

IX. Tibet

TIBET

Findings

- The Commission did not observe any interest from People's Republic of China (PRC) officials in resuming formal negotiations with the Dalai Lama's representatives, the last round of which, the ninth, was held in January 2010.
- The PRC continued to restrict, and seek to control, the religious practices of Tibetans, the majority of whom practice Tibetan Buddhism. Authorities in Tibetan areas issued prohibitions on forms of religious worship, particularly during important religious events or around the times of politically sensitive anniversaries, and restricted access to religious institutions and places of worship, including Tibetan Buddhist monasteries and temples. The PRC continued to assert control over the process of selection and recognition of Tibetan Buddhist reincarnated teachers, including the Dalai Lama.
- The Commission did not observe reports of Tibetan self-immolations that occurred during the 2023 reporting year, the first year since 2021 in which no self-immolations were reported to have occurred. Chinese authorities reportedly continued to harass family members of Tibetans who had self-immolated in the past.
- International observers expressed concern over reports in recent years of PRC policies aimed at severely restricting the domains of usage of Tibetan and other local languages, including school closures, reduction in school instruction in languages other than Standard Mandarin, and a network of colonial boarding schools that house a majority of Tibetan school-age children.
- Reports published this year documented police-run programs in the Tibet Autonomous Region and Qinghai province in which officials have collected sensitive biometric information from millions of Tibetans and other local residents in recent years. The DNA, blood sample, and iris scan collection programs reportedly are employed as forms of social control, surveillance, and repression of the residents of Tibet.
- In contravention of international human rights standards, officials punished residents of Tibetan areas for exercising protected rights, including the expression of religious belief, criticism of PRC policies, and sharing information online. Notable cases this past year included those of writer **Rongbo Gangkar**, a writer and translator detained since 2021 after he led a discussion at a meeting in which he advocated celebration of the Dalai Lama's birthday; **Thubsam**, accused of sending "information about Tibet" to individuals in Europe and India, and later sentenced to two years in prison for "leaking state secrets" and "separatism"; and **Jamyang**, also known as Zangkar Jamyang, a writer detained in June 2020 and held incommunicado until information emerged in March 2023 on his four-year sentence related to his advocacy for Tibetan language rights in schools.

Tibet

Recommendations

Members of the U.S. Congress and Administration officials are encouraged to take the following actions:

- Work with the United Nations to help set up visits by U.N. human rights officials, including the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Special Rapporteur on minority issues, and the Special Rapporteur on the right to education, to Tibetan areas of China to independently assess the human rights situation there, free of any restrictions or hindrances by Chinese Communist Party or government officials, to be followed by a full report to the United Nations on their findings.
- Adopt and implement appropriate legislation to prohibit American companies doing business with Chinese police and other law enforcement agencies in Tibet from selling or providing equipment used by those forces in gross human rights violations, including mass coercive biometric data-gathering and surveillance programs.
- Work with government officials, parliamentarians, and non-governmental organizations in like-minded countries to pressure the Chinese government and Communist Party to respect, as a matter of the right to religious freedom and as recognized under Chinese and international law, that it is the right of Tibetan Buddhists to identify and educate all religious teachers, including the Dalai Lama, in a manner consistent with Tibetan Buddhist practices and traditions.
- Urge the Chinese government to cease treating the Dalai Lama as a security threat, and encourage the resumption of genuine dialogue, without preconditions, between the Chinese government and the Dalai Lama or his representatives.
- In interactions with Chinese officials, call for the release of Tibetan political prisoners currently detained or imprisoned for the peaceful exercise of their human rights. The records of detained Tibetans in the Commission's Political Prisoner Database provide a useful resource for such advocacy. Urge the Chinese government and its law enforcement and security forces to end the use of arbitrary detention, disappearance, beatings, torture, and intimidation to suppress and punish Tibetans for the peaceful exercise of their rights.
- Urge the Chinese government to invite representatives of governments and international organizations to meet with **Gedun Choekyi Nyima**, whom the Dalai Lama recognized as the 11th Panchen Lama, and his parents, all three of whom disappeared shortly after his recognition as Panchen Lama in 1995.

