

# TIBET BRIEF

OCTOBER 2020

A REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

## NEW REPORT REVEALS COERCIVE LABOR PROGRAM IN TIBET



Military-style training of "rural surplus laborers" in the Chamdo region of Tibet in 2016. (Photo: Tibet's Chamdo, 30 June 2016).

**MIRRORING A PROGRAM OF FORCED LABOR IN XINJIANG, BEIJING IS PUSHING GROWING NUMBERS OF TIBETANS INTO MILITARY-STYLE "TRAINING CENTERS", WHERE THEY ARE BEING TURNED INTO LOW-PAID FACTORY WORKERS, A NEW REPORT HAS FOUND.**

The [report](#), released on 22 September by the Jamestown Foundation and corroborated by [Reuters](#), documents a large-scale program in the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) that pushed more than half a million rural Tibetans off their land and into military-style training centers in the first seven months of this year alone. After their coerced training, many of the Tibetans were sent to other areas of Tibet and China and pushed into low-wage factory and construction work.

The policy, first introduced in the Chamdo region in 2013 and extended to the rest

of the TAR last year, includes a number of racist assumptions about Tibetans' "backwardness" and the need to reform their thinking and cultural identity while making them loyal to the Chinese Communist Party. It also seeks to reduce the influence of Tibetans' Buddhist religion, and to force Tibetans to abandon their traditional way of life under the pretext of poverty alleviation.

Although there is currently no evidence that the TAR's scheme is linked to extrajudicial internment like in Xinjiang, where over a million Uyghurs are being detained in labor



### IN THIS ISSUE

- 1 New report reveals coercive labor program in Tibet
- 2 Tibet raised at EU-China leaders' virtual meeting
- 3 China elected to UN Human Rights Council but suffers another setback as criticism grows
- 4 ICT joins Global Day of Action against human rights violations in China
- 5 Seventh Tibet Work Forum promises more repression
- 6 Arrest of New York police officer accused of spying for China reveals China's efforts against Tibetans abroad
- 7 New ICT report exposes fraudulent "anti-gang" trial of "Sangchu 10" Tibetans
- 8 Political Prisoner Focus
- 9 Reading Suggestion
- 10 Tibet Talks Europe
- 11 Upcoming Events

> CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



INTERNATIONAL  
CAMPAIGN  
FOR TIBET

#### ICT EUROPE

Funenpark 1D  
1018 AK Amsterdam,  
The Netherlands  
Phone: +31 (0)20 3308265  
Fax: +31 (0)20 3308266  
[icteurope@savetibet.nl](mailto:icteurope@savetibet.nl)

#### ICT BRUSSELS

15, rue de la linière  
1060 Brussels  
Belgium  
Phone: +32 (0)2 609 44 10  
Fax: +32 (0)2 609 44 32  
[info@savetibet.eu](mailto:info@savetibet.eu)

#### ICT GERMANY

Schonhauser Allee 163  
10435 Berlin  
Germany  
Tel.: +49 (0)30 27879086  
Fax: +49 (0)30 27879087  
[info@savetibet.de](mailto:info@savetibet.de)

#### ICT

1825 Jefferson Place, NW  
Washington, DC 20036  
United States of America  
Phone: +1 (1) 202-785-1515  
Fax: (202) 785-434  
[info@savetibet.org](mailto:info@savetibet.org)



> CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

camps, the program presents clear elements of coercion during recruitment, training and job matching. It constitutes a dramatic example of widespread human rights violations that affects a large part of the Tibetan population and their fundamentals

rights, including freedom of movement and the right to one's own livelihood.

Following the report's publication, more than 60 parliamentarians from 16 countries [demanded urgent action](#) against the

Chinese Communist Party, calling upon their governments *"to take immediate action to condemn these atrocities and to prevent further human rights abuses."*

## TIBET RAISED AT EU-CHINA LEADERS' VIRTUAL MEETING

A VIRTUAL MEETING OF EUROPEAN UNION AND CHINESE LEADERS ON 14 SEPTEMBER HIGHLIGHTED THE EU'S INCREASINGLY ASSERTIVE POSITION CONCERNING CHINA AND INCLUDED DISCUSSIONS ABOUT THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY.



Xi Jinping, President of the People's Republic of China; Charles Michel, President of the European Council; Angela Merkel, Federal Chancellor of Germany; and Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, at the EU-China leaders' meeting via video conference, on 14 September. (Photo: European Union)

The meeting, which replaced a major summit of the bloc's 27 leaders with their Chinese counterpart in Leipzig postponed due to the Covid pandemic, was chaired by European Council President Charles Michel on the EU side and President Xi Jinping on the Chinese side. European Commission President Ursula von der

Leyen, and, for the Council presidency, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, also participated. Four main issues were on the agenda: climate change, economic and trade issues, international affairs and human rights, as well as COVID-19 and economic recovery.

