

PUBLIC

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5 February 2002**

Further Information on EXTRA 01/02 (ASA 17/001/02, 4 January 2002) Death penalty / fear of imminent execution / torture and ill-treatment

**PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA Gong Shengliang (m), aged 46
Li Ying (f), aged 36**

**New Names: Xu Fuming (m)
Hu Yong (m)
Gong Bangkun (m)
Zhang Hongjuan (f), aged 20
Li Tongjin (f), also known as "Immanuel"
Yang Tongni (f), also known as "Ni"**

The three men sentenced to death together with Gong Shengliang and Li Ying have been named as Xu Fuming, Hu Yong and Gong Bangkun. All five were sentenced to death on 29 December 2001 in connection with their membership of an unofficial Christian organization, the "Huanan (South China) Church".

Gong Bangkun's sentence is suspended for two years. This means that he will only be executed if he "intentionally commits crimes" during that period. According to official Chinese sources, such prisoners generally have their sentences commuted to the end of the suspension period, usually to life imprisonment.

The authorities have banned the "Huanan Church" as a "heretical organization". Since May 2001, dozens of alleged members of the church have been arrested in the Hubei Province, and some have allegedly been tortured in police custody. Amnesty International is concerned that the five persons sentenced to death may have been tortured to force them to confess.

Among those who claim they have been tortured by the police are three young women, identified as Zhang Hongjuan, Li Tongjin, and Yang Tongni, who were reportedly detained on separate occasions between August and October 2001. In letters to their families, which have recently been made public, they claim that they were tortured during interrogation in an apparent attempt to make them confess to having sexual relations with Gong Shengliang. Gong Shengliang was sentenced to death on charges reportedly including "rape".

In her letter, Zhang Hongjuan states that police officers at the Public Security Bureau detention centre in Zhongxiang City, Hubei Province, shackled her hands and feet, ripped open her shirt and beat her on the chest with an electric baton.

Li Tongjin wrote to her family that police officers at the same detention centre shackled her feet and tried to pull off her shirt, before beating her on her chest and legs with an electric baton.

Yang Tongni described how police officers at the Jingmen Police School and Jingmen No. 1 Detention Centre kicked and beat her, whipped her with a leather belt, cuffed her

hands behind her back and wedged books between the handcuffs and her back, and tied her up with rope. All three claim that others detained with them received similar or harsher treatment.

Yang Tongni and Li Tongjin are reported to be serving three-year terms at Shayang Labour Camp in Hubei Province. The current whereabouts of Zhang Hongjuan are not known

Twenty-eight relatives of Li Ying and Xu Fuming have publicly appealed to the Chinese authorities to review the case, pointing out that the secrecy which surrounded all the judicial proceedings was a violation of both Chinese law and international human rights standards.

The relatives complain that the authorities did not tell them about the prosecution and trial. The appeal continues: "Even at this moment we still don't know the whereabouts of our loved ones, how their life is, whether they are still healthy, even whether they are still alive or what awaits them eventually. "

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Chinese, English or your own language:

- urging the authorities to commute the death sentences passed on Gong Shengliang, Li Ying, Xu Fuming, Hu Yong and Gong Bangkun in Hubei Province and to guarantee that they will not be harmed while they are in custody;

- urging the authorities to carry out an immediate and impartial investigation into the reports that their trial did not meet international fair trial standards;

- calling on the authorities to investigate all allegations that those detained in connection with this case have been tortured, including the specific allegations made by Zhang Hongjuan, Yang Tongni and Li Tongjin;

- urging the authorities to clarify the whereabouts of Zhang Hongjuan, and to guarantee that Zhang Hongjuan, Yang Tongni and Li Tongjin will not be subjected to further human rights violations.

APPEALS TO:

Prime Minister of the People's Republic of China:

ZHU Rongji Zongli

Guowuyuan

9 Xihuangchenggenbeijie

Beijingshi 100032

People's Republic of China

Telex: 210070 FMPRC CN or 22478 MFERT CN

Telegram: Premier Zhu Rongji, Beijing, China

Fax: + 8610 6 520 6722 (c/o the Ministry of Justice)

+ 8610 6 529 2345 (c/o the Ministry of Communications)

Salutation: Your Excellency,

President of the Supreme People's Court of the People's Republic of China

XIAO Yang Yuanzhang
Zuigao Renmin Fayuan
27 Dongjiao Min Xiang
Beijingshi 100726
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Telegram: President, Supreme People's Court, Beijing, China
Fax: + 86106 512 5012
Salutation: Dear President

Director of the Department of Justice of Hubei Province:
YANG Yicai Tingzhang
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Telegram: Director of the Provincial Department of Justice, Wuhan, Hubei Province, China
Salutation: Dear Director

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and to diplomatic representatives of China accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 4 March 2002.