TIBET

Status of Negotiations between the Chinese Government and the Dalai Lama or His Representatives

During the Commission's 2023 reporting year, the Commission did not observe any interest on the part of People's Republic of China (PRC) officials in resuming formal negotiations with the Dalai Lama or his representatives. The last round of negotiations, the ninth, was held in January 2010.¹

Self-Immolations

The Commission did not observe reports of Tibetan self-immolations that occurred during the 2023 reporting year, the first year since 2021 in which no self-immolations were reported to have occurred.² The Commission has observed 154 self-immolations reported to focus on political or religious issues since 2009 in Tibetan areas.³ Radio Free Asia reported that Chinese authorities in Gansu and Sichuan provinces continued to harass family members of Tibetans who had self-immolated, denying them employment opportunities, preventing them from taking university admissions exams, and in at least one case imprisoning the nephew of a self-immolator for contacting people outside Tibet.⁴

Religious Freedom for Tibetans

The PRC continued to restrict, and seek to control, the religious practices of Tibetans, particularly practitioners of Tibetan Buddhism. International observers and rights advocacy groups reported on continuing violations of international human rights standards, including the right to freely worship and to choose one's own religion, that result from PRC religious policy and its implementation.⁵ PRC officials exercise political control and supervision of Tibetan Buddhist monastic and educational institutions through the United Front Work Department's National Religious Affairs Administration.⁶ [For more information on religion and religious freedom in China, see Chapter 3—Freedom of Religion.]

During the 2023 reporting year, PRC organizations continued to target Tibetan Buddhist monks and nuns with propaganda in ideological education sessions held at monastic institutions and other sites.⁷ These propaganda efforts included the study of Chinese Communist Party ethnic and religious policy initiatives and priorities, such as the "sinicization" of Tibetan Buddhism and managing the practice of Tibetan Buddhism "to adapt to socialist society";⁸ as well as Chinese legal provisions, including the Measures on the Management of the Reincarnation of Living Buddhas⁹ and local religious regulations.¹⁰ These study sessions emphasized the Party and government's primacy over and control of religious institutions¹¹ and monks' and nuns' responsibilities to be loyal to and supportive of the Party and government.¹² The propaganda campaigns at monastic institutions placed special focus this year on the 20th National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party,¹³ and authorities across Tibet reportedly ordered monks to watch broadcasts of the 20th Party Congress at their monasteries.¹⁴

Tibet

PRC authorities in Tibetan areas issued prohibitions on forms of religious worship, particularly during important religious events or around the times of politically sensitive anniversaries, and restricted access to religious institutions and places of worship, including Tibetan Buddhist monasteries and temples.¹⁵ Examples from this past year included:

- **Ganzi TAP: Prohibitions on religious celebrations for the Dalai Lama's birthday.**¹⁶ Authorities in some Tibetan areas, including Kardze (Ganzi) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (TAP), Sichuan province, stepped up surveillance of Tibetans around the time of the Dalai Lama's July 6 birthday, reportedly stationing informants in some homes to ensure that residents were not conducting religious rituals in celebration.¹⁷ Authorities also warned Tibetans not to share images on their phones and threatened those found with images of the Dalai Lama on their phones with detention or imprisonment.¹⁸
- **Detention for creating unauthorized WeChat group.** In July 2022, police in Sershul (Shiqu) county, Kardze (Ganzi) TAP, took into custody **Lotse**,¹⁹ accusing him of setting up a WeChat group without registering it with authorities.²⁰ The WeChat group, "Happy 80th Birthday" (in Tibetan, "80 *khrungs skar*"), had approximately 100 members "from across Tibet," and was created to celebrate the birthdays of Tibetan religious figures.²¹
- **Warning against celebrating the birthday of Kirti Rinpoche.** Sichuan province authorities warned Tibetans against online celebrations of the August 8 birthday of Kirti Rinpoche, the exiled Tibetan Buddhist religious leader of Kirti Monastery, located in Ngaba (Aba) county, Ngaba (Aba) Tibetan and Qiang Autonomous Prefecture (T&QAP), Sichuan.²² In 2021, authorities in Aba and Dzoerge (Ruo'ergai) counties banned religious activities at Kirti Monastery around the same date.²³
- **Death in custody and police torture.** On August 24, 2022, police in Serthar (Seda) county, Kardze (Ganzi) TAP, detained five Tibetan residents of Serthar after they lit incense for a religious ceremony and prayed in public.²⁴ Officials initially held **Chugdar, Gelo, Tsedo, Bamo, and Kori**²⁵ at a Serthar detention facility and refused to let their families visit them in detention or send them food.²⁶ On August 26, authorities told Chugdar's family that he had died in custody and told them that they could only collect his body if they signed a document stating that police had not caused his death, offering financial compensation in return for compliance.²⁷ Sources alleged that police tortured the five detainees and that this torture had caused Chugdar's death.²⁸
- **Prison sentences for sending donations abroad.**²⁹ Information emerged in November 2022 on the April 2021 detentions of **Rachung Gedun** and **Sonam Gyatso**, two senior monks at Kirti Monastery.³⁰ Chinese authorities accused the two monks of having sent donations to the Dalai Lama and Kirti Rinpoche, both of whom live in exile in India.³¹ In July 2022, an unidentified court sentenced Rachung Gedun to three years in prison, and Sonam Gyatso to two years.³²

