



Red Lantern
ANALYTICA



TIBET DIGEST

June 2026



A land occupied. A faith surveilled. A resistance alive.

China's Ethnic Unity Law institutionalises forced assimilation

The new law, effective from 1 July, moves Chinese minority governance towards a common state-defined language and identity. Its implications for Tibetan-language education, religion, cultural expression and community autonomy made it the month's most consequential development.



Lobga Rangzen's self-immolation outside the UN headquarters

The death of Tibetan activist Lobsang Palden, known as Lobga Rangzen, became the defining protest event of July. It drew international attention to repression, surveillance, religious restrictions and the perceived failure of global institutions to respond effectively to Tibet.



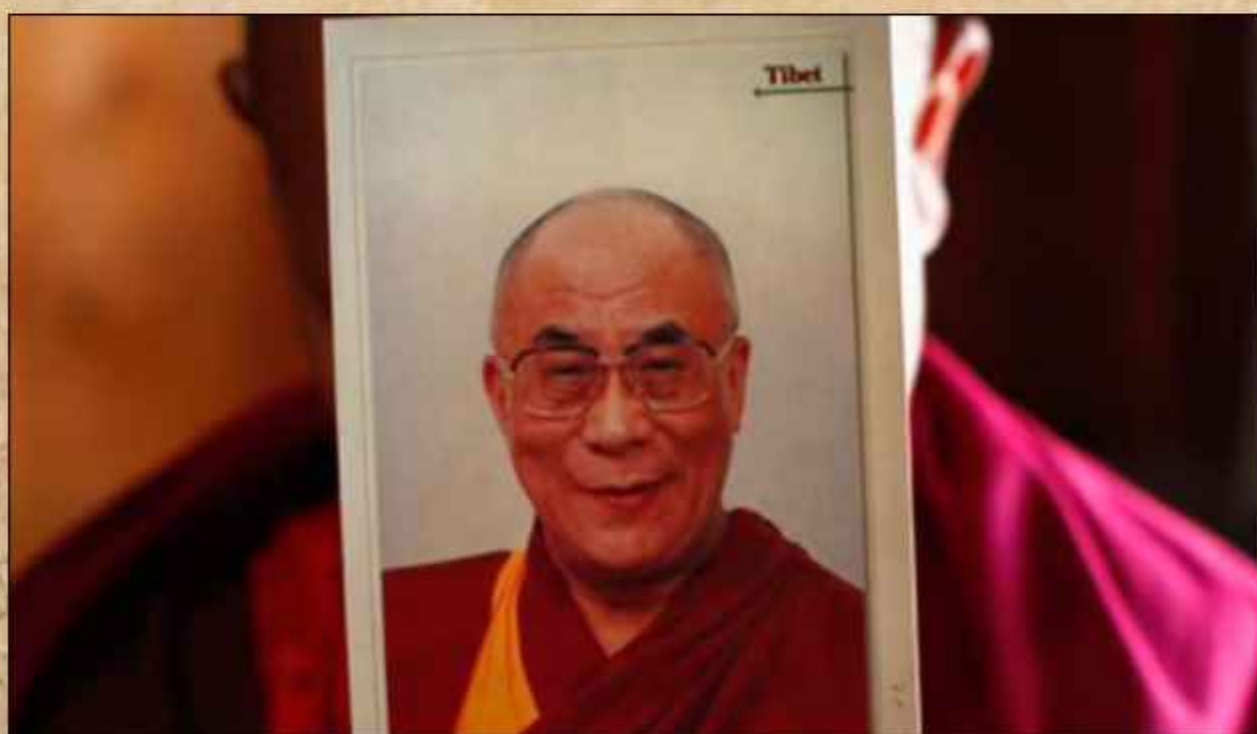
China launches a three-month internet crackdown

The “Qinglang” campaign ostensibly targeted misinformation and fake accounts, but the digest highlighted its likely consequences for Tibetan-language communication, references to the Dalai Lama, religious content and online dissent. It represented the digital dimension of China’s assimilation strategy.



Activist detained after displaying the Dalai Lama's photograph

Zhang Yi was reportedly detained after showing a photograph of the Dalai Lama at Sera Monastery in Lhasa. His initial administrative detention was subsequently treated as an alleged criminal "incitement" case, illustrating the criminalisation of ordinary religious expression.



Larung Gar demolitions followed by expulsion of monks and nuns

Chinese authorities reportedly ordered displaced monks and nuns to return to their home regions after the demolition of approximately 1,060 residences.

The action further reduced the population and independence of one of the world's most important Tibetan Buddhist centres.



