



## INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

### Masked men attack Tibetan ex-political prisoner

<http://www.savetibet.org/masked-men-attack-tibetan-ex-political-prisoner>

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Tibetan language rights activist Tashi Wangchuk continues to face repercussions for his activism. In a recently published personal account, Tashi describes how a group of masked men attacked him in the night of Aug. 19, 2023 in his hotel room in Darlag (Chinese: Dari) County, Golog (Guoluo) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai.

Although Tashi lodged a complaint about the attack, the police did not take adequate action, nor did the local hospital when he asked for a CT scan to investigate injuries to his head.

Tashi's personal account was published on the overseas [Rights Protection Network](#) (Weiquanwang) blog, which the International Campaign for Tibet verified as a true account through independent sources.

Earlier in the day, Tashi, a native of Yulshul (Yushu) county, upon arriving in Darlag county, posted a [video clip](#) on the Chinese video social media platform Douyin (the domestic Chinese version of TikTok) of his safe arrival there.

Standing in front of the gate of Darlag County Nationality Middle School and holding an umbrella on a wet day, Tashi Wangchuk pans his camera 360 degrees, showing a panoramic view in front of the school. At the beginning of the video clip, he says, "Tashi Delek [a traditional Tibetan greeting] to all. I am Tashi Wangchuk, a native of Yulshul. I have arrived safely in Darlag County."

#### Invisible chains

Tashi completed a five-year prison term from 2016 to 2021 on charges of "inciting separatism" after he appeared in a New York Times article and [video documentary](#) in November 2015 documenting his efforts to petition the Chinese government for Tibetan language protection.

Even after being released on Jan. 28, 2021 from Dongchuan Prison in Xining City, Qinghai Province, Tashi has continued to face harassment and repercussions for his peaceful language activism.

He remains subjected to surveillance and a five-year deprivation of political rights after his release from prison. Tashi is required to show up at his local police station once every two months to register his presence and provide details about the status of his livelihood. He is also required to get prior permission from the police station before traveling outside of his hometown.

#### Activism and harassment

Upon release from prison, Tashi continued his activism for the Tibetan language by traveling to various parts of Tibet like Golog, Rebkong (Chinese: Tongren) and Malho (Huangnan) in Qinghai province, where he found it hard to get hotel rooms because of his activism and the authorities' warnings to businesses against accommodating him.

Tashi opened an account on the popular Chinese social media site Sina Weibo in October 2021 to advocate for protection of the Tibetan language. However, his [account](#) was shut down in April 2022 after he went to Malho to investigate the state of education of Tibetan middle schools in the area. The local police did not allow him to stay in a hotel there.

After he posted a video clip of himself on Sino Weibo at the local police station to lodge a harassment complaint against the police, his Weibo account was suspended and deleted.

Tashi has continued to be under constant surveillance and face harassment from the Chinese law enforcement agencies.

## **After the masked men attack**

After Tashi was attacked by a group of masked men in a hotel in Darlag county on the night of Aug. 19, 2023, he continued to face threats and harassment from Chinese law enforcement officers.

Tashi eventually arrived in Tsolho (Hainan) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture on the evening of Aug. 21.

Tashi's personal account of the attack incident was published on the overseas Rights Protection Network blog. A translation of the account is appended to this report.

The following is a summary of events that took place after those already described in his personal account.

After exiting Darlag County People's Hospital, where he went to unsuccessfully get a CT scan after the attack, at around 7 am, he went to a temple to perform prayers. A monk, presumably following instructions from two policemen at the site, asked him to leave as the temple's daily routine faced disruption.

Tashi went to another temple that was further away but was again told by a monk to leave, saying the temple is closed.

When Tashi began to take a nap on the grass, as the temple was located on a grassland, four young policemen in civilian dress from the Darlag County police station ordered him to leave leading to argument between Tashi and the policemen. Later three policemen manhandled Tashi with one of them punching him on the head. The policemen drove Tashi out of the site.

After being detained for about two hours, he was told to leave the county. When he was about to leave on a bus, some policemen told him that he could not leave without proper procedure and permit.

Tashi got down from the bus and tried to find a hotel for the night. None of the dozen hotels he went to would accommodate him under the pretext of being fully booked.