The meeting took place amidst [Europe's growing wariness about China](#) (which it considers both as a strategic partner and rival), and demonstrated a more robust and assertive attitude of the EU in this regard. *"Europe needs to be a player, not a playing field. Today's meeting represents another step forward in forging a more balanced relationship with China",* [remarked](#) President Michel afterwards.

In a reportedly "tense" exchange, EU leaders also raised their concerns about China's human rights record, including the national security law for Hong Kong and the treatment of minorities, particularly in Xinjiang and Tibet. They also asked for independent access to Xinjiang and hoped for a field visit to Tibet in the framework of the next EU-China human rights dialogue.

According to Noah Barkin, an EU-China specialist at Rhodium Group (a policy research firm) *"the focus on Hong Kong and Xinjiang shows that values are playing an ever greater role in the relationship."* *"In the past, human rights issues like these were discussed behind closed doors. Europe's line on China is hardening."*



## CHINA ELECTED TO UN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL BUT SUFFERS ANOTHER SETBACK AS CRITICISM GROWS

**DESPITE ITS APPALLING HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD, CHINA WAS RE-ELECTED TO THE UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL ON 13 OCTOBER, BUT SUFFERED A SIGNIFICANT DROP IN VOTES.**

There were 139 votes in favor of China's candidacy, compared to the 180 votes secured in 2016. The result - about a 25% drop - showed that an increasing number of countries strongly disapprove of the CCP's systematic and grave rights violations in Tibet, Xinjiang and Hong Kong.

The disappointing outcome follows a number of recent setbacks for China at the United Nations. In June, more than 50 UN experts and expert bodies [called for an independent](#)

[monitoring mechanism and a special session of the Human Rights Council](#) to investigate human rights violations in Xinjiang, Tibet and Hong Kong.

During the 45<sup>th</sup> session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva, an important number of states highlighted China's mass human rights violations in their statements under item 4. Belgium, the Czech Republic, Germany and the EU specifically raised concerns about the situation in Tibet. China also withdrew

a resolution on the right to development that it had introduced jointly with Pakistan, and which observers feared would redefine international human rights standards and undermine the universality and indivisibility of human rights.

Meanwhile, at the 75<sup>th</sup> General Assembly in New York, [39 states signed a statement](#) on the human rights situation in China, referring to the situations in Xinjiang, Tibet and Hong Kong.

## ICT JOINS GLOBAL DAY OF ACTION AGAINST HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN CHINA

**ON THE 71<sup>ST</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA ON 1 OCTOBER, THE INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET JOINED A SERIES OF WORLDWIDE PROTESTS TO DENOUNCE MASSIVE HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN CHINA AS PART OF THE "GLOBAL DAY OF ACTION."**



In Brussels, the World Uyghur Congress, the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization, the Belgian Uyghur Association, Lungta – Actief voor Tibet, the Tibetan Community and ICT [held a protest](#) in the EU headquarters district. About 150 people, as well as representatives of Hong Kong and Taiwan, joined them. (Photo: ICT)

dissidents joining hands - either through physical demonstrations or via online action - on China's National Day to honor victims of Chinese Communist Party repression. The day also saw a strident call for China to respect the fundamental rights and freedoms of all peoples.

ICT organized or joined protests in Washington D.C., Berlin and Amsterdam, as well as in the European Union headquarters district in Brussels, where EU leaders were discussing foreign affairs issues, including their relationship with China during a special European Council meeting.

It was the first time that so many organizations representing various ethnic groups and peoples in China demonstrated together, indicating their increasing solidarity in the face of the Chinese government's abuses of the rights and freedoms of their peoples.

The [Global Day of Action](#) was a joint initiative of organizations representing

Uyghurs, Tibetans, Southern Mongolians, Hong Kongers, Taiwanese and Chinese



## SEVENTH TIBET WORK FORUM PROMISES MORE REPRESSION

THE SEVENTH TIBET WORK FORUM HELD IN BEIJING ON 28 AND 29 AUGUST, AND PRESIDED OVER BY XI JINPING, INDICATED THE CHINESE LEADERSHIP'S DECISION TO CONTINUE ITS POLICY OF ABSOLUTE CONTROL AND ASSIMILATION IN TIBET.



Delegates attending the seventh Tibet Work Forum in Beijing. (Photo: Chinese state media)

Chinese state media [reported](#) that Xi laid out a “strategy of governing Tibet in the new era” that includes “Sinicization” of Tibetan Buddhism and improving the ability

of Chinese Communist Party organizations and members at all levels “to deal with major struggles and prevent major risks.” There was considerable emphasis on ensuring “national

security” and “ethnic solidarity.”

