups organizing the current demonstrations lack the grassroots depth to sustain such mobilizations without external backing.

Their sudden resurgence and coordinated messaging, paired with narratives about "nationalist revival" and "foreign threats," are alarmingly consistent with the tactics used in influence operations elsewhere in the region.

As Nepal continues to push back, by demanding grants over loans, maintaining a cautious stance on BRI projects, and openly voicing economic and political concerns, Beijing may be turning to more indirect methods to sway Kathmandu's hand.

The sudden resurgence of mass pro-monarchy protests, many led by fringe groups with ambiguous funding sources and organizational capacity, is raising questions about external influences fanning domestic unrest.

China has historically used soft power, economic inducements, and when required, subtle coercion to extend its influence in neighbouring countries.

In the context of Nepal, where the institutional foundations of federalism remain fragile and public disillusionment with democratic governance is palpable, the conditions are ripe for the deployment of information manipulation, strategic narrative framing, and clandestine support to disruptive domestic actors.

While the reinstatement of the monarchy may not align directly with Beijing's core objectives, any erosion of Nepal's democratic institutions and the subsequent delegitimization of its republican leadership could nonetheless advance the CCP's broader strategic calculus in the region.

Add to this the nearly \$1.84 billion trade deficit Nepal holds with China, a figure likely to balloon further, and it becomes evident why Kathmandu has every reason to remain wary.

Increasing economic imbalance, coupled with Beijing's pressure to accept dubious financial terms, may push Nepal toward losing control over critical national assets.

For Nepal, the path forward must be one of careful calibration. The state must prioritize partnerships that respect its autonomy, address its economic

vulnerabilities without strings attached, and recognize its geopolitical sensitivities.

Aligning with likeminded nations and coalitions that advocate for a democratic and equitable South Asia could be Nepal's best bet to escape the tightening grip of Chinese influence.

Ultimately, if Kathmandu gives in to Beijing's pressure, either economic or political, it will end up risking much more than monetary loss.

It will risk compromising the very democratic foundation that it has strived to build since the monarchy's fall. And that is a price too steep for any sovereign nation to pay.

Placating China won't prevent it from invading Taiwan

28 April 2025, [The Japan Times](#), Dee Wu

Beijing will be deterred by strength, not political concessions from the island.

A survey from last November found that 34.7% of Taiwanese believed that being pro-United States would provoke China to invade Taiwan.

Although the number decreased by 6.5 points from 2023, these figures are alarming. They show that many Taiwanese people are misreading the conditions under which China would launch a major invasion, misperceiving the enemy as an irrational actor that defies realist logic.

There is no reason to believe that China would invade when the costs, namely the likelihood of a U.S. intervention, are high. This misperception poses significant risks to Taiwan's deterrence against a Chinese invasion.

To understand China more accurately, it is important to gain a deeper understanding of this misperception's origin, which stems from Beijing's propaganda 30 years ago during the 1995 to 1996 Taiwan Strait Crisis, as well as China's actual crisis behaviors back then. It is also essential to investigate how Taiwan's domestic politics has played a role in aggravating this misperception then and now.

China's crisis propaganda

The misperception that stronger Taiwan-U.S. ties would bring Taiwan to a war originates from China's propaganda during the 1995 to 1996 Taiwan Strait Crisis. It was the first time China framed Taiwan's efforts to forge closer Taiwan-U.S. relations as pursuing Taiwan independence, after which a major political-military coercion campaign was launched against Taiwan.

In response to Taiwan President Lee Teng-hui's speech at Cornell University, which was the first-ever U.S. visit by a sitting Taiwan president, Beijing launched an intensive propaganda campaign as they fired six missiles into the open sea north of Taiwan in July 1995.

In a rare move, Xinhua and the People's Daily published four joint commentaries criticizing Lee's U.S. visit as pursuing Taiwan independence.

Framing closer Taiwan-U.S. ties as pursuing Taiwan independence is closely linked to China's appeal to Chinese nationalism on Taiwan. As the U.S. support for Taiwan grew later during the crisis, Beijing began to criticize the Clinton administration's actions for being anti-Chinese. At the same time, the Chinese government told the Taiwanese that Taiwan would not be invaded, provided that the United States did not intervene in "Chinese" matters.

China's appeal to Chinese nationalism worked to a certain extent. Two of the four candidates running during the March 1996 presidential election denounced U.S. carrier battle groups' show of force near Taiwan, urging the United States to let the "Chinese" on both sides of the strait settle the internal matters. Nonetheless, their support for distancing Taiwan from the United States failed to win public support. Two United Daily News surveys conducted during the crisis found that less than 17% of people opposed a U.S. intervention in the event of a Chinese invasion. This explains why the two candidates collectively won only 25% of the popular vote.

China actions tell a story

Despite China's propaganda that peace would be ensured if cross-strait disputes were settled internally, Beijing's actual behaviors suggest otherwise. China escalated its coercion campaign when it anticipated few costs would be imposed by the United States — and de-escalated when Washington showed a stronger commitment to Taiwan's security.

The Clinton administration's early crisis goal of preventing a downward spiral in China-U.S. ties, which included downplaying China's threats against Taiwan, gave Chinese decision-makers the confidence to continue the escalation. In October 1995, a senior Chinese military officer asserted to recently retired Assistant Secretary of Defense Chas W. Freeman Jr. that U.S. leaders "care more about Los Angeles than they do about Taiwan." This remark strongly suggested that Beijing expected Washington to continue making conciliatory gestures if their coercion campaign persisted. Other U.S. officials who engaged with the Chinese government early in the crisis also perceived similar attitudes from their Chinese counterparts.

However, the Clinton administration's decision to show strength later in 1996, including the deployment of two carrier battle groups near the Taiwan Strait, forced China to de-escalate. U.S. support for Taiwan and its superior military capabilities convinced China that its post-1996 military planning and modernization efforts needed to consider the likelihood of a U.S. intervention.

Explaining China's actions

China's actions during the 1995 to 1996 Taiwan Strait Crisis were undoubtedly rational and followed a realist logic. Beijing escalated the coercion campaign when anticipating little cost imposed by the United States and de-escalated when otherwise. In fact, China's measured behavior was consistent with Geoffrey Blainey's findings in his seminal work "The Causes of War," which noted that most countries' decisions regarding the use of force follow a rational calculation: Countries would not launch a major invasion without a positive assessment of their relative strength, which encompasses military capabilities and the likelihood of third-party intervention.

Nonetheless, China attempted to convince Taiwan that its logic was different, stressing that peace would only be possible if Taiwan ceased pursuing independence — which, according to Beijing's definition, included pursuing closer political ties with the United States. Portraying its invasion of Taiwan as an irrational behavior driven by Chinese nationalism was part of China's cognitive warfare, only seeking to gain the upper hand in shaping Taiwan's political choices.

Taiwan's misperceptions

Thirty years apart, it is extremely alarming to observe nearly 20 percentage point growth in the number of Taiwanese buying into China's propaganda. Besides Beijing's frequent warnings not to "rely on the United States to seek independence" nowadays, Taiwan's domestic politics have played a crucial role in amplifying China's propaganda.

Whereas the two candidates that cautioned against stronger Taiwan-U.S. relations during the 1996 presidential election did not represent any major political party, Taiwan's largest opposition today, the Kuomintang, is the leading proponent against building stronger ties with the United States. This explains why the 2024 survey mentioned above found that 55.3% of KMT supporters agreed that being pro-U.S. would bring Taiwan to war, the highest among all major parties' supporters. Meanwhile, only 12.5% of the ruling Democratic Progressive Party supporters believed so.

For instance, in response to the ruling DPP's pledge to raise defense spending to over 3% of Taiwan's gross domestic product, the KMT's vice presidential candidate in the 2024 election contended that being subservient to Washington without a cross-strait rapprochement would make Taiwan the next Ukraine. Likewise, a KMT lawmaker asserted that the Lai Ching-te administration is making mistakes in its security policy, arguing that Taiwan should prioritize cross-strait rapprochement instead of relying on the United States. Finally, another KMT official called U.S. Sen. Dan Sullivan's criticisms about the KMT-controlled legislature's defense budget cut an intervention in Taiwan's domestic affairs.

Clearly, many in Taiwan's largest opposition are not concerned that a potential downturn in Taiwan-U.S. ties, stemming from the question of Taiwan's commitment to its self defense, would weaken Taiwan's deterrence against China.

These examples showed that Taiwan's evolving political landscape played a crucial role in making China's propaganda more prevalent 30 years after its origin, leading to a growing number of Taiwanese misperceiving China's logic tree to use force.

The most important lesson from the 1995 to 1996 Taiwan Strait Crisis is that there is no such thing as Chinese exceptionalism when it comes to launching a major invasion. Understanding China requires nothing more than common sense — it will be deterred from launching an invasion when its adversaries, including third-party actors, especially the United States, demonstrate strength. Simply put, China wants Taiwan to believe otherwise because it grants Beijing the leverage to coerce Taiwan.

A Pakistan hitch on road to normalizing Sino-India ties?

27 April 2025, [Tibetan Review](#)

As India and China marked progress in normalizing bilateral ties with the announcement of the resumption of the Kailash-Mansarovar pilgrimage in western Tibet for Indian believers from Jun 30 after a gap of nearly five years, the latter is accused of helping Pakistan to water down the UN Security Council (UNSC) resolution condemning the gruesome terrorist gunning down of 26 tourists in Kashmir on Apr 22.

The four terrorists who carried out the selective killing of the tourists, including one from Nepal, near Pahalgam were stated to consist of three Pakistani and one local terrorists. The Resistance Front (TRF), a Lashkar-e-Taiba proxy backed by Pakistan's military intelligence apparatus, has reportedly claimed responsibility for the attack.

Pakistan, a non-permanent member of the UNSC, united with the other 14 member nations to vehemently denounce the Pahalgam attack in an Apr 25 resolution. However, the level of the condemnation was influenced by discussions with China aimed at softening the language used, reported The Times of India Apr 27.

The report noted that while Pakistan has firmly denied any involvement in the deadly incident, its previous statements had only conveyed concern over the tragic loss of life.

On Apr 27, China backed its close ally Pakistan in "safeguarding its sovereignty and security interests", with foreign minister Wang Yi calling on New Delhi and Islamabad to exercise restraint in the aftermath of the terror attack in Pahalgam, reported hindustantimes.com.

During a phone call with his Pakistani counterpart Ishaq Dar, Wang said China is closely following developments after the terror attack and backs an "impartial investigation" into the incident, the report said, citing a readout from China's foreign ministry.

With regard to the substance of the UNSC resolution, the report said it emphasized the importance of global cooperation to ensure that those responsible for the "reprehensible act of terrorism" are brought to justice. However, in contrast with the UNSC's earlier resolution following the 2019 Pulwama attack (also in Kashmir), which called for all nations to collaborate with the "government of India," the Apr 25 statement war markedly neutral, referencing "all relevant authorities" without specifying India.

The report said efforts by Pakistan and China were evident in their attempts to adjust the phrasing of the UNSC statement.

China has in the past regularly prevented the UNSC from sanctioning Pakistan-based terrorists for attacks in India by effectively vetoing any such move.

Also, Pakistan has boasted its iron-clad ties with all-weather-friend China while reacting to India's current retaliatory move to suspend the Indus Waters Treaty with it of 1960, which governs the use of water from six rivers in the Indus basin. The river system is a crucial life-line for Pakistan.

In the Pulwama attack on Feb 14 2019, a convoy of vehicles carrying Indian security personnel on the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway was attacked by a vehicle-borne suicide bomber at Lethapora in the Pulwama district of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir. The attack killed 40 Central Reserve Police Force personnel as well as the perpetrator — Adil Ahmad Dar — who was a local Kashmiri youth from the Pulwama district. The responsibility for the attack was claimed by the Pakistan-based Islamist terrorist group Jaish-e-Mohammed.

As Dalai Lama approaches 90, Tibetans weigh future without Buddhist leader

27 April 2025, [HongKong FP](#)

For the charismatic Nobel Peace Prize-winning leader, his landmark birthday will be a time to encourage people to plan for an eventual future without him and address whether there will be another Dalai Lama.

When the Dalai Lama turns 90 in July, the Buddhist monk, who for many exiled Tibetans personifies dreams of a free homeland, will ask if they want a successor.

For the charismatic Nobel Peace Prize-winning leader, his landmark birthday will be a time to encourage people to plan for an eventual future without him and address whether there will be another Dalai Lama.

The answer, at least according to his translator of nearly four decades, is clear: yes.

"I know for a fact that he has received petitions from across the Tibetan Buddhism communities, including some from inside Tibet," said Thupten Jinpa, 66, a Buddhist scholar who helped produce the leader's latest book, "Voice for the Voiceless".

Jinpa believes the post, which he likens to a Buddhist "papal institution" not only for Tibet but also encompassing the Himalayan regions of India, Bhutan and Nepal, as well as Mongolia and some Russian republics, will continue.

"My hope is that before his birthday, July 6, he will issue a final statement," Jinpa said, speaking in India, where the Dalai Lama has been based since fleeing into exile in 1959.

"If my guess is right, and he says that the continuity of the institution will remain, that means then there will be a new Dalai Lama."

Many exiled Tibetans fear China will name a successor to bolster control over a land it poured troops into in 1950.

'Almost unthinkable'

The current Dalai Lama was identified in 1936 when, aged two, he passed a test by pointing to objects that had belonged to the post's previous occupier.

He was hailed as the 14th reincarnation of the Dalai Lama, a role that stretches back more than 600 years.

"One constant in everybody's life has been the presence of the Dalai Lama," said Jinpa, who fled Tibet with his parents as a baby, around the same time the Dalai Lama escaped.

If there is to be a 15th, the Dalai Lama has said he will "leave clear written instructions" on what will happen after his death.

Jinpa, who trained as a monk before completing his doctorate at the University of Cambridge, said that a foundational principle of Buddhism was the contemplation of impermanence.

"Anything that comes into being will come to an end," he said. "Where there is birth, there will be death."

But he said the Dalai Lama — who has said he wants to live until he is 113 — also wants followers to confront a future, someday, without him.

"The idea of a world without him is almost unthinkable," Jinpa said. "But that will happen, and His Holiness has himself been very explicit in making sure that people are thinking about it."

'Symbol of a nation'

Jinpa said that plans for the future had long been in progress.

The Dalai Lama stepped down as his people's political head in 2011, passing the baton of secular power to a government chosen democratically by 130,000 Tibetans around the world.

"He has already prepared the formal political structure for carrying on the struggles of the Tibetan cause beyond his lifetime," Jinpa said.

"But one of the things that he can't just transfer to an elected body... is the moral authority, and his status as the symbol of a nation, and a symbol of the aspiration of the Tibetan people," he added.

"This is why the continuity of the Dalai Lama institution becomes important."

China, which says Tibet is an integral part of the country, insists the Dalai Lama "has no right to represent the Tibetan people".

Jinpa said the Dalai Lama is only advocating for greater Tibetan autonomy.

"If we were asking for independence, it's a completely different thing," he said.

'People's heart'

The Dalai Lama has already said that if there "is a consensus that the Dalai Lama institution should continue", then the Office of the Dalai Lama — the Gaden Phodrang Trust in India's Himalayan hill town of McLeod Ganj — would hold the responsibility for the recognition of the next leader.

He has also made it clear that any successor would by necessity be "born in the free world".

In 1995, Beijing selected its own child as the Panchen Lama, another influential Tibetan religious figure, and detained a Dalai Lama-recognised six-year-old, described by rights groups as the world's youngest political prisoner.

"The Chinese will choose another 'Dalai Lama', that's for sure," Jinpa said. "It will be ridiculous, but they will do it."

But he is confident that Tibetans will not acknowledge whoever Beijing selects.

"They can suppress, they can ban, they can force," said Jinpa, noting that Beijing forbids the Dalai Lama's photograph in Tibet.

"But you can never change people's heart. What's in the heart belongs to the individual, and the loyalty will always be to this Dalai Lama, and whoever is going to be chosen through the traditional system."

India must address Chinese espionage among Tibetan diaspora

27 April 2025, [The Sunday Guardian](#), Khedroob Thondup

Chinese intelligence agencies employ various methods to monitor and control Tibetan activists and dissidents abroad.

The Tibetan diaspora represents a community of profound cultural and spiritual significance, whose members often find refuge in India while maintaining aspirations for their homeland's autonomy. However, this community has increasingly found itself as a target of Chinese intelligence operations aimed at suppressing dissent, gathering sensitive information,

and undermining efforts for Tibetan self-determination.

While India's intelligence agencies have traditionally focused their resources on countering external threats at national borders, the covert activities of Chinese operatives among the Tibetan diaspora warrant more active engagement. Here's why India's intelligence apparatus should recalibrate its focus and strategies. The Tibetan diaspora holds a unique geopolitical position within India. India is home to the Tibetan Government-in-Exile, headquartered in Dharamshala, which serves as a powerful symbol of resistance against Chinese authoritarian policies. This makes India a focal point in the broader struggle for Tibetan autonomy—an issue that China views as a direct threat to its territorial integrity.

Chinese intelligence agencies have been known to employ various methods, including surveillance, infiltration, and disinformation campaigns, to monitor and control Tibetan activists and dissidents abroad. Such activities not only erode the autonomy of the Tibetan movement but also represent a direct affront to India's sovereignty, as they exploit Indian soil to advance China's agenda.

1. The activities of Chinese intelligence among the Tibetan diaspora could compromise India's internal security by fostering mistrust, collecting sensitive information, and undermining local governance.

2. Supporting the Tibetan community more actively would solidify India's position as a defender of human rights and autonomy, which could strengthen India's relations with global democracies opposed to Chinese authoritarianism.

3. Addressing espionage and subversion early prevents escalation. Covert activities left unchecked can snowball into broader regional instability.

India's intelligence agencies can employ various measures to counteract Chinese espionage:

Building trust and collaboration with Tibetan activists and community leaders can help intelligence agencies gain insight into Chinese tactics.

Monitoring communication networks and social platforms for disinformation campaigns that target Tibetan activists.

Partnering with international intelligence agencies that have experience in countering Chinese espionage can provide valuable insights and resources.

India is at a critical juncture where proactive intelligence efforts can not only safeguard its sovereignty but also assert its leadership role in advocating for justice and human rights. Countering Chinese intelligence activities among the Tibetan diaspora is not just a matter of security—it is a moral imperative in a broader geopolitical contest for influence and autonomy. The time for decisive action is now.

Why China-Taiwan Relations Are Getting So Tense

26 April 2025, [TIME](#), Ian Bremmer

Since the inaugurations of William Lai as Taiwan's President in May 2024 and Donald Trump as U.S. President in January, Beijing has been on edge. Will Lai take provocative actions that demand a response? And what is Trump's attitude toward Taiwan and its fight to remain outside China's orbit?

The answers have proved complicated. In the early days of his presidency, Lai carefully avoided riling Beijing unnecessarily. The strength of Taiwan's economy last year appeared to relieve him of any political need to rally his nationalist base with fist-shaking actions or rhetoric toward the mainland. But his Democratic Progressive Party lacks a parliamentary majority, and he can't be sure the Trump Administration has his back. Whatever his political intent, Lai has become more strident on cross-Taiwan Strait questions in recent weeks.

On March 13, Lai delivered a speech in which he proposed 17 steps Taiwan should take to counter threats posed by China and its bid to infiltrate his government and Taiwanese society. Predictably, Beijing one-upped him, with 18 pieces of official commentary via state media that attacked Lai and his plans. Two weeks later, he was denounced as a "danger maker" and China's People's Liberation Army released propaganda videos simulating a blockade of the self-ruled island. If that was too subtle, China's navy conducted joint exercises around Taiwan on April 1 to simulate an "assault on maritime and ground targets, and a blockade on key areas and sea lanes," according to a PLA official. The Chinese coast guard deployed vessels in a circumnavigation patrol around Taiwan.

We've seen similar moves and countermoves in the waters between China and Taiwan many times before. But this time both sides are trying to decipher what the mercurial Trump really thinks.

For now, Taiwan needs to safeguard its economy against Trump's tariff pressures. Lai's negotiators held their first trade talks with the White House on April 11, shortly after Bloomberg published an op-ed by Lai that proposed a reciprocal zero-tariff regime with the U.S. and an increase in purchases and investments in the U.S. Lai then called on April 14 for a "Taiwan plus the U.S." framework to help Taiwanese companies relocate and expand into the American market.

Though we don't yet know his tariff intentions toward Taiwan, Trump is extremely unlikely to cut it loose, at least in the near term. Yes, he's made clear his flexibility on territorial integrity (see Greenland/Denmark, Panama, and even Canada). If he won't take on costs and risks to help Ukraine repel Russian invaders, how confident can Taiwan be that

Trump will commit U.S. troops and taxpayer funds to defend an “ally” thousands of miles from American shores?

At the same time, Trump has filled his Cabinet with China hawks, and if there’s one U.S. ally most every Republican in Washington wants to defend, it’s Taiwan against China. Beijing knows a full-scale invasion would risk direct war with the U.S., a destructive gamble for China’s already wobbly economy at a time when Trump has added 145% tariffs to its burdens.

For China’s leaders, it’s much safer to hold off on a full-scale invasion until the military balance more decisively favors its forces, its economy is on more solid footing, and the U.S. is led by a more predictable President. The real risk is that China will test U.S. resolve and probe Trump’s responses with incremental escalations of pressure on Taiwan, none big enough on its own to create a crisis.

Would it were that simple. As U.S.-China relations further break down, the shutting down of key lines of communication between Washington and Beijing could enable any accident or miscalculation to escalate into a full-blown military crisis that both would much prefer to avoid.

China’s conciliatory comments are purely cosmetic

25 April 2025, [The Tribune](#), Jayadeva Ranade

The absence of warmth in India-China relations was evident in Xi Jinping not sending a message on the terrorist attack on innocent Indian tourists in Pahalgam.

IN recent months, China has been making seemingly conciliatory comments in an apparent bid for free access to India's market. Chinese President Xi Jinping sent congratulatory messages to the Indian President and Prime Minister on April 1, on the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations, which were cosmetic. China's Ambassador to India recently spoke of lowering tariffs to promote Indian exports to China, but the obstacles also include China's non-tariff trade barriers and the thicket of China's confidential regulations which selectively restrict trade.

Significantly, Xi Jinping's recent tour to Vietnam, Malaysia and Cambodia from April 14 to 18, focussed on Asia and sought to highlight the importance China gives to developing good ties with neighbours. There was emphasis on promoting the "community with a shared future in the new era as a new starting point", which was included in the individual joint statements. The absence of warmth in India-China relations was evident in Xi Jinping not sending a message on the terrorist attack on innocent Indian tourists in Pahalgam. Only the Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson and China's Ambassador to India expressed condolences.

In fact, the Chinese Communist Party's official newspaper People's Daily too did not publish any report at least till April 24. It published that Pakistan had expressed condolences. This is in stark contrast to the messages pouring in from others, including the US and Russian presidents.

A People's Daily article disclosed that the 'Central Conference on Neighbourhood Diplomacy', held on April 8-9 in Beijing, for the first time "proposed an Asian security model of sharing danger and security, seeking common ground while reserving differences, and dialogue and consultation." It said this will be based on China and its neighbours "jointly protecting security."

There were no references to India in the plethora of articles on China's neighbourhood policy, revealing Beijing's singular focus on economic interaction with India. Chinese leaders have notably avoided any mention of the clashes that took place between India and China in 2020 or the tensions that continue along the 4,057-km Line of Actual Control (LAC).

Meanwhile, reports show that China continues its military build-up across the Line of Actual Control and is constructing border defences, communication infrastructure, airports, etc. On March 21, a Henan-based Chinese think tank published an article captioned 'During the military reforms, the Tibet Military District, Joint Logistics Support Force, and the Tibet Corps of the Armed Police were all upgraded'. It cited a report published by China's prestigious National Defense University titled: '2024 Border Defense Construction Research Report'. The report said the Tibet Military District, the Joint Logistics Support Force and the Tibet Corps of the Armed Police had been upgraded to comprehensively enhance high-altitude combat capabilities and that their overall combat effectiveness of border defense had increased by 43.7 per cent. It said that after the upgrade of the Tibet Military District to a full Theatre command level, the Tibet Military District had greater decision-making power and resource allocation capabilities.

It disclosed that the upgraded Tibet Military District now "oversees five high-altitude mechanized brigades, two mountain brigades, one special operations brigade, and multiple support units, representing a 28.5% increase in troop strength." A Special Operations Brigade had been newly established and equipped with the latest high-altitude special gear and high-precision strike weapons. The report added that there had been a qualitative leap in weapons and equipment and new systems tailored for high-altitude combat, including upgraded Type 15 light tanks, highland versions of the Z-20 helicopter and long-range rocket systems suited for cold conditions. It said the Tibet Detachment of the Joint Logistics Support Force was also upgraded from a full division level to a

deputy corps level, and in early 2025, the upgraded detachment increased its personnel by 1,200.

The article also revealed that the personnel strength of the Tibet Corps of the Armed Police was increased by 32 per cent to a deputy corps level, overseeing six detachments, which now cover all seven prefecture-level cities in Tibet. It noted that by early 2025, the Corps had achieved 85 per cent modernisation, introduced a new highland unmanned reconnaissance system, expanded border patrol coverage by 3.7 times and greatly enhanced control over border areas. Saying that shifting geopolitics was the reason for the upgrade, it explained: "Tibet borders several countries and serves as a crucial defensive line in China's southwest. In recent years, the surrounding region has seen increasingly complex dynamics and new security challenges." With the upgradation, "a multidimensional and comprehensive border defense system has been formed — capable of effectively responding to all kinds of security threats."

It quoted a routine Chinese Defence Ministry press briefing of 2024, which stated: "Strengthening military forces in the Tibet region is a necessary measure to safeguard national sovereignty and territorial integrity." It added that the upgradation of military forces in Tibet sends a clear signal: China has both the resolve and capacity to defend every inch of its southwestern border. The report cited military analysts as noting that "China's comprehensive military upgrade in Tibet indicates a more proactive and assertive defensive posture in the plateau border regions." The article also revealed that in early 2025, China's Central Military Commission issued special instructions for strengthening the military in Tibet: "Further deepen reform achievements, enhance joint combat capabilities of the three forces, and provide strong guarantees for safeguarding national sovereignty, security, and development interests."

It is apparent from China's official media reporting on India and the developments along the LAC that the conciliatory statements by Chinese leaders are only intended to gain access to India's market. The tariff war with the US makes it imperative for China to seek new markets and India is the largest untapped market in the Indo-Pacific.

A major potential challenge on the horizon is the issue of the XIVth Dalai Lama's reincarnation. The military preparations being undertaken by China's Central Military Commission in 2025 indicate that China intends to retain the option of applying military pressure against India in the not too distant future.

China's game plan to sinicize Buddhism in Tibet exposed

25 April 2025, [The Statesman](#)

The Higher Buddhist Institute of the Tibetan Department in Beijing was initiated by the late 10th Panchen Lama and President of the Buddhist Association of China (BAC), Zhao Puchu, with the approval of the CPC Central Committee and the State Council, on September 1, 1987 in Xihuang Monastery in Beijing. The 10th Panchen Lama personally served as the first President, and Zhao Puchu, then President of the BAC, was the Senior Advisor.

he establishment of the Higher Buddhist Institute through the guidance of Communist Party of China (CPC) marks a fundamental change in the way of cultivating senior Tibetan Buddhist talents, and has opened a new chapter in the history of Modern Tibetan Buddhist education, to allow only that degree of freedom of religious belief which would be compatible with "complete acceptance of communism in China".

The Higher Buddhist Institute of the Tibetan Department in Beijing was initiated by the late 10th Panchen Lama and President of the Buddhist Association of China (BAC), Zhao Puchu, with the approval of the CPC Central Committee and the State Council, on September 1, 1987 in Xihuang Monastery in Beijing. The 10th Panchen Lama personally served as the first President, and Zhao Puchu, then President of the BAC, was the Senior Advisor.

This Institute is the only full-time institution across China of higher learning with the qualification of 'Tuorangpa' senior academic title (doctorate) training and awarding with the goal of cultivating high-quality monks. The current abbot is the 6th Lobsang Jigme Thubten Chokyi Nyima Living Buddha.

Since the establishment and implementation of the three-level academic title system of Tibetan Buddhism in 2004, the college has awarded a total of 363 senior titles and 150 intermediate titles of 'Zhiranpa'.

The college plans to enroll 39 students in the 2025 senior title class, including 13 Gelugpa, 13 Sakya and 13 Bon Pothroughout China. The enrollment targets of this institute are the winners of the intermediate title of 'Zhiranpa' of the Tibetan Department of Buddhism and the monks of the temple with high comprehensive quality.