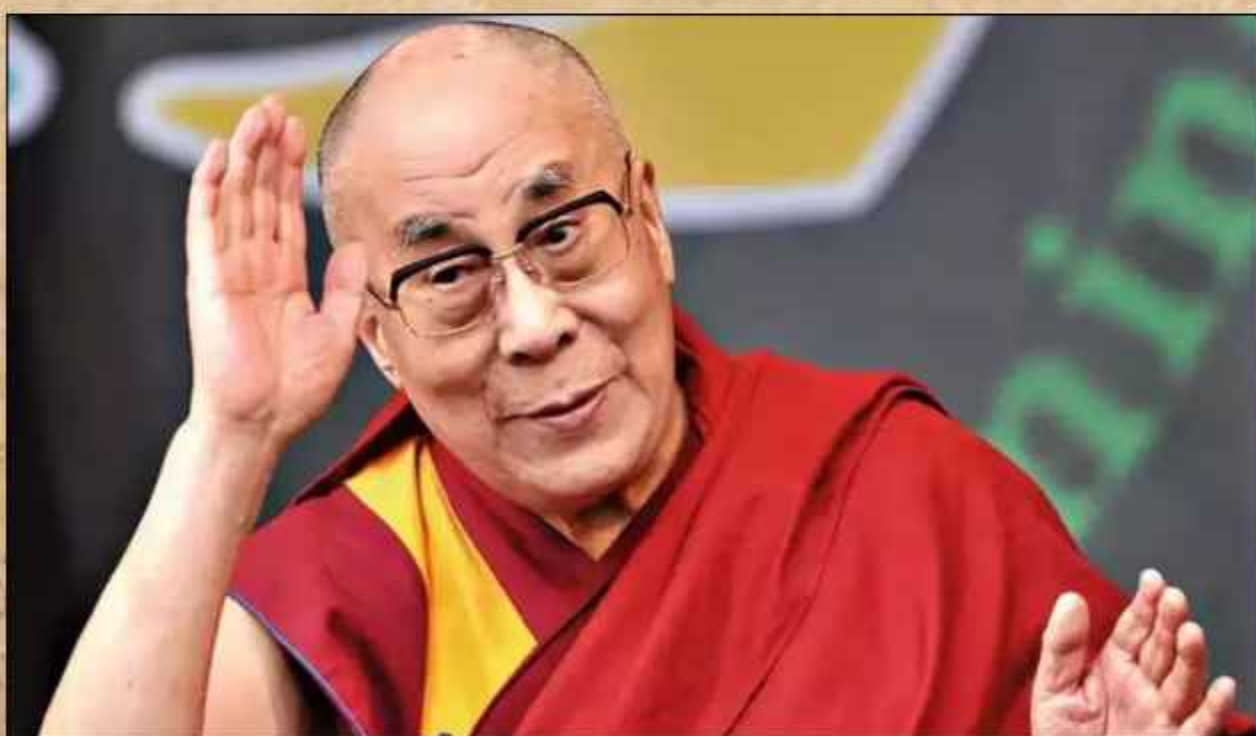
Government-controlled media tour presents a curated Tibet

Foreign journalists were shown Lhasa, the Potala Palace, Jokhang Temple and selected aspects of Tibetan life under official supervision. The absence of independent access demonstrated how Beijing combines controlled tourism, restricted journalism and development narratives to shape international perceptions.



Belgium rejects Chinese interference in Dalai Lama succession

Belgian Foreign Minister Maxime Prévot stated that recognition of the next Dalai Lama belongs exclusively to the Tibetan Buddhist community, not to secular authorities. The declaration was among the clearest governmental rejections of Beijing's succession claims during the month.



Chinese pressure forces CTA withdrawal from Tibetan Studies conference in Nepal

Following objections from the Chinese ambassador, the Central Tibetan Administration withdrew its official representative from the International Association for Tibetan Studies conference in Kathmandu. The incident exposed Beijing's ability to restrict Tibetan participation and academic freedom beyond China's borders.



Around 25,000 attend the Dalai Lama's 91st birthday in Leh

The gathering demonstrated the continuing spiritual authority of the Dalai Lama and the depth of Tibetan-Ladakhi Buddhist connections. His message emphasised warm-heartedness, bodhichitta and the continued transmission of Buddhist teachings despite political uncertainty over succession.



Chinese J-20 fighters deployed at Tibet- facing airbases

Satellite imagery reportedly showed 11 J-20 stealth fighters at Hotan and Damxung, including aircraft positioned opposite Ladakh and Arunachal Pradesh. The deployment underlined China's use of the Tibetan Plateau as a forward military platform against India.



High-altitude drone research centre established near Mount Everest

The centre could support scientific research and mountain logistics, but its dual-use potential includes surveillance, reconnaissance and military operations. Its location demonstrates the expanding strategic and technological use of Tibet's high-altitude geography.



Fifth Chinese ‘border defence village’ completed near Arunachal Pradesh

The village in Metog lies only a few kilometres from the frontier. Presented as development and poverty alleviation, such settlements also facilitate infrastructure construction, population movement and permanent administrative presence along the disputed Himalayan boundary.



Green-energy projects threaten Tibetan grazing lands and livelihoods

Researcher Sanggay Tashi documented concerns surrounding solar and wind installations on pastoral land. Tibetan communities reported unclear contracts, land acquisition, damage to topsoil and sacred sites, livestock risks and limited participation in decisions presented as environmentally beneficial.



Shipki La border trade scheduled to resume after six years

The reopening offered a limited revival of traditional India–Tibet commercial connections. Nevertheless, restricted trader numbers, inadequate infrastructure, security delays and continuing LAC distrust showed that commercial engagement did not amount to broader India–China normalisation.



Wang Huning's Tibet Visit Signals Deeper Assimilation Drive

Senior CCP leader Wang Huning's visit to Tibet was presented as reinforcing implementation of China's Ethnic Unity Law and assimilation policies. Discussions focused on ideological governance, cultural integration, religious regulation, social stability, and Beijing's efforts to consolidate political control in Tibet.





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