THE DALAI LAMA

Reports continued to emerge this year of Chinese authorities penalizing Tibetans for expressions of reverence for the Dalai Lama, including through harassment and surveillance, detention, and imprisonment. Authorities in Tibetan areas reportedly detained Tibetans in connection with celebrations or observances of the Dalai Lama's birthday, discussions of him and well-wishes for him online, and possession of his image or recordings of his teachings, including the following cases:

- **Rongbo Gangkar.**³³ On an unknown date in or around early 2021, authorities in Rebong (Tongren) county, Malho (Huangnan) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai province, detained Rongbo Gangkar, a Tibetan writer and translator, near Rebong's Rongbo Gonchen Monastery.³⁴ Based on information from local sources, Radio Free Asia (RFA) later reported that officials had detained Rongbo Gangkar after he led a discussion at a meeting in which he advocated celebration of the Dalai Lama's birthday.³⁵ Rongbo Gangkar's whereabouts in custody were unconfirmed, but one source told RFA that authorities held him at a Rebong detention facility.³⁶
- **Sisters detained over Dalai Lama photo.** On July 11, 2022, police in Amdo (Anduo) county, Nagchu (Naqu) municipality, Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), detained **Yudron**, a young Tibetan woman.³⁷ Several weeks earlier, Amdo county officials had detained Yudron's older sister **Dzumkar**³⁸ after finding a photo of the Dalai Lama on an altar during a search of their house.³⁹ Police transferred both women to an unknown detention facility or facilities in Lhasa municipality, TAR.⁴⁰
- **Detention for possession of Dalai Lama images, pendant.** On August 12, 2022, authorities in Lhasa detained **Karma Samdrub**⁴¹ on suspicion of "contacting separatists" after he was found with images of the Dalai Lama in his car and on a pendant he was wearing.⁴²

COVID-19 in the Tibet Autonomous Region

After the rapid spread of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) across Tibet beginning in mid-2022, the subsequent official response of lockdowns and sending residents to mass quarantine centers in parts of the TAR led to widespread criticism of "zero-COVID" measures and to the largest protests in Tibet since 2008. Following COVID-19 outbreaks in August 2022, authorities ordered lockdowns in parts of the TAR including Lhasa and Shigatse (Rikaze) municipalities and Ngari (Ali) prefecture, confining residents to their homes, enforcing frequent testing, and sending thousands of residents to mass quarantine centers.⁴³ In September and October, sources reported that Lhasa residents were publicly complaining about authorities' failure to control the outbreaks and to provide food, medicine, and adequate housing conditions for those in lockdown or in quarantine facilities.⁴⁴ Online commenters reported inappropriate use of quarantine orders, including for those who were not confirmed to have COVID-19, uninhabitable conditions and inadequate food at quarantine centers, and severe difficulties in obtaining food and financial support for people forced to

Tibet

stop working.⁴⁵ In late September, at least five Lhasa residents reportedly committed suicide under the strain of lockdown conditions.⁴⁶

Despite a public apology by Lhasa's vice mayor in late September,⁴⁷ officials responded to residents' discontent over zero-COVID measures by censoring online complaints and investigating and detaining hundreds of people for expressing their grievances.⁴⁸ On October 10, the Lhasa Public Security Bureau announced that it had ordered administrative punishments for over 1,000 people suspected of violating anti-COVID measures.⁴⁹ Heavy communications restrictions in the TAR limited reporting on these detainees, but information was available on some individual cases, including mother and daughter **Rigzin Drolma** and **Tashi Yangkyi**, detained in Lhasa in August for sharing "illegal photos," ostensibly referring to the COVID-19 situation in Tibet;⁵⁰ and **Yidam**, one of two people detained in Lhasa after they organized volunteers to create stone prayer engravings for victims of COVID-19.⁵¹ Outside the TAR, Tibetan language teacher **Gontse** was detained in Sichuan province in August for sharing photos and videos of lockdown conditions in Lhasa.⁵²

After TAR authorities announced in late October that they would partially relax some of the lockdown restrictions, hundreds of protesters demonstrated in Lhasa against continuing COVID controls.⁵³ Sources reported that many of the protesters appeared to be Han Chinese migrant workers demanding permission to leave Tibet to return to their homes elsewhere in China.⁵⁴ Of approximately 200 protesters detained in connection with the Lhasa protests, 47 were Tibetan; authorities reportedly discriminated against Tibetan detainees by holding them in custody for longer periods (14 days in detention, compared with 1 day for many non-Tibetan detainees), interrogating them repeatedly and denying them adequate food.⁵⁵