Courses to be taught are mainly 'Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era', as well as courses such as 'Introduction to the Theoretical System of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics', 'Modern Chinese History' and 'Constitution and Legal Foundation'. Further, students have to carry out on-site teaching in Beijing and surrounding patriotic education bases, cultural relics

and historic sites, museums, modern enterprises and other places to participate in academic exchange meetings such as doctrinal interpretation seminars and Huangsi forums, and carry out exchanges with domestic and foreign religious schools and academic institutions.

Chinese State through the BAC, which is a key instrument in the CPC's strategy to assimilate and transform Tibetan Buddhism, particularly in relation to the search for and recognition of reincarnate lamas intends to destroy Tibetan Buddhism's unique qualities and to retain it as a 'tool of convenience' in the hands of Chinese State. This is called Sinification. Sinification is thus linked to the future of Tibetan Buddhism. In this connection, China is attempting to create a false narrative in terms of its history, as with China's political claim over Tibet, which it says goes back in history.

According to a report by the Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD), China's State Administration for Religious Affairs (SARA) issued a revised version of the 'Measures for the Administration of Tibetan Buddhist Temples'.

This was adopted in September 2024 and came into force in January, significantly expanding state control over Tibetan religious practice by embedding political mandates into Tibetan religious administration. These measures are part of the broader state efforts to assimilate Tibetan Buddhism, religious and cultural identity into the dominant Han identity, thereby undermining Article 36 of China's 1982 Constitution. The Chinese State has also been accused of escalating its suppression of religious freedom in Tibet in the last 15 years. Chinese President Xi Jinping's administration through coercive 'patriotic education' campaigns designed to instill loyalty, strict control over monastic institutions of learning and widespread arbitrary arrests and detentions has tightened its grip. Significantly, BAC is playing a prominent role in Sinicizing Tibetan Buddhism. BAC is a tool for implementing sinicization campaigns and advancing CPC's political agenda through United Front Work Department (UFWD) along with State Administration for Religious Affairs (SARA).

'Cross-strait shadows: Inside the Chinese influence campaign against Taiwan (Part III)

25 April 2025, [RFA](#), Zhuang Jing, Dong Zhe and Alan Lu
What appears to be a homegrown Taiwan show is in fact part of Beijing's sophisticated influence operation. Marketed as a cross-strait collaboration, "Taiwan's Voice" presents itself as a local commentary platform. But behind the familiar hosts and studio lies a deeper link to China's state-run media.

Over the past year, the Asia Fact Check Lab has traced how content produced in Taiwan, yet aligned with Chinese narratives, is seeping into the island's media landscape through what it calls the "Fujian Network." With slick production and recognizable faces, these shows blur the line between domestic discourse and foreign influence – part of Beijing's quiet push to shape public opinion in Taiwan.

What is 'Taiwan's Voice'?

The show "Taiwan's voice," or "寶島，報到!" in Chinese, is marketed as an original cross-strait news and commentary program designed to "speak through borrowed mouths," by inviting Taiwan's pan-blue "opinion leaders" to serve as guest commentators and enhance the effectiveness of messaging directed at Taiwan.

The show – launched in 2019 – is operated by "Straits TV," a subsidiary of China's Fujian Broadcasting and Television Group.

According to a news release from the Fujian Provincial Radio and Television Bureau, the program was recognized as a "Model Case of Media Integration in Fujian Province in 2021" and recommended for commendation by China's National Radio and Television Administration.

The program branded itself as a cross-strait collaboration "jointly produced by news teams from both sides," without mentioning which Taiwanese team was actually working with Straits TV.

Despite this framing, the program prominently features pro-China Taiwanese commentators and content crafted for Chinese audiences, frequently using mainland Chinese terminology.

Who actually produces the show?

While monitoring broadcasts, AFCL noticed a detail: in one episode, a guest of the show, New Party Taipei City councilor Hou Han-ting, thanks live viewers at the start and mentions he had just come from a budget review session at the city council and took a taxi to the studio. This suggests the recording took place in Taiwan.

In another video, the guest host interacted with off-screen staff, confirming a cooperative relationship between Straits TV and Chung T'ien Television, or CTiTV, a Taipei-based broadcaster.

Interviews with media insiders later confirmed the program is recorded in a studio operated by CTiTV in Taipei.

CTiTV, owned by the pro-China Want Want Group, is known for promoting Beijing-friendly narratives. In 2020, Taiwan's media regulator revoked its license over repeated disinformation and biased reporting.

CTiTV denied the allegations and accused regulators of bias, but the channel reportedly failed to explain the nature of its China-related content and collaborations. Since then, the broadcaster transitioned to digital platforms to continue its operations, streaming its

content online via its YouTube channel and through its dedicated mobile app.

Interviews and content comparisons confirm at least a practical partnership between CTiTV and Straits TV. This includes content sharing and the provision of production facilities and personnel, jointly producing the politically focused program “Taiwan’s Voice.”

When questioned about whether the scripts originated from China, a CTiTV employee denied the claim, saying that the producers choose the topics and the guests are responsible for preparing their own scripts.

Two CTiTV employees, speaking on condition of anonymity, told AFCL they did not believe Chinese authorities had directly intervened in the broadcaster’s operations.

However, they pointed to Want Want Group chairman Tsai Eng-meng’s pro-China stance, suggesting that CTiTV’s editorial direction may already be influenced by Tsai in ways that align with Beijing’s narrative.

CTiTV has not responded to AFCL’s inquiries.

Legal gray zone

While Taiwanese law prohibits unauthorized political collaboration between local organizations and Chinese entities, enforcement remains a challenge.

Under the current law, such collaborations must be approved by the relevant authority – yet what constitutes “political content” or “cooperation” remains vague.

The Mainland Affairs Council, a Taiwanese administrative agency that oversees cross-strait relations policy targeting mainland China, Hong Kong and Macau, confirmed to AFCL that any cross-strait political co-productions require pre-approval.

But in practice, responsibility is diffused among various agencies such as the Ministry of Culture, the National Communications Commission, or NCC, and the Ministry of Digital Affairs.

National Taiwan University’s journalism professor Hung Chen-ling noted that while such activities may breach the law, penalties are weak.

“Even if someone reports a violation, the fine might be just a few thousand dollars. For those involved, the benefits often outweigh the cost,” she said.

Another hurdle is the challenge of regulating cross-strait media co-productions in the digital era. While cable broadcasts in Taiwan are subject to licensing and oversight, these mechanisms have limited reach online.

Although traditional television content must comply with established regulations, the rise of digital platforms and internet-native programming has introduced enforcement gaps.

As more broadcasters pivot to online distribution, it becomes harder for authorities to monitor content – potentially enabling foreign-affiliated media to reach Taiwanese audiences with less regulatory scrutiny.

Nest of Spies’?: The stories around Kalimpong as nodal point for Tibet, India and China

25 April 2025, [The Kathmandu Post](#), Prem Poddar

Kalimpong serves as a site for unpacking the anxieties around China-India enmeshment.

China watchers in North Block or Langley would probably be nonplussed by a book on China and India that focuses, not on the great arid scapes of Galwan or the high reaches above Tawang, but upon a mofussil town stretched along a ridge that points northwards towards the Chumbi Valley which itself swings southwards like a giant axe-head menacing the Indian chicken’s neck.

Last month, Kalimpong mourned the passing of its famous citizen, Gyalo Thondup, elder brother of the Dalai Lama. Thondup memorably transcribed *The Noodle Maker of Kalimpong* after living there with his Chinese wife Di Kyi Dolkar (née Zhu Dan) since the 1950s.

What was more captivating about his life and times there was the historic location of Kalimpong itself that propelled the narration of his intense involvement as the go-to intermediary for dealing with Beijing, Washington, Tokyo, Delhi, London and other European capitals on the Tibet Question on behalf of the Tibetan Dharamshala government-in-exile. As the Civil War (fought intermittently between 1927 until Communist victory on mainland China in 1949) raged on in China, Thondup had the backing and blessings of the Guomindang generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek who went on to found Taiwan, when the revolutionary regime under Chairman Mao Zedong took over mainland China in 1949.

Kalimpong itself sits not far from the border of Jelep-La, that “tranquil pass” that derives its name from the Tibetan *dzi li la*, the favoured contact and crossing point at 14,390 feet between Tibet and the eastern Himalayas where the great mule trains of the Tibetan clans Pangdatsang, Reting, and Sadutsang thundered their way to Lhasa. Jelep-La now stands militarised and forbidden for the nosy while the other, more arduous mountain crossing of Nathu-La is a four-hour drive on jeeps from the Sikkim capital Gangtok through the picturesque Tsongmo Lake to a highly battle-ready border, redolent with the smell of diesel and jalebis.

Functioning as the geopolitical coordinates for the Tibetan cause much before the Chinese takeover of Tibet, Kalimpong became the ‘Harbour of Tibet’, developing into the southern terminus of a flourishing Indo-Tibetan trade with both central and outer Tibet, oozing into China. Tibet also stood for China then, as manufactured luxury goods (knocked down cars, Rolexes and Parker fountain pens) as well as piece goods made their way up on mule trains that returned with yak wool and Chinese silver dollars. Fortunes

were here for the making, attracting merchants and adventurers who migrated from Rajasthan, North-western India and Kathmandu. Traders also settled and circuited back and forth from Kham (part of 'ethnographic' or 'outer Tibet') and the Chinese territories.

A leading player in this was Ma Zhucai. It was in the medley of the 'Tibet-Yi ethnic corridor' that Ma Zhucai grew up near Gyalthang where minorities (or what are now called minzu or nationalities such as Hui, Han, Khampa, Yi, Nakhi, Hani, Lisu, Lahu, Jinuo, Pumi, Jingpo and others) mingled and diverged while travelling both intensively and extensively.

He worked for a caravan business which traded in Southeast Asia and Kalimpong before he quickly rose to establish his own business, running an extremely successful firm named Zhu Ji. Competing with the Reting, Pangdatsang and Sadutsang fraternities, his firm was among the larger of the 12 or 13 caravan businesses headquartered in Kalimpong where he lived for 41 years. With the proceeds from his trade, he not only helped found the Chung Hwa Chinese School (to which headmasters served as cover for intelligence agents), procured rare manuscripts for a monastery in Tibet, engaged in philanthropy, but also contributed generously towards buying fighter planes for China to scuffle the Japanese.

He was arrested in 1960 and charged with being a 'Chinese spy-chief' after the murder of Lama Lobsang Doma in the haat bazaar of Kalimpong. It was to become an international cause célèbre, with the Chinese foreign ministry arranging to extract him via Rangoon in Burma. Thus, even before the 1962 war, the 'inhumane treatment' of Chinese nationals became a dominant part of the narrative on India and China. The story of the Chinese residents, Deoliwallahs, sent to the internment camp in Rajasthan is now well known – an early instance of what we now call 'affective' injustice.

Ma's story is later cast in the patriotic mould of a hero returning to his motherland, understandably one of appropriation in a nationalist narrative by the Chinese Communist Party. His grandson founded the Ancient Tea and Horse Road Museum (scripted also as a branch of the Silk Roads) in his old hometown of Gyalthang now rechristened as Shangri-La, a tourist destination standing at about 11,000 feet.

Celebrated as a hero, trading in treacherous places between Kalimpong and Yunnan (erstwhile Kham) he is part of the Historical and Cultural Records produced after Zhou Enlai and particularly after Deng Xiaoping in the 1980s. As wenshi ziliao—or memories of the Revolution – his Kalimpong story resonates with subaltern historiography's endeavour to recover archives that may have been otherwise lost. Seen from our perspective, one must also be clearly cognisant of propagandistic elements that may enter such Chinese

projects, for affective injustice runs like a leitmotif through the stories of other Chinese settlers of Kalimpong and its environs.

Against the backdrop of Lord Curzon's frontier anxiety in the late nineteenth century, Tibet featured as a central burl for the British empire in the Great Game. It was such angst-ridden state subjectivities that fuelled Colonel Francis Younghusband's invasion of Lhasa in 1904 to 'open' up the Forbidden Land. Chary of this, the Qing empire harboured corresponding concerns before 1908—which explains why the embers of this legacy in Republican China smouldered again at the Simla (1914) Tibetan-British-Chinese convention to settle the border. In these negotiations, Charles Bell served as an adviser to assist the Tibetans. A decade earlier, Bell also produced the Final Report of the Survey and Settlement of the Kalimpong Government Estate in the District of Darjeeling, 1901-1903 and his ethnographic records already note the presence of 'Chinamen' there.

Chinese settlement in Kalimpong had already begun but took off in earnest only as a result of the bloody Civil War. A reading of Bell's settlement report serves to identify discursive themes or strategies. The 'lease' of Bhutanese land is conquest and resulting (re)discovery, with its double edges of finding and showing. It is a seductive and violent strategy which closely deploys the surveillance and observation of other colonial texts.

Nehru, Zhou Enlai and Mao Zedong, willy-nilly the political protagonists in Kalimpong's tale of intrigue and espionage, would follow colonially prescribed borders of the troubled McMahon Line, with no mechanisms for settlement in place. Other minor characters—Chinese, Tibetan, Japanese, British spies, white and red Russians, amongst many others slosh around with traders, aristocrats, mystics, missionaries, travellers, reformers, and subalterns, all presences that provide texture and tone to the palimpsestic world of Kalimpong. The super-diversity of the town becomes a penumbra, a nodal point, that serves as the lens of these exchanges. Reminiscent of the Caribbean islands as the hurricane eyes of the world, this particular space serves as a listening post.

Contextualised in the book *Through the India-China Border: Kalimpong in the Himalayas* are both Nehru and Zhou's traded words about Kalimpong being the 'command centre' or a 'nest of spies' fomenting trouble and insurgency in Tibet and China. Nehru in his finely tuned rhetorical style would also note that 'sometimes I begin to doubt whether the greater part of the population of Kalimpong does not consist of foreign spies.' Historians Michael Schoenhals (founder of 'garbology' or collection of historical sources from rubbish bins) and Liu Xiaoyuan both record that 'without exception, every piece of intelligence...came from Kalimpong'.

Beijing's security orientation was to use teqing (special intelligence agents) not inside Tibet but in Kalimpong. One such Chinese agent who served as the headmaster of Chung Hwa Chinese School in Kalimpong while doubling as Honorary Liaison Officer of the Mongolian and Tibetan Affairs Commission was Shen Fumin, who wrote disarmingly that he 'could not support the British Imperialistic Policy regarding Tibet and China and in fact towards all Asiatic races'. He was later to teach art at the local Swiss Jesuit school whose students remember him fondly as an extremely masterful water-colourist and a stern draughtsman, who with a few deft strokes could evoke a Chinese landscape. And as an old man, he never lost his austere Confucian mien till the end of his days.

Much geopolitical, historical and theoretical ink has been spilled, much atkalbaazi inscribed in generating digital bytes about the China-India enmeshment. It is this anxiety—and not just of the cartographic kind—encoded in the new nation-states (particularly a post-revolution China and a post-colonial India) that craves unremitting unpacking. And Kalimpong serves as a site for precisely that sort of work. Apart from central mainstream dealings, border landers or peripheries cannot feature as fault-lines in foreign policy or mere footnotes in the writing of histories.

China Mobilizes Museums for Propaganda

25 April 2025, Bitter Winter, [Guo Luoyang](#)

At a training session in Beijing, museum directors are told they should focus on documenting that “border regions” such as Tibet and Xinjiang were always Chinese.



China Archeological Museum in Beijing. Credits.

Now, museums are also mobilized for Chinese propaganda. The CCP's primary interest is telling what Xi Jinping calls the “China story” and emphasizing that “border regions” such as Xinjiang, Inner Mongolia, or Tibet were “always part of China.”

Pan Yue, director of the National Ethnic Affairs Commission, presided in Beijing on April 16 at the First National Training Session for Museum Directors. Museums, he said, should counter “incorrect historical interpretations,” including those that “attempt to

position the Central Plains against border regions, the Han against non-Han groups, and Han culture against those of ethnic minorities.”

Each cultural artifact and historical account should be framed within “the overall development of the Chinese nation,” according to Pan, who emphasized that the country's representation should be “diverse yet unified.” Pan also mentioned Xi Jinping's thought on archeology, highlighting the alleged ancestral unity of Chinese culture within the present borders of the People's Republic. Xi also believes that the earliest Chinese populations practiced a form of communism. The training session was especially focused on Tibet and Xinjiang, which museums should (falsely) present as part of China from ancient times.

Pan visited Xinjiang in 2024, lecturing on Western and Uyghur critics' “ignorance of history” and insisting that “a large amount of archaeological evidence tells us that Xinjiang has been an important part of the Chinese cultural sphere since ancient times.”

We can expect leading Chinese museums to be restructured to tell the “China story,” and spread CCP propaganda on Tibet, Xinjiang, and Southern Mongolia being parts of China. Foreign entities permitting Chinese museums to organize exhibitions in their countries should also be cautious not to import Chinese propaganda inadvertently.

Pokhara Airport: A runway for corruption, not for flights

25 April 2025, [The Himalayan Times](#), Dr. Pushpa R. Joshi



File--Pokhara International Airport. Photo: RSS

Recently, international media, including The New York Times, Business Standard and Deccan Herald, reported on the grave corruption contentions associated with the construction of Pokhara Airport. The reports cited the findings of the parliamentary sub-committee formed to investigate the involvement of officials and lawmakers in irregularities and corruption associated with the US\$ 216 million international airport where no regular international flights have operated so far. These reports have propagated Nepal's pervasive

corruption scandal onto the global stage. In addition to the corruption amounting to a whopping \$105 million in the Pokhara Airport, grave engineering flaws and safety concerns were also exhumed by the parliamentary sub-committee led by Member of Parliament Rajendra Lingden. These pitfalls are making the headlines of national as well as international media. The airport that was inaugurated in 2023 was built with a 20-year loan from the state-owned Export-Import (EXIM) Bank of China. Moreover, the construction was overtaken by China CAMC Engineering, the construction subsidiary of a state-owned conglomerate, Sinomach. Hence, the international media outlets are also implicating China in the corruption and irregularities associated with the airport.

Even without scrutinising the trivial details associated with the construction of Pokhara airport as reported by the parliamentary sub-committee, it is obvious that the second international airport has become a financial albatross for Nepal. Airports are meant to generate revenue through the operation of regular national and international flights. In contrast, Pokhara airport is not getting enough regular international flights. Forget about the debt that Nepal has to pay to EXIM bank, the airport is not being able to generate even its operational costs. Pokhara Airport is only a representative case of grave corruption and irregularities that are omnipresent in Nepal. Countless similar cases of irregularities involving officials, contractors and lawmakers have regularly surfaced over various construction projects. As Nepal is already grey-listed by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), the dissemination of state-sponsored corruption charges in the global arena will be detrimental for Nepal in improving its financial standing.

Interestingly, the parliamentary sub-committee has pointed out the involvement of only the government officials in the irregularities associated with Pokhara airport. However, it is clear as daylight that such large-scale corruption could not have been possible without the direct involvement of lawmakers and high-level political leadership. Unfortunately, the political leadership is always exempted from corruption charges, be it the Sudan armored personnel carrier (APC) scandal, Lalita Niwas land case, Widebody purchase irregularities, or the fake-Bhutanese refugee scam. Financial irregularities, engineering mishaps and security lapses associated with the construction of Pokhara Airport add up to the list of state-owned corruption that has officially exempted the involvement of political leadership. In addition to Nepal's plummeting financial standing, the Pokhara airport corruption scandal is going to have severe diplomatic implications for Nepal. China being dragged by the international media into the corruption allegations will weaken Nepal's bilateral relations with

China. In fact, Nepal has asked China to convert the \$216 million loan used for the construction of Pokhara Airport to a grant to alleviate its financial burden. Now, following the revelation of large-scale corruption in this project, the possibility of this appears slim. Over that, international financial institutions are likely to have reservations about funding future construction projects in Nepal. The state-sponsored corruption backed by policy-level decisions is gravely affecting Nepal's all-round development. Nepal's proliferation of low-priority, substandard infrastructure projects, such as scores of view towers throughout the country, unnecessarily complex and superfluous rural roads, and underutilised airports, is draining a large portion of national resources, foreign loans and development grants. The allegations of irregularities at Pokhara Airport are merely the tip of the iceberg, hinting at a deeper corruption crisis that threatens to sink Nepal's financial stability. Time is running out for Nepal. The concerned anti-corruption authorities should scrutinise the findings of the parliamentary sub-committee and apprehend the culprits involved in Pokhara Airport irregularities. The report is still incomplete as it has not investigated the involvement of political leadership in the irregularities. Hence, all the political leaders, lawmakers and ministers involved directly or indirectly in the policy-level decision on Pokhara Airport should also be brought to book. As Nepal's financial standing, international reputation and diplomatic relationship are at stake, the government should handle this case with utmost priority. Following the example set by the Pokhara Airport irregularities, it is essential to retrospectively investigate the involvement of political leadership in past high-profile corruption cases. Such actions would serve as a testament to Nepal's commitment to financial reform. Unfortunately, given the current leadership's moral reputation and lack of financial integrity, such actions are not going to be executed anytime soon. The present cohort of corrupt leadership is unlikely to open the floodgates of accountability, knowing that it will ultimately engulf them. For the time being, speaking out against corruption feels like a Sisyphean task – endlessly pursued, yet tragically futile.

‘Voice For The Voiceless’: The Dalai Lama’s Struggle For Tibet And Religious Survival

23 April 2025, [Religion Unplugged](#), Matthew Peterson
It started with mass killings and the loss of independence and has resulted in over 150 self-immolations in the last 15 years and the slow erasure of a cultural identity.

At the dead center of the 20th century, Tibet was an independent nation built around a peaceful buddhist

tradition with a teenage leader-in-training, the young 14th Dalai Lama. But on Oct. 7, 1950, the Chinese invasion began — and it changed everything.

The Dalai Lama has lived an extraordinary life. Believed by Tibetan Buddhists to be the 14th reincarnation of the Bodhisattva of Compassion and patron saint of Tibet, he started his rigorous study of the complex religion he was destined to lead at age six. In public appearances, those who approach the sage 89 year-old in his flowing red and yellow robe often bow before him.

A skilled author of over 100 books, accomplished academic and acquaintance to a great number of the world's most powerful leaders, the Dalai Lama could certainly choose to speak in five-dollar words accompanied by lofty spiritual concepts. But, in his latest book, *"Voice For The Voiceless,"* the Dalai Lama's uncomplicated, frank writing masterfully explains the last 70 years of Chinese and Tibetan history in a style accessible to those with very little knowledge of Eastern geopolitics or the Buddhist tradition.

The book functions mostly as a documentation of the Dalai Lama's diplomatic efforts, but it does contain one major announcement: the 15th Dalai Lama will be born in the free world, not in communist China.

China has tried for years to garner further control of Tibet by means of the Buddhist tradition. In 1995, the CCP abducted the child who was named to be the new Panchen Lama, a reincarnate figure who would traditionally have helped identify the next Dalai Lama. The child has not been seen since, and a fake Panchen Lama has been named by the Chinese government in his place—a move which is almost certainly an attempt to establish the CCP's very own Dalai Lama after the 14th passes.

With the additional order that the next Dalai Lama be identified by the Gaden Phodrang Trust (The Office of The Dalai Lama) and that they should simply "follow the procedures of search and recognition in accordance with past Tibetan Buddhist tradition," the Dalai Lama has precluded any trust of a Chinese-appointed Lama.

Despite being written by a deeply religious man, and holding a crucial announcement for Tibetan Buddhists, *"Voice For The Voiceless,"* is not a particularly religious book. While Buddhist principles are certainly the guiding factors for how the Dalai Lama acts, and while the mass majority of Tibetans are committed Buddhists, *"Voice For The Voiceless,"* focuses on documenting the ongoing political struggle of the Tibetan people against the Chinese Communist party. The Dalai Lama's story is one characterized by patient, persistent diplomacy. He was only 15 when Chairman Mao and his People's Liberation Army invaded Tibet. He spent the 1950's trying to negotiate with this new occupier all while trying to earn his Geshe Laram degree — essentially a doctorate of divinity. By the end

of the decade, China had been so resistant to Tibetan efforts for an agreement, that the bodily safety of the Dalai Lama was called into question. In March of 1959, he fled to India, and has not returned to his home since.

The chaos, misinformation and heartbreak — which characterized the beginning of the Dalai Lama's time in leadership — proved to set the stage for a lifetime of frustrating diplomatic efforts. He wrote, "In all other aspects of my life and in all other domains of my work, 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." In contrast to the rest of his life, he said that the CCP leaders from Mao to Xi "have only a mouth to speak but no ear to listen."

In the closing chapters of his book, The Dalai Lama emphasizes that the only real path forward is for everybody involved to start treating each other with the respect they deserve as fellow human beings.

"I remain committed to the belief that our problems can be solved only through negotiations, held in an atmosphere of sincerity and openness, for the benefit of both the Tibetan and Chinese people," he wrote.

Cognizant of the way hate from oppressors can quickly turn into hate for oppressors, he repeatedly makes clear that he is deeply appreciative of the many Chinese supporters he and his fellow Tibetans have met over the years and that he does not blame the Chinese people for the errors of their leaders. He also names Chinese citizens in his list of those who are actively being oppressed by the CCP and says he has "deep empathy" for them.

The Dalai Lama also explained that he does not advocate for Tibetan independence in the most radical sense. Instead he fights for "genuine national regional autonomy" in which Tibet would be governed democratically and have its own judicial system. Tibet would be in charge of its own religion, culture, education, economy, health, and environmental protection. China would simply manage the region's defense and international relations. Sweeping freedoms, to be sure, but not a complete independence.

The Dalai Lama has these hopes for Tibet, but as someone who knows the feeling of having governance forced upon him all too well, he does not say that these conditions are the absolutely correct ones. Instead, he makes clear that neither the CCP nor he himself should decide the destiny of the Tibetan people.

While the Dalai Lama expresses disappointment at the fact that he will likely not return to Tibet in his lifetime, he is hopeful for the future and believes time will bring about justice. He wrote, "As an inherently unstable system, totalitarianism definitely does not have time

on its side. Time is on the side of the people, Tibetans as well as Chinese, who aspire for freedom.”

Opinion: Vietnam’s Transnational Religious Repression Mirrors China’s Playbook

23 April 2025, [Phayul](#), Nguyen Ngoc Nhu Quynh



Nguyen Ngoc Nhu Quynh, a Vietnamese human rights activist and deceased Tibetan Buddhist leader Tulku Hungkar Dorje (Photo/PEN International/freetibet.org)

The shocking case of Tulku Hungkar Dorje, a renowned Tibetan lama, who was arrested in Saigon in a joint operation between Vietnamese police and Chinese intelligence agents and died under mysterious circumstances just three days later, raises a painful and urgent question: Who truly controls national security and sovereignty on Vietnamese soil—and why has Vietnam become a tool for China’s religious repression strategy?

This case is not an isolated incident. It vividly reflects a growing pattern of transnational suppression carried out through the collaboration of two communist-led states: Vietnam and China. Religious repression targeting independent individuals and organizations is now being conducted across borders, through close coordination between state power and state-controlled religious institutions.

One need not look to Tibet for an example. Right inside Vietnam, another case is unfolding: Minh Tue, a Vietnamese citizen and monk who practices the 13 austere ascetic practices (dhutangas), unrecognized by the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha (GHPGVN). Forced to leave Vietnam, he began a pilgrimage on foot to India from the Laos border to follow the Buddha’s path of practice. However, GHPGVN has obstructed him in various ways from Thailand to Malaysia, Indonesia, and Singapore. Even after being compelled to fly to Sri Lanka, harassment from GHPGVN has continued.

More concerning is the recent action of Venerable Thich Nhat Tu, Head of the International Buddhist Affairs Committee of Ho Chi Minh City and a senior member of GHPGVN, who sent an official letter to Sri Lanka. The letter accused Minh Tue’s pilgrimage of “damaging the image of Vietnamese Buddhism” and requested Sri Lankan Buddhist authorities to monitor

and prevent his activities. Most alarming is that a religious official like Thich Nhat Tu invoked a memorandum from Thailand’s National Office of Buddhism to pressure Sri Lanka to act against a Vietnamese citizen. According to Sri Lankan police cited by BBC Sinhala, official dispatch No. 12/2025/CV-BPGQT from the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha’s International Department, signed by Thich Nhat Tu on April 13, 2025, cited a February 13, 2025 memorandum from the Thai National Office of Buddhism which labeled Minh Tue as a “fake monk in disguise.”

