

# URGENT ACTION

## TIBETAN MONK JAILED FOR WECHAT POSTS RELEASED

Tibetan monk Rinchen Tsultrim was released from prison in Sichuan Province on 1 February 2024. He had served a four years and six months prison sentence for “inciting secession” for expressing political views on his WeChat account. He is under strict surveillance with limitations on his movement. His current physical and mental conditions are unknown.

**NO FURTHER ACTION IS REQUESTED. MANY THANKS TO ALL WHO SENT APPEALS.**

Rinchen Tsultrim was a monk at the Nangshig monastery in the Aba Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture of Sichuan Province. After a wave of Tibetan unrest in 2008, he began expressing his views through WeChat and a personal website titled “Scepticism on Tibet” (in Tibetan). In 2018, the local public security bureau twice warned him to stop expressing opinions critical of Chinese policies online. He was closely monitored, and his personal website was shut down.

Rinchen Tsultrim was arrested on 1 August 2019 and held incommunicado. In March 2020 his family was officially informed that he was suspected of “inciting separatism”. He underwent a secret trial and, in November 2020, was sentenced to four years and six months of imprisonment and three years of deprivation of political rights for “inciting secession.” However, it was not until March 2021 that the Aba Tibetan and Qiang Autonomous Prefecture Public Security Bureau notified his family he was being held in a prison in Chengdu, providing no further details. The full extent of his trial, the charges against him, and his exact whereabouts, Aba Prison, only came to light for his family in August 2021, when the Chinese authorities responded to inquiries from United Nations human rights experts.

Severe and wide-ranging restrictions on and repression of ethnic minorities has been carried out under the pretence of “anti-separatism”, “anti-extremism” and “counter-terrorism” in Tibetan-populated areas and the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (Xinjiang). Access to and from Tibetan- populated areas remains highly restricted, particularly for journalists, academics and human rights organizations, making it extremely difficult to investigate and document the human rights situation in the region.

Regulations, effective as of 1 February 2021, stipulated that religious groups must “follow the leadership of the Communist Party of China... persist in the direction of sinicization of religion, and practise core socialist values”. The government sought to bring religious teachings and practices in line with state ideology and to comprehensively strengthen control over both state-approved and unregistered religious groups. Reports documented the destruction of thousands of cultural and religious sites, particularly in the north-west of China. The state’s repression of religion in Xinjiang and Tibet remained severe. People were arbitrarily detained for ordinary religious practices.

Rinchen Tsultrim was released on 1 February 2024 after completing his sentence but is under strict surveillance with limitations on his movement. His current physical and mental conditions are unknown. Amnesty International will continue to monitor the human rights situation in Tibet, and to put pressure on the Chinese government to ensure that individuals like Rinchen Tsultrim are not prosecuted for peacefully expressing their views, and that when they are released from prison, they are free from surveillance and restrictions on their movement.

**NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Rinchen Tsultrim (he, him)**

**THIS IS THE THIRD AND FINAL OUTPUT FOR UA 72/21**

**LINK TO PREVIOUS UAs:**

First UA: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa17/4339/2021/en/>

Second UA: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa17/5065/2021/en/>

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**