Mass Biometric Data Collection and Surveillance in Tibetan Areas

During the past year, rights and technology monitoring groups documented massive police surveillance programs in Tibetan areas where officials have been collecting sensitive biometric information from millions of Tibetans and other local residents.⁵⁶ Human Rights Watch wrote in September 2022 about DNA collection programs in the TAR in recent years, in which public security officials collected blood samples, apparently without obtaining consent, and possibly without any way for individuals to refuse to participate.⁵⁷ A Citizen Lab report, also published in September, found that public security officials had collected between 919,000 and 1.2 million DNA samples in the TAR between 2016 and 2022.⁵⁸ Some DNA collection programs took place at primary schools, targeting children and reportedly without parental involvement or consent.⁵⁹ Citizen Lab found that Tibetan Buddhist monasteries and resident monks were also targets for DNA collection.⁶⁰ In December 2022, Citizen Lab separately reported on an iris scan collection program in Qinghai province from 2019 to 2022.⁶¹ The program, also organized by public security agencies, may have collected around 1.2 to 1.4 million iris scans in those three years, amounting to between 21 and 25 percent of Qinghai's population.⁶²

Public security officials have offered a range of justifications for the biometric data collection programs, but the author of the Citizen Lab reports found that the DNA collection program “is a form of social control directed against Tibet’s people”⁶³ and that the Qinghai iris scan collection program “effectively treat[s] entire communities as populated by potential threats to social stability.”⁶⁴ Both the DNA and iris scan collection programs are notable for being operated separate from any criminal investigation.⁶⁵

In light of concerns over these programs, in December 2022, the Commission wrote to Thermo Fisher Scientific, an American company that manufactures DNA kits and sequencers that police in the TAR have purchased,⁶⁶ to inquire into Thermo Fisher’s knowledge of how its products are used by police and other security forces, and the extent to which the company was taking steps to prevent its products from being used in human rights abuses.⁶⁷ In response, Thermo Fisher’s president and chief executive officer wrote that the company believed that the use of its products by TAR police was “entirely consistent with . . . routine forensics investigations”;⁶⁸ the company did not address concerns that law enforcement agencies in the TAR have engaged in human rights abuses.⁶⁹

Language and Cultural Rights

China’s Constitution and laws contain provisions affirming the freedom of ethnic minorities to “use and develop”⁷⁰ their languages, yet Chinese authorities continued to threaten linguistic rights in Tibetan areas, including through implementation of policies promoting or enforcing the use of Mandarin Chinese instead of Tibetan, as well as policies of neglect with regard to minority languages. PRC ethnic policy ignores unrecognized linguistic communities, including in Tibetan areas,⁷¹ and individuals or commu-

Tibet

nities with languages that lack official recognition are deprived of access to official support in education and other government services.⁷² The U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which China is a State Party,⁷³ recognizes and protects the rights of ethnic and linguistic minority groups to use their languages.⁷⁴ [For more information on language rights and ethnic policy, see Chapter 7—Ethnic Minority Rights.]

Chinese authorities restricted the scope of Tibetan-language education, or announced plans to do so, in parts of Tibet. In Ngaba (Aba) Tibetan and Qiang Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan province, education officials reportedly began to phase out the use of Standard Tibetan as an instructional language in primary and secondary schools in early 2023, relegating Tibetan-language study to a single class.⁷⁵ Radio Free Asia reported that the 2023 nationwide university entrance examinations (*gaokao*) were only offered in Mandarin Chinese, and not regional languages, for the first time.⁷⁶ Prefectural education bureau officials in Kardze (Ganzi) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan, announced that Tibetan-language classes would not be offered at all in primary schools beginning in 2024.⁷⁷

International observers expressed concern over recent reports of PRC policies aimed at severely restricting the domains of usage of Tibetan and other local languages and threatening the cultural rights of Tibetans. In a November 2022 letter, four U.N. Special Rapporteurs “express[ed] serious concern about . . . a series of oppressive actions against Tibetan educational, religious[,] and linguistic institutions,” including school closures, reduction in school instruction in languages other than Standard Mandarin, and a network of colonial boarding schools that house a majority of Tibetan school-age children.⁷⁸ Six U.N. Special Rapporteurs, in a February 2023 letter to the Chinese government expressing concern over labor transfer programs in Tibetan areas, noted that the programs were “eroding Tibetan minority languages, cultural practices, and religion” in both execution and intent.⁷⁹