This is no longer the language of religion. It is the language of power and political control—mirroring China’s model: using religious diplomacy to legitimize transnational persecution. This event shows that Vietnam is not only copying China’s playbook but is proactively deploying a model of multilateral religious control—a soft but highly effective form of repression. The Death and the Silence

Returning to Tulku Hungkar Dorje’s case: he was not a Vietnamese citizen, had no criminal record, and was living in Vietnam in lawful asylum. He was arrested without a warrant, transferred between security agencies, and died within three days with no publicly available autopsy report. This has created a severe stain on Vietnam’s legal and ethical standing.

Matters became even more serious when Ju Tenkyong, spokesperson for the Tibetan exile community, confirmed that Vietnam was acting under direct pressure from the Chinese government in ordering the cremation of Tulku Dorje’s body. The cremation is scheduled to take place at Long Tho Cremation Center in Cu Chi, Ho Chi Minh City—a remote facility under tight information and ritual control.

China’s Script, Vietnam’s Stage

Both incidents—the death of Tulku Hungkar Dorje and the letter from Thich Nhat Tu—are manifestations of the same script: the consolidation of state power, the Fatherland Front, and state-sanctioned religious institutions to control belief and repress anyone who dares to step beyond the “approved framework.”

In Tulku Dorje’s case, Vietnam acted as a transit point for China’s transnational repression.

In Minh Tue’s case, Vietnam has directly adopted this model, using Buddhist diplomacy to interfere with a citizen’s personal spiritual journey—something unprecedented in the country’s modern history.

Most frightening of all: this persecution is being legitimized by saffron robes.

The Party, the Front, and GHPGVN: A Triangle of Faith Control

The Vietnam Buddhist Sangha (GHPGVN) is not an independent religious body. It is a component of the Vietnamese Fatherland Front, under the appointment and direction of the Communist Party. Through GHPGVN, the government can:

- Suppress and eliminate independent monks.
- Control teachings and public discourse.
- And as we are witnessing: export repression via international Buddhist relations.

From pressuring Tibetan monasteries to cancel memorials, to sending letters to Sri Lanka to halt Minh Tue's pilgrimage, GHPGVN is acting less like a religious body and more like a political tool.

Vietnam Must Rethink Its "Friendly Nation" Image

As a country that fought wars to defend its sovereignty, Vietnam cannot turn a blind eye to foreign intelligence operations arresting individuals on its soil. Nor can it turn religion into a weapon to persecute peaceful citizens practicing in accordance with Buddhist teachings.

Without an independent investigation into Tulku Hungkar Dorje's death, and without acknowledging the wrongful treatment of Minh Tue, Vietnam is walking headlong into a Chinese-style religious control regime—where the state governs faith, denies compassion, and expels those who seek enlightenment through their own path.

In the context of Vietnam hosting VESAK 2025 under the lofty theme "Solidarity and Tolerance for Human Dignity: Buddhist Wisdom for World Peace and Sustainable Development," staying silent or complicit in such acts of religious persecution runs counter to the very spirit of Vesak. These are not acts of peace. They undermine Buddhism's universal values and tarnish the image of a peaceful, friendly Vietnam on the global stage.

For democratic societies like Taiwan, where freedom of religion is a pillar of national identity and a key distinction from authoritarian neighbors, these cases are more than distant tragedies—they are warnings. Defending the right to spiritual expression, regardless of borders, is not only a matter of human dignity, but also a safeguard of democracy itself.

A nation seeking international respect cannot build its image on grand ceremonies while hiding the suffering of its people behind the sealed doors of political diplomacy.

(Views expressed are her own)

VOA, RFA vital in countering China

23 April 2025, [Taipei Times](#), Yeshe Dawa

The gutting of Voice of America (VOA) and Radio Free Asia (RFA) by US President Donald Trump's administration poses a serious threat to the global voice of freedom, particularly for those living under authoritarian regimes such as China. The US — hailed as the model of liberal democracy — has the moral responsibility to uphold the values it champions. In undermining these institutions, the US risks diminishing its "soft power," a pivotal pillar of its global influence.

VOA Tibetan and RFA Tibetan played an enormous role in promoting the strong image of the US in and outside Tibet. On VOA Tibetan, the Dalai Lama once said that "Tibetans call VOA broadcasts their medicine for depression and exhaustion." Similarly, on the 15th Anniversary of RFA, the Dalai Lama emphasized the importance of its broadcasts and lauded their contribution in working to "educate people who have no freedom of information."

China's iron grip over the flow of information is stronger than ever, as are its relentless efforts in disseminating misinformation. The state-run China Global Television Network has more than 125 million followers on Facebook, while the VOA and RFA have just 15.5 million combined. Despite Facebook's ban in China, that stark disparity speaks volumes about China's efforts to silence the truth and promote its propaganda.

However, the VOA and RFA have done good work in countering China's misinformation. The news platforms have been protecting the image of the US and courageously revealing the harsh realities of authoritarian regimes.

"The protection of fundamental human rights was a foundation stone in the establishment of the United States over 200 years ago," the US Department of State's Web site says. The department's annual report on human rights underlines the pivotal roles of VOA and RFA in particular for unearthing human rights violations in China.

From 2000 to 2023, RFA reports on human rights violations in China have been cited 41 times. The reports indirectly give the US leverage in championing human rights in the world.

However, the risks and the sacrifices RFA journalists undergo are truly unacceptable. A reporter at RFA Dharamshala had to cut off communication with his family in Tibet. The families of people who work at RFA have faced constant harassment and threats.

Despite all the sacrifices and the truths told to the world, the Global Times — a mouthpiece of China — lauded the Trump administration's decision to gut the news operations and denounced the VOA as "discarded by its own government like a dirty rag."

The VOA and RFA became strong countermeasures to China's lies — for which Chinese authorities have been trying to intimidate the families of reporters who expose the truth. American political scientist John Arquilla said that "in today's global information age, victory may sometimes depend not on whose army wins, but on whose story wins."

Former US secretary of state Mike Pompeo captured this urgency in a 2011 address at VOA headquarters. "The world needs VOA's clarion call for freedom, now more than ever. I hear it wherever I go," he said.

Likewise, on RFA's 25th anniversary, US senators Chris Coons and Rob Portman passed a bipartisan resolution

recognizing its vital contributions. “For the past 25 years, Radio Free Asia has delivered balanced and objective reporting to countries where freedom of the press is only an idea,” Portman said.

In the battle of narratives, the VOA and RFA are the US’ frontline tools in countering China’s propaganda.

The Unfolding Sorry Saga of Nepal’s China-built Airport at Pokhara

23 April 2025, [The Diplomat](#), Biswas Baral

A parliamentary panel probing the project has discovered irregularities worth over \$100 million. Nepal’s connectivity with the rest of the world has been deepening since the country’s opening up in 1990, the year that democracy, which had been suspended in 1960, was restored.

As Nepalis started traveling far and wide in search of better jobs and education, the burden on the Tribhuvan International Airport (TIA), the country’s only international airport, steadily increased. Thus started the quest for another international airport.

It was in this context that a 1971 plan for an international airport in Pokhara was dusted off in 2009. Four years later, in 2013, Nepal signed an agreement with China CAMC Engineering Ltd for the construction of a regional international airport in the tourist city.

The project became mired in controversy right from the start. CAMC’s winning bid came at \$305 million, which was more than double the projected cost. After much criticism of the “flawed” contract, its value was revised down to \$216 million.

Construction progressed in fits and starts before the airport was completed in late 2022, and Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli inaugurated it on January 1, 2023.

Now, it turns out, a major portion of even the revised expenditure was misappropriated.

In its 36-page report published last week, a parliamentary panel probing the project discovered irregularities worth over \$100 million. The 12-member body pointed to some egregious instances of corruption.

For instance, the contract mandated the elevation of the ground for the runway to be between 2,677 and 2,674 feet above sea level. For this purpose, soil and pebbles had to be ferried to the site. The panel found \$5.5 million had been paid for their transport, even though there is no documentary evidence that any soil was brought to the site. Perhaps this is why the eventual runway was only 2,636 feet above sea level, in clear breach of the contract with the CAMC.

Another finding was that various governments had illegally waived off \$16 million in taxes to the CAMC.

There are countless such instances of corruption packed in the probe report.

The House panel has recommended an immediate suspension of the head of the country’s civil aviation regulator as well as some of its ex-officials.

But the airport’s problems, built with the help of a soft loan from China EXIM Bank, go beyond these instances of corruption and design flaws.

Since its completion, there had been no scheduled passenger flights to or from Pokhara — until March 31. On that day, Nepal-Tibet joint venture Himalaya Airlines’ Airbus A319—with 32 Chinese and 75 Nepali nationals on board — flew there from Lhasa.

The plane was given a water cannon salute at the airport. But tourist entrepreneurs in Pokhara, who have invested billions of dollars in the hope of more business accruing from the new airport, want to see many more regular flights. (Currently, Himalayan Airlines flies the Pokhara-Lhasa route once a week.)

After much lobbying with the Chinese, Pokhara’s businessmen recently received a proposal from Sichuan Airlines that if they guaranteed three chartered flights from Pokhara, the airline would guarantee a total of 10 such flights. The hope is that these charter flights will lead to more regular flights.

That is unlikely as most international airlines will continue to shun Pokhara.

The airport, built amid difficult terrain, can accommodate only narrow-body planes, and even these will face payload issues. The permissible load for a narrow-body aircraft like Airbus A320 is 77 tons, but an A320 taking off from Pokhara can carry a maximum load of only 68 tons. This restriction prevents these flights from operating at full capacity. This is just one of the multiple terrain-related issues.

Then there are the geopolitical barriers. During the airport’s inauguration, Chinese Ambassador to Nepal Chen Song said the project had been built under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), Chinese President Xi Jinping’s flagship foreign policy tool. This was not the case as the agreement for the airport had been signed much before Nepal formally joined the BRI in 2017.

While building the airport, in addition to tourists from China, Nepal had been banking on bringing even more Indian tourists to make the project financially viable. But with direct Chinese financing in the Pokhara airport and with China placing it under the BRI — of which India is not a part — Indian airlines have stayed away.

Also, because of the Chinese involvement in new Nepali international airports like the ones in Pokhara and Bhairahawa, New Delhi has been reluctant to give “India-locked” Nepal additional air routes. Without these routes, it won’t be financially viable for international airlines to fly to Pokhara via longer routes.

After the publication of the latest parliamentary committee report, the airport's international image has taken a further hit, and India could be even more averse to sending its planes there or to give Nepal additional air routes over its territories. Moreover, India is unlikely to do Nepal any big favor so long as the Oli government, with which it has had a difficult relationship, is in place.

Domestically, the corruption case could drag on for years, as they typically do in Nepal. For the Nepalis, the unfolding saga of corruption at the Pokhara airport is yet more evidence of the utter incompetence and corruption of their government machinery and bureaucracy.

China Erases Tibet in Latest White Paper

22 April 2025, [CTA](#)

"A lie repeated a thousand times is still a lie" — China's recent white paper on Tibet erases history, silences dissent, and calls repression "human rights."

-By Tsewang Gyalpo Arya for Japan Forward

China released its latest white paper on Tibet, Human Rights in Xizang in the New Era, on March 28. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) calls this date "Serf Emancipation Day." It is the anniversary of the CCP's dissolution of Tibet's legitimate government in 1959. After 70 years of control, China's legitimacy in Tibet remains an unresolved international issue. This situation is highlighted by the fact that this is China's 18th white paper on Tibet. That is more than any other country has produced about the territories it claims. Over-issuing white papers only reinforces the image of a fragile regime resorting to propaganda and disinformation.

The white paper shows how far the CCP will go to impose its blatant lies on both its people and the international community. It falsely portrays the Chinese People's Liberation Army as liberators of Tibet from imperialist forces and feudal lords. Beijing has assaulted and distorted the very concept of human rights to legitimize the genocide it committed — and continues to commit in Tibet and other occupied territories. It does not become an aspiring superpower to stoop so low, distorting reality and historical facts, and spreading disinformation.

Erasing Tibet Through Language

This time, unlike previous white papers, China has made a deliberate effort to avoid using the word "Tibet." Instead, it has adopted its own nomenclature of Xizang for Tibet. This reflects a deliberate policy shift: erasing historical Tibet — U-Tsang, Amdo, and Kham — and replacing it with the Tibet Autonomous Region, which Beijing has now renamed the Xizang Autonomous Region.

CCTV Screenshot announcing the white paper without using the name Tibet. March 28, 2025

The latest white paper consists of eight chapters and a concluding remark. It focuses on themes of human rights and effectively safeguarding people's democratic, economic and social rights, culture, religious freedom, and the environment. There are many facts, however, that it hides.

Compare it to the first white paper on Tibet, issued in 1992. That one had the title, "Tibet — Its Ownership and Human Rights Situation." No matter the tall tales and mendacity of the contents, it at least talked about Tibet.

A Façade of Rights

The 2025 white paper opens with the statement:

It is a common human aspiration for every individual to fully enjoy their human rights. This is also the goal of the Chinese people of all ethnic groups, including those in the Xizang Autonomous Region.

If only that were true.

Yes, the statement echoes the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights, to which China is a signatory, and even the Chinese constitution. But does the regime practice what it preaches?

Over 157 Tibetans have self-immolated, demanding those very rights China says it is safeguarding. Liu Xiaobo, the 2010 Nobel Peace Laureate, died seeking them for the Chinese people. People are still tortured or disappeared for simply possessing a photo of the Dalai Lama. Or for talking about the importance of Tibetan language, culture, and religion. The regime disparages His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Tibetans as separatists and anti-China. It even tries to misinform the Chinese people.

China has hidden the 2008 Tibetan proposal — the Memorandum on Genuine Autonomy for the Tibetan People — from its own citizens. This peaceful "Middle Way" approach to coexistence with China remains censored, contradicting the government's claim of transparency and pluralism. [Click here to read more.](#)

Tibet's silent sorrows: Xi's Vietnam visit and death of a 'rebel' Lama

22 April 2025, [FirstPost](#), Claude Arpi

On April 13, before reaching Hanoi on a state visit to Vietnam, President Xi Jinping said that he expects that it will be "an opportunity to work with the Vietnamese side to draw up a new blueprint for the building of the China-Vietnam community with a shared future".

Xi later pointed out that building a Sino-Vietnamese community of shared future is of great world significance: "The two countries have joined hands to follow the path of peaceful development, and more than 1.5 billion people will work together towards modernisation, which will effectively safeguard

regional and even world peace and stability and promote common development. ...The boat can withstand the stormy waves, and the boat can go steady and far. China and Vietnam are both beneficiaries of economic globalisation, and it is necessary to strengthen strategic efforts, jointly oppose unilateral bullying, and maintain the stability of the global free trade system and industrial supply chain."

It sounds good, but the reality is vastly different.

The death of a Lama

A few days before Xi departed for Vietnam, the international media reported the 'disappearance' and then the death of a highly respected Tibetan Lama, Trulku Hungkar Dorjee 'Rinpoche'.

The Lama, known for his work in the field of education and culture in the Golok area of northeastern Tibet, passed away on March 29, 2025, in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. It is the Chinese authorities who informed his monastery, Lung-ngon Monastery in Gade County of Golog Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, of his death. Apparently he was in Vietnam since July 2024.

According to the International Campaign for Tibet (ICT), Lungngon monastery "issued a seemingly coerced statement dated April 3 claiming that Trulku Hungkar Dorjee had quietly left for a retreat last year." However, the Lama's followers did not accept this version.

On April 8, Radio Free Asia (Tibetan Service) noted that "a team comprising five monks of Lungngon Monastery and six officials representing Qinghai Province's security, united front work department and religion bureau arrived in Vietnam on April 5 to collect Trulku's body. Excluding the five monks, the officials held a meeting at the Chinese diplomatic mission in Vietnam. On April 8, the monks were instructed to depart from Vietnam."

Despite the earlier assurance, they were unable to see the body, though the monks were instructed to sign a document stating Trulku had died.

ICT observed: "Since June 2024, he had been subjected to intense harassment for not organising an elaborate reception to the Chinese-appointed Panchen Lama, Gyaltsen Norbu, during his visit to Golog, according to information gathered from the local Tibetans by Tibet Times, a news outlet based in India."

An article in The Vietnamese, a media outlet, gives more details: "On March 25, 2025, he [the Rinpoche] was arrested at a residence in Ho Chi Minh City in an operation believed to be coordinated between Vietnamese police and Chinese agents. He passed away a few days later. The circumstances surrounding his death have not been clarified. State media have not mentioned the incident. A group of five monks from Lung-ngon Monastery and six officials representing the security agency arrived in Vietnam on April 5 to

bring Trulku's [Trulku] body back to Tibet. However, it is still unclear whether these people have been able to access or receive the body. The reason is that, in a meeting at the Chinese Embassy in Vietnam, Tibetan monks were denied permission to participate in the body-handling process. His body is currently being preserved at Vinmec Central Park International Hospital and is closely monitored by security forces."

The article added, "Mr Trulku was accused by the Chinese government of being disobedient and disloyal to the government's religious line. The issue of the 'Panchen Lama' is also one of the most sensitive issues in the relationship between China and Tibet."

Gyaltsen Norbu and a rebellious lama

The 11th Panchen Lama recognised by the Dalai Lama in 1995 has since then remained under 'house arrest' (in fact, nothing is known about his fate); through a farcical Golden Urn test, Beijing nominated Gyaltsen Norbu as the reincarnation of the 10th Panchen Lama. Shockingly, the Chinese test consisted of having three or four names inserted in capsules, dropped into an urn, with a friendly lama's hand choosing one of the capsules (in this case, Gyaltsen Norbu's capsule was said to have been longer to facilitate the job of the 'lama' chosen by the Party).

Hungkar Rinpoche seems to have displeased the Communist Party by refusing to kowtow to Gyaltsen Norbu when the latter was to visit his monastery.

ICT gives a background: "The Chinese Panchen Lama had an unusually extended stay in Tibet in recent years, visiting various regions on government-organised tours to boost his profile and gain legitimacy among Tibetan followers. In some remote areas, authorities reportedly paid cash to each person who attended his meetings complying with official directives."

As Gyaltsen Norbu was due to visit the Golok area: "Chinese authorities had instructed local monasteries and Tibetans to attend meetings and receive religious sermons from Gyaltsen Norbu."

It is said that the Lama did not "fully comply with these orders, leading to intensified harassment of him by the Chinese officials".

The succession of the Dalai Lama

The crux of the matter is not 'a community of shared future' as preached by Xi Jinping, but who will control the next Dalai Lama.

Beijing is extremely nervous since the present Dalai Lama has declared that he will be born in the free world. The Communist Party of China is not ready to have to deal with an 'Indian' Dalai Lama. Already, as in the case of Hungkar Rinpoche, the Party has difficulties imposing its own Panchen Lama, and many Tibetans refuse to play the game of Beijing and acknowledge Gyaltsen Norbu as the true Panchen Lama.

There is an old Chinese idiom: "Kill the chicken to scare the monkey."

It means to make an example of someone in order to warn others.

This is exactly what was done by the 'disappearance' of the Rinpoche.

The idiom perhaps refers to an old folktale: "A street entertainer earned a lot of money with his dancing monkey. One day, when the monkey refused to dance, the entertainer killed a live chicken in front of the monkey, and then the monkey resumed dancing."

A typical visit by Gyaltzen Norbu

the example of July 22, 2022. China Tibet Network announced that Gyaltzen Norbu visited a village on the Indian border: "Panchen: Guarding the border is a great cause," was the title of the article.

The name of the village as given by the article is 'Lowa', though the newly built village was in fact Longju, located at the frontier of Arunachal Pradesh and Tibet, and was the site of the first bloody clash between India and China in August 1959.

The article added, "The new village lying quietly at the foot of the Himalayas became lively with a strong smell of mulberry smoke in the air; the masses of believers welcomed him, bowed and prayed." The article admitted that the 'Lowa' new village is part of the 'relocation' scheme and new inhabitants arrived on January 15, 2021.

During his visit, Gyaltzen Norbu asked, "How many children do you have? Where do the children go to school? Where are the teachers from?" He met members of two households "to talk to the masses of relocated households to understand their living situation after relocation."

The visit was pure propaganda to show that Longju belongs to China and that the Tibetans are given the freedom to practice their religion, but where are the stupas, the gompas, the prayer flags, and the prayer mills in these new villages?

At the same time, the Dalai Lama was visiting Ladakh. For the Dalai Lama there was a 10-km line-up in Leh; in Longju, hardly 20 people represented the 'masses'. This is why China has to kill a few chickens to warn the monkeys (Tibetans believe that they descend from a first monkey who had an affair with Goddess Tara) that in the future, they better accept the Lamas selected by the Communist Party.

A new White Paper

A few weeks ago, a new white paper was published by Beijing ... on human rights in Tibet: "It is a common human aspiration for every individual to fully enjoy their human rights. This is also the goal of the Chinese people of all ethnic groups, including those in the Xizang [Tibet] Autonomous Region," says the publication.

It continues: "Today, Xizang enjoys political stability, ethnic unity, economic development, social harmony, and amity among different religions. Its environment is sound, and its people are content in their work and

daily lives. This progress represents a remarkable achievement in protecting human rights on the snowy plateau."

But Tibetans can't even use 'Tibet' as the name of their country. Now they have to say 'Xizang'.

China denies the current Dalai Lama but eyes the next

21 April 2025, [The Week](#), Yeshi Dawa

China's attempts to undermine the institution of the Dalai Lama is a continuation of Mao Zedong's failure in capturing the current Dalai Lama

In the latest book 'Voice for the Voiceless', the Dalai Lama has categorically stated about his reincarnation thus: "The new Dalai Lama will be born in the free world...". This unequivocal stance sends a crystal-clear message to the world that the current Dalai Lama's reincarnation will, at any cost, not be born in China. Regardless of China's claims on the Dalai Lama successions, the aforementioned statement made by the current Dalai Lama, however, determines the future of the Dalai Lama. More importantly, the Dalai Lama has written in the book that he would leave clear written instructions on the matter of his succession.

In the future, when the current Dalai Lama passes away, the written instruction will play a key role in nullifying the attempts of the Chinese government in search of the next Dalai Lama. A key international player in the process of rejecting China's anointed Dalai Lama would be the official policy of the US mandated in the Tibetan Policy and Support Act 2020 which strongly states thus: "The wishes of the 14th Dalai Lama, including any written instructions, should play a key role in the selection, education, and veneration of a future 15th Dalai Lama ...".

The Central Tibetan Administration's (CTA) lobbying to the like-minded nations will, undoubtedly, raise the question of legitimacy and authenticity if China anoints the 15th Dalai Lama. One such fruition of CTA's lobbying is the recent passage of a resolution in Dutch parliament rejecting China's interference in the succession of the Dalai Lama. In future, many more laws and policies will unfold. Even India's future stance on the succession of the Dalai Lama is as vital as the policy of the US and could become a greater vocal for the rejection of China's Dalai Lama.

Why China eyes the next Dalai Lama

China's unflagging efforts to undermine the institution of the Dalai Lama is a continuation of Mao Zedong's failure in capturing the current Dalai Lama. In fact, the book notes that when Mao was informed of the Dalai Lama's escape, he simply reacted: "We have lost!" To some extent, Mao was right. Therefore, it is China's belief that they could win over Tibetans if they had the next Dalai Lama. But, the installment of their Panchen Lama could serve them a lesson if they think they

would succeed after choosing the next Dalai Lama. In 1995, the Chinese authorities kidnapped the reincarnation of 10th Panchen Lama – officially recognised by the current Dalai Lama, and China anointed Gyaltsen Norbu as the 11th Panchen Lama. Today, the Chinese authorities pay 100 yuan to each Tibetan to receive his blessings. This pathetic gesture shows the lack of devotion from Tibetans to China's anointed Panchen Lama. The same gesture is inevitable for China's 15th Dalai Lama.

Even though the current Dalai Lama devolved his political authority to Dr. Lobsang Sangay who was democratically elected in 2011, he is still the sole supreme leader who represents the identity of Tibet and is widely revered by Tibetans from all walks of life. Despite all the pejorative labels used by China to describe the Dalai Lama, the Dalai Lama is, today, synonymous to peace in the world. China's malicious attempts to smear his image never borne any results. In other words, it is a direct challenge to the non-violence and peace around the world. The very purpose of a reincarnation is to continue the mission of the predecessor "to be the voice for universal compassion..."

China's unlawful laws on the Dalai Lama

China's blatant claims on having the right to choose the next Dalai Lama stemmed from 'The 29-articles ordinance' imposed on Tibet by the Manchus in 1793 on "the pretext of making the Tibetan Government's administration more efficient". This ordinance demands the selection of reincarnation of the Dalai Lamas, Panchen Lamas and other high Lamas by picking lots from a Golden Urn. Except for the 11th Dalai Lama, "this procedure was dispensed with for the Ninth, Thirteenth and the Fourteenth Dalai Lama ...". In fact, the 10th and 12th Dalai Lamas were already found and never used the Golden Urn procedures. In practicality, the Golden Urn procedure is tantamount to a gambling where the win or loss is entirely dependent on luck. By contrast, the real sophisticated and authentic search of the reincarnation in Tibetan Buddhism is clearly understandable from the discovery of the current Dalai Lama.

In the search for the current Dalai Lama, the search party saw the prophecy: "During the mummification process of the Thirteenth Dalai Lama, the head was discovered to have turned from facing south to the northeast." Then, the search party sought a prophecy from a sacred lake called 'Lhamoi Lhatso' where a vision of three Tibetan alphabets appeared - Ah Ka Ma. The first initial Ah referred to Amdo in Tibet. Surprisingly, the current Dalai Lama was born in Amdo, Tibet.

Consequently, it is logical to conclude that the Golden Urn procedure is not applicable in the selection of the next Dalai Lama. The whole narrative of the Golden Urn is to make the next Dalai Lama as a marionette

who would play on the words of the Chinese authorities.

In 2007, China issued an 'Order no. 5' document, which stipulates the measures to own the reincarnation of living Buddhas. Ironically, this very stipulation contradicts the foundation of Chinese communism whose founder Mao Zedong notoriously said that religion is a poison. This stipulation, however, came into implementation in major parts of Tibet. For instance, In 2023, Tibetans monks were forcibly ordered to sign a document renouncing ties with the Dalai Lama. In other words, the Chinese authorities have been trying to sever the spiritual relationship between the Dalai Lama and Tibetan monks in Tibet. This measure could impinge on the mentality of Tibetan monks whose devotion towards the Dalai Lama is unshakable. Another striking yet very common instance of China's brutal clampdown on Tibetans secretly worshiping the Dalai Lama happened in 2024 where a Tibetan monk was imprisoned for almost 18 months on the charges of disseminating the speech of the Dalai Lama.

China leaves no efforts to challenge anything that favours the Dalai Lama. They don't even spare individuals who support the ideas of the Dalai Lama in either private or the public spaces, let alone the Governments. Strikingly, international celebrities such as Richard Gere, Brad Pitt and Lady Gaga were completely banned from entering China. Today, China has created an environment where all the celebrities and business people will have to choose between the Dalai Lama and the fame and access in China. For the governments, it is all about the muscling economic powers. Except the USA, no country has so far taken a stance on the reincarnation of the current Dalai Lama. Has China found Mao's reincarnation?

The Dalai Lama has jokingly spoken at various occasions about the reincarnation of Mao Zedong. He simply put it: "If the Chinese government believes in rebirth and religion, then they should start it from the reincarnation of Mao and Deng Xiaoping ...". The notorious remark of Mao Zedong on religion is a clear sign that communism and religion can't be compatible. So, it is obvious that China's claim in the succession of the Dalai Lama is religiously inapplicable and morally unacceptable. If China, at any chance, finds the reincarnation of Mao, only then can they say they know the business of reincarnation. Otherwise, the attempts to choose the next Dalai Lama is a complete colonization of a religion.

Tibet Groups Condemn Cremation of Tulku Hungkar Dorje

21 April 2025, [Free Tibet](#)

Demand for an international investigation grows following the death of beloved Tibetan Lama in Vietnam and cremation without family consent.

Tibet groups condemn cremation of deceased Tibetan Lama in Vietnam without family consent following his death in custody; demand international investigation. Body Reportedly Cremated Before Inquiry Fueling Suspicions of Chinese Involvement in Arrest and Death of Tulku Hungkar Dorje Rinpoche.

Global Tibet groups voice vehement condemnation following reports of the cremation of Tulku Hungkar Dorje Rinpoche, a highly revered Tibetan leader, without family consent. Rinpoche is reported to have died in custody in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, in late March, under suspicious circumstances that demand immediate scrutiny. Disturbing information indicates that Rinpoches's remains were cremated in Vietnam on 20 April at 1 AM Rinpoches' detention, his untimely death in custody and the subsequent unauthorised cremation constitute grave violations of international legal standards and can be seen to represent a deliberate obstruction of justice, raising serious questions regarding China's involvement in his apprehension and death.