Even as Xi claimed success in China’s Tibet policy, particularly since the 18<sup>th</sup> CCP Congress in 2012 where Xi took over as China’s leader, his statement to party officials that the focus of their work in Tibet must be “on maintaining the unity of the motherland and strengthening national unity” suggests that there is a growing realization that the CCP has failed to win over the Tibetan people.

Following the forum, two senior Chinese officials, Wang Yang, chairman of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference, and You Quan, minister of the Central United Front Work Department, [visited Qinghai and Sichuan](#) as part of a propaganda campaign focusing specifically on implementing the goal of the forum.

## ARREST OF NEW YORK POLICE OFFICER ACCUSED OF SPYING FOR CHINA REVEALS CHINA’S EFFORTS AGAINST TIBETANS ABROAD

THE ARREST, AT THE END OF SEPTEMBER, OF A NEW YORK CITY POLICE OFFICER ACCUSED OF SPYING FOR CHINA IS THE LATEST EVIDENCE OF CHINA’S INCREASING PRESSURE ON TIBETAN EXILES.

In a press release on 21 September, the US Department of Justice [announced](#) charges against Officer Baimadajie Angwang, an American citizen reported to be of Tibetan origin, for acting as an illegal agent of the People’s Republic of China. Angwang, who is also a US Army reservist, is accused of reporting to a Chinese government handler in the Chinese consulate in New York as he surveilled the Tibetan community in the

area and attempted to cultivate additional spies within it.

This is one of the latest examples of a clear pattern of Chinese efforts at infiltrating Tibetan communities around the world in order to monitor their activities, intimidate them and stifle critical discussion of its repressive policies in Tibet. The trend includes an [incident in 2018](#) in Sweden in

which a Tibetan man, Dorjee Gyantsan, was paid to provide personal information about fellow Tibetans. Gyantsan was found guilty by a Swedish court and sentenced to 22 months in prison. Recently, Sweden [decided](#) to deport him back to China. In recent years, Chinese authorities have also been found using similar tactics against Uyghurs.



## NEW ICT REPORT EXPOSES FRAUDULENT “ANTI-GANG” TRIAL OF “SANGCHU 10” TIBETANS

10 TIBETANS HAVE RECEIVED HARSH PRISON SENTENCES IN A TRIAL THAT REVEALS HOW CHINA USES “ANTI-GANG” MEASURES TO SILENCE TIBETANS AND DENY THEM FAIR HEARINGS, THE INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET FOUND IN A NEW REPORT.



Line-up of the 10 Sangchu defendants in hazmat suits. (Photo: Chinese state media)

They were unjustly charged under the “Saohei Chu-e” (an abbreviation for “The Sweep Away Gangs, Root Out Evil Special Struggle) campaign. At the end of the trial, the judge gave the 10 Tibetans prison sentences between nine and 14 years for “extortion” and “forced trading.”

This legal and political campaign, launched in 2018 to eliminate “gangs” and “organized crime” in China, is used in Tibetan areas [to silence critics and challenges to the state](#), as the Saohei Chu-e campaign is enforced in essence to ensure Party power at the grassroots level. Although it is impossible to know exactly how many Tibetans have faced prosecution under the anti-gang campaign (due to the Chinese authorities' lack of transparency as well as their refusal to allow independent journalists and investigators into Tibet), it is estimated that several hundred Tibetans have been imprisoned under the initiative.

The [report](#), which analyses the video recording of the trial of 10 individuals in the Sangchu (Chinese: Xiahe) County People's Court in Gansu province's Kanlho (Gannan) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture at the end of June, shows that the defendants - all respected

community leaders - were only requesting compensation for property damage from state highway projects; raising concerns about a slaughterhouse in their hometown, and fundraising and procuring a piece of abandoned land for the monastery's use.

## POLITICAL PRISONER FOCUS

### DOLKAR



Dolkar after her release on 15 August.  
(Photo: Tibet Times)

**A TIBETAN WOMAN NAMED DOLKAR, WHO SERVED OVER A YEAR IN PRISON FOR SHARING NEWS ABOUT HER NEPHEW'S ARREST, HAD BADLY DAMAGED LIMBS AND EXTENSIVE BRUISING WHEN CHINESE AUTHORITIES RELEASED HER IN AUGUST.**

The International Campaign for Tibet [reported](#) last year on the sentencing of Dolkar and the arrest of her nephew Wangchen for praying for the Panchen Lama and calling for the reunion of the Dalai Lama and Panchen Lama in Tibet.

In mid-August, after completing her 15-month sentence, Dolkar was released from Ra-nga Khar (Xinduqiao) prison in Mingyao (Chinese: Mingya) near Dartsedo (Kangding) in Kardze (Ganzi) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Sichuan Province. According to Dhondup, her brother who lives in exile, she was released from

prison in poor health, with bruises all over her body and her limbs in a terrible condition due to carrying and moving rocks during prison labor. Upon her release, she was taken to a local clinic to extract pus and other fluids from her limbs.