In its March 2023 concluding observations on China’s compliance with the International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the U.N. Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights urged China to afford all citizens the “right to enjoy fully their own cultural identity and take part in cultural life [and] to ensure the use and practice of their language and culture[,]” and called on China “to abolish immediately the coerced residential (boarding) school system imposed on Tibetan children and allow private Tibetan schools to be established.”⁸⁰ The Committee also called on China to “take adequate measures to protect cultural diversity and the cultural practices and heritage of religious minorities” over concerns about the “systematic and massive destruction of religious sites” in China.⁸¹

Restrictions on the Freedom of Expression and the Free Flow of Information

During the 2023 reporting year, Tibet remained⁸² one of the most closed-off areas in the world, with tight restrictions on communications into and out of the region.⁸³ Chinese authorities continued to restrict contact between Tibetans in Tibetan areas of

China and individuals or groups abroad, including by punishing or threatening to punish those found to have contact with Tibetans in exile—often those in India—or who have shared information in Tibet about Tibetans living abroad.⁸⁴ Chinese authorities also strictly monitored online communications platforms to find and punish Tibetans who were alleged to have committed crimes online.⁸⁵ Illustrative examples of Tibetans detained by Chinese authorities in connection with online expression included:

- **Yangdron.**⁸⁶ On November 15, 2022, public security officials in Damshung (Dangxiong) county, Lhasa municipality, Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR), detained Yangdron, a restaurant owner and Damshung resident, reportedly in connection with her criticism on social media of Chinese authorities' misrule and abuse of power in Tibet.⁸⁷
- **Thubsam.**⁸⁸ On May 3, 2022, public security officials in Kardze (Ganzi) county, Kardze (Ganzi) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (TAP), Sichuan province, detained Thubsam, a 28-year-old Tibetan craftsman originally from Sershul (Shiqu) county, Kardze TAP.⁸⁹ Authorities reportedly accused him of sending "information about Tibet" to individuals in Europe and India.⁹⁰ His whereabouts in custody were not reported, but on November 21, officials from the Ganzi TAP Intermediate People's Court told his wife and brother that the court had sentenced him to two years in prison for "leaking state secrets" and "separatism."⁹¹
- **Palgon.**⁹² In August 2022, police in Golog (Guoluo) TAP, Qinghai province, detained Palgon, a 30-year-old Tibetan writer and former teacher from Pema (Banma) county, Golog TAP, after he contacted Tibetans living abroad and offered prayers to the Dalai Lama.⁹³ Detailed information on his detention, including his whereabouts, his condition in custody, and the official accusation against him, was unavailable; authorities did not provide Palgon's family this information either.⁹⁴
- **Yangtso.**⁹⁵ On March 2, 2023, police in Namling (Nanmulin) county, Shigatse (Rikaze) municipality, TAR, detained Yangtso, a 23-year-old Namling resident and restaurant employee, after checking her phone and finding that she had sent photos and videos to someone outside China; the content of the photos and videos was not reported.⁹⁶ Her family was unable to visit her in detention at an unidentified facility in Shigatse.⁹⁷
- **Guru Kyab.**⁹⁸ In late December 2022, information emerged about the case of Guru Kyab, a Tibetan resident of Chigdril (Jiuzhi) county, Golog TAP, whom Chinese authorities detained on an unknown date in 2021 for corresponding with Tibetans living outside China.⁹⁹ Detailed information on his detention was limited, but sources reported that he served a prison sentence of at least one year until his release in November 2022.¹⁰⁰ He went to India in 2016 and maintained contact with people there upon his return to Tibet.¹⁰¹ Following the end of his sentence in November 2022, authorities kept Guru Kyab under post-release restrictions as a "high-level suspect target."¹⁰²

In December 2022, the TAR People's Congress Standing Committee passed the TAR Regulations on the Administration of Net-

Tibet

work Information Security (the Regulations) to comply with requirements of the PRC Cybersecurity Law and the PRC National Security Law.¹⁰³ The Regulations, which took effect on February 1, 2023, officially promote the creation and dissemination of several types of online content,¹⁰⁴ prohibit others,¹⁰⁵ and require that internet service providers, alongside public and state security agencies, create platforms to facilitate reporting by individuals or organizations of “behavior threatening network information security.”¹⁰⁶ While the Regulations do not define this behavior, the list of content types which individuals and groups are prohibited from creating, sharing, downloading, or forwarding includes content that:

- publicizes the symbols of “Tibetan independence” organizations or their members’ images, comments, and activities;¹⁰⁷
- “distorts and slanders human rights conditions in Tibet”;¹⁰⁸
- “distorts or undermines the use of Standard Mandarin Chinese as the national commonly used language and script”;¹⁰⁹ and
- “distorts and slanders Chinese religious policy and laws”, pointing to legal measures by which the PRC asserts its control over the selection and recognition of reincarnated Tibetan Buddhist teachers.¹¹⁰

SIX TIBETAN INTELLECTUALS DETAINED IN SICHUAN PROVINCE

In September 2022, the Kardze (Ganzi) Intermediate People’s Court in Kardze (Ganzi) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Sichuan, sentenced six Tibetan writers and intellectuals to prison terms ranging from 4 to 14 years on charges including “inciting separatism.”¹¹¹ Chinese authorities detained the six—**Drubpa Kyab, Tsering Drolma, Samdrub, Gangbu Yubum, Senam, and Pema Rinchen**—between late 2020 and spring 2021, and while the Commission observed reports of their detentions as early as 2021, further reporting on their detentions did not emerge until October 2022.¹¹² Detailed information on their cases, including what Chinese authorities alleged was evidence of “inciting separatism,” remained unavailable.¹¹³ Each of the six prisoners had previously been detained by Chinese authorities at least once.¹¹⁴

Heavy Restrictions Remain on Freedom of Movement, Travel, and Access to Tibet

This reporting year, Chinese authorities maintained heavy restrictions on physical access to Tibet and movement within or from Tibet, with periodic intensification of physical restrictions and inspection and surveillance at “politically sensitive” times of year.¹¹⁵ The Foreign Correspondents’ Club of China reported that no foreign reporters surveyed who applied for access to report in the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) in 2022 were granted such permission.¹¹⁶ Authorities in Lhasa municipality, TAR, restricted the numbers of visitors at the Jokhang Temple and the Potala Palace around the time of the Dalai Lama’s birthday in July 2022.¹¹⁷ Prior to the Tibetan New Year (*Losar*) in February 2023, TAR authorities reportedly conducted raids in several municipalities and stepped up surveillance on residents,¹¹⁸ leading some Tibetans to

Tibet

ask relatives living abroad not to contact them for fear of official scrutiny and possible retaliation.¹¹⁹ Lhasa officials also ordered the temporary closure of the Jokhang Temple complex for several days in March 2023 around the time of the March 10 anniversary of the 1959 Tibetan uprising,¹²⁰ and increased inspections in the area around the Jokhang and other major religious sites several days later, coinciding with the March 14 anniversary of the 2008 Tibetan protests.¹²¹

Chinese authorities in Tibetan areas sought to prevent Tibetans from traveling to India. In December 2022, security officials in Shigatse (Rikaze) municipality, TAR, detained three Tibetans, accusing them of “having plans to travel to India.”¹²² The three—**Dradul, Sonam Gyatso, and Gonkyab**—were reportedly returning from a pilgrimage visit to Sekhar Guthog Monastery in Lhodrag (Luozha) county, Lhokha (Shannan) municipality, TAR, near the border with Bhutan.¹²³

Notes to Chapter 17—Tibet

¹U.S. Department of State, “Report to Congress on Tibet Negotiations, Section 613(b) of the Tibetan Policy Act of 2002 (22 U.S.C. 6901 note),” accessed June 15, 2022.

²Congressional-Executive Commission on China, *2021 Annual Report* (Washington: March 2022), 296; Congressional-Executive Commission on China, *2022 Annual Report* (Washington: November 2022), 283.

³This cumulative total does not include six deaths by self-immolation of Tibetans in 2012 and 2013. Congressional-Executive Commission on China, “CECC Update: Tibetan Self-Immolations,” January 10, 2017. See also International Campaign for Tibet, “Self-Immolation Fact Sheet,” accessed June 8, 2023.

⁴Sangyal Kunchok, “Chinese Authorities in Tibet Go After Relatives of Self-Immolating Protestors,” *Radio Free Asia*, April 5, 2023.

⁵Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted and proclaimed by U.N. General Assembly resolution 217A (III) of December 10, 1948, art. 18; International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, adopted by U.N. General Assembly resolution 2200A (XXI) of December 16, 1966, entry into force March 23, 1976, art. 18.