Tibet Groups reiterate their urgent demand for a full and transparent international investigation into the circumstances surrounding Tulku Hungkar Dorje Rinpoche's death.

Lhadon Tethong, Tibet Action Institute, said: "Tulku Hungkar Dorje was targeted by the Chinese government simply for being a beloved Buddhist leader and advocate for Tibetan language and culture. His death is part of a pattern of unrelenting attacks on religious leaders, monasteries, and schools across Tibet, and a particular assault on his region of Golog, long known for its strong Tibetan identity and resistance to Chinese rule. With this cremation, Chinese authorities appear to be trying to hide the circumstances of his death. The world must call for an independent investigation."

Dr Zoe Bedford, Australia Tibet Council, said: "This deeply disrespectful act strongly suggests an attempt to eliminate crucial evidence and prevent the truth from emerging. We fear a coordinated effort to cover up the circumstances of his arrest and death, potentially involving Chinese authorities. Tulku Hungkar Dorje's body was secretly transferred late at night to Sakya Vietnam temple under heavy Chinese and Vietnamese security—the monks present having their phones confiscated, and no family allowed. Any claimed consent is clearly under duress. This is not a sacred rite—it's a forced cremation that looks like an attempt to destroy evidence and erase the truth. The world must call this what it is: a potential cover-up of what could be a state-sanctioned killing."

Ju Tenkyong, Amnye Machen Institute said: "In the future, the five monks who came to Vietnam to

retrieve Rinpoche's body will face extreme danger to their safety. Even now, Lung Ngon Monastery is facing immense difficulties, and forwarding and disseminating photos and information about Rinpoche is strictly forbidden. The monastery has been threatened with shutdown if it violates orders from the Chinese government. The reason behind the huge secrecy with which Rinpoche's cremation has been conducted is, not only because the Chinese government murdered Rinpoche under an evil strategy, but it is now also absolutely clear that it is an attempt to conceal any evidence that was on Rinpoche's body."

Tenzin Yangzom, International Tibet Network said: "This is a calculated act of erasure. The Chinese government, with the complicity of Vietnamese authorities, has secretly cremated a Tibetan leader—denying his family, his community, and the Tibetan people any form of justice or closure. This isn't just disrespect—it's a deliberate attempt to hide the truth. Under surveillance, intimidation, and without consent, this forced cremation reeks of a cover-up. The world must hold both China and Vietnam accountable—this cannot be allowed to disappear in silence."

Tenzin Rabga, Free Tibet, added: "The cremation of Tulku Hungkar Rinpoche without his family's agreement is a shocking and deliberate act of erasure. It not only defiles Tibetan tradition but destroys any chance for a fair investigation into his deeply suspicious death. This is not just a spiritual loss—it's a clear attempt to cover up the truth. We demand an independent, international investigation. Justice must not be denied."

Topjor Tsultrim, Students For a Free Tibet said: "In one of Tulku Hungkar Dorje's last public teachings before his death, he spoke about how the Tibetan language is the lifeline of the Tibetan race and how every family should endeavor to preserve it. His death and clandestine cremation proves that promoting the Tibetan language is a capital offense to the Chinese government that will be prosecuted in any jurisdiction without regard for state sovereignty or international human rights law. Teaching Tibetan is now a crime punishable by death."

Gloria Montgomery, Tibet Justice Center said: "If the governments of China and Vietnam had no part in what happened to Tulku Hungkar Dorje, they have everything to gain from a transparent and credible UN investigation. But the decision to cremate his body without his family's consent has only deepened the global suspicion surrounding the case. The world is watching, and without transparency, both governments risk being permanently stained by one of the most alarming cases of suspected extra-judicial killing and cross-border repression in recent memory. The UN must speak out clearly and urgently to ensure his body is returned to his family, and both China and

Vietnam must cooperate fully with an investigation to ensure the truth comes to light.”

Tulku Hungkar Dorje, 56, had reportedly escaped into exile in Vietnam after facing relentless persecution from Chinese authorities in Tibet for his unwavering commitment to preserving Tibetan language and cultural identity. Shockingly, credible sources indicate his arrest in Ho Chi Minh City on 25 March in an operation allegedly involving both Vietnamese police and Chinese agents. He died just days later while reportedly in custody. The Vietnamese authorities’ unsubstantiated claim of a heart attack, the denial of family access to his body, and the complete absence of official documentation point to a deliberate cover-up.

[1]

This development coincides with deeply troubling reports of an escalated crackdown and intensified security measures in the local area of his monastery in Golog, Tibet, further fueling global concern and demands for immediate international intervention.[2] Tibet Groups are also deeply concerned for the wellbeing of the monks in Golog, where eyewitness accounts detail an immediate and intense crackdown at his monastery — surveillance has spiked, movement is heavily restricted, and monks and laypeople face ongoing intimidation.

Tibetans and Tibet groups are calling for a full and transparent investigation into the circumstances surrounding Tulku Hungkar Dorje Rinpoche’s death and for his remains to be returned to his family.

Foreign governments are being called on to press the Vietnamese and Chinese governments for answers, and to condemn the escalated crackdown and intensified security measures at Tulku Hungkar Dorje Rinpoche’s monastery in Tibet.

The United Nations is also being urged to investigate the possible extra-judicial execution of Tulku Hungkar Dorje Rinpoche, to identify everyone responsible for ordering, planning, and executing any operations connected with the circumstances surrounding Tulku Hungkar Dorje Rinpoche’s death.

The Silencing of Tibetan Voices: Who Benefits and Who Loses from the Closure of VOA and RFA?

18 April 2025, [Tibetan Review](#), Gyaltsen Choedrak

Recalling his experiences of listening clandestinely to the US government-funded radio broadcast services while living in Tibet and later working for it at great personal cost after arriving in exile, Gyaltsen Choedrak* argues that while China is spending many billions of dollars to expand its propaganda power throughout the world, the US is withdrawing from the battlefield of information and propaganda with the suspension of many of its global broadcast services,

including VOA and RFA; that this is not merely a budget cut but also the abandoning of one of the most important soft power resources that has maintained American interests and values across generations.

On March 14, 2025, under President Donald Trump’s policy to reduce U.S. government expenditures, an executive order was issued requiring all operations of the State Department, including the U.S. Agency for Global Media (USAGM), to be drastically curtailed.

This resulted in downsizing offices, eliminating many subsidiary departments, and forcing numerous staff to resign. The funding freeze for five radio stations under USAGM’s direct supervision, including Voice of America (VOA) and Radio Free Asia (RFA), led to their operations being suspended from March 15, with staff placed on leave.

As a consequence, the Voice of America Tibetan Service and Radio Free Asia’s Tibetan Service—which have served as bridges between Tibet and the outside world and as voices for the Tibetan people—now face an extremely critical situation, unable to continue their operations.

In short, although legal battles and continued efforts are being made to restore the operations of these two Tibetan-language radio stations, their future status currently remains uncertain.

After news of the disruption to these radio services spread within Tibet, many Tibetans expressed deep sorrow and anxiety.

A Tibetan from Lhasa, speaking anonymously due to security concerns, told me: “These two radio stations are, for us, the only means through which we can see the wider world through a small window. Without them, we will essentially be left in darkness.”

A young person from eastern Tibet also shared their feelings: “Thanks to these U.S.-supported Tibetan-language radio stations, news from inside Tibet could be broadcast internationally, and we could learn about the outside world. The sudden closure of these stations is unbelievable.”

In this article, I will share my experiences and perspectives on the historical connection between the Tibetan people and these two radio stations, the benefits they have provided to Tibetans, and the losses resulting from their closure. I will also discuss how this situation affects the Tibetan cause on the international stage and the new challenges Tibetans will face in accessing news and information in the future.

A Profound Connection

Like many Tibetans, I share a deep and emotional history with these two radio stations. Their broadcasts—bringing hope-inspiring news, thought-provoking discussions, and programs on religion, culture, customs, and language preservation—have blossomed like flowers of compassion in the hearts of Tibetans.

When I was young, I spent several years and studied Buddhism at Sera Monastery near Lhasa, Tibet's capital. Entering through the monastery's main gate, one arrives at the monastery's shop. Our monk quarters were on the second floor above this shop. The shop area belonged to Sera Mey Monastery's Shungpa Khangtsen (house). From our window, we could see devotees entering and leaving the monastery through the main gate.

Before China's complete occupation of Tibet in 1951, my teacher had served as the secretary of Sera Je Monastery's Hardhong Khangtsen. After the Chinese occupation, when thousands of monasteries and temples were destroyed and monks and nuns expelled, my teacher returned to his native village and lived the difficult life of a farmer. After China slightly relaxed its religious policies in Tibet in 1978, he returned to Sera Monastery and resumed his role as secretary. His main responsibility was managing the monastery's properties as a treasurer.

One of my clearest memories is that 9 to 10 in the evening was my teacher's most important time of day. This was when he listened to Tibetan-language radio programs broadcast from abroad. First, he would carefully close all doors and windows, thoroughly checking the surroundings and beneath the windows for any people. After adjusting the radio frequency and lowering the volume, he would hold the radio close to his ear and listen with intense concentration. During this time, we students had to remain absolutely quiet, not disturbing him. At that time, I didn't understand why he considered listening to the radio so important or what he was listening to. Sometimes his face would show a smile and joy, which was surely a sign that he had heard good news.

Later, I became interested in the radio programs he was listening to. I discovered that he was listening to the Voice of America Tibetan Service.

Eventually, I too listened to VOA news with my teacher many times. I later learned that my teacher was not the only one in the monastery who listened to VOA's Tibetan Service; many other monks did as well. Through these radio broadcasts, they could learn about His Holiness the Dalai Lama's activities, Tibet-related issues, international support for Tibet, and global news. Sometimes they could even hear speeches by the U.S. President and His Holiness the Dalai Lama from their meetings discussing Tibet. When important news about His Holiness or Tibet was broadcast, the Chinese government would deliberately jam the program and play loud music and noise to interfere with the reception. When important Tibet-related news was heard, trusted senior monks would come to our quarters, where they would discuss the news content, share experiences, and talk optimistically and hopefully about Tibet's future.

After I had been in political exile in India for several years, my teacher passed away. Until his death, he never stopped listening to Voice of America and Radio Free Asia.

During that period, regardless of the Chinese Communist government's severe restrictions, there was widespread clandestine listening to VOA's Tibetan Service—and later Radio Free Asia and Voice of Tibet (Norway)—throughout Tibet's monasteries, among farmers and nomads. Their experiences of accessing news seem to have been similar.

After arriving as a political exile in India, due to circumstances and my interests, I had the opportunity to work as a regional correspondent for Voice of Tibet (Norway) in southern India from 2009 to 2018. Subsequently, from 2018 to 2025, I served for seven years as the southern India regional correspondent for VOA's Tibetan Service.

At both radio stations, my primary responsibility was collecting news from inside Tibet and broadcasting it to the international community. During those approximately 17 years, I was able to report on and disseminate news about the self-immolations of more than 155 Tibetans who protested against the Chinese government, as well as reporting on these key issues: Various peaceful protest movements

The lack of religious freedom

Environmental degradation problems

Forced relocation of nomads

Land confiscation cases

Arrests, imprisonments, and death sentences of Tibetans

Closure of local monasteries

Prohibitions against keeping photos of His Holiness the Dalai Lama in private homes

Policies restricting the learning and use of the Tibetan language

News about the establishment of Communist Party surveillance offices in monasteries

In total, I was able to broadcast over 1,900 news stories from inside Tibet to the international community.

Looking back on this period, I feel proud that my work contributed, even if modestly, to the Tibetan community and cause. However, I learned that my work led the Chinese government to harass and interrogate my parents and family members in Tibet, causing them many difficulties.

The Chinese authorities imposed strict prohibitions on my family from contacting me abroad, resulting in a complete severing of communication between me and my family for more than a decade, leaving me unaware of their situation. This is not just my personal circumstance but a common challenge faced by many Tibetans in exile.

Sadly, with the suspension of funding to the USAGM and its ongoing reorganization, both the Voice of

America Tibetan Service and Radio Free Asia's Tibetan Service have had to suspend operations, and radio staff have become unemployed.

Notably, on the second day after the news of VOA's suspension broke, Chinese state media outlets expressed their welcome. For instance, Global Times and Beijing Daily published articles gleefully praising the U.S. government's decision. They labeled VOA as a "factory of lies" and accused it of being among the most critical foreign entities toward China. Their jubilation clearly demonstrates who benefits and who is harmed by the decision to suspend these radio operations.

Impact and Significance

The influence of these two radio stations has preserved the morale, hope, and ethnic pride of Tibetans inside Tibet and has kept the Tibet issue alive internationally. Likewise, the international community, led by the United States, has criticized the Chinese government on issues of human rights and religious freedom in Tibet and has supported the Tibetan cause. To counter external information and propaganda and to control Tibetans' interest in and access to foreign media such as VOA and RFA, the Chinese government has established numerous state-controlled radio and television stations throughout Tibet. Especially in the last decade, the number of such media outlets has increased, and their media power has grown.

These Chinese government media primarily focus on the following themes:

Promoting Chinese government positions and policies
Claiming Tibetan people's lives have improved under Chinese Communist Party leadership

Opposing Tibetan separatist movements

Calling for the protection of national unity and ethnic harmony

Disseminating news about economic construction and development in Tibet

Defaming and criticizing His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan government-in-exile

While strictly prohibiting listening to foreign news in Tibet, the Chinese government also severely restricts international journalists from freely traveling there. Moreover, local people face heavy penalties for contacting foreign media or providing information to the outside world.

All this demonstrates how highly the Chinese government values controlling information dissemination and ideological dominance in Tibet.

While China is spending many billions of dollars to expand its propaganda power throughout the world, the United States is withdrawing from the battlefield of information and propaganda. This withdrawal is not merely a budget cut but abandoning one of the most important soft power resources that has maintained American interests and values across generations.

For Tibetans, these radio stations are not just sources of information but lifelines connecting an oppressed people to the global community. Their closure represents not only an organizational loss but also the withdrawal of a voice that has given lifeblood to the challenging Tibetan cause.

Renowned Tibetan writer inside Tibet, Tsering Woesser, has said that if RFA and VOA's Tibetan services close, "Tibetan voices will disappear from this world."

In March, the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile in Dharamsala held emergency discussions on this critical issue. The Sikyong (President) of the Central Tibetan Administration, Penpa Tsering, committed to working toward restoring these broadcasts, stating that their suspension is "a major loss to the Tibetan struggle."

Mr. Golok Jigme, a prominent former Tibetan political prisoner who was imprisoned in Tibet for listening to and giving interviews to VOA and RFA and who now resides in the U.S., emphasized: "I know firsthand how vital these two radio stations are to Tibetans living under Chinese rule. They provide hope and truthful information in an environment of fear and propaganda." Many other former Tibetan political prisoners have also shared their experiences of how these two radio stations have benefited Tibet and Tibetans and expressed their disappointment at the suspension of operations.

During her response in the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile, Norzin Dolma, the Minister of Information and International Relations of the Central Tibetan Administration, said that the sudden suspension of the operations of these two radio stations is deeply regrettable and has closed a window through which Tibetans inside Tibet could view the world.

Stephen Capus, the head of Radio Free Europe, has stated that the blocking of funding for these two radio stations is a huge gift to America's enemies.

The Cost of Silence

If these two foreign news programs permanently disappear from Tibet in the future, it will inevitably lead to these serious situations:

No one to counter Chinese government distortions and falsehoods

Obstacles to the actual situation in Tibet reaching the outside world

Difficulties in internal information exchange

The international community's inability to understand conditions in Tibet

A situation where Tibetan suffering and calls cannot be transmitted to the outside world

Under such circumstances, it is clear that the Chinese Communist government will have a good opportunity to act without restraint in Tibet and implement increasingly oppressive and brutal policies against Tibetans. The status of the Tibetan language and culture will also be at risk.

The loss impacts not only the approximately six million Tibetans inside Tibet but also millions of Tibetan cultural and linguistic heirs in the Himalayan regions of India, Nepal, and Bhutan. It also contradicts the United States' China policy. This represents a major victory for the Chinese Communist government and its authorities in the 21st-century information media struggle, while the losers are the U.S. government and vulnerable people around the world, including Tibetans, as evident from the Chinese government's welcoming articles. Therefore, there are many reasons why these two radio stations must continue their operations in full.

Dalai Lama's quiet victory over China

18 April 2025, Times of India, [Ashok](#)

His influence is reason Beijing wants to pick his successor

History is not a political project written in the present, Dalai Lama reminds Beijing, and the free world, in *Voice for the Voiceless: Over Seven Decades of Struggle with China for My Land and My People*. That said, commitment to a mutually beneficial relationship would mean "there's no need to insist the two parties agree on exactly the same version of the past."

It's been 75 years since China invaded and annexed Tibet. Tibetan Buddhism's spiritual head turns 90 in July. The hot question is who's his successor? He/she'll be from the free world, says Dalai Lama. In a cruel twist, the 'leader' of this 'free world' recently created a more immediate problem for Tibet's govt-in-exile. It froze USAID funds.

From his first encounter, as a hopeful teenager, with Mao Zedong to his expectations of Deng Xiaoping (who said "except for independence, everything is negotiable"), to Tibetan govt-in-exile's last exchange in 2010 for Tibet's self-rule, not independence, the book lays out both the road travelled and a roadmap ahead for the Tibetan struggle. The basic point: "The simple truth is no Tibetan will ever say, 'I am a Chinese'."

There have been no formal talks since 2010. A meeting with Xi during his 2014 trip to India didn't materialise. Dalai Lama had hopes from Xi as "the most powerful Chinese leader since Deng Xiaoping". That "he'd seize the opportunity for a bold vision (for) Tibet...Xi had made positive remarks about Buddhism (in Paris)."

The monk was told Xi's mother was a practising Buddhist, and, he had met Xi's father, who had opposed the Tiananmen crackdown, on his first visit to Beijing 1954-1955.

But Dalai Lama always found CCP's leadership changes "hard to gauge". Transitions from Deng to Jiang to Hu to Xi were "difficult to navigate in real time". When dealing with "any Chinese leader, it isn't clear if one is speaking to an empowered individual or someone caught in the complex web of power relations with

other Politburo members," writes Dalai Lama. Individual efforts seemed thwarted by the leadership. The book recounts China's Buddhist traditions and argues that Tibetan Buddhism alone can bring "mental peace among millions of young Chinese." Beijing's got their land. But Dalai Lama may just be making his way into Chinese people's hearts and minds. "What gives me hope is that the relationship between the two peoples – Tibetans and Chinese – has not been irreparably damaged."

Communist China had invaded a theocratic state. But Dalai Lama shaped Tibet-in-exile as a democracy. He mused that people may abolish his post even – an acutely political idea that would put paid to Beijing's strategy of picking his successor. The takeaway from the Tibet struggle perhaps is that CCP has had to concede that Dalai Lama's reach and influence – regardless of the fact that Beijing sees him as a "separatist" – has no parallel.

Communist China waiting to appoint a religious head, the next Dalai Lama, shows how strong the current Dalai Lama's brand is.

China Buddhist Association: A Trojan Horse of Chinese Propaganda

18 April 2025, [Bitter Winter](#), Zhu Yaozu

Naïve Buddhists in democratic countries believe they are conducting genuine inter-Buddhist dialogue with a group that exists to advance CCP interests.

Earlier this month, in the magazine "Chinese Religion," an interesting article was published on directives from the United Front Work Department and the CCP to the government-controlled China Buddhist Association.

The text first underlines what is the purpose of China Buddhist Association. "General Secretary Xi Jinping stressed that winning people's hearts is crucial and the United Front is key to this." The Association is there to make sure that, "The Buddhist community should follow Xi Jinping Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for the New Era, study and implement his views on the Party's United Front and religious work and unite religious believers. They should embrace patriotism, align Buddhism with socialist values..."

Of special interest is the work entrusted to China Buddhist Association to advance Chinese interests abroad by "promoting friendship between Chinese and foreign Buddhist circles." Follows a list of best practices. "China Buddhist Association has escorted the Buddha's tooth relic from Lingguang Temple in Beijing to Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and Thailand for worship several times, enhancing mutual understanding and promoting good neighborliness and friendship. Friendly exchanges have been carried out with Buddhist circles of South Korea and Japan, initiating the establishment of the 'China-Korea-Japan

Buddhist Friendship Exchange Conference’ platform, and concluding the ‘golden bond’ of East Asian folk cultural exchanges. The Association deepened and expanded exchanges and cooperation between the Buddhist circles of China and the countries in the Lancang-Mekong River Basin, regularly holding the ‘Lancang-Mekong River Basin Buddhist Exchange Conference’ and helping build a community of shared future with China for Lancang-Mekong countries.”

In the future, the China Buddhist Association is told that it should “continuously strengthen friendly exchanges with the Buddhist circles in the Americas, Oceania and Europe, and co-host the ‘China-US-Canada Buddhist Forum’ and ‘China-Australia-New Zealand Buddhist Forum’ and other exchange activities, as foreign friendly exchanges are gradually globalized. It should continue and manage the ‘World Buddhist Forum,’ and strive to build a high-level international multilateral exchange platform for Buddhism with global influence and achieve remarkable results.”

The China Buddhist Association is also instructed to “participate in the activities of international Buddhist and religious peace organizations,” including “the World Fellowship of Buddhists, the United Nations Vesak Day Committee, and groups such as ‘China Buddhist Harmony,’ ‘Asia Buddhist Harmony,’ and ‘World Buddhist Harmony,’ actively telling Chinese stories, spreading China’s voice, and promoting China’s image.” The ultimate aim is to foster “a solid social and public opinion foundation for friendship between China and foreign countries and create a favorable international atmosphere.”

Naïve Buddhists in democratic countries believe that by interacting with the China Buddhist Association they genuinely promote inter-Buddhist dialogue. In fact, the China Buddhist Association spreads international Chinese propaganda under the direct guidance of the United Front. It is time for honest Buddhists abroad to cut ties with an organization denounced by international instances as promoting the persecution of Buddhists not aligned with the regime in China and Tibet

Xi’s intensifying war on Tibetans

18 April 2025, [Bitter Winter](#), Dolma Tsering

The Chinese government on March 29 sent shock waves through the Tibetan Buddhist community by announcing the untimely death of one of its most revered spiritual figures, Hungkar Dorje Rinpoche. His sudden passing in Vietnam raised widespread suspicion and concern among his followers, who demanded an investigation. International human rights organization Human Rights Watch joined their call and urged a thorough investigation into his death,

highlighting the potential involvement of the Chinese government.

At just 56 years old, Rinpoche was influential not only as a spiritual leader, but also for his steadfast efforts to preserve and promote Tibetan identity and cultural values — efforts increasingly deemed subversive under Chinese President Xi Jinping’s (习近平) rule. Born in 1969 in Dga’de Dzong, Golog Prefecture, Qinghai (Amdo) Province, he pursued studies at various Tibetan monasteries and in Beijing and the US. In 2002, he received government approval to become the 10th abbot of Longen Monastery, which supported more than 700 monks and nuns. Two years later, he founded the Qinghai Provincial Gesar Charity Foundation, which provided free food, clothing and medical care to impoverished Tibetans in Golog.

In 2007, Rinpoche established a multidisciplinary technical school offering free education to Tibetan children in Golog, accepting more than 300 students. His contributions extended beyond Buddhist teachings, as he viewed himself as a philanthropist and an educator.

In 2021, Xi’s administration intensified its campaign to shut down privately run Tibetan cultural schools, as part of a broader push for cultural assimilation. Rinpoche’s school was among those targeted and it subsequently closed. More than 100 schools were forced to shut down and merge with government-run institutions where Mandarin was the primary medium of instruction.

Unlike private schools in other parts of China, those Tibetan schools were free and focused on promoting the Tibetan language, culture and identity. Xi’s war on Tibetan identity has made Tibetan-language schools key targets. That campaign escalated further with the banning of the Tibetan language in college entrance exams and on social media platforms such as Douyin. The closure of Tibetan-run schools was followed by the establishment of colonial-style boarding schools, where children were separated from their families. Those schools prioritized ideological re-education and Mandarin language instruction.

Rinpoche came under closer scrutiny in September last year when he refused to welcome the Chinese government-appointed Panchen Lama during a visit to his monastery. From that point onward, Rinpoche was subjected to several interrogations, signaling a serious risk of detention if he did not flee the country. He was accused not only of defying state policies, but also of composing lifelong prayers for the Dalai Lama.

Fearing for his safety, Rinpoche fled to Vietnam, seeking refuge. However, in March, Chinese intelligence agents, reportedly with the cooperation of local Vietnamese police, apprehended and detained him. Just days after his detention, news of his death was announced.

Rinpoche's death in Vietnam has drawn attention to the Chinese government's pressure on Tibetan religious figures and its transnational repression of dissidents. In 1995, the Chinese government kidnapped 11th Panchen Lama Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, recognized by the Dalai Lama, and installed its own state-selected Panchen Lama, Gyaltzen Norbu. In 2015, it was accused of being responsible for the death of another prominent religious figure, Tulku Tenzin Delek. The 17th Karmapa fled Tibet in 2000.

While those figures are known internationally, many lesser-known Tibetan monks and educators have been detained solely for promoting the Tibetan language and culture. Additionally, since 2015, thousands of monks and nuns have been forcibly evicted from major Tibetan Buddhist institutions such as Larung Gar and Yachen Gar, as Xi's government intensifies its religious repression. The Chinese government's assault on Tibetan Buddhist leaders is part of a larger agenda of cultural assimilation and the erasure of Tibetan identity.

Rinpoche's death also highlights the alarming nature of China's transnational repression of dissidents. In February, the Guardian reported that China ranked highest in suppressing exiled dissidents globally. Since Xi came to power, the Chinese government has launched an overseas dissident surveillance program known as Operation Fox Hunt, which targeted more than 100,000 individuals across 120 countries between 2014 and 2021. Those activities were orchestrated in cooperation with the host nations. Notably, Rinpoche's death in Vietnam coincided with Xi's official visit to the country.

The tragic death of Rinpoche marks a critical juncture in Xi's aggressive campaign to silence prominent Tibetan Buddhist figures advocating for the preservation of Tibetan culture and identity. That war on Tibetan identity goes far beyond closing schools and suppressing language, it now extends to hunting spiritual leaders beyond China's borders.

China is sending soldiers to Ukraine to prepare for a Taiwan invasion

17 April 2025, [The Hill](#), Gordon G. Chang

A former Western intelligence official told Reuters that approximately 200 Chinese soldiers are fighting for Russia in Ukraine. Two current U.S. officials, speaking anonymously, confirm that there are more than a hundred of them.

Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky put the number at 155. His forces have recently captured two of them.

Reuters reports that the U.S. government believes these soldiers are mercenaries and apparently have no "direct link" with the Chinese government. Whether this view is correct or not, Washington and other

governments should impose severe costs upon China for permitting its nationals to enter the battle against Ukraine.

As an initial matter, China's regime is in fact sending soldiers to that Eastern European country. Reuters reports that "Chinese military officers have, with Beijing's approval, been touring close to Russia's frontlines to draw lessons and tactics from the war." The former Western intelligence official told the news service that these officers "are absolutely there under approval."

"The Communist Party craves first-hand experience of the battlefield in Ukraine to inform its People's Liberation Army for its future wars," Richard Fisher of the Washington, D.C. area-based International Assessment and Strategy Center told me late last week. "For the PLA, the Ukraine battlefield offers the most vivid and brutal evolution of the revolutionary and see-saw battle between unmanned weapons and electronic warfare defenses arrayed against them."

"If the PLA can grasp and expand on the lessons of the Ukraine battlefield, it can vastly increase its chances of a rapid blitzkrieg victory in Taiwan," says Fisher.

It is also likely that the Chinese officers are doing more than observing and reporting back to China. They may also be giving advice to their Russian counterparts. China, after all, has been backing Russia's war effort from the beginning.

China almost certainly greenlighted the invasion with its 5,300-word joint statement issued by Xi Jinping and Vladimir Putin in Beijing on Feb. 4, 2022, just 20 days before the Russian attack. Putin might have invaded earlier, but he evidently acceded to Chinese wishes and waited until after the end of the Beijing Winter Olympics to hit the former Soviet republic.

China has during the war supported Putin almost across the board. For instance, Beijing has purchased Russian oil sanctioned by the United Kingdom, U.S. and the European Union, opened its financial and banking systems to Russia's institutions under sanction, provided military intelligence and diplomatic and propaganda support and sold both dual-use items and, according to some sources, weapons.

Given Beijing's support to both Moscow and Pyongyang, it is unlikely that North Korea could have joined the war on Russia's side without China's approval.

With regard to the mercenaries, Beijing probably both knew and approved of their participation in the war.