Radio Free Asia and Voice of America reported that Chinese prison authorities warned Dolkar not to engage with the public on social media or over the phone. The authorities also told her not to upload any images on her social media profile except photos of herself. Her current stay at home is being viewed as a house arrest.

## NINE TIBETANS SENTENCED FOR SEPARATISM BY KARDZE COURT

THE SAN FRANCISCO-BASED PRISONERS RIGHT ADVOCACY GROUP DUIHUA HAS **REPORTED** THAT NINE TIBETANS HAVE BEEN CONVICTED OF “INCITING SPLITTISM” BY THE KARDZE (CHINESE: GANZI) TIBETAN AUTONOMOUS PREFECTURE INTERMEDIATE PEOPLE’S COURT IN SICHUAN SINCE THE END OF JUNE THIS YEAR.

According to Duihua, the nine Tibetans were Choethar, who was sentenced on 31 August; Dolma Tsering, Drakpa and Tsering Yeshi, who were sentenced on 28 August; Penpa, Namkha Gyaltsen and Pema Tsethar who were sentenced on 7 August; Bhutruk, sentenced on 2 July; and Bhudhar (Buda), who was sentenced on 30 June.

Duihua said scant other details about the individuals were known - including their ages, genders, the times and reasons for their arrests and trials, and the length of their sentences. “Splittism” is a term used by the Chinese government to punish activities connected to the Tibetan independence movement or challenging the Chinese government’s repressive policies in Tibet.

## TIBET TALKS EUROPE



### ‘IMPLICATIONS OF MINISTER WANG YI’S VISIT TO EUROPE AND OF EU-CHINA’S SUMMIT FOR TIBET’

What do Minister Wang Yi’s recent European tour and the EU-China leaders’ virtual summit mean for EU-China relations, and for effective diplomacy on Tibet? This episode of Tibet Talks Europe explored these questions with Members of Parliament André Gattolin (France), Martijn van Helvert (The Netherlands), Petter Eide (Norway) and Isabel Santos (European Parliament) as well as ICT’s EU Policy Director Vincent Metten.

[Click here to watch Tibet Talks Europe #7 - Implications of Minister Wang Yi’s visit to Europe and of EU-China summit for Tibet](#)

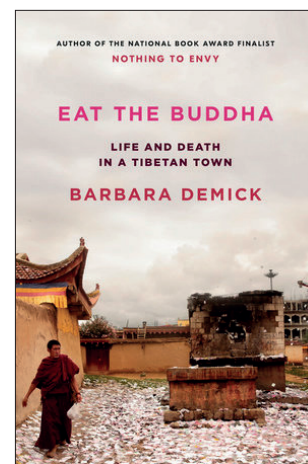
### ‘CONVERSATION WITH FRENCH TIBETOLOGIST KATIA BUFFETRILLE’

In the first French edition of Tibet Talks Europe, ICT’s EU Policy Director Vincent Metten interviewed French ethnologist and Tibetologist Katia Buffetrille about her recent book *‘L’Âge d’or du Tibet’* (‘The Golden Age of Tibet’) and the current worrying situation in Tibet in light of China’s increasing oppression and assimilationist policies.

[Click here to watch Tibet Talks Europe #8 - Conversation with French Tibetologist Katia Buffetrille \(in French\)](#)

## READING SUGGESTION

### EAT THE BUDDHA: LIFE AND DEATH IN A TIBETAN TOWN, BY BARBARA DEMICK



In *‘Eat the Buddha’*, award-winning journalist Barbara Demick paints a gripping portrait of modern Tibet through the lives of a group of Tibetans with roots in Ngaba, one of the first places where Tibetans and Chinese Communists encountered one another and has since become the undisputed world capital of self-immolations. Demick’s subjects - among them a princess whose family is wiped out during the Cultural Revolution, and a young Tibetan nomad who becomes radicalized in the storied monastery of Kirti - all face the same dilemma: Do they resist the Chinese, or do they join them? Do they adhere to Buddhist teachings of compassion and nonviolence, or do they fight? Illuminating a culture that has long been romanticized by Westerners, Demick reveals what it is really like to be a Tibetan in the twenty-first century, trying to preserve one’s culture, faith, and language against the depredations of a seemingly unstoppable, technologically all-seeing superpower. Her depiction is nuanced, unvarnished, and at times shocking.

[Click here](#) to buy this book.



# TIBET BRIEF

OCTOBER 2020

A REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET



## UPCOMING EVENTS

- **19-20 NOVEMBER:**  
UN Forum on Minority Issues on “Hate Speech, Social Media and Minorities” in Geneva
- **END OF 2020:** 38<sup>th</sup> EU-China Human Rights Dialogue (tbc)