



INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR TIBET

Political Prisoners

<https://savetibet.org/why-tibet/political-prisoners>

Electric shocks that send them flying across the room. Attacks by dogs. Sexual abuse.

That's what Tibetan political prisoners have faced in Chinese jails just for asserting their right to practice their culture and for resisting Chinese oppression. There are anywhere between 500 to 2,000 Tibetan political prisoners currently in detention, according to the [US State Department](#).

The most famous Tibetan political prisoner is the Panchen Lama, the second most well-known figure in [Tibetan Buddhism](#), who was abducted by Chinese authorities in 1995 at age 6. Neither he nor his family have been seen in public since.

Tibetan language rights advocate Tashi Wangchuk was accused of “separatism” and sentenced to five years in jail in 2018 after he appeared in a New York Times video discussing the importance of Tibetan children studying the Tibetan language. Court documents later [showed his prosecution to be a sham](#).

Buddhist nun Ngawang Sangdrol was arrested at age 13 for saying “independent Tibet, and long live His Holiness the Dalai Lama” in a marketplace near her home. The guards in prison used to pick her up and bounce her head off the concrete floor. But inspired by the [Dalai Lama](#), she forgave her captors.

Like the Panchen Lama, Tashi Wangchuk and Ngawang Sangdrol, many Tibetans have been arrested and brutally tortured simply for exercising their basic rights.

The International Campaign for Tibet is working to get those prisoners released.

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It is very difficult for outsiders to ascertain the exact number of Tibetan political prisoners held by China. The prisoners detailed here are frequently included in the International Campaign for Tibet's advocacy work. [Priority political prisoners »](#)

