

# URGENT ACTION

## FALUN GONG MAN AT RISK OF TORTURE IN PRISON

**Detained Falun Gong practitioner, Zhou Xiangyang (周向阳), is on a hunger strike and is at risk of torture and other ill-treatment. Several people were targeted by security forces in November for signing a petition calling for his release.**

**Zhou Xiangyang** has been held in Gangbei Prison in Tianjin City, north of Beijing, since 5 March, when security forces from Tangshan City, Hebei Province, broke into his home and took him and his wife into custody. Zhou Xiangyang was brought to Gangbei Prison. He was able to meet only once with his mother, after she held a vigil for two days in front of the hospital, and has not had access to his lawyer. Prison authorities told the family that he began a hunger strike as soon as he was incarcerated. He is at