"It is unlikely that these soldiers would have been permitted to travel to Russia without the full consent of the Xi regime," Charles Burton of the Sinopsis think tank told me.

"Xi runs a near-total surveillance state and pays special attention to the interactions of its nationals with close partners such as Russia," Burton, also a former Canadian diplomat stationed in Beijing, said. "A couple

hundred military-age Chinese men leaving the country to fight in a foreign war is certainly something Beijing would know about.”

There are, for instance, bound to be Ministry of State Security agents monitoring visa applications for Russia.

The presence of Chinese soldiers in Ukraine is reminiscent of the “Chinese People’s Volunteers” who went to fight United Nations troops in North Korea beginning in 1950.

“China sending in an initial small cohort to join the Russians is consistent with Chinese Communist strategy to initially create plausible deniability and then a veneer of legitimacy for a gradual build-up of those at the front lines,” says Burton. “This will almost certainly be accompanied by the gradual introduction of sophisticated Chinese offensive weaponry,” he added.

Burton is also concerned that Russia, indebted to China because of the support in Ukraine, will not be able to say no when China demands that Moscow send forces to help it invade Taiwan or another neighbor.

The Chinese and Russian militaries regularly hold joint drills in East Asia. Therefore, the Pentagon should assume that these two powers, along with North Korea, will fight together during the next war.

So China probably sees great advantage in Chinese troops, even if just mercenaries, fighting in Ukraine.

The U.S. and other countries have imposed almost no costs on China for its extensive support for the Russian war effort. We should not be surprised, therefore, that Beijing now thinks it can, with impunity, send soldiers to fight in Europe.

Taiwan: the sponge that soaks up Chinese power

16 April 2025, [The Strategist](#), Nathan Attril

Taiwan has an inadvertent, rarely acknowledged role in global affairs: it’s a kind of sponge, soaking up much of China’s political, military and diplomatic efforts. Taiwan absorbs Chinese power of persuasion and coercion that won’t be directed elsewhere while the island remains free.

This means that sporting Taiwan is not merely a moral stance in favour of democracy; it is a strategic and economic necessity. Taiwan’s independence from China anchors the regional order—and maybe even the global order. While it remains separate from China, Beijing is delayed in shifting attention to new, potentially more dangerous fronts.

Every leader of the People’s Republic of China—from Mao Zedong to Xi Jinping—has made ‘reunification’ a non-negotiable part of the party’s mission. Xi has tied Taiwan’s future directly to what he calls the ‘Chinese Dream’ of national rejuvenation. Unification is ‘essential’ to achieving China’s rise as a great power,

he says. Party officials have referred to Xi Jinping as the ‘helmsman’ guiding China’s national rejuvenation.

The intensity of this focus is obvious. The Chinese armed forces have made preparing for an invasion and occupation of Taiwan their top strategic priority, developing a vast arsenal of missiles, air and naval forces designed to overwhelm the island’s defences and deter US intervention.

Military exercises simulating blockades or invasion have become normalised. In 2022, just over 1,700 Chinese military aircraft flew into Taiwan’s de facto air defence identification zone, twice as many as in the previous year. In 2024, that figure was more than 3,000. As the graphs below show, in 2024 Chinese aircraft and seafaring vessels were spotted around Taiwan on all but five days of the year. The exceptions were caused mostly by typhoons in the area.

And alongside this military pressure, Beijing wages an unrelenting pressure campaign to isolate Taiwan internationally, intimidate nations that support it and subvert Taiwanese society. This sustained, multi-domain strategy of intensifying coercion reflects just how much of China’s political and strategic bandwidth Taiwan consumes.

China devotes enormous resources to keeping Taiwan under pressure. The Taiwan issue so dominates Beijing’s strategic agenda that it slows, redirects, and tempers other assertive behaviours: it has fewer resources for other domains, including in the South China Sea, along the Indian border, in Africa and in the Pacific islands.

If unification remains the regime’s priority, Beijing must be cautious not to unnecessarily provoke crises elsewhere that could derail its Taiwan plans. Military adventurism in the East China Sea or South China Sea carries the risk of triggering a conflict and diverting resources that might undermine China’s ability to seize Taiwan. So, Taiwan’s function as a sponge for China’s attention is also a check on broader aggression. Beijing would be more emboldened to pursue its other strategic priorities if Taiwan capitulated.

There’s also a domestic angle. The Chinese Communist Party uses Taiwan to fuel nationalist sentiment, to justify defence spending instead of fixing an economy weighed down by structural issues, and to distract from other internal challenges. If the Taiwan issue were solved, the regime would need a new outlet for this energy—potentially one more dangerous for China’s neighbours.

Policymakers must ask a sobering question: what happens if Taiwan is annexed by China? This would not satisfy Beijing’s appetite but rather embolden it. Absorption of Hong Kong has only freed up more resources to focus on coercion of Taiwan.

With Taiwan under its control, China would gain a crucial forward base for power projection. Its navy would have more available resources to operate in the

Pacific, threatening shipping lanes and enforcing the rights of internal waters within the Taiwan Strait. China could pressure Japan more aggressively over the Senkaku Islands or enforce dominance in the South China Sea. The Philippines, just south of Taiwan, would be more vulnerable to Chinese coercion.

Moreover, the psychological impact of a Chinese victory would ripple across Asia. US allies might question Washington's resolve. Smaller countries might accommodate Chinese influence to avoid becoming the next target. The delicate balance of power in the Indo-Pacific would tilt—not towards peace, but towards authoritarian dominance.

Policymakers in Indo-Pacific capitals need to send a clear message: maintaining the status quo in the Taiwan Strait helps preserve the broader stability of the Indo-Pacific. Conversely, abandoning Taiwan would not end China's expansion; it would accelerate it.

Taiwan may be small in size, but it plays a disproportionate role in shaping Asia's future. So long as it remains a sponge for CCP attention, the rest of the region has a chance to stay dry.

Tibet, the territory where the Chinese Communist Party is omnipresent

16 April 2025, [El País](#), Guillermo Abril

EL PAÍS travels to the autonomous region of China, where governments and NGOs denounce the violation of rights and Beijing claims it has implemented a successful development model.

The white and reddish walls of the Potala Palace, the Dalai Lama's former residence, rise on the hill opposite. It has something of an ancient ship about it, like a stranded ark awaiting the flood, riddled with dozens of hatches. Tibetan fabrics flutter above the galleries. The view is lost in the labyrinth of staircases that crisscross toward the sky in an optical illusion crowned by golden roofs. A blinding sun beats down at an altitude of 3,646 meters. It is midday in Lhasa, the capital of the autonomous region of Tibet, on the borders of China, at the foot of the Himalayas. The current Dalai Lama left this city in March 1959 on his way to exile. He has never returned to what he considers an "occupied" territory.

Down here, in the square at the foot of the palace, a ceremony has just been held to commemorate the other side of that milestone. Soldiers have raised the flag of the People's Republic and a floral frieze has been laid out with the inscription: "March 28, Day of the Liberated Serfs of Tibet." Tourists from all over China stroll by. And two huge billboards on the sides emphasize that everything remains under Beijing's control. One displays the faces of the five great leaders since 1949, from Mao Zedong to Xi Jinping. The other is reserved for the latter. It is a face of Xi, about 10 by

6 meters. It is reminiscent of Mao's at Tiananmen Square; his eyes survey every corner of the space.

The Chinese Communist Party is omnipresent in Tibet. Its traces are visible throughout a five-day visit organized by the State Council (the Chinese government) for various media outlets, including EL PAÍS.

"The Party's radiant light illuminates the borders, and the border people have their hearts turned to the Party!" reads a billboard by the roadside. There are dozens of similar messages, scattered here and there. Going hand in hand with the authorities is the only way for foreign journalists and observers to enter the region. It is sensitive territory. There have been outbreaks of rage here in the past, dozens of Tibetans have set themselves on fire, and the repression has been denounced by governments, NGOs, and international organizations. The self-immolations have long since ceased to make the news; criticism persists. "Since 2013, the human rights situation of ethnic Tibetans in Tibetan areas of China [...] has been deteriorating," the European Union delegation to China stated in December. In March, the United States sanctioned Chinese officials for failing to provide unrestricted access to journalists, diplomats, and independent observers.

Much of the concern centers on the erasure of Tibetan identity and culture. In 2023, the UN expressed concern about the separation of one million Tibetan children from their families for "forced" assimilation in boarding schools. Beijing claims that this network of schools is open to everyone, and a visit to one of them will be included in the program.

The trip aims to showcase businesses, social services, infrastructure, and tourist attractions. The focus is on development, investment, and opportunities for locals. The agenda has been organized so the media can see what Beijing wants to show. Everything is focused on highlighting the "unity" between Tibet and China: from the hotel (with a huge Chinese flag dominating the lobby) to the evening show (an embellished tale about the 7th-century Chinese princess Wencheng, who married the Tibetan king Songtsen Gampo). It fits with Beijing's message: "It is the most powerful historical foundation of our national unity," summarizes one of the show's organizers.

At Jokhang Monastery, a spectacular 7th-century complex in central Lhasa, the holiest monastery in Tibetan Buddhism, the religious realignment with Beijing is also clear. The Ba, a monk draped in a maroon robe and deputy executive director of the center's management committee, does not shy away from the latest controversy surrounding the Dalai Lama, whose image is banned in Tibet, but who remains the spiritual leader of the religion. At 89 years old, the Dalai Lama has stated that in his next

reincarnation, he will be born in the “free world.” The Ba responds: the choice will follow “historical rituals” and, in any case, “must be recognized by the central government.”

In a day care center for seniors, there’s a picture of the Chinese president at the entrance. Another photograph of the leader presides over the lounge where elderly men with tanned faces and Tibetan hats play dice and sip tea. They are retired farmers. They speak Tibetan. They are over 70. One says that the region has undergone “a dramatic change,” according to the translation provided by the government. He speaks of the bridges and roads that “now lead everywhere,” of the plumbing and hygiene compared to the filth of the past. Their children no longer work in the fields; they have bought trucks and are engaged in construction. Some were born before the arrival of Mao’s troops, when the Dalai Lama was still in power. — What was it like back then?

— I was very small, I don’t remember everything.

They say they wouldn’t change the present. “If I compare it to the past, it couldn’t be better.” One of them spins the Tibetan mani prayer wheel with a flick of his wrist, adding: “We all die and we have to prepare for the next life.”

The city is in a growth phase. The centuries-old streets of the center, where pilgrims trudge, are the exception. Lhasa is populated by nondescript blocks; new developments are springing up on the outskirts with shopping malls identical to those in the rest of the country, where children play video games with virtual reality headsets. Police booths are ubiquitous on street corners. They are scattered throughout the city. They are part of Beijing’s response to past incidents: the authorities created a network of small, local police stations to keep self-immolations at bay and respond immediately to potential disturbances. The model was so successful that it was replicated in Xinjiang, another sensitive territory.

One day, the group of reporters is led to a press conference with regional authorities where, unexpectedly, the presentation of the document Human Rights in Xizang [the Chinese name for Tibet] in the New Era is announced. The text, drafted by the government, emphasizes that Tibet has gone from being a theocracy where more than 95% of people were “serfs and slaves” to a place that “enjoys political stability, ethnic unity, economic development, social harmony, and friendship among different religions.” It is an immersion in the vision of human rights promoted by Beijing (the “Marxist perspective”), which has put Western democracies on alert: it emphasizes a vision tailored to each country over universality; it prioritizes development and subsistence over other freedoms, such as freedom of expression.

After the press conference, “experts” brought in by the government speak. “For a long time, certain sectors within the international community — including Tibetan separatist forces and anti-China groups — have spread numerous false statements about the human rights situation in Tibet,” says Zhaluo of the Tibetology Research Center. “Western prejudices toward China are evident,” adds Zhang Yonghe of the Human Rights Research Institute at Southwest University in Chongqing. According to him, there’s nothing like going to Tibet and observing to see the change. When asked why journalists and others are prohibited from freely visiting, he replies that it’s due to the poor condition of some infrastructure, dangerous winds blowing at certain airports, and poor accommodations, “since the Chinese generally want to receive foreign guests with the best quality.”

“Most of the things the government wanted to do in Tibet have already been done,” a Beijing-based European source who deals with human rights issues says. The violations of the past have been buried by official history and a policy of fait accompli, he adds. “Cultural homogenization with inland China has been achieved in every important way, while maintaining the theme park characteristics so that the Han [the country’s majority ethnic group] can go on tourist visits and enjoy the yaks and the prayer flags.” They have only been offered one development option — the Chinese one — and the majority have embraced it: “People don’t want to die of typhus.”

A bullet train now crisscrosses the province, flying from Lhasa to Linzhi, surrounded by snow-capped peaks. The valley, crossed by the Nyang River, is fertile, and the newly blossoming peach trees form a cottony landscape. It’s one of its main attractions. At this time of year, thousands of people flock to Gala, a small village with 149 inhabitants and 1,253 peach trees in bloom. Hundreds of people mill around, cell phones in hand. Income has multiplied since they discovered the tourist industry.

Gala is an ode of loyalty to Beijing. In the small square, a sculpture of a hammer and sickle is inscribed with the “oath of joining the Communist Party.” The local mayor, Nima Duoji, 39, receives visitors in the living room of his home. It smells of firewood, light filters through the curtains; he is the first Party member in his family. He subscribes to the developmentalist discourse: he remembers these streets, from his childhood, littered with yak droppings. “It was very dirty and very poor.” The worst times, according to what his ancestors have told him, were the 1940s and 1950s. There was barely anything to eat. He dropped out of school at 16. The eldest of his three children is now studying law in Sichuan. Numerous photographs of Xi and Mao hang on the walls. He concludes: “Without the Communist Party, we would not have a happy life now.”

Surprise: Lama Humkar Dorje Rinpoche “Died in Vietnam”

14 April 2025, [Bitter Winter](#), Lopsang Gurung

He was “disappeared” in December 2024. The authorities announced he was dead on April 5 and now claims he died in Ho Chi Minh City.

Earlier this month, we reported in “Bitter Winter” that Chinese authorities on April 5 told his monks that Lama Humkar Dorje Rinpoche, who had been “disappeared” in late 2024, was dead. The 56-year-old Lama was the abbot of Longen Monastery, which is located in Golog Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai province, which is part of historical Tibet but not of Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR). He was also a famous educator with thousands of devotees, and was known for his criticism of Chinese repression of Tibetan culture and the false Panchen Lama Beijing tries to impose on Tibetans.

While Tibetans abroad were protesting the suspicious death of the Lama, in a surprise development Chinese authorities have now produced a death certificate stating that he died in Vinmec Central Park International Hospital in Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon) on March 28. Five Buddhist monks from Longen Monastery were allowed to travel to Vietnam accompanied by Chinese Public Security officials to see the body of the Lama. According to reports received by “Bitter Winter,” they saw only his face.

Nonetheless, the Longen Monastery, obviously under Chinese pressure, issued a press release stating that Humkar Dorje had exhibited “signs of ill health” (something they had always denied before) and had died “of illness” in Vietnam.

This version, however, is denied by the Central Tibetan Administration in Dharamsala, India, which held a press conference on April 9.

There are other Tibetan exiles in Vietnam. According to the information they were able to gather, Humkar Dorje did manage to flee to Vietnam after having been submitted to heavy-handed interrogation by the Chinese police. However, he was not ill and did not die of natural causes in a hospital. He was kidnapped from his hotel room in Ho Chi Minh City on March 25 by Chinese intelligence agents and Vietnamese police. He died on March 28 in the Public Security bureau where he was again submitted to interrogation and presumably torture.

The statements by the Chinese authorities have not appeased the Tibetan diaspora, and protest demonstrations are multiplying.

New Delhi’s China Dilemma: Diplomacy and Defense Must Align

14 April 2025, [ORE](#), Kartik Bmmakanti

Recognising that strategic intentions may evolve faster than military capabilities, New Delhi should ensure that its defence preparedness keeps pace

In a quest to mend strained ties with Beijing following its aggression in Ladakh in April-May 2020, the Modi government is moving to normalise relations between the two countries. There is a partial withdrawal from the friction points where the Chinese crossed the Line of Actual Control (LAC) and occupied territory. Limited patrolling has been restored. Yet, immediately adjacent to these areas that China occupied in 2020, a large number of Indian and Chinese forces are still deployed. In fact, as of today, the Indian Army (IA) has roughly 10 regiments deployed in Eastern Ladakh and in one of its latest decisions it has raised a division dubbed the “72 Infantry Division” for permanent deployment in Eastern Ladakh. There are additional forces deployed along the central and eastern sectors of the contested boundary. In any case, Prime Minister Modi’s statement in an interview a few weeks ago made clear that he wants to see the pre-April 2020 status quo restored along the Sino-Indian boundary, which would involve a comprehensive climbdown by the Xi Jinping regime. It is unclear how New Delhi will be able to do that along with the normalisation of bilateral ties that involve more intensive bilateral exchanges across the spectrum of areas covering trade, investment and resumption of direct flights between the two countries.

The Indian Army (IA) has roughly 10 regiments deployed in Eastern Ladakh and in one of its latest decisions it has raised a division dubbed the “72 Infantry Division” for permanent deployment in Eastern Ladakh.

Even if there is a diplomatic and salutary denouement to the ongoing LAC crisis between India and China with a return to the pre-April 2020 status quo, considerable challenges remain. The late K. Subrahmanyam had incisively observed that “Irrespective of the state of relationship at any particular time,” he contended, “India and China will constitute mutual challenges to each other” as a result of their massive size, geographic proximity, perceptions as civilisational great states and an ambitious global agenda. As a consequence, New Delhi as Subrahmanyam had prescribed must “...adopt a policy of directly befriending China and, at the same time,” balancing China’s power through “an Asian and global balance of power system”.

To secure more Chinese investments and rejuvenate the Indian economy, New Delhi cannot ignore the imperative and the absolute indispensability of building up the military capabilities of the armed

forces against the PRC. Military power forms the foundation of the balance of power. Indian governments have tended to place a higher premium on responding to actual threats that manifest themselves, especially during a crisis than on anticipating threats or quickly reacting to the development of capabilities initiated by India's adversaries. The ongoing crisis at the contested Sino-Indian frontier perfectly exemplifies what is problematic with India's approach to the development of military capabilities especially vis-à-vis the PRC. Take the development of light tanks, the PRC announced the development of its Type-15 Light Battle Tank (LBT) in the early 2010s and its prototype or variant was first showcased at the 2016 Zhuhai Air Show in 2016. It was finally displayed during the 2019 National Day Parade by the People's Liberation Army (PLA). Indeed, the 2019 Defence White Paper released by the PRC—the first of its kind from the Communist Regime—made a pointed reference to the integration of the Type-15 into the PLA's Order of Battle (ORBAT). India has moved post-haste to develop a native light tank with some of its key components imported such as engines and the turret system for the Zorawar LBT. Built by China North Industries Corporation (NORINCO), the Type-15 LBT, evidence of the development of the tank was visible to Indian decision-makers, but it took more than a year after the outbreak of the current boundary crisis deliberately precipitated by the PRC, which has only slightly eased, that New Delhi announced the purchase of the Russian-built Sprut-SDM1 light tank. Although the government proceeded subsequently to announce the development of a native light tank dubbed the 'Zorawar'—which has undergone preliminary trials, further testing is required before the native variant goes into production and is commissioned into the IA. Today, India has moved post-haste to develop a native light tank with some of its key components imported such as engines and the turret system for the Zorawar LBT. Almost the same pattern was seen with other capabilities such as airborne and spaceborne Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities. It took the PLA intrusion at Yangtse in Arunachal Pradesh in December 2022 that led to the government taking steps to acquire ISR capabilities in the form of the 31 MQ-9Bs last year for all three Indian armed services, which will give the IA and the Indian Air Force (IAF) variants of the MQ-9s better 24-hour surveillance capability along the LAC. It revealed the inadequacy, prompting Indian officials, to concede that New Delhi just did not have Earth Observation (EO) spacecraft and airborne capabilities dedicated to Imagery Intelligence (IMINT) to prevent the PLA intrusion like the one that occurred at Yangtse. While airborne ISR in the form of the MQ-9s are necessary, they are insufficient, because the Indian armed forces

need Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellites for EO missions. Indeed, as the author recommended in 2020, India's forces need a dedicated Small Satellite (SmSat) constellation for Command, Control, Computers, Communications, and Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (C4ISR).

The capabilities listed above that India is accumulating represent only a small fragment that New Delhi needs to acquire against the PRC. They are being acquired with urgency not because of a need or commitment to balancing Chinese military power vigorously, but because of crisis and the immediacy of the military threat along the LAC. Building capabilities only after a crisis breaks out makes India too reactive and it might be ineffective because third parties are unlikely to always assist New Delhi if war breaks out. Ultimately, New Delhi will have to recognise a distinctive yet recurring element in international politics is that intentions can change faster than capabilities which India painfully discovered with the PRC launching their military aggression across the LAC in Ladakh in 2020.

He Weidong's Possible Downfall and Xi's Trust Deficit With the PLA

11 April 2025, [The Jamestown Foundation](#), K. Tristan Tang

Executive Summary:

Central Military Commission Vice Chairman He Weidong's absence from an important public event, one attended by all Politburo members except him, suggests that he is either seriously ill or under investigation. The latter possibility would suggest that Xi Jinping may have lost confidence in him.

He Weidong is responsible for overseeing the military's political and disciplinary affairs, but his personnel management and promotion recommendations since the 20th Party Congress in October 2022 have raised significant issues. Many key generals, upon promotion, were found to have corruption problems.

He Weidong came up through the Nanjing Military Region, as did recently purged senior officials Tang Yong and Miao Hua. Xi Jinping may view their rise as containing elements of factionalism and cronyism, likely contributing to a loss of trust in He Weidong.

Xi's wider distrust is evident in the removal of Li Ganjie from his role overseeing personnel for the Party and government.

If He Weidong has been purged, the PLA does not have suitable candidates within its ranks to replace him.

As early as March 13, reports began to suggest that He Weidong (何卫东), a vice chairman of the Central Military Commission (CMC), had come under investigation following the big annual political gatherings in Beijing known as the "Two Sessions"

(The Epoch Times, March 14). The Financial Times, citing five people familiar with the matter, reported on April 10 confirming He's removal (Financial Times, April 10). This reporting followed He's absence from the Central Conference on Work Related to Neighboring Countries (中央周边工作会议), held from April 8–9. This event was attended by all other members of the Politburo, as well as senior three-star generals on the CMC, including CMC Vice Chairman Zhang Youxia, Secretary of the Discipline Inspection Commission Zhang Shengmin (张升民), Minister of National Defense Dong Jun (董军), Director of the Equipment Development Department Xu Xueqiang (许学强), Deputy Chief of the Joint Staff Department Xu Qiling (徐起零), and Deputy Director of the Political Work Department He Hongjun (何宏军) (CCTV, April 9). (See Figure 1).

He Weidong has not made any public appearances since the Two Sessions and has been absent from key events. Although he still appears in the official list of Politburo members on Xinhua's website and the government has yet to release any related information, his absence raises the possibility that, barring major illness, he is under investigation. Alternatively, as the Financial Times report suggests, He Weidong may have been suspended or removed from his position already (Xinhua, accessed April 10). Unusual Silence Surrounds Supposedly Loyal He

Two details make the alleged investigation into He Weidong appear unusual. The first is his apparent loyalty to Xi Jinping. The two men have a history of interactions that dates back to Xi's tenure in Fujian and Zhejiang provinces (Asia Society, October 27, 2022). His loyalty can be inferred from public statements that he has made; specifically from references to the "CMC Chairperson Responsibility System" (军委主席负责制)—a slogan that underscores Xi's complete control over the military—in remarks delivered at the Two Sessions. He Weidong has used this phrase consistently since he joined the CMC in 2023 (State Council Information Office, November 10, 2021). [1] A review of statements dating back to 2021 shows that CMC members previously removed from the commission, including Miao Hua (苗华) and Li Shangfu (李尚福), did not always mention the "CMC Chairperson Responsibility System." This sets He apart from many other senior generals on the CMC and demonstrates a high degree of public loyalty to Xi, loyalty that presumably led Xi to trust him enough to promote him to his current position. (See Table 1).

The severity of He Weidong's suspected investigation, which appears to surpass that of Li Shangfu and Miao Hua, is the second unusual detail. For instance, part of

Li Shangfu's investigation took place publicly, including a public call for leads (Lianhe Zaobao, July 29, 2023; Xinhua, June 27, 2024). Miao Hua, despite missing the Two Sessions, reappeared to participate in an annual tree planting event on April 1, 2024, before being suspended later that year. By contrast, silence surrounds He's case, and he was absent from this year's tree planting event (PLA Daily, April 2, 2024, April 3). This could indicate that the government either is handling his investigation with a high level secrecy or may not be seeking extensive concrete evidence for its case against him. Miao was placed under "suspension for investigation" (停职检查) rather than being "expelled from the military" (开除军籍) or having their rank revoked (Xinhua, November 28, 2024). It is possible He could face the latter, more serious consequence.

Table 1: Mentions of the Chairman's Responsibility System by 20th Party Congress CMC Members in Their Two Sessions Speeches.

Year	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Zhang Youxia	X	X	O	O	X
He Weidong	Promoted to the CMC at the 20th Party Congress in 2022.		O	O	O
Li Shangfu			X	Announced investigation on August 31, 2023.	under on
Liu Zhenli			O	O	X
Miao Hua	O	X	O	Absent from the 2024 Two Sessions and announced to be under investigation in November 2024.	
Zhang Shengmin	O	O	O	O	O

(Source: Compilation by the author based on Xinhua news report)

Xi May Have Lost Trust in He

A loss of trust in He Weidong's ability to manage the People's Liberation Army (PLA) generals is the primary reason Xi may have removed him. He Weidong's responsibilities likely include managing political affairs and discipline. [2] However, under his management, the number of PLA generals being investigated or removed for disciplinary violations or otherwise breaking the law since the 20th Party Congress has been high—even after a decade-long anti-corruption campaign within the PLA. Many of the affected generals had been promoted to key positions during He's tenure, raising concerns about the personnel management and promotion system he oversaw. For instance, Li Zhizhong (李志忠), who was removed as a

National People's Congress (NPC) representative in February 2024, was previously promoted to lieutenant general as the deputy commander of the Central Theater Command in May 2023 (Xinhua, February 27, 2024; HKTKWW, March 4, 2024). Similarly, Li Pengcheng (李鹏程), who lost his position as an NPC representative in December 2024, had been promoted to vice admiral and the commander of the Southern Theater Command Navy in 2024 (NPC, December 25, 2024; RFI, December 25, 2024).

The most serious case may be that of Tang Yong (唐勇), as it could suggest that a "He Weidong" faction was gaining momentum within the military's disciplinary apparatus. Tang, like He Weidong (and also the recently purged Miao Hua), had served in the Nanjing Military Region (now the Eastern Theater Command) from the 1990s to the 2000s, specifically in the military court. In December 2023, Tang was promoted to lieutenant general and became the Deputy Secretary of the CMC Discipline Inspection Commission. His appointment aroused suspicion due to the unusual treatment of his predecessor, Chen Guoqiang (陈国强). Chen, despite appearing publicly in September 2024 as the political commissar of the National University of Defense Technology (NUDT), remains listed as a member of the Standing Committee of the Central Commission for Discipline Inspection (CCDI). His transfer to NUDT could be seen as a demotion, as his role there was previously held by a major general—a lower rank than Chen's (Caixin, September 29, 2024). Since Chen has retained his position on the CCDI, he likely has not been found guilty of corruption; however, his reassignment suggests that his superiors may have sought to undermine or punish him. He Weidong may have been the man behind this reassignment. If so, his subsequent promotion of Tang Yong could be seen as an attempt to place a trusted ally in charge of a key position in the military discipline apparatus. This appearance of factionalism and favoritism—whether valid or not—may have caused Xi Jinping to lose trust in He Weidong. The revocation of Tang's membership to the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, the PRC's top political advisory body, could be one indication of this (Xinhua, March 26; Lianhe Zaobao, March 27; Mingpao, March 28). Tang has likely been removed from his position, as another lieutenant general, Zhou Jianxin (周建新), recently attended a National Inspection Work Conference (全国巡视工作会议) that Tang previously attended, as shown in Figure 2 (CCTV, April 8).

Xi's Quest for Loyalists Managing Personnel

He Weidong's current situation remains unknown. However, the hypothesis that Xi Jinping lost trust in He

and has placed him under investigation is plausible. It also fits with a broader but related phenomenon, namely, Xi's low level of confidence in his senior military officers, as evidenced by his willingness to pay attention to the opinions of lower-ranking officers during his participation in the PLA delegation at the Two Sessions, a departure from his previous focus on high-ranking officials (China Brief, March 15). This, in turn, is related to Xi's growing paranoia beyond the military system.