⁶See, e.g., “Huangnan zhou Fojiao jie shenru kaizhan ‘yao zuohao sengni, xian zuohao gongmin’ zhuti jiaoyu shijian huodong” [Malho Prefecture Buddhists thoroughly launch education and implementation activity on the theme of “to be good monks and nuns, first be good citizens”], Qinghai Province United Front Work Department, July 29, 2022; Nyingtri Municipality Religious Small Leading Group Office for “Three Consciousnesses” Education, “Linshi shi ‘san ge yishi’ jiaoyu zongjiao daibiao renshi xuanjiang tuan shenru Motuo xian zongjiao lingyu kaizhan Dang de Ershi Da jingshen ji ‘san ge yishi’ jiaoyu xuanjiang” [Nyingtri municipality’s “three consciousnesses” education and religious representatives propaganda group thoroughly penetrates Motuo county’s religious sphere to launch education and propaganda on the spirit of the 20th Party Congress and the “three consciousnesses”], reprinted in Tibet Autonomous Region United Front Work Department, November 26, 2022. See also International Campaign for Tibet, “Party Above Buddhism: China’s Surveillance and Control of Tibetan Monasteries and Nunneries,” March 2021, 10–11.

⁷For past Commission coverage, see, e.g., Congressional-Executive Commission on China, *2022 Annual Report* (Washington: November 2022), 283–84.

⁸See, e.g., Mindrolling Monastic Management Committee, “Zhanang xianwei shuji Tang Yong fu Minzhulin Si kaizhan ‘san ge yishi’ jiaoyu xuanjiang huodong” [Dranang county committee secretary Tang Yong visits Mindrolling Monastery to launch “three consciousnesses” education and propaganda activity], reprinted in Tibet Autonomous Region United Front Work Department, August 5, 2022.

⁹See, e.g., “Huangnan zhou Fojiao jie shenru kaizhan ‘yao zuohao sengni, xian zuohao gongmin’ zhuti jiaoyu shijian huodong” [Malho Prefecture Buddhists thoroughly launch education and implementation activity on the theme of “to be good monks and nuns, first be good citizens”], Qinghai Province United Front Work Department, July 29, 2022.

¹⁰See, e.g., “Huangnan zhou Fojiao jie shenru kaizhan ‘yao zuohao sengni, xian zuohao gongmin’ zhuti jiaoyu shijian huodong” [Malho Prefecture Buddhists thoroughly launch education and implementation activity on the theme of “to be good monks and nuns, first be good citizens”], Qinghai Province United Front Work Department, July 29, 2022; Lhasa Municipal United Front Work Department, “Lasa shi Fojiao Xiehui juban shoujie Xizang Fo Xueyuan Lasa shi ge simiao fenyuan xueyuan peixun ban” [Lhasa Municipal Buddhist Association holds first training session for various Lhasa monastery branches of the Tibetan Buddhist Institute], reprinted in Tibet Autonomous Region United Front Work Department, August 2, 2022.

¹¹See, e.g., Mindrolling Monastic Management Committee, “Zhanang xianwei shuji Tang Yong fu Minzhulin Si kaizhan ‘san ge yishi’ jiaoyu xuanjiang huodong” [Dranang county committee secretary Tang Yong visits Mindrolling Monastery to launch “three consciousnesses” education and propaganda activity], reprinted in Tibet Autonomous Region United Front Work Department, August 5, 2022; Nyingtri Municipality Religious Small Leading Group Office for “Three Consciousnesses” Education, “Linshi shi ‘san ge yishi’ jiaoyu zongjiao daibiao renshi xuanjiang tuan shenru Motuo xian zongjiao lingyu kaizhan Dang de Ershi Da jingshen ji ‘san ge yishi’ jiaoyu xuanjiang” [Nyingtri municipality’s “three consciousnesses” education and religious representatives propaganda group thoroughly penetrates Motuo county’s religious sphere to launch education and propaganda on the spirit of the 20th Party Congress and the “three consciousnesses”], reprinted in Tibet Autonomous Region United Front Work Department, November 26, 2022.

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Tibet

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Tibet

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⁸⁹"thub bsam zhu ba'i bod mi zhig la lo gnyis kyi btson 'jug khirms thag bcad yod 'dug' [Thubsam, a Tibetan, sentenced to two years in prison], *Tibet Times*, November 24, 2022; Yangchen Dolma, "China Jailed a Young Tibetan for Two Years for Allegedly Sending Information to the World," *Tibet Post International*, November 24, 2022; Dangqiu, "Xizang Shiqu yi Zangren zao dangju yi xielu guojia jimi wei ming panchu 2 nian tuxing" [In Sershul, Tibet, Tibetan man sentenced to 2 years in prison for leaking state secrets], *Voice of Tibet*, November 28, 2022.

