

Tibetan language advocate indicted, trial imminent

[18 January 2017] Tashi Wangchuk is facing an imminent trial, following the resubmission of his case to the Yushu Intermediate People's Court. Tashi, a Tibetan language advocate, was arrested a year ago after The New York Times featured his work.

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According to a report published on 18 January by Amnesty International, Tashi Wangchuk has now been indicted by the prosecutor and faces a trial which could begin at any time. Tashi's case was resubmitted to the Yushu Intermediate People's Court by the Procuratorate in early January following a further investigation into his case.

Tashi Wangchuk, an advocate of Tibetan language education, was initially detained by Chinese police on 27 January 2016 and charged with "inciting separatism".

In December, The New York Times reported that Chinese prosecutors had asked for more time to investigate the case. One of Tashi's two lawyers, Lin Qilei, said such a request was "very rare". His other lawyer, Liang Xiaojun, confirmed that the case related to Tashi's interview with The New York Times about his language advocacy work.

Human Rights Watch reported that the re-investigation into Tashi's case was completed on 4 January 2017.

Tashi Wangchuk could face up to 15 years in prison and is at risk of torture. In China, defendants are almost always found guilty once a case is brought to court. The conviction rate in 2015 was 99.92% according to Chinese official statistics.

Tashi was arrested in Jyekundo (Chinese: Yushu), in the eastern Tibetan region of Kham (now part of China's Qinghai province), after The New York Times produced a video documentary and published feature articles on his efforts to file a lawsuit against local officials over the lack of Tibetan language education in schools in the Yushu area.

Note: Tibet Society has raised the case with the UK Foreign Office and asked for the British Embassy in Beijing to make representations on behalf of Tashi.

Further reading: [Amnesty International](#) | [Human Rights Watch](#) | [New York Times](#)

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