On April 2, reports surfaced that the former head of the Central Organization Department, Li Ganjie (李干杰), and the former head of the United Front Work Department, Shi Taifeng (石泰峰), were publicly reassigned to each other's positions (12371, April 2; Xinhua, April 2). This occurred in the context of ongoing corruption issues across the Party and government, which suggests the switch may have been prompted by Li Ganjie's inability to effectively manage personnel. The announcement on April 8 that Li Gang (李刚), the head of the Central Organization Department's Discipline Inspection and Supervision Group, is under investigation supports this theory—Li Gang has only been in this role since January 2024 (The Paper, January 30, 2024; People's Daily, April 8). Disciplinary oversight in the Central Organization Department is an enormously sensitive portfolio, yet it was assigned to someone with a corruption problem under Li Ganjie's watch. The installation of Shi, a politburo member who served as the vice president of the Party School of the Central Committee from 2007–2010 (when Xi Jinping was its president), likely means that Xi now has a trusted ally in this crucial position (12371, May 22, 2013; Xinhua, October 25, 2017).

The overhaul of officials responsible for personnel changes that has occurred since the 20th Party Congress is connected to Xi's consolidation of power. During the 18th Party Congress, Xi's control over personnel was limited. After the 19th Party Congress in 2017, his confidants took key roles, including Chen Xi (陈希) as the head of the Organization Department and Zhang Youxia as the vice-chairman of the Central Military Commission in charge of politics. [3] This may have led Xi to treat them with particular favor. For example, even after Chen stepped down from the Politburo, he continued to serve as president of the Party School. At the same time, Zhang Youxia remains on the Politburo despite being past the conventional retirement age. Zhang has also been unaffected by recent investigations into the equipment development department, which he led from 2012–2017 (Global Times, March 2; SCMP, October 23, 2022). However, it was only after the 20th Party Congress that all members of the Politburo Standing Committee came from Xi Jinping's faction (China Leadership Monitor, December 1, 2022). Without non-Xi figures such as Li

Keqiang (李克强) among the top leadership, Xi likely believed personnel arrangements could be made without resistance, avoiding any compromise that could lead to lingering issues. Therefore, Xi Jinping may view the ongoing personnel management issues within the Party, government, and military systems after the 20th Party Congress as due to what he perceives as incompetence from He Weidong and Li Ganjie. Additionally, He and Li do not share the same special relationship with Xi Jinping as Chen Xi and Zhang Youxia, so Xi could remove them from their posts without concerns about personal ties.

He Weidong's likely downfall poses a deeper personnel problem for Xi, however. Within the PLA, only Zhang Youxia shares He Weidong's rank; Miao Hua is under investigation; and Zhang Shengmin does not hold a Central Committee position. No one else would likely have the sufficient rank and experience to take on He's role and manage PLA personnel effectively.

Forthcoming book brings Tibetan history to the forefront

11 April 2025, [The Lindsay Advocate](#), Ian McKechnie
The local history genre is one with which many residents of Kawartha Lakes are familiar. Thanks to scores of books, articles, and museum exhibits – not to mention good old-fashioned oral histories – the stories that have shaped and continue to shape our community keep being told and retold.

Count Lindsay's Pencho Rabgey among the most enthusiastic students of local history – not simply of his adopted community in which he has resided for more than half a century, but of the region in Tibet from which he hails. So committed is Rabgey to sharing his stories with others that he wrote a book of personal reflections, chronicling his life journey in the context of the local history of his homeland in the mountains of eastern Tibet.

Originally published in the Tibetan language by the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives in Dharamasala, India, the book is now being edited and translated into English by his daughter, Tashi Rabgey, and will be released later this year as *Roaring Mountains: A Tibetan Journey of Faith and Renewal*.

Not unlike local histories published over the years in Kawartha Lakes, *Roaring Mountains* has its origins in an archive – in this case, books of stories kept in a Tibetan monastery. “These books document the local history of the Chungba community,” he explains. As a monk, Rabgey read through this repository of stories aloud while a scribe copied everything down. The books, available only locally, were sadly destroyed during the Cultural Revolution.

The result is a collection of tales about the history of Chungba and its monastery and includes stories from Rabgey's own life throughout. And, as many local residents are aware, that story is one of personal sacrifice.

Rabgey left his homeland in 1959 as part of the Dalai Lama's bodyguard following the Tibetan uprising and in due course made his way to Canada, arriving as a refugee in 1971. He and his family arrived in Lindsay a few years later. In the ensuing decades, he has become best known for his work in establishing the Chungba Primary School, which welcomed its first students in 2002.

Looking back over his nearly 90 years, Rabgey is humble about what he has done to help build a stronger future for Tibet. “I have done many things – some by choice, some by circumstance,” he says.

How circumstances paved the way for Rabgey's remarkable journey is woven deeply into the narrative of *Roaring Mountains*. Asked how he hopes this mixture of local history and personal story will resonate with readers (particularly those who are unfamiliar with the rich tapestry of Tibetan culture and heritage), Rabgey says, “I hope that, by reading it, young people will feel motivated to know and record their own local histories here in Lindsay, too.”

Beginning with the local (whether in Tibet or in Lindsay), Rabgey also hopes that readers of his book might feel more personally and deeply connected to the global community – and thus go forth and become the change-makers the world needs.

The challenge of establishing a politically self-reliant Tibet

09 April 2025, [Economy Next](#), Kshama Ranawana

The foundation of Tibet's parliament in exile is built on respecting diverse views and the space to question and critique, an inherent principle of Buddhism, explained Namgyal Dolkar Lhagyari, a Member of the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile.

A democracy creates space for disagreement and different perspectives, and Tibetans too must be open to having a dialogue amongst themselves. It is what the 14th Dalai Lama expects of all Tibetans she stated, adding that being open to internal dialogue would prepare them for talks with the Chinese Communist Party some day.

The Dalai Lama “foresees a politically self-reliant Tibet,” she added, pointing out that even though he divested himself of all political power in 2011, Tibetans continue to look to him for direction, as he is experienced in both running a State and a freedom movement.

In the Dalai Lama, observed Lhagyari, ‘we see the meaning of compassion in action’ and a reformer the world needs. Despite all the power he possesses, the

Dalai Lama places leadership on Tibetans, inspiring even the women to lead the freedom movement.

Despite regional or class backgrounds, the common denominator is that they are all people of Tibet, and the younger generation recognises that fact when pursuing the vision for Tibet, Lhagyari pointed out, adding that it is also important to be the voice for those living within Tibet.

Lhagyari made her observations at a web talk organised by the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom South Asia on 'Celebrating the Dalai Lama's Legacy and Tibet's Future, Perspectives from Europe, South Asia and China' on April 4, 2025

The talk, moderated by Tibet Expert Dr Swati Chawla, included Tencho Gyatso, President, International Campaign for Tibet, and Dr Dawa Lokyitsang, anthropologist and expert on Tibetan Agency and Identity as panelists.

The Minister of Security of the Central Tibetan Administration, Dolma Gyari, delivered the keynote address.

Growing up in Dharamsala in the 1960s, Tencho Gyatso experienced the Dalai Lama's actions firsthand. He was just 25 years old when he began his life in exile. Despite his youth, Gyatso pointed out he had a vision and the conviction to inspire an entire generation of Tibetans to work with him to establish a government in exile and to build centres of education and monasteries.

In those early years, he spoke about Tibet's culture and lifestyle, not politics, to make Tibet relevant to the world. Many decades later, she witnessed the support he had gained across the world and respect for his diplomatic skills, when Republicans and Democrats came together to celebrate him in the USA, during a time of polarised political views.

Gyatso pointed out that the current challenge for Tibetans is carrying forward his legacy, a responsibility that falls on the shoulders of the younger generation. It is also important to keep in mind that whatever happens in Tibet, impacts neighbouring countries, she said, pointing out that a quarter of the world is nurtured by rivers that flow out of Tibet.

The best resistance to China's endeavour to co-opt the Tibetan narrative is by teaching Tibet's history to the younger generation, explained Dr Dawa Lokyitsang.

While some academics and activists prefer to position themselves as victims of tragedy, Lokyitsang considers it as an opportunity for Tibetans to create their own destiny, and "to challenge China's narrative of geopolitics in Asia."

When the Dalai Lama took it upon himself to build schools and the infrastructure for life in exile in the aftermath of the Lhasa uprising of 1959, he was joined by Tibetans who shared the vision that it was not simply an exercise of preserving a language and a

culture, but promoting the idea that Tibetan refugees would, someday, return home she opined.

The entire structure the Dalai Lama put together for those in exile is based on carrying forward his legacy, she added, describing it as 'modeling a unique and particularly Tibetan leadership' amidst the rising geopolitical wars and populist candidates.

By voluntarily divesting himself of political power, he has set an example not only for Tibetans but the world at large.

Though more than 1.2 million Tibetans lost their lives or were displaced in the uprising, the Dalai Lama has remained steadfast to his non-violent ideology and the hope of reaching a lasting political solution, stated Dolma Gyari.

He remains a strong proponent of political reform, inter-religious harmony and protecting the environment, she added.

Drawing the discussion to a close, Dr Carsten Klein, Head of the FNF Regional Office South Asia, pointed out to the Dalai Lama's commitment to peaceful co-existence.

He said that global decision makers too should emulate the Tibetan leader, adding that Tibet's geo-strategic relevance should take centre stage in diplomatic and political discussions.

The Dalai Lama turns 90 on July 6, which will coincide with the launch of the Year of Compassion, during which his teachings, publications and life story will be shared globally. (Colombo/Apr9/2025)

The unfinished journey of India-China relations

08 April 2025, [The Pioneer](#), Santosh Mathew

From the optimism of Panchsheel to the shadows of the 1962 war, the story of the Dragon and the Elephant is one of trust gained and lost, of cooperation in multilateral arenas, and of a shared yet often conflicting vision for Asia's future

The relationship between India and China, two of the oldest civilisations in the world, has been a saga marked by both shared history and contentious moments. As the two nations now celebrate the Platinum Jubilee of their diplomatic ties, the journey of their complex relationship reveals a fascinating story of aspirations, trust, mistrust, and evolving geopolitical realities.

When India and China first established diplomatic ties in 1950, it was a moment of promise. India was the first non-socialist country to formally recognise the People's Republic of China (PRC) following its establishment after a bloody civil war. India, under the leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru, was focused on promoting a vision of peaceful coexistence and non-alignment during the Cold War. Nehru saw a future

where the two Asian giants could cooperate to achieve regional peace and stability. This vision was encapsulated in the Panchsheel Agreement signed in 1954, based on five guiding principles: respect for territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence.

The relationship, however, was fraught with challenges from the start. China's refusal to honour the McMahon Line, which demarcated the border between Tibet and India, and its invasion of Tibet in 1950, created early tensions. India, under Nehru's leadership, viewed China's expansionist ambitions with increasing suspicion.

The fact that India offered sanctuary to the Dalai Lama, Tibet's spiritual leader, following an uprising in Tibet in 1959, was seen by China as a direct affront to its sovereignty. Beijing accused India of meddling in its internal affairs, especially over the Tibet issue, and the relationship began to sour.

Nehru, ever the optimist, sought to engage with China diplomatically. He believed that forging closer ties would help India address its security concerns and create a stable, peaceful environment in Asia.

However, the signing of the Panchsheel Agreement in 1954 did not resolve the underlying issues. By the early 1960s, border skirmishes between Indian and Chinese forces were becoming increasingly frequent. The situation escalated in 1962, leading to the war that India would later describe as a crushing defeat. In just a matter of weeks, India lost over 3,000 soldiers and territory in Aksai Chin — an area China had already occupied by the time of the conflict. The defeat left deep scars in the Indian psyche and marked the lowest point in India–China relations. Over the years, both nations struggled to reconcile their differences. In the aftermath of the 1962 war, the relationship remained largely antagonistic for decades, with distrust growing over time. Even as the world around them shifted dramatically, with the Cold War coming to an end, the rise of globalisation, and China's economic liberalisation — India and China found themselves caught in the crosscurrents of global politics. China's increasing engagement with the West, especially the United States, was viewed with suspicion in India, especially as India cultivated deeper ties with the US in the 21st century. The early optimism of Panchsheel began to fade as both countries realised that their interests in Asia and on the global stage — were often at odds. In the 1980s, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's visit to China in 1988 marked a thaw in bilateral relations. China's economic reforms under Deng Xiaoping were yielding positive results, and India, too, was opening up its economy. Gandhi, in his visit to China, reaffirmed India's stance on territorial integrity, especially over disputed areas like Aksai Chin.

Despite the thaw, however, the spectre of the 1962 war continued to hover over the relationship, and issues such as the status of Tibet, the Dalai Lama, and China's growing influence in Asia remained unresolved. In the years that followed, both countries began to recognise the importance of cooperating in global forums. The rise of BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) in the 2000s highlighted the growing significance of emerging economies on the global stage. Yet, even as China and India engaged in multilateral settings like BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), their bilateral ties were continually tested.

For China, the SCO provided a platform to assert its leadership in Central Asia and, by extension, its influence over the Global South. For India, the organisation offered a way to engage with its neighbour while simultaneously countering China's growing assertiveness in the region. The SCO, however, could never completely shield the two nations from the larger geopolitical currents that often drove them apart.

As China's economic power and military capabilities grew, India's strategic positioning within the global order became more important. China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) presented both opportunities and challenges for India. While China promised infrastructure investment across the developing world, including in South Asia, India expressed concerns over the so-called "debt-trap diplomacy" that came with these investments.

India feared that Chinese loans to smaller countries could lead to unsustainable debt burdens, eventually giving China undue political leverage. India's concerns were particularly acute in Sri Lanka, Pakistan, and other neighbouring countries, where Chinese investments were seen as part of a broader strategic move to establish Chinese dominance in South Asia.

The issue of the Dalai Lama continues to be a thorn in the side of Sino–Indian relations. For India, offering sanctuary to the Dalai Lama has been a symbol of its support for the Tibetan cause. For China, however, the Dalai Lama remains a figure of contention — seen as a challenge to its sovereignty over Tibet.

In recent years, as India has taken a stronger stance on human rights and has deepened its strategic ties with the West, China has become increasingly critical of India's stance on Tibet and other issues.

India's rising ties with the US have further complicated its relationship with China. The two countries' growing strategic partnership — especially in the context of the Indo–Pacific — has led to increasing tensions between Beijing and New Delhi. China's growing assertiveness in the South China Sea, its Belt and Road Initiative, and its growing military presence have placed India in a difficult position.

Despite attempts at dialogue, there is an undeniable tension between India's desire for a more secure and independent global role and China's pursuit of regional and global dominance.

In the past two decades, both India and China have had to grapple with the geopolitical realities of an interconnected world. India's participation in BRICS and the SCO, its deepening ties with the US, and its increasingly assertive stance in regional and global politics have put it at odds with China's ambitions. Meanwhile, China's global footprint has only expanded, further complicating bilateral ties.

The Dragon and the Elephant, once bound by common aspirations of peace and prosperity, now find themselves facing a more competitive and uncertain future. As the two countries celebrate the Platinum Jubilee of their diplomatic ties, the relationship between India and China remains as complex as ever. While cooperation in multilateral forums like BRICS and SCO continues, unresolved issues, including border disputes, the Tibet question, and the growing competition for global influence — continue to challenge the bilateral relationship.

The journey of the Dragon and the Elephant is far from over, and it remains to be seen whether these two great nations can navigate their differences and work toward a future of peaceful coexistence or if history will continue to repeat itself.

Yet, the geopolitical realities of the 21st century present an opportunity for these two giants, often described as the "Dragon" and the "Elephant", to transform their cooperation into a force capable of reshaping global power dynamics.

As emerging economic powers, India and China have the potential to create a partnership that could challenge existing global structures and bring about a new era of economic collaboration, technological innovation, and global influence.

The comparison to a "sleeping giant" is fitting in this context: just as China's rise was once predicted to "shake the world", the cooperation between India and China holds the potential to disrupt and transform the global order.

If both nations can overcome their historical grievances and align their interests, their combined influence in global forums such as BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) could lead to an era where their collective strength could rival any other power bloc.

The future of their relationship, while uncertain, offers a tantalising possibility: if the Dragon and the Elephant truly cooperate, they could shake the world in ways that extend far beyond their regional borders — creating a new, more balanced world order.

Ready to return to an autonomous Tibetan homeland

08 April 025, [Tibetan Review](#), Sharchok Khukta

Sharchok Khukta* argues that Tibetans remain ready to return to an autonomous homeland within the People's Republic of China whereas the Chinese government keeps levelling false accusations and imposing impossible preconditions to prevent talks towards the realisation of this goal.

A person of great political expertise who is like a key to opening the door to Tibetan-Chinese dialogue, a pivotal figure in modern Tibetan history, someone who has always prioritized the happiness of and concern for the suffering of the poor and who worked tirelessly since childhood for equality and the rule of law, someone who sought to transform the backwardness of a system based on aristocratic and sectarian feudalism, someone who sought a global path for Tibet based on the aspirations of the Tibetan people, former Kalon Tripa Gyalo Thondup, an elder brother of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, passed away at his Taktser home in Kalimpong, India, on February 8, 2025.

During a routine press conference of the Chinese Foreign Ministry in Beijing on February 10, 2025, a Reuters reporter asked about the passing away of Gyalo Thondup. The Foreign Ministry spokesperson, Guo Jiakun, evaded a direct answer and, instead, reiterated the Chinese government's hardline and indifferent stance which has delayed substantive negotiations on Tibet-China relations.

The reiteration included the Chinese government's position that the negotiating parties be the Dalai Lama and his personal representatives, that the issue for discussion be the future of the Dalai Lama and, at most, a few people around him, and that there be no discussion on the issue of high-level autonomy for Tibet. It was also stated that the Dalai Lama should stop separatist activities and take the correct path; that he publicly acknowledge that both Tibet and Taiwan are part of China; and that the current Chinese government is the only legitimate government of China. He also stated without any sense of demur that the Central Tibetan Administration is an illegal organization.

The fact that the Chinese government continues to repeat its coercive approach after having failed to seize the opportunity for a negotiated settlement during the lifetime of such selfless former Tibetan leader as Gyalo Thondup, who had a sincere concern for the long-term future of both Tibetans and Chinese, does not augur well for the future relationship between the two sides. Gyalo Thondup was not only the most trusted confidante of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, he was also a person who could speak face-to-face, on an equal footing with the top leaders of China on any issue in a

direct manner, and there has never been a person like him who could do that. It cannot be that the Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson knew nothing about this fact. Nor could he have forgotten about the fact that Gyalo Thondup had already responded to these hardline reiterations of China's position in a manner that is mutually beneficial to the two sides.

His Holiness has no demands to make for his personal benefits by holding talks with the Chinese government. On the contrary, he enjoys prestige, respect, trust, and devotion among Tibetans, who are the rightful determiners of Tibet's destiny, and in the international community, that surpassing those of the successive Chinese leaders thus far. At a time when it pretends that there is no such thing as a Tibetan issue and utterly disregards the Central Tibetan Administration, the Chinese government is still unable to ignore His Holiness the Dalai Lama. This is no doubt on account of the power of his matchless leadership, personal integrity, and peaceful influence. Even if one were to survey the people in the international community and especially the Tibetan public, there is no doubt about the fact that the trust in His Holiness the Dalai Lama undoubtedly far exceeds that in the leaders of the government of China. It is therefore laughable that China seeks to create the impression that the personal future of His Holiness the Dalai Lama is contingent on the position adopted by a government.

Neither His Holiness the Dalai Lama nor anyone else on the Tibetan side has ever uttered any word seeking high or low level of autonomy for Tibet. Rather, they have publicly made known both in their pronouncements and publications that they have been seeking genuine autonomy. Whether or not this aspiration of the Tibetan people could be fulfilled depended primarily on whether or not there is a will to change the way the boundary of this autonomous territory is demarcated. There is no basis to associate this with separatism, whether internally or externally or secretly. In this regard, His Holiness, in 2008, asked representatives of the Chinese government to come and examine even the documents of the various offices of the Tibetan government-in-exile. Secondly, if the autonomy proposal put forward by the Tibetan side is inconsistent with the law, the Chinese government only needed to clearly state which and which of the provisions of the autonomy proposal from the Tibetan side was in violation thereof. Otherwise, qualifying the discussion on autonomy by bringing in a term called "high level" in order to avoid it defies intelligence.

It has become clear not just to the Tibetan people but also to the rest of the world that the question whether Tibet and Taiwan are part of China has been used by China at all times to create an obstacle to the realization of Sino-Tibetan dialogue. Not rewriting the

history of Tibet for the sake of its political future is an exceptionally proper thing to do and is only in keeping with the reality. His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the then Kalon Tripa Samdhong Rinpoche have repeatedly spoken on this, as has the current Sikyong Penpa Tsering many times. The philosophical foundation of the policy based on the Middle Way Approach is not derived from Tibetan history. Nor at all is the framework of the Tibetan autonomy proposal put forward through the Middle Way Approach based on that history. Rather, it was the Chinese government which has since 1949 been trying to create this historical dispute on the Sino-Tibetan dialogue table only in order to play for time. Moreover, a few individuals who lack genuine interest to see the Tibetan issue being resolved through the Middle Way Approach have been making inflammatory remarks saying that the lack of historical basis for this would mean we are empty handed beggars. This puts them in the company of those who agree with China on its lack of genuine interest to resolve the issue of Tibet. This performance is, however, too old and no one with a brain to think could believe it. The time has come to withdraw this meaningless tactic of obstructing progress by relying on a supposed history-based dispute.

As regards the history of Taiwan, it is the domain of people with expertise in the evolution of Taiwan. As Tibetans, we have never believed in playing dirty politics of working to draw the flow of water on others for the sake of our selfish benefits. His Holiness the Dalai Lama is a genuine, pre-eminent leader of the people and there is no room for such self-serving policies and discussions for him. There has never been a case where we interfered with Taiwan's stance on its issue. When a delegation from the Tibetan Parliament-in-Exile, including myself, made an official visit to Taiwan, some students holding banners calling for Hong Kong's independence asked to take pictures with us. Even at that time, we did not agree to get involved. Out stand on these things is transparent, unequivocal, and decisive.

In the 1980s, Tibetan representatives – based on a side conversation on a topic that was not part of His Holiness's vision – and Chinese leaders such as Yang Jianren decided that the central government should get His Holiness to take a stand on whether or not Taiwan is part of China. This decision was a serious mistake of judgment based on an utterly wrong view of the reality. The resentment China showed towards His Holiness with false accusations during his visits to Taiwan after 1990 too lacked merit and interfered with the religious belief of the country's faithful. In my view, it would be honourable for China to withdraw such hardline policies henceforth.

As the late honourable Mr. Gyalo Thondup repeatedly said, His Holiness and the Tibetan people are not carrying out a separatist movement; rather, they are

waiting to return to an autonomous homeland in the great big family, with the eagerness of a people dying to quench their thirst for water.

The late Mr. Gyalo Thondup had a genuine selfless concern for the well-being of both the Chinese and Tibetan peoples, which was one reason why he lived a long life in good health and with a sharp mind. Chinese folks have a saying, “a kind-hearted person lives a long life”.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the soul of the Tibetan people, has reached an advanced age. It is time for the Chinese government to respond in a meaningful way to his unblemished aspiration for the Middle Way solution and the Tibetan people’s single-minded belief in this approach.

China plans to build the world’s largest dam – but what does this mean for India and Bangladesh downstream?

08 April 2025, [The Conversation](#)

China recently approved the construction of the world’s largest hydropower dam, across the Yarlung Tsangpo river in Tibet. When fully up and running, it will be the world’s largest power plant – by some distance.

Yet many are worried the dam will displace local people and cause huge environmental disruption. This is particularly the case in the downstream nations of India and Bangladesh, where that same river is known as the Brahmaputra.

The proposed dam highlights some of the geopolitical issues raised by rivers that cross international borders. Who owns the river itself, and who has the right to use its water? Do countries have obligations not to pollute shared rivers, or to keep their shipping lanes open? And when a drop of rain falls on a mountain, do farmers in a different country thousands of miles downstream have a claim to use it? Ultimately, we still don’t know enough about these questions of river rights and ownership to settle disputes easily.

The Yarlung Tsangpo begins on the Tibetan Plateau, in a region sometimes referred to as the world’s third pole as its glaciers contain the largest stores of ice outside of the Arctic and Antarctica. A series of huge rivers tumble down from the plateau and spread across south and south-east Asia. Well over a billion people depend on them, from Pakistan to Vietnam.

Yet the region is already under immense stress as global warming melts glaciers and changes rainfall patterns. Reduced water flow in the dry season, coupled with sudden releases of water during monsoons, could intensify both water scarcity and flooding, endangering millions in India and Bangladesh.

The construction of large dams in the Himalayas has historically disrupted river flows, displaced people, destroyed fragile ecosystems and increased risks of floods. The Yarlung Tsangpo Grand Dam will likely be no exception.

The dam will sit along the tectonic boundary where the Indian and Eurasian plates converge to form the Himalayas. This makes the region particularly vulnerable to earthquakes, landslides, and sudden floods when natural dams burst.

Downstream, the Brahmaputra is one of south Asia’s mightiest rivers and has been integral to human civilisation for thousands of years. It’s one of the world’s most sediment-rich rivers, which helps form a huge and fertile delta.

Yet a dam of this scale would trap massive amounts of sediment upstream, disrupting its flow downstream. This could make farming less productive, threatening food security in one of the world’s most densely populated regions.

The Sundarbans mangrove forest, a Unesco World Heritage Site that stretches across most of coastal Bangladesh and a portion of India, is particularly vulnerable. Any disruption to the balance of sediment could accelerate coastal erosion and make the already low lying area more vulnerable to sea-level rise.

Unfortunately, despite the transboundary nature of the Brahmaputra, there is no comprehensive treaty governing it. This lack of formal agreements complicates efforts to ensure China, India and Bangladesh share the water equitably and work together to prepare for disasters.

These sorts of agreements are perfectly possible: 14 countries plus the European Union are parties to a convention on protecting the Danube, for instance. But the Brahmaputra is not alone. Many transboundary rivers in the global south face similar neglect and inadequate research.

Researching rivers

In our recent study, colleagues and I analysed 4,713 case studies across 286 transboundary river basins. We wanted to assess how much academic research there was on each, what themes it focused on, and how that varied depending on the type of river. We found that, while large rivers in the global north receive considerable academic attention, many equally important rivers in the global south remain overlooked.

What research there is in the global south is predominantly led by institutions from the global north. This dynamic influences research themes and locations, often sidelining the most pressing local issues. We found that research in the global north tends to focus on technical aspects of river management and governance, whereas studies in the global south primarily examine conflicts and resource competition.

In Asia, research is concentrated on large, geopolitically significant basins like the Mekong and Indus. Smaller rivers where water crises are most acute are often neglected. Something similar is happening in Africa, where studies focus on climate change and water-sharing disputes, yet a lack of infrastructure limits broader research efforts.

Small and medium-sized river basins, critical to millions of people in the global south, are among the most neglected in research. This oversight has serious real-world consequences. We still don't know enough about water scarcity, pollution, and climate change impacts in these regions, which makes it harder to develop effective governance and threatens the livelihoods of everyone who depends on these rivers. A more inclusive approach to research will ensure the sustainable management of transboundary rivers, safeguarding these vital resources for future generations.

The Dalai Lama's Escape & CIA Money

07 April 2025, [SCOOP](#), Richard S. Ehrlich

The Dalai Lama's dangerous escape into India on March 31, 1959 fleeing Communist Chinese troops seizing Tibet, prompted the CIA's secret financing, training, arming, and parachute-dropping of Tibetan guerrillas into their homeland four months later.

On the 66th anniversary of that epic escape, India's Arunachal Pradesh state government, for the first time, opened a six-day public "Freedom Trail, Route of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama" trek on foot from the border into India following the original passage.

The unprecedented event may irk Beijing which began invading Tibet in 1951 and denounces the Dalai Lama as subversive.

The March 31-April 5 trek's main purpose however is to attract tourists and pilgrims to the mountainous route which showcases the Dalai Lama's historic journey and the Buddhist shrines, monoliths, stupas, and displays along the way.

Fearing execution or imprisonment, the Dalai Lama escaped from his gigantic, fortress-like Potala Palace in 1959 and began a dangerous two-week trek on horses and yaks southeast across Tibet's glacier-covered Himalayas and steep valleys to reach the Indian border.

A pair of previously inserted CIA-trained Tibetan radio operators rode with him.

"Team A accompanied the Dalai Lama on his journey to the Indian border from where they radioed CIA Langley that the Dalai Lama had arrived safely," said Bruce Walker, the last surviving CIA case officer of those who had trained Tibetan insurgents in Colorado. Upon arrival in India, The Dalai Lama asked for Washington's help.

