

Chinese woman jailed over Covid reporting in Wuhan is set to be freed

Citizen journalist Zhang Zhan, who gave an unfiltered view of life under lockdown in the central Chinese city at the beginning of the pandemic, was jailed for four years.

HONG KONG — A Chinese citizen journalist who was jailed over her reporting on the early days of the Covid-19 pandemic was due to be released Monday after four years in prison, supporters said.

Zhang Zhan, a former lawyer from Shanghai, went to the central Chinese city of Wuhan in February 2020 to cover the growing outbreak and the government's effort to contain it. Information was tightly controlled by the ruling Chinese Communist Party and reporting by citizen journalists like Zhang, now 40, drew widespread attention as the world braced for the virus to spread.

In May 2020, Zhang was arrested for “picking quarrels and provoking trouble,” a vaguely defined crime that is often used to silence government critics. She was later sentenced to four years in prison by a Shanghai court.

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