

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Further information on UA 47/94 (ASA 17/07/94, 14 February 1994) - Arbitrary Detention / Legal Concern and new concern: Ill-treatment

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA: Zhang Yongliang (Chinese citizen)
Tian (Chinese citizen, full name not known)
One other Chinese citizen (name unknown)
Kok Fai Kwok (Hong Kong resident)
May Chong (Hong Kong resident)
Bam Bang Yang (Indonesia national)
Ina Yang (Indonesia national)
Dennis Balcombe (US national)
Daughin Chan (US national)
Paul Star (US national)

Amnesty International has learned that the seven foreign Christians named above, detained on 10 February 1994 in Henan province, have been released. However the three Chinese Christians, arrested at the same time, remain in detention and are at risk of being ill-treated. One of the Chinese Christians has been named as Zhang Yongliang who has previously been detained for his peaceful religious activities. Amnesty International believes that Zhang Yongliang and the two other Chinese Christians may be prisoners of conscience.

The ten Christians had been taking part in a large prayer meeting in a private house in Fangcheng city, Henan province and were asleep when public security bureau (police) officers arrested them. The three Chinese Christians were separated from the foreign nationals and put into the kitchen of the house. One of the seven foreign nationals says that he heard screams coming from the kitchen and another reported being beaten by the police and having some of his hair pulled out. The seven say they were detained in unheated rooms and suffered sleep deprivation due to intensive interrogation. They were denied permission to telephone their embassies or families.

The foreign nationals reported having witnessed police officers emptying bags belonging to the Chinese Christians and taking away bibles, work permits, tape recorders and money which they reportedly put into a truck along with bicycles belonging to the Chinese Christians. The foreign Christians had valuables and cash confiscated.

Police officers reportedly told the foreign Christians that they were being detained under Articles 3, 4 and 8 of a new regulation called Order Number 144 which governs the religious activities of foreign nationals in China and which became law on 31 January 1994.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Zhang Yongliang, a protestant preacher from Fangcheng city, Henan province, has already spent several years in detention as a prisoner of conscience. He was most recently arrested in September 1990 and in August 1991 was sentenced without charge or trial to three years' of reeducation through labour for his peaceful religious activities. After his arrest in September 1990 he was reportedly beaten by police officials. He was released in February 1992 before the end of his sentence.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes and airmail letters in English, Mandarin or your own language:

- urging the authorities to release the full names of all the Chinese detainees, their place of detention and any charges made against them;
- expressing concern at the reports of ill-treatment of the Chinese detainees and one of the foreign nationals and seeking assurances that the detainees are treated humanely in accordance with international standards;
- calling for their immediate and unconditional release unless they are charged promptly with recognizably criminal offences in accordance with international standards;
- expressing concern that new legislation which came into force on 31 January 1994 appears to allow the detention of people solely for the peaceful exercise of the right to freedom of conscience and for carrying out peaceful religious activity.

APPEALS TO:

Minister of Justice of the People's Republic of China

XIAO Yang, Buzhang

Sifabu

Xiaguangli

Beijingshi 100016

People's Republic of China

Telexes: 210070 FMPC CN or 22478 MFERT CN

(Please forward to Xiao Yang Buzhang)

Faxes: + 861 467 7351

Telegrams: Minister of Justice Xiao Yang, Beijing, China

Salutation: Your Excellency

Director of the State Council Bureau of Religious Affairs

REN Wuzhi, Juzhang

Guowuyuan Zongjiao Shiwuju

Guowuyuan

22 Xianmen Dajie

Beijingshi 100017

People's Republic of China

Faxes: + 86 1 512 5810

Telegrams: Director of the State Council Bureau of Religious Affairs Ren Wuzhi, Beijing, China

Salutation: Dear Director

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

Director of the Henan Department of Public Security

LI Guangjing Tingzhang

Gong'anting

10 Jinshuilu

Zhengzhoushi 450003

Henansheng, People's Republic of China

and to diplomatic representatives of People's Republic of China accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 31 March 1994.