"Using a hand-cranked Morse radio, Athar, a member of the U.S.-trained Tibetan resistance, sent a message to Washington asking for political asylum in India for the Dalai Lama," Patrick French reported in The Daily Telegraph in 1998.

"Four hours later, the CIA's man in New Delhi sent a wire back to Washington saying that the Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru had granted asylum to the Dalai Lama and his entourage," Mr. French reported.

"I get emotional because in 1959, when I escaped from Tibet, I came from this route," the Dalai Lama told The Times of India.

"I was physically very weak. Mentally, there was a lot of anxiety, hopelessness and helplessness. It was difficult.

"The local [Indian] people here and also officials extended a very, very warm welcome," said the Dalai Lama who is regarded as Tibet's temporal and spiritual leader.

The Dalai Lama, 89, and Arunachal Pradesh officials have been planning the Freedom Trail trek for more than a year, expecting it will boost the economy of relatively isolated western Arunachal Pradesh state.

Some sites display rare artefacts linked to the 14th Dalai Lama whose name is Tenzin Gyatso.

Day one on the Freedom Trail began at the border gate where on March 31, 1959, a 24-year-old Dalai Lama and his entourage rode on horses and yaks through Khen Dze Mane mountain pass into India.

Participants can stay in towns where the Dalai Lama and his entourage slept 66 years ago, and visit newly built or restored Buddhist sites along the mountainous winding trail which parallels India's short border with eastern Bhutan.

Overnight stops and important places include Chuudangmo, Gorzam Chorten, Shakti, Lungla, and Thongleng.

"March 31st serves as a poignant reminder of the sacrifices made by the Tibetan people and the ongoing struggle for justice and freedom," said the New Delhi-based Tibet Rights Collective.

"It is a day of reflection, gratitude, and renewed determination to continue the fight for Tibet's autonomy and the preservation of its unique cultural and spiritual heritage," the advocacy and policy research group said.

Intrigue about the Dalai Lama's fate and fears of betrayal had been swirling in Washington before he escaped.

"They [Tibetans] have hesitated to send the Dalai Lama to India for fear that the Indian government would turn him over to the Chinese," said a declassified confidential CIA document written before the Dalai Lama fled.

In 1959, tens of thousands of Tibetan refugees were fleeing Tibet on foot and horseback to reach the frontiers of Nepal and India.

Ethnic Tibetan Khampas and Ambos went to the Potala and told the Dalai Lama to flee, according to the book "Feet to the Fire" by Kenneth Conboy and James Morrison.

"The Dalai Lama didn't believe them. And they told the Dalai Lama, 'The Chinese are right behind us. Right outside the city.'"

Arriving with the Dalai Lama at the China-India frontier were his assistants, relatives, government officials, and Tibetan soldiers from the Volunteer Freedom Fighters.

"High mountains. If you try to walk then...breathing difficulties, but on horse too much cold," the Dalai Lama told CNN. "Hand and foot become frozen."

"We must have been a sorry sight when we were welcomed by the Indian border guards," the Dalai Lama wrote.

"There were 80 of us, physically exhausted by the journey and morally overwhelmed by the ordeal," he said.

He eventually settled in northwest India's McLeod Ganj town nestled above Dharamsala amid forested Himalayan peaks and armed Indian guards, and attracted a bustling Tibetan refugee community.

"Currently, a small gate known as 'Lhasa Dwar,' the point where the Dalai Lama entered India, is marked by a 'Holy Tree' which is said to have grown from a staff dug by the Dalai Lama during his escape," The Tibetan Review reported.

"It is now worshipped as a relic marking the historic event."

Meanwhile, five years after his escape, the CIA was financing the Dalai Lama, according to a declassified formerly "Secret; Eyes Only" 1964 document.

The "Review of Tibetan Operations" memorandum, published by the State Department's Office of the Historian, said:

"Subsidy to the Dalai Lama -- \$180,000" as part of the total "cost of the Tibetan Program for FY 1964."

"Black air transportation of Tibetan trainees from Colorado to India -- \$185,000. Support of 2,100 Tibetan guerrillas based in Nepal -- \$500,000. Expenses of covert training site in Colorado -- \$400,000," in 1964.

"The Agency is supporting the establishment of Tibet Houses in Geneva and New York City. The Tibet Houses are intended to serve as unofficial representation for the Dalai Lama to maintain the concept of a separate Tibetan political identity," the January 9, 1964 State Department review said.

Currently, China and India are trying to halt occasional clashes along their border where each country claims the other is occupying territory captured during their brief 1962 war, which India under Prime Minister Nehru lost.

China claims all of northeast India's Arunachal Pradesh state -- including where the Dalai Lama's Freedom Trail routes through.

New Delhi claims Beijing occupies 15,000 square miles of India's far northwest Aksai Chin territory.

If the Freedom Trail lures enough tourists, the expected cash influx could strengthen India's border in Tawang district where the trek ends.

"Zemithang is also being developed as a Vibrant Village in Tawang district under New Delhi's Vibrant Village Program to counter China's Border Defense Villages in occupied Tibet," reported the New Delhi-based Tibetan Review.

The CIA began training Tibetans in combat and operations skills in 1957 -- two years before the Dalai Lama escaped.

"The CIA had piloted the project with a group of [Tibetan] fighters who were trained at Saipan, Northern Mariana Island," Radio Free Asia (RFA) reported.

"The first radio team to be dropped back into Tibet by Operations St. Circus took place in September, 1957, but the training grounds were moved to Camp Hale [Colorado] when it became apparent that the Tibetans were not used to the hot weather conditions of the island, and Colorado was selected because its terrain and weather conditions resembled that of Tibet," RFA reported.

The CIA trained at least 259 Tibetan insurgents in Camp Hale from 1958 to 1964, Mr. Walker said told RFA.

"The Tibetans were trained in radio operation, surveillance and combat maneuvers, parachuting at Fort Carson another military base in Colorado, intelligence collecting, clandestine exchange of written material and film, world history and geography, and small armament training with bazookas, grenades and rifles," RFA reported.

In July 1959, "the CIA began using C-130s, flying from a secret CIA base in Takhli, Thailand, to airdrop arms, ammunition, and U.S.-trained Tibetans into their occupied homeland," Newsweek reported in 1999.

Nine out of every 10 guerrillas who parachuted into Tibet were killed by Chinese or committed suicide to evade capture, the Smithsonian Institution's Air & Space Magazine reported.

The Tibetan Buddhists' CIA-backed insurgency ended in defeat against China's revolution-hardened Peoples' Liberation Army in 1972 when President Richard Nixon visited Beijing, shook hands with Chairman Mao Zedong, and improved their frosty relations.

Monks' Visit Provides Glimpse into a Different Culture

07 April 2025, [Stockton University](#)



A group of Tibetan monks from Drepung Gomang Monastery begin work on a sand mandala in the Campus Center's Great Hall. The monks are visiting Stockton for a week while the mandala is being constructed.

As an associate professor of Asian Philosophy, Jongbok Yi lectures his Stockton University students about a completely different way of life than what most of them are used to.

Now, Yi hopes to show them firsthand by bringing a group of Tibetan monks from the Drepung Gomang Monastery to campus to build a sand mandala and meet with students. The week-long program, titled "Healing Through Mandala," began with an opening ceremony on Monday, April 7 in the Campus Center's Great Hall.

"This is important because students can see the presence of a very different culture here and then hopefully can appreciate the beauty of different cultures," Yi said. "Sociologist Max Weber said that if you only know one thing, you don't know anything. By seeing the difference, you can clearly see who you are and what culture you have."

After a series of chants and prayers, six monks began to design the pattern for the mandala that they will construct during the week. Red, green, yellow, blue and orange sand will fill out the mandala's pattern. According to Tibetan Buddhist Tradition, mandala symbolizes the Buddhist cosmos.

"If you think about how they build this mandala, they build it from individual grains of sand. So, if you can think of each grain of sand as us — Stockton students, faculty and staff — then this is Stockton," Yi said. "I think this will show the importance of harmony, love and compassion to the entire Stockton community."

The monks' work will continue until a closing ceremony at 2:30 p.m. Friday, April 11 in the Campus Center where they will destroy the sand mandala to symbolize the transitory nature of all phenomena.

Yi said he first arranged for the monks to come to campus in 2016. His plan was to bring them back every three years so each class that attends Stockton can see them once. The monks returned to campus in 2019, but the COVID-19 pandemic prevented them from coming back sooner, Yi said.

"This is also a special event for the monks, since they don't build the sand mandalas in their monastery often," he said.

This week, Stockton will host several other events with the monks that are open to the public, unless noted: Tuesday, April 8 at 2:30 p.m. in the Campus Center: The monks will help participants to draw the mantra of compassion on pebbles.

Wednesday, April 9 at 7:30 p.m. in the Campus Center Event Room: The monks will perform a Tibetan traditional dance during the Phoenix Night Market hosted by Stockton's Asian Student Alliance.

Thursday, April 10 at 8:30 a.m. in the Campus Center Theatre: The monks will perform a tea offering ritual, the history of tea in Tibet, and a Tibetan tea tasting. At 5 p.m. reserved students and local community members will participate in a Tibetan cooking class at the Townsend Residential Life Center

-- Story by Mark Melhorn, photos by Lizzie Nealis

How Tibet's Earthquake Recovery Could Redefine China's Climate Security

07 April 2025, [Modern Diplomacy](#), Genevieve Donnellon-May

Are China's earthquake-prone regions ready for the double threat of seismic disasters and climate change? Are China's earthquake-prone regions ready for the double threat of seismic disasters and climate change? On January 1, 2025, a 6.8-magnitude earthquake struck near Lhasa, Tibet Autonomous Region, displacing over 120,000 people and devastating eight villages. Reconstruction began on March 3.

This disaster highlights a troubling trend: climate change is worsening seismic risks. Rising temperatures destabilize permafrost and glaciers, increasing landslide threats and jeopardizing vulnerable infrastructure. Tibet's fragile geology along the Himalayan seismic belt makes it especially susceptible to these dangers.

The costs are staggering. China faces a growing toll from climate-driven natural disasters. In the first half of 2024 alone, natural disasters caused China enormous direct economic losses of 93.16 billion yuan.

The January 2025 disaster serves as a painful reminder of past tragedies, like the 2008 Sichuan earthquake, which killed 87,000 and caused US\$150 billion in damages.

Post-disaster rebuilding often consumes 5 to 7 percent of annual GDP in affected regions, pushing rural households below the poverty line. These staggering costs highlight the urgent need for climate-resilient rebuilding strategies to protect vulnerable communities from future disasters.

Some steps have already been taken to address these concerns. Nationally, the country's Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2035 emphasizes green infrastructure and smart early-warning systems, aiming to cut climate-related economic losses by 2025. At the local level, Tibet's Ecological Security Barrier" initiative has driven 6 million hectares in reforestation since 2016, thereby reducing landslide risks by 20 percent.

More can be done. As climate-driven disasters escalate, these efforts must scale to match the Himalayan region's increasing seismic and climate threats.

Firstly, an owner-driven reconstruction model should be prioritized to empower households, as seen in other earthquake-prone regions. For instance, after Nepal's Gorkha earthquake in 2015, the National Reconstruction Authority launched the Earthquake Housing Reconstruction Project. From 2015 to 2020, it rebuilt 211,985 homes through grants and generated US\$3.76 billion, thereby revitalizing local economies. The program also promoted increased financial inclusion, with 70 percent of beneficiaries accessing formal banking for the first time, 30 percent of whom were women.

Secondly, strengthening resilience involves adopting the latest building codes for new construction and retrofitting existing buildings across Tibet. The benefits are significant. According to research from the National Institute of Building Sciences, every US\$1 invested in resilient buildings can save between US\$4 and US\$11 in recovery costs, reinforcing the fiscal prudence of such measures.

For older buildings and structures, retrofitting with modern seismic codes—such as reinforced wall-slab connections, structural sizing, and shock absorbers—can reduce the risk of collapse and severe damage while reinforcing the structure of buildings.

Lessons from other countries offer valuable insights. For example, base isolation—used in nearly 10,000 buildings in Japan—enabled hospitals in Turkey to endure minimal damage during the 2023 earthquakes. Despite the earthquakes causing over US\$34 billion in damages, the hospitals remained operational, demonstrating the effectiveness of this technique.

For new buildings, the TallWood project demonstrates that mass timber offers a sustainable, carbon-storing, earthquake-resistant alternative to steel and concrete. The design, used in 10-story buildings, includes a "rocking wall" that allows panels to move and return to their original position after seismic shaking. Tibet could adopt similar strategies, adapting innovative seismic designs to local ecological, geological, and cultural contexts.

Thirdly, technological advances in hazard forecasting—powered by supercomputers, satellites, and sensors—are improving the precision of seismic and weather

predictions. Tibet should integrate these technologies to shift from reactive to proactive disaster resilience. AI models like Huawei's Pangu-Weather, which forecasts typhoons and floods, could help produce multi-hazard risk assessments, predict aftershocks, map landslide risks via satellite Internet of Technology networks, and reduce emergency response times.

The effectiveness of this technology was evident during Typhoon Gaemi in Fujian, where AI-powered disaster warnings and drones helped evacuate 312,700 residents without casualties. Scaling such tools, including AI-driven seismic risk models, across earthquake-prone regions like Tibet as part of a broader monitoring network could help save lives and billions in yuan annually.

Further supporting these efforts, Tibetan authorities could partner with tech giants like Alibaba, Tencent, and Huawei to fast-track predictive systems, drone damage assessments, and blockchain-based aid distribution.

Complementing these technologies, smart materials like self-healing concrete—tested in Singapore's infrastructure projects—could strengthen rebuilt infrastructure. By embedding such innovations, China can convert vulnerable regions like Tibet into models of tech-augmented resilience.

Challenges still lie ahead. A major issue is funding such initiatives due to potentially high costs. Local governments burdened by substantial debt may struggle to prioritize such expensive projects, particularly given the State Council's warning in January that local governments must prioritize fiscal responsibility over excessive spending on projects. Concerns are compounded by the ongoing efforts of local governments to address revenue shortfalls by liquidating state-owned assets in a process described as "smashing iron pots and selling the steel."

Amid a national economic slowdown, local governments facing soaring debt may understandably prioritize immediate needs over long-term climate resilience programs. To tackle financing challenges, the TAR government may seek loans from the central government, private sector investment, or even enter public-private partnerships with multilateral institutions. There is interest from the World Bank, for instance, which has pledged US\$1 billion for Himalayan climate resilience.

The pursuit of technological research and development should also be encouraged. As technological leaps in hazard forecasting—powered by supercomputers, satellites, and indigenously developed sensors—are refining the precision of hydrometeorological and seismic predictions, the private sector, research institutions, and universities could work together to run related pilot programs, including in Tibet.

The Tibet earthquake is a wake-up call: disasters will continue, but devastation can be mitigated. For Tibet—and all of China—the future lies in rebuilding not just homes, but resilience. With the central government's and local government's initial steps, scaling up efforts will be crucial to building a climate-resilient future.

Reincarnation Of Dalai Lama In A Free World

06 April 2025, [The Shillong Times](#)

In his recent book "Voice of the Voiceless," the Dalai Lama has reaffirmed his stand on the issue of his reincarnation and succession—a matter that has long been a source of tension between him and the Chinese government. His comments in the book have again brought the issue to the forefront, highlighting the ongoing clash between the Tibetan spiritual leader and the ruling Chinese Communist Party.

The Dalai Lama explicitly states in the book that his reincarnation will not occur in China or Tibet under Chinese rule. He will be reborn in a free world, away from the Chinese Communist Party's control. This is a significant statement because it directly challenges China's desire to assert authority over the reincarnation process, a system the Chinese government has attempted to control for decades.

His Holiness urges his followers to reject any successor that is chosen by the Chinese government. This is a crucial point in the ongoing dispute. China has made several moves to control the process of selecting the next Dalai Lama, and his Holiness has for long resisted this interference. The Dalai Lama's spiritual authority, he believes, should remain independent of political control, particularly that of a regime that has heavily repressed Tibetan culture and religion.

In a statement about his reincarnation he also raises questions about the future of the Dalai Lama Institution. By stating that he will be reborn in a free world, he reaffirms his commitment to ensuring that the Dalai Lama tradition continues its traditional role of advocating for human rights and spiritual leadership. He suggests that his future reincarnation will help preserve the spiritual autonomy of the Tibetan people and continue their fight for freedom and justice in the face of ongoing repression.

The Dalai Lama's remarks in the book underscores the growing conflict between Tibet's spiritual leadership and the Chinese Communist Party. Beijing has consistently sought to assert control over the process of selecting religious leaders in Tibet, including the Dalai Lama's successor. This is seen as a ploy to maintain political influence over Tibet and undermine the Tibetan struggle for autonomy.

The Chinese government's claim that it has the right to select the next Dalai Lama is viewed by the Dalai

Lama and many Tibetans as an infringement on religious freedom and the cultural sovereignty of the Tibetan people. This has led to significant tensions between Tibetans in exile, particularly in India, and China, with the Dalai Lama being a powerful symbol of Tibetan resistance.

The Dalai Lama's message in the book reflects his enduring belief in the power of the 'Dalai Lama Institution' as a force for good in the world. He envisions his reincarnation as a voice for the oppressed, an advocate for human rights, and a protector of Tibetan culture and Buddhist teachings.

The Chinese government views the Dalai Lama as a major obstacle to its control over Tibet, and is likely to be angered by such statements. For Beijing, the Dalai Lama is seen not only as a spiritual figure but as a political leader advocating for Tibetan autonomy, which it views as a threat to national unity. The Dalai Lama's comments continue to attract international attention, as they highlight the struggle for religious freedom in Tibet and China. His call for the 'Dalai Lama Institution' to be maintained in a free world could galvanize international support for the Tibetan cause, particularly in the context of global movements advocating for human rights and religious freedom.

The Dalai Lama's vision for his reincarnation outside of China and Tibet may have long-term consequences for the Tibetan identity and the future of the Tibetan Buddhist tradition. Should the Dalai Lama's reincarnation occur outside Tibet, it could symbolise a shift in the Tibetan struggle, where the Tibetan people's religious and cultural heritage is maintained in exile and outside the influence of Chinese Communist rule.

"Voice of the Voiceless," is not only a spiritual work but also a political statement that addresses the future of the 'Dalai Lama Institution' in the face of Chinese interference. By affirming that his reincarnation will be outside China and Tibet, he reaffirms his commitment to the Tibetan people's freedom and spiritual independence. His followers are encouraged to reject any Chinese-appointed successor, and the focus on his reincarnation will undoubtedly continue to be a point of tension between Tibetan Buddhism and the Chinese government. The book has further illuminated the Dalai Lama's intentions to ensure that his legacy and the cause of Tibet continue in a free world.

Tibetan people's middle way approach

06 April 2025, [The Sunday Guardian](#), Khedroob Thondup

From 'Government in Exile' to 'Central Tibetan Administration'. What's in a name?

In the world of geopolitics, even the names we choose can carry immense weight. The terms "Tibetan

Government in Exile” and “Central Tibetan Administration” (CTA) are more than mere labels—they reflect nuanced shifts in identity, diplomacy, and purpose. Understanding the differences between these two names allows us to glimpse the complex layers of the Tibetan struggle and the strategic decisions behind it.

Historically, the “Tibetan Government in Exile” was a direct assertion of Tibet’s sovereignty. When the 14th Dalai Lama fled to India in 1959, following China’s occupation of Tibet, the government he had led in Lhasa was re-established in exile. The name carried a powerful message: it represented a legitimate governing body displaced from its homeland, a beacon for Tibetan autonomy and resistance against Chinese rule.

However, with the challenges of maintaining international support, the term “Central Tibetan Administration” was introduced in 2011 during the Dalai Lama’s transition of political authority to an elected leader. This shift marked a pragmatic approach to recalibrating Tibet’s advocacy. The CTA emphasizes its role as a democratic administrative body representing Tibetan interests in exile, focusing on issues like education, cultural preservation, and human rights, rather than projecting itself as a government.

Why the change? First, “Central Tibetan Administration” avoids the direct implication of a competing government—a term that could provoke heightened opposition from China or complicate relations with host nations like India. By reframing itself as a non-governmental body, the CTA opens doors for broader diplomatic engagement and signals flexibility in its approach to dialogue.

Second, the name aligns with the CTA’s commitment to the “Middle Way Approach,” which seeks meaningful autonomy within China rather than full independence. This more nuanced nomenclature reflects a willingness to explore compromise while still safeguarding Tibetan culture and self-determination. Ultimately, these differences are strategic, not ideological. While the “Government in Exile” emphasizes sovereignty, the “Central Tibetan Administration” underscores practicality and diplomatic efficacy. Both names carry the essence of Tibetan identity—an identity that transcends labels and continues to inspire those fighting for justice and freedom.

The evolution from “Tibetan Government in Exile” to “Central Tibetan Administration” reminds us that names are not just semantics—they are choices that shape narratives, strategies, and perceptions. For Tibet, the journey of representation continues, proving that even in exile, the power of self-definition is unyielding.

China’s plan for world’s biggest dam a mega-disaster for India

05 April 2025, [Asia Times](#), Sara Sheikh

Brahmaputra dam will generate huge amounts of power for China, but at the expense of India’s security, stability and influence

China’s ambitious plan to construct the world’s largest hydropower dam on the Brahmaputra River marks a significant and crucial turning point in South Asia’s geopolitical landscape.

This project is more than just a Chinese technological marvel; it heralds a profound shift in regional power dynamics, particularly in the realm of transboundary water politics.

While Pakistan views the dam as a strategic advantage that aligns with its broader geopolitical goals, India perceives it as a looming threat to its water security, border stability and regional influence. When China recently announced the dam plan, India responded that it would “protect its interests.”

The Brahmaputra River, known as the Yarlung Tsangpo in Tibet, originates near Mount Kailash and traverses China, India and Bangladesh before merging with the Ganges in the Bay of Bengal.

The river’s unique topography, particularly at the “Great Bend” in Tibet, offers immense potential for hydropower generation.

Recognizing this, China has embarked on constructing a massive dam capable of generating an unprecedented 60 gigawatts of electricity, three times the capacity of the renowned Three Gorges Dam.

Beijing justifies this endeavor as a crucial step toward its 2030 carbon neutrality goals. However, the strategic implications of controlling the Brahmaputra’s upper reaches cannot be overlooked.

By harnessing the river’s flow at its source, China secures unparalleled leverage over downstream nations, particularly India and Bangladesh. Additionally, the dam’s proximity to India’s northeastern border, a region fraught with territorial disputes, adds a layer of geopolitical complexity.

For Pakistan, China’s Brahmaputra dam project is a welcome development that bolsters its longstanding strategic partnership with Beijing while simultaneously countering India’s regional dominance.

As a lower riparian state, Pakistan has long grappled with water management challenges, especially concerning shared rivers with India. Despite the Indus Waters Treaty providing a framework for water sharing, tensions persist.

China’s control over the Brahmaputra introduces a new dynamic that could diminish India’s leverage in future water-related negotiations.

With China firmly positioned as a key player in South Asia's water politics, Pakistan gains a strategic ally capable of influencing regional hydro-diplomacy.

Given the complex history of water disputes between India and Pakistan, Beijing's growing role could serve to recalibrate power dynamics in Islamabad's favor.

This shift aligns with Pakistan's broader objectives of securing its water resources and challenging India's supremacy in the region.

For India, the implications of China's dam project are profound. The Brahmaputra is a crucial lifeline for India's northeastern states, supporting agriculture, drinking water supplies and hydropower generation.

Any alteration to its natural flow could disrupt these essential functions, posing severe risks to millions of Indian people who depend on the river.

Reduced water flow and sediment deposits could negatively impact agriculture, fisheries and local ecosystems, exacerbating socio-economic vulnerabilities in the region.

The dam's location near Arunachal Pradesh, an area claimed by both India and China, further complicates matters. Given the recent military standoffs along the Sino-Indian border, Beijing's control over a major water source could be perceived as a strategic pressure point.

Any manipulation of water flow, whether intentional or due to mismanagement, could escalate tensions between the two nuclear-armed neighbors.

Environmental concerns also loom large. The Himalayas are one of the most seismically active regions in the world, making large-scale infrastructure projects highly risky.

A potential dam failure or mismanagement during extreme weather events could lead to catastrophic flooding in downstream areas, posing serious humanitarian and economic consequences for India.

Adding to India's apprehension is China's history of unilateral decision-making on transboundary rivers. Unlike the water-sharing treaty India has with Pakistan, Beijing has refrained from entering legally binding agreements with downstream nations.

The lack of transparency in China's hydropower projects has fueled mistrust, leaving India with limited diplomatic avenues to address its concerns.

China's Brahmaputra dam project signifies a broader trend of increasing competition over water resources in South Asia. Water is fast emerging as a critical geopolitical asset, and Beijing's ability to regulate the Brahmaputra's flow places India and Bangladesh in a precarious position.

For Bangladesh, which relies heavily on the Brahmaputra for agriculture and drinking water, the project raises fears of water scarcity and accelerated riverbank erosion.

Disruptions in river flow could impact millions of livelihoods, pushing Dhaka to seek greater

engagement with both India and China to mitigate potential risks. However, the power imbalance between these nations complicates the possibility of meaningful negotiations.

The dam also aligns with China's broader Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which seeks to expand Beijing's economic and strategic influence across Asia. By developing critical infrastructure in key locations, China aims to deepen regional dependencies on its economic and technological prowess.

The Brahmaputra dam is yet another step in this strategy, offering China both hydroelectric capabilities and geopolitical leverage over its South Asian neighbors.

India has responded to China's dam project with plans to construct its own hydropower infrastructure on the Brahmaputra. The proposed Siang dam in Arunachal Pradesh is intended to counterbalance China's influence and ensure India's water security.

However, given the region's geological sensitivity, executing such a project presents significant technical and environmental challenges.

Beyond infrastructure, India has sought diplomatic avenues to address its concerns. Indian officials have urged China to engage in greater transparency and consultation on water-sharing matters.

However, Beijing's preference for unilateral decision-making limits the effectiveness of these efforts. In response, India may need to strengthen regional partnerships, particularly with Bangladesh, to present a united front against China's growing hydro-hegemony.

New Delhi is also exploring technological solutions such as advanced satellite monitoring of water flows and predictive modeling to anticipate and mitigate any adverse impacts from China's dam.

Additionally, India's emphasis on diversifying its energy sources, including a push for domestic hydropower projects, aims to reduce dependency on transboundary river flows.

Still, China's decision to build the world's largest hydropower dam on the Brahmaputra River represents a watershed moment in South Asian geopolitics.

As the dam project progresses, India faces the challenge of formulating a comprehensive strategy to protect its water interests while navigating its complex relationship with China. Diplomatic engagement, regional partnerships and domestic countermeasures will be key in shaping India's response.

Ultimately, China's increasing control over South Asia's water resources has altered the balance of power, tipping the scales in favor of Beijing and Islamabad.

As competition over water intensifies, the possibility of escalating tensions in the region grows. The era of hydro-diplomacy in South Asia is evolving rapidly, and the stakes have never been higher.

‘We try to assist the seed of belief’: Pope’s deal with Communist party in China draws criticism from some Catholics

05 April 2025, [The Irish Times](#), Denis Staunton

The archbishop processed up the aisle behind a group of priests, deacons and altar servers, one of them swinging a thurifer as it pumped out thick gusts of incense. Behind them, a great organ thundered from the loft, as one of the cathedral’s 10 choirs led the congregation in an introductory hymn.

This was high Mass at Beijing’s North Cathedral, a late 19th-century church near the city’s financial district built in the French Gothic style in the shape of a cross with an elaborate grey marble facade. There are holy water stoups inside each entrance, stations of the cross on the pillars lining the nave, votive statues in alcoves and side altars, and confessionals and a baptismal font at the back of the church.

The church sits in a large compound and the courtyard outside features two gold-roofed pavilions and other Chinese architectural features including 60 carved lions. The stained glass windows show scenes from the history of the Catholic Church in China and one of the most popular shrines inside features a Chinese Madonna and child.

“It’s a combination of the West and the East, the Catholic Church and the Chinese culture,” said Fr Simon Zhu, who has been a priest at the cathedral since 2014.

“We feel very blessed to have such a design. Even 100 years ago, the missionaries already started inculturation or Sinicization, the combination of Catholic culture and Chinese culture, Catholic thinking, plus Chinese thinking, and combining the two together.”

The principle of inculturation, adapting Christian teachings to local cultures, has a long tradition in the Catholic Church and the Jesuit Matteo Ricci blended Catholic faith with Chinese thinking in the 17th century. But the word Sinicization also refers to Xi Jinping’s policy that “religions in China must be Chinese in orientation”, incorporated into socialist society and independent of foreign influence.