⁹⁰"thub bsam zhu ba'i bod mi zhig la lo gnyis kyi btson 'jug khirms thag bcad yod 'dug' [Thubsam, a Tibetan, sentenced to two years in prison], *Tibet Times*, November 24, 2022; Yangchen Dolma, "China Jailed a Young Tibetan for Two Years for Allegedly Sending Information to the World," *Tibet Post International*, November 24, 2022; Dangqiu, "Xizang Shiqu yi Zangren zao dangju yi xielu guojia jimi wei ming panchu 2 nian tuxing" [In Sershul, Tibet, Tibetan man sentenced to 2 years in prison for leaking state secrets], *Voice of Tibet*, November 28, 2022.

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⁹²For more information on Palgon, see the Commission's Political Prisoner Database record 2023-00038.

⁹³"Chinese Authorities Detain Tibetan Writer for Contacting People in Exile," *Radio Free Asia*, January 25, 2023.

⁹⁴"Chinese Authorities Detain Tibetan Writer for Contacting People in Exile," *Radio Free Asia*, January 25, 2023.

⁹⁵For more information on Yangtso, the Commission's Political Prisoner Database record 2023-00084.

⁹⁶"phyi phyogs su 'brel ba yod pa'i nyes ming gyogs te dbyangs mtsho lags 'dzin bzung byas" [Yangtso detained for crime of having contact with foreigners], *Tibet Times*, March 4, 2023; Luosang, "Xizang Rikaze yi funü bei kong xiang jingwai chuansong zhaopian er zao jubu" [Woman in Shigatse, Tibet, detained, accused of sending photos abroad], *Voice of Tibet*, March 6, 2023.

⁹⁷"phyi phyogs su 'brel ba yod pa'i nyes ming gyogs te dbyangs mtsho lags 'dzin bzung byas" [Yangtso detained for crime of having contact with foreigners], *Tibet Times*, March 4, 2023; Luosang, "Xizang Rikaze yi funü bei kong xiang jingwai chuansong zhaopian er zao jubu" [Woman in Shigatse, Tibet, detained, accused of sending photos abroad], *Voice of Tibet*, March 6, 2023.

⁹⁸For more information on Guru Kyab, see the Commission's Political Prisoner Database record 2023-00029.

⁹⁹Paldan, "bod mi zhig lo gcig lhag btson 'jug byas nas klod grol btang" [Tibetan released after over a year in prison], *Tibet Times*, December 30, 2022; Zhacuo, "Xizang Jiuzhi xian yi Zangren jin yin yu jingwai lianxi bian zao panchu 1 nian duo, huoshi hou reng shou jianshi" [In Chigdril county, Tibet, Tibetan man sentenced to more than 1 year because of contacting foreigners, after release still under surveillance], *Voice of Tibet*, January 2, 2023.

¹⁰⁰Paldan, "bod mi zhig lo gcig lhag btson 'jug byas nas klod grol btang" [Tibetan released after over a year in prison], *Tibet Times*, December 30, 2022; Zhacuo, "Xizang Jiuzhi xian yi Zangren jin yin yu jingwai lianxi bian zao panchu 1 nian duo, huoshi hou reng shou jianshi" [In Chigdril county, Tibet, Tibetan man sentenced to more than 1 year because of contacting foreigners, after release still under surveillance], *Voice of Tibet*, January 2, 2023.

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¹⁰³*Xizang Zizhiqiu Wangluo Xinxi Anquan Guanli Tiaoli* [Tibet Autonomous Region Regulations on the Administration of Network Information Security], passed December 9, 2022, issued January 20, 2023, effective February 1, 2023, art. 1.

¹⁰⁴*Xizang Zizhiqiu Wangluo Xinxi Anquan Guanli Tiaoli* [Tibet Autonomous Region Regulations on the Administration of Network Information Security], passed December 9, 2022, issued January 20, 2023, effective February 1, 2023, art. 10.

¹⁰⁵*Xizang Zizhiqiu Wangluo Xinxi Anquan Guanli Tiaoli* [Tibet Autonomous Region Regulations on the Administration of Network Information Security], passed December 9, 2022, issued January 20, 2023, effective February 1, 2023, art. 11.

¹⁰⁶*Xizang Zizhiqiu Wangluo Xinxi Anquan Guanli Tiaoli* [Tibet Autonomous Region Regulations on the Administration of Network Information Security], passed December 9, 2022, issued January 20, 2023, effective February 1, 2023, art. 9.

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Tibet

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¹¹⁵See, e.g., Foreign Correspondents’ Club of China, “Zero COVID, Many Controls: Covering China in 2022,” March 1, 2023, 10; Freedom House, “Freedom in the World 2023 Country Report: Tibet,” accessed March 9, 2023.

¹¹⁶Foreign Correspondents’ Club of China, “Zero COVID, Many Controls: Covering China in 2022,” March 1, 2023, 10.

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