After searching for a couple hours, Tashi found a ride in a private car to leave the county. But the police again stopped the car after he was in it for a few minutes. After some conversation, the policemen arranged a ride for him to leave the county for the capital (Machen/Maqin county) of Golog Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture.

On Aug. 20, at about 6 pm when Tashi was about 3 to 4 kilometers away from the capital of Golog prefecture, the local police stopped him. The police told Tashi that he would have to leave the area. After four hours of detention, Tashi was in another car at around 10 pm and heading toward the capital of Tsolho prefecture.

On Aug. 21, at 3:40 pm, Tashi arrived at the capital [Serchen/Gonghe County] of Tsolho (Hainan) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, where he found a hotel to sleep in. He had not slept for 36 hours.

## **Translation of Tashi Wangchuk's verified personal account**

Tashi Wangchuk's description of the attack on him by a group of masked men was published by the overseas [Rights Protection Network](#) (Weiquanwang). The following is a translation of the account, with only minimal edits made for the sake of clarity:

I, Tashi Wangchuk, arrived in Darlag (Chinese: Dari) County at 15:00 on August 19, 2023, from the three-fork intersection in Sershul (Shiqu) County, Kardze (Ganzi) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, to Darlag County, Golog (Guoluo) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture. At 14 minutes past the hour, I posted a Douyin video of myself arriving at the gate of Darlag County Nationality Middle School and also took a photo of myself along the way.

At 19:29, I took a picture of myself at the gate of Darlag County Nationality Middle School. During this period, a car followed me. I found a small hotel to check in around 20:00. The owner said that his place was full. I then implored him to assist me in finding accommodation as it was getting dark. He managed to arrange a bed for me, but approximately ten minutes after I registered, the hotel owner asked if I was the person he was looking for that day. He requested to see my ID card. I assured him that I hadn't broken any laws and that anyone was welcome to approach me. Subsequently, I presented my provincial ID card. After about half an hour, a few individuals knocked on my door. Upon opening the door, four people entered immediately. They were wearing masks and proceeded to assault me with punches and kicks. They then took turns beating me while conversing in a dialect that seemed to be Golog dialect.

Around ten minutes into the ordeal, I pleaded with the hotel owner to call the police. After they departed, the hotel owner contacted the police. An officer arrived from the police station at around 21:00. After a series of inquiries, I was taken to the police station. The police officers went in and out of the station several times, even changing computers during the process.

During this period, I informed the police that I needed a report to document the details of the beating, including the time and location, with the hope that they could also uncover the individuals responsible for orchestrating and executing the attack. The report began at 23:30, and I was questioned for about an hour before being allowed to leave.

Afterward, I attempted to return to the hotel, but I couldn't locate it after searching for about an hour. Throughout this time, a car continued to follow me. Consequently, I returned to the police station and requested an officer to take me to a small hotel. Upon reaching the small hotel, the owner pleaded with me to vacate the premises, explaining that he might face repercussions due to the strict environment and his reliance on the business to support his family.

I heeded his advice and embarked on a long walk to find a larger hotel. However, they claimed to be fully booked. I remained in the hotel lobby until dawn, checking notices in the process.

While sitting in the hotel lobby, the establishment received a call possibly from the Public Security Bureau, prompting them to ask me to leave temporarily. The hotel hinted that they might be shut down in the future and suggested I try the hotel across the street, which had good connections but turned out to be closed when I arrived. Later, two elderly women and their son-in-law, who had just arrived from Xining after seeking medical treatment, also struggled to secure accommodation. Faced with multiple closed hotels, I visited the Darlag County hospital and informed them about the assault, explaining my need for a head CT scan to preserve evidence. However, I was told that the CT machine was malfunctioning. They directed me to a vacant seat on the second floor, where a doctor eventually approached and relocated me to the first floor. A Tibetan doctor then arrived and instructed me to leave the hospital. Subsequently, I spent the entire night sitting on a stool on the hospital's first floor.

I began documenting the events that transpired and hoped that by sharing my story, the online community would bring attention to the unlawful activities of government officials operating in conjunction with criminal groups. I extend my gratitude to everyone involved. This account was written on August 20, 2023, at 6 am.



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