The archbishop of Beijing, Joseph Li Shan, is also the president of the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association (CCPA), the representative body for Catholics officially recognised by the Chinese Communist Party. Most of China’s roughly 10 million Catholics attend officially sanctioned churches such as the North Cathedral but a substantial minority belong to the so-called “underground church”, attending masses in unapproved venues and private homes. Under Pope Francis, the Vatican entered into an agreement with China in 2018 aimed at ending the division between

the two Catholic communities by regularising the appointment of bishops. But the agreement, which was renewed last October for four years, has drawn criticism from some Catholics who fear it cedes too much influence to the Communist Party.

The liturgy at high Mass at the cathedral was indistinguishable from that in any Catholic church in Europe and the archbishop’s sermon focused on the importance of faith and repentance. His only reference to any political issue was at the start of Mass when he said he hoped that China and the Vatican would soon establish diplomatic relations.



Fr Simon Zhu in his office at Beijing’s North Cathedral. Photograph

The cathedral parish has five priests and one deacon, and in a convent behind the church live 50 nuns from the Congregation of St Joseph, a French order that has been in Beijing for more than 150 years. Although the Beijing diocese is more than 700 years old, created by an Italian Franciscan missionary in 1307, Fr Zhu describes the Catholic Church in China as a developing church.

“We would challenge our ministers, our church servers to watch how the developed church does things. Of course, number one, the standard for the Catholic Church, that’s Rome. So do whatever Rome does,” he said.

A small Chinese flag on Fr Zhu’s desk was the only symbol of the state I saw at the North Cathedral and his conversation was peppered with references to the pope and his guidance to parishes. The cathedral has three groups undergoing the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults the official Catholic process for joining the Church. “Anybody can come here and say, I would like to learn more about becoming a Catholic and we just assist. To be a Catholic or to be a Christian in this country is also God’s calling. We just try to assist to make the seed of faith, the seed of belief, grow toward maturity,” Fr Zhu said.

The Chinese Communist Party is officially atheist, forbidding its 99 million members from practising religion and the early years of the People’s Republic of China saw the exile of foreign missionaries and the arrest of priests and bishops. After the foundation of

the CCPA in 1957, Pope Pius XII said anyone who took part in the consecration of bishops without the Vatican's approval would be excommunicated.

Chinese Catholics who remained loyal to Rome formed the underground church but after 1966 the Cultural Revolution saw the systematic suppression and destruction of all religion.

Deng Xiaoping's liberalisation brought a lighter touch to the regulation of religion and from 1981 Catholics were no longer obliged to pledge independence from the Pope and the Holy See. Restrictions tightened again in 1994 when all places of worship had to be registered with the government, opening the way for the arrest and prosecution of priests and bishops in the underground church for violating the regulation.

Meanwhile, bishops consecrated in the patriotic church without papal approval were not recognised by the Holy See while bishops in the underground church were seen by the Chinese authorities as illegitimate. The 2018 Provisional Agreement on the Appointment of Bishops, the text of which has never been published, was designed to regularise the status of bishops with an agreed system for approving them.

This meant that bishops would be nominated by the Chinese authorities but the Vatican would have a veto over their appointment. Pope Francis immediately readmitted to "full, ecclesial communion" eight bishops from the patriotic church who had been appointed without Vatican approval and some bishops from the underground church were recognised by the Chinese authorities.

Ten bishops have been appointed under the new system since 2018 and the Vatican has yet to object formally to anyone nominated by the Chinese authorities. After the agreement's renewal last year, the Pope said "the results are positive, and we are working with goodwill", adding that he was pleased with the Vatican's dialogue with China.

Sergio Ticozzi is a Hong Kong-based Italian priest and an expert on the church in China whose books include *China and the Catholic Church: Through Mutual Eyes*. He believes the agreement is a very positive and effective channel for communication and dialogue, if both parties have a clear mutual understanding of what they are talking about but that China and the Vatican have different understandings of the terms at the heart of the agreement: bishops and appointment. "For the Chinese authorities bishops are considered just public state officials, to be 'democratically' elected, while for the Vatican, they should be religious heads of a diocese or local church with a 'sacred' or divine authority. Consequently, the choice of the episcopal candidates by Chinese authorities is based mainly upon being a politically reliable person and obedient to the government/party, while for the Vatican they should have moral, doctrinal and pastoral qualifications," he said.

"As far as the 'appointment' is concerned, the Vatican understands it as the handing down to the candidate of God's authority upon a diocese, but for the Chinese side it simply means Vatican's 'agreement or approval' of the elected candidate."

Both the official church of the majority of Chinese Catholics and the underground church are in full communion with Rome and the agreement's supporters hope that it will help to bring the two communities together. The Holy See has told priests in the underground church that they should not be forced to register with the Chinese authorities but Fr Ticozzi says that they are under great pressure to do so.

"The Chinese authorities want clearly to eliminate this section of the church, and exploit the ambiguous and silent attitude of the Vatican to achieve their objective. They openly make use of the Sino-Vatican agreement for this purpose: they do not show great concern about providing bishops for the more than 30 vacant dioceses, but prefer to propose their own episcopal candidate for dioceses which already have unofficial bishops, in order to force the Vatican to order the latter to accept the government solution, which can be rather unjust," he said.

The Vatican is one of only a handful of states in the world that have diplomatic relations with Taiwan rather than with the People's Republic of China and Beijing would like to change that. Some in the Vatican see the establishment of diplomatic relations with Beijing as a desirable next step in the process of normalisation of which the 2018 agreement was a part.

Fr Ticozzi is pessimistic about the future of the church in China, noting a dimming of religious fervour among younger generations and a lack of spiritual guidance from above.

"The official emphasis will be on formal appearances, on external show of ceremonies, on the political interpretation and role of the clergy, since bishops and communities are required first to obey the government's orders," he said.

"The official reports speak about various religious celebrations, construction of new churches, ordination of new priests and religious profession of new nuns, spiritual retreats and pilgrimages, religious symposia and study meetings. Several priests and sisters are truly very committed. But, the number of baptisms of adults is not high, bishops are kept busy by the authorities in political meetings, tours and banquets, lay people often are left by themselves without a solid catechesis and spiritual formation."

Cindy Yik-Yi Chu, a historian at Hong Kong Baptist University and the author of a number of books on the Catholic Church in modern China, is more upbeat. She believes the fact that there are no longer any illicit

bishops in the Chinese church is a big step forward that will enable more dialogue.

"It's very slow. But I think the Pope wants it very much and wants to have dialogue. Even before he became pope he wanted to have dialogue with the Chinese church," she said.

"I think that he was interested in working with the Chinese people because it's a large population and there had be so many conflicts along the way. I think that's the reason. It's not something diplomatic or something like that. I think it's just out of sincerity."

Prof Chu acknowledges the sense of being abandoned felt by some in the underground church but argues that, since the pope still accepts them as Catholics, they have not been forgotten. And she rejects the argument that the church should not engage with the Communist Party.

"Should we just continue to hate them? That doesn't do any good for the people," she said.

Back in the North Cathedral, Fr Zhu was feeling optimistic too, noting that the convent has six new novices this year and that vocations for the priesthood are increasing steadily. When he returned from the Philippines in 2014, he was one of only a handful of priests in the diocese but now there are 91 and he says the change is visible.

"Every year, we get around two priests in the diocese of Beijing. An increase of two priests per year, that's pretty good," he said.

"I think there are some good signs. Maybe God really works in a very mysterious way."

China needs friends in Trump's trade war. But Xi may have to go it alone

05 April 2025, [The Guardian](#), Philip Inman

Beijing has launched a charm offensive with other countries as US tariffs tighten. If they can't be won over, it may have no choice but to stimulate its vast domestic market

China's leader, Xi Jinping, says he is prepared to dance if it means sidestepping some of the worst of Donald Trump's trade tariffs. Last week he sent a letter to India's president, Droupadi Murmu, urging her to join him in a tango to celebrate 75 years of -bilateral trade. Xi said it was "the right choice" for the two countries to be "partners of mutual achievement and realise the 'Dragon-Elephant Tango'", which, he added, "fully serves the fundamental interests of both countries and their peoples."

Beijing is on a wide-ranging charm offensive, aimed at redirecting its exports away from the US to other willing destinations as Washington erects trade barriers.

Tariffs on China imposed by the US president amounting to 20% earlier this year were more than doubled last week to 54% and an effective average rate

of 65%, raising the cost of Chinese imports to a level that many analysts believe will be uncompetitive.

The response from Beijing was swift. A sell-off on financial markets intensified after China's finance ministry said it would respond in kind, adding 34% to the tariff on all US goods from 10 April.

Investors worry that a recession in the US cannot be ruled out as the trade war intensifies and companies hunker down, cutting investment and jobs to weather the storm.

Here comes a Chinese wave

Fears that China could embark on a campaign of dumping goods or increasing subsidies to help domestic firms win foreign contracts are growing. There are also concerns that the US, already unpopular in much of the developing world, will foster a realignment of global trade that favours authoritarian regimes, including China's. BYD, which has leapfrogged Tesla to produce the world's most popular electric cars, is looking to expand in Europe, despite separate tariffs imposed by the EU and UK limiting European sales.

Former UK Treasury minister Jim O'Neill says closer trade ties with Beijing should be part of a realignment that is inevitable following Trump's "kamikaze" tariff initiative.

Lord O'Neill, a former Goldman Sachs chief economist, said that G7 countries could take the lead in this, but that India and China should be included too.

"It's important to realise that the rest of the G7, except the US, collectively are the same size as the United States. And I would have thought a very sensible thing to be doing is having a serious conversation with the other members about actually lowering trade barriers between ourselves," he said.

China, in fact, sends more goods to the EU than the US, and the export trend away from the US has accelerated since Trump's first period in the White House, even when the Covid-related surge in exports of Chinese goods is discounted. Whereas China sends about \$440bn (£340bn) of goods to the US, it exports close to \$580bn to the EU's 27 members.

Christopher Dent, a professor of economics and international business at Edge Hill University business school, said there might be a "bigger picture" that Brussels thinks is worth pursuing, in a fundamental break with the US.

"Trump's aggressive trade policy will most likely compel other countries to form stronger trade clubs and alliances among themselves.

"The EU and China, for example, might look to resolve or put aside their own trade disputes with each other and champion the cause of trade multilateralism and liberalism along with willing others, such as the UK, Canada, Japan, South Korea, Australia, lowering their tariffs and signing new kinds of trade agreements – a trend that is already evident."

The EU's trade and economic security commissioner, Maroš Šefčovič, indicated that talks could take more than a few weeks or months. He said after a meeting with Chinese vice-premier He Lifeng last weekend that there could only be a more open relationship if trade flows and investment were "symmetrical".

The UK is in a particularly tight spot. It managed to escape with the lowest level of tariffs imposed by Trump, 10%, and is hopeful of securing a deal with Washington. Yet it cannot be seen to succumb to Beijing's advances. Like others, Britain risks being engulfed by the flood of cheap Chinese goods, from electric cars to steel, that will soon wash up on its shores, threatening jobs.

Speaking at a recent Chatham House event, the UK business secretary, Jonathan Reynolds, said the "majority of UK China trade is not in particularly contentious areas".

"We've got to engage with a fifth of the world economy. The Conservative view, which is to just pretend China does not exist – I'm sorry, I don't think that's realistic whatsoever."

He said there were "areas we can work more closely", but added there was no suggestion of returning to the so-called golden age pursued by David Cameron.

"Pork exports would be an obvious example," he said.

"Whichever way we go on these areas, there is nothing to be gained from just pretending China does not exist."

China and its neighbours

John Denton, head of the International Chambers of Commerce, likens the onset of these tariff wars to the oil shock of the 1970s, such is its seismic importance. "The overriding theme is the battle for supremacy between China and the US for global trade dominance," he said.

Denton is among the senior international business leaders imploring politicians to resist retaliatory action, to prevent a death spiral of punitive import charges that push up inflation and crash the world economy.

He is worried that the tariffs pose an existential crisis for Asean (the Association of Southeast Asian Nations), which has become a conduit for Chinese firms exporting to the US. This was noticed in Washington, hence tariffs adding a 46% surcharge on imports from Vietnam and 49% on those from Cambodia.

US trainer-maker Nike, which manufactures 50% of its shoes in Vietnam, has been caught in the crossfire. Its shares slumped by 15% after the tariffs were applied. But Chinese-owned clothes and shoe factories based in both countries are the chief targets.

Mary Lovely, a trade expert at the Peterson Institute in Washington, said most American workers would not aspire to work in a clothing or shoe factory, which is why they had been outsourced to east Asia.

"Are we supposed to knit our own knickers?" she asked an audience at the Brookings Institution in the US capital. "I mean, really, what is a good job for an American worker?"

"Reducing the dependence on China was a good thing, but we totally whacked it [with these tariffs]."

Vietnam has taken steps to convince the US it is serious about reducing its trade surplus, which reached \$123.5bn last year, and the third highest gap for the US, behind China and Mexico. Hanoi expects the economy to grow by 8% this year, even though exports account for 90% of economic output and the US accounts for 25% of that total. It declined to change the outlook after Trump's announcement, preferring instead to dispatch a team to Washington to plead with officials.

Meanwhile, with regard to India, Xi said the two countries were both ancient civilisations, major developing countries and important members of the "global south" standing at a critical stage in their respective modernisation efforts.

Murmu refused to reply to his letter in kind. In a short response, she noted that together they were home to a third of the world's population, and that a stable, predictable and friendly relationship would benefit both countries and the world.

It was a message widely seen in Indian business circles as a way to sidestep many longstanding political and economic issues.

Indians are sceptical that there is much mileage in talks when the trade balance is almost nine to one in China's favour. In part, this is due to severe restrictions on Indian imports of pharmaceuticals, IT services, basmati rice and beef.

There is also a long-running border dispute in the north of India that ignited into conflict in 2020 and remains unresolved.

Worse before it gets better

But for China, it looks like the situation is only going to get worse. Trump plans to phase out a "de minimis" exemption next month that allows packages with a value of \$800 or less to be shipped to the US from China duty free, and is central to the business model of companies such as fast fashion firm Shein and household goods supplier Temu.

Trump is also expected to apply additional tariffs on pharmaceuticals and semiconductors, targeting China and affiliates in neighbouring countries, before deciding how to punish firms that trade in rare earth metals sourced from China.

The White House has bipartisan support when it applies a tourniquet to China, especially the communist state's carmakers and tech companies, which are widely considered to be leapfrogging US manufacturers to become global leaders.

China's full-throttle shift to become a tech powerhouse – a move exemplified by the rise of

telecoms giant Huawei and AI firm DeepSeek – has also spooked many potential export destinations, including Europe, which fear the Moscow-friendly nation is as keen on harnessing personal data and industrial secrets as it is hard cash.

Christopher Beddor, deputy China research director at Beijing-based Gavekal Research, said China had few friends it could rely on to take goods previously destined for the US market.

In an initiative that parallels the Murmu letter, Chinese government officials have also toured European capitals to say that China, unlike the US, still believes in the rules-based international trading system, giving them a common cause. “But I have been interested to see how there is still lots of resistance to the idea of China as a reliable partner,” said Beddor.

Maybe a renewed effort to attract foreign firms to build factories inside China will help ease tensions. Last month, China’s second-in-command, Li Qiang, urged countries to open their markets to combat “-rising instability and uncertainty” at a business forum in Beijing attended by the bosses of Europe and the US’s largest companies.

Ola Källenius, the chair of Mercedes, was in attendance with Laurent Freixe, chief executive of Nestlé and bosses from Siemens, BMW, Saudi Aramco, Rio Tinto, and UK bank Standard Chartered. AstraZeneca’s chief executive, Pascal Soriot, was also in the audience with Tim Cook of Apple and Cristiano Amon of chip designer Qualcomm.

Li urged them to increase their investment in China based on promises that the world’s second largest economy would buck the global economic slowdown that was sure to follow a further round of tariffs.

Is there a way back?

A rapprochement with the US looks unlikely. If anything, the Trump administration wants to ringfence Beijing, preventing America’s consumers from buying any of its goods unless a huge surcharge is applied.

Trump’s planned tax cuts, due to be announced before the end of the year, are paid for with the -revenue from tariff charges, though there are wildly differing forecasts about how much will be raised.

Trump’s comments that he is open to bargaining away some tariffs also complicates the picture. The US president said after announcing his latest measures that a deal to secure US ownership of TikTok could reduce China’s tariff burden. But the deal is subject to legal wrangling and it’s not clear when China might be ready to make concessions.

Beddor says the US’s stance and a lack of international partners will force Xi to look inwards for extra sales and growth.

“Chinese exports into the US are about 2% of its overall economic output, and so Beijing will think that is manageable,” Beddor said.

US imports of Chinese goods reached \$438.9bn in 2024, or 2.3% of China’s \$19tn economy, while the trade surplus hit \$295bn, a 5.8% increase from 2023.

“It is a much bigger problem when Trump’s tariffs create a global downturn. That is a different order of magnitude,” Beddor said. “And for China, if there is a global slowdown, there is nowhere for Beijing to go other than to the Chinese consumer.”

He said Xi had already signalled that an economic stimulus package outlined at the beginning of the year in response to tariff threats could be enlarged.

“China’s policymakers are now almost certain to ramp up stimulus efforts in the coming months, and will probably introduce more fiscal measures later in the year.

“The fiscal stimulus this year may be well beyond anything we’ve seen in the past decade.”

China’s Two Sessions, China’s two challenges

01 April 2025, [IISS](#), Eric Green and Meia Nouwens

The CCP’s recent Two Sessions outlined Beijing’s plans for national and economic development, highlighting a desire to develop greater resilience against ‘global shocks’. Yet two challenges are likely to continue to obstruct China’s ambitions.

In early March China held its Two Sessions – the annual gathering of the National People’s Congress and the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) – where delegates discussed plans for China’s development in 2025 and attended events held by President Xi Jinping and other Politburo members. Premier Li Qiang’s Government Work Report outlined economic targets and high-level policies focused on boosting consumption and innovation to reverse China’s sluggish economic growth and achieve technological superiority over the United States. There was also a significant emphasis in Li’s report on guarding against ‘global shocks’ and ‘defusing’ risks in key domestic areas, including by stockpiling food and energy and reducing supply-chain vulnerabilities.

These ambitions may be undermined by two major challenges, however, that China’s senior leadership has identified a need to mitigate: the central government’s struggle to obtain accurate and timely information on key sectors, and officials’ deep-seated risk aversion and consequent unwillingness to implement reforms and innovate policy solutions. Despite the development of plans to address them, these challenges are likely to continue to undermine the progress of China’s economic, social, political and military reforms.

Elsewhere, the Two Sessions demonstrated the Chinese Communist Party’s (CCP) continuing interest in promoting cross-strait economic integration with Taiwan, while Li’s report also voiced concerns about

corruption and the pace of 'informatisation' across the People's Liberation Army (PLA), and called for more military theories with Chinese characteristics, per 'Xi Jinping Thought on Strengthening the Military'.

Risk and resilience policies

Li's Two Sessions address reflected Chinese leaders' current concerns about the world. He stated that an 'increasingly complex and severe external environment may exert a greater impact on trade, science, and technology', and that domestically 'the foundation for sustained economic recovery and growth is not strong enough'. He added that more work was needed to 'address social problems' and fix 'weak links' undermining efforts to improve public wellbeing.

Consequently, guarding against external shocks and defusing risk in key areas is one of China's ten policy ambitions for 2025. Localities were ordered to improve food security by ensuring the total area of China's farmland remains above a 'red line', while Li advocated for 'stable production and supply of grains' and better management of government reserves. He also announced that the central government will 'support the building of major wholesale markets' and encourage local governments to improve their 'emergency supply capacity' to provide a secure and affordable supply of necessities. There were also plans announced to 'move faster to fulfil the yearly tasks of stockpiling strategic goods' while working to 'expand the scale of reserves'. This included building more storage facilities, as well as additional 'national petroleum reserve bases, and general storage warehouses'.

Although these energy- and food-security policies would be part of China's conflict preparations, the current focus is likely an attempt to ensure its economy can withstand the aforementioned external shocks. These concerns were visible in 2022 when Xi told rural-affairs officials that agriculture is a 'matter of national security', and in June 2024 when China enacted strict fines for converting farmland to grow non-staple crops. These policies also help build a toolkit for China's leaders to use – alongside coercive social controls – should economic woes lead to social instability. It is also notable that plans for securing food and energy supplies were mentioned in Li's address in relation to improving 'people's wellbeing' to enhance their 'sense of fulfilment, happiness, and security'.

Information problems

This policy ambition may be undermined by the central government's inability to obtain accurate and timely information about resources and vulnerabilities. Under Xi, the CCP no longer manages China's economy through outright state ownership or subsidies. Instead, the Party directs a complex ecosystem of public, private and mixed-ownership firms through state investment entities, Party

members acting as shareholders on company boards, and various market mechanisms (including the establishment of venture-capital funds and renewed efforts since October 2024 to make the Party's style of economic decision-making more market friendly). While this setup enables a speedy response to top-level developmental plans, it also leads to information problems. For example, in 2023 China's aerospace research teams warned about difficulties encountered in trying to obtain information about the origins of products within the defence-industry supply chain, particularly in large state-owned enterprises. There have also been concerns voiced by some Party officials about the true level of domestic stockpiles and resources.

In response, officials aim to improve overall planning and linkages between firms and integrate relevant data from 'various departments and regions', and have established numerous 'systems' that operate across sectors to improve information-sharing and establish early-warning indicators for future risks. Recently there have been references to 'supply-chain risk assessment and early-warning systems', 'national security legal systems' and a 'national integrated strategic system', among others. There are indications, however, that these systems have failed to provide the central government the information it seeks – to the frustration of senior leadership. Two weeks before the Two Sessions, extracts from a speech delivered by Xi at a June 2024 Politburo session were published in the Party's theoretical journal *Qiushi*, which for the first time mentioned the phrase 'systems trap' (制度陷阱). Xi warned against the creation of numerous systems to address existing problems within a flawed system, arguing this results in cumbersome actions and increased complexity. He instead recommended the integration of systems as 'an organic whole'.

Implementation problems

The Chinese leadership – including Xi – has recognised that officials have not been executing their duties due to a fear of making mistakes. It seems that the continuous nature of Xi's anti-corruption campaigns has paralysed local officials. This concern has been highlighted by the recent revival of the phrase 'three distinguishes' (三个区分开来), first promoted by Xi in 2016. When analysing party members' mistakes, it calls for officials to distinguish between those resulting from inexperience or 'experiments that have not been clearly restricted by superiors' as well as 'unintentional mistakes to promote development'; and mistakes that are 'knowing and wilful violations of discipline and law', made 'despite clear prohibitions', or 'made for personal gain'. These concerns likely motivated Li's call for officials to implement policies 'as soon as possible' as 'it is better to act early than late'.

Following the Third Plenum in July 2024, Xinhua published a Q&A titled: 'How to understand the three

distinguishes'. To achieve China's economic modernisation, it argued that 'it is urgent to have the courage and innovative spirit of party members to dare to tackle tough problems'. It stated that officials should be able to learn from mistakes and 'regroup', with errors assessed in terms of whether they are 'out of public interest or self-interest, unintentional or intentional', and called for greater understanding and tolerance for mistakes born of inexperience or 'unforeseeable factors'. Such remarks have also been repeated in the Party's newspaper – PLA Daily – to military officials and soldiers. Around the time of the 2025 Central Commission for Discipline Inspection fourth plenum, the newspaper published an article titled: 'Dare to do good and implement'.

People's Liberation Army

The coverage of the PLA in Li's Government Work Report featured largely the same language as the 2024 report and suggests steady progression towards achieving military modernisation goals. However, three areas of difference from 2024 were evident and provide insight into concerns for the PLA's leadership. Firstly, the report mentioned the PLA's efforts to 'continue improving political conduct of the military' – likely a veiled reference to the ongoing anti-corruption investigations across the PLA. In 2024, these investigations publicly confirmed the removal of former defence ministers Li Shangfu and Wei Fenghe from the Party, while other theatre commanders, senior military officers and defence-industry leaders were implicated in corruption investigations that spanned the PLA Rocket Force, Ministry of National Defense and Equipment Development Department. In November 2024 Beijing confirmed that Miao Hua, a member of the Central Military Commission (CMC), had been suspended and placed under investigation 'for suspected serious violations of discipline'. This year, the corruption investigations are rumoured to have expanded to the PLA Navy and potentially the Eastern Theatre Command. However, no official statements have been made by the government to confirm this.

Secondly, Li's report stated that the PLA will 'move faster to develop [its] network information system'. This was not mentioned in the previous report. Informatisation – and the development of an information network – across the PLA's services and theatre commands is one of two primary streams of effort within Xi's military reforms. The second is 'intelligentisation' – the application of new and emerging technologies (in particular AI) to the military to integrate greater automation across PLA capabilities. By 2020, the PLA was meant to have made significant progress towards achieving informatisation, but has seemingly faced difficulties. The 2019 defence white paper reported that despite making good progress towards modernisation goals, the PLA 'has

yet to complete the task of mechanization, and is in urgent need of improving its informationization'. Furthermore, in 2024, the CMC disbanded the Strategic Support Force in favour of creating three separate and deputy-theatre-command leader grade 'arms', including the Information Support Force. The call to 'work faster' towards this goal suggests informatisation remains a work in progress.

Relatedly, Li's report called for the establishment of a framework of modern military theories with Chinese characteristics, which was last mentioned by Xi in October 2024 in remarks at a meeting on work related to military theory in Beijing. This effort reportedly includes the optimisation of top-level design for military-theory innovations, improving the model of relevant research and enhancing the application of military theory. Xi also said that as the new global military revolution is rapidly unfolding, new military theory is urgently needed to keep pace with technological developments.

Taiwan

Li's 2025 report also featured a significant change of language in relation to Taiwan: additional wording promoting cross-strait economic and cultural exchanges. In 2024, Li ordered officials to promote the development of 'integrated' cross-strait 'development'; in 2025, he specifically called for cross-strait 'economic and cultural cooperation' and the promotion of 'institutions and policies' to support this ambition. Similarly, at the annual Taiwan Affairs Work Conference, CPPCC Chairman Wang Huning replaced the 2024 phrase to 'promote the peaceful development of cross-strait exchanges' with more specific instructions for officials to 'support Taiwanese businessmen and enterprises' in mainland China and create better conditions to attract young Taiwanese citizens. Both statements perhaps reflect a signal from senior leadership for officials to intensify schemes aimed at improving cross-strait economic integration. Alternatively, after a year in which local officials across China explored various avenues to improve integration (economic, cultural, legal, regulatory), the specific language around economic integration may be an attempt to better focus local officials' efforts.

Communist Party of China for strengthening ties between India and China

04 April 2025, [The Hindu](#), B. Kolapan

"The CPC and the CPI(M) have long maintained friendly exchanges, which played a significant role for facilitating mutual understanding and practical cooperation between our two sides," says International Department, Central Committee, CPC

An improving China-India relationship serves the common interests of both countries and the region at a time the international landscape and world order are now in a new round of transformation, the Communist Party of China (CPC) said in its message to the 24th Congress of the CPI(M) taking place in Madurai. "The CPC and the CPI(M) have long maintained friendly exchanges, which has played a significant role for facilitating mutual understanding and practical cooperation between our two sides," read the message of the International Department, Central Committee, CPC.

The CPC said in the new circumstances it was ready to strengthen exchanges and strategic communication as well as experience sharing of party and state governance with the CPI(M) and other Indian political parties, so as to promote continued progress of China-India relations as well as peace and stability of the region.

One of the important aspects of the CPI(M) Congress in the past was visit of delegates from Communist countries and representatives from communist parties across the world. Their visit is no longer taking place. Instead the parties are sending their greetings, Communist parties from 34 countries have sent their messages.

Communist Party of Brazil (PCdoB) in its message pointed out that while the far right is gaining political ground worldwide, there is a growing resistance from peoples and nations against the hegemonic power of the declining U.S. imperialism. "Inter-imperialist contradictions are also intensifying, creating opportunities for the forces of national sovereignty, justice, and world peace to raise their banners," said Ana Prestes, Secretary of International Relations of PCdoB.

She expressed the hope that the resolutions and guidelines resulting from the Congress debates would be of great value to our common fight against fascism, always with the goal of building socialism and communism on the horizon.

The Communist Party of Vietnam said the friendship and excellent cooperation between the two parties, the people of Vietnam and India as well as the State of Kerala and provinces of Vietnam would be further consolidated.

The Workers Party of Korea (DPRK) reiterated its conviction that the long-standing friendship and cooperation between the two parties would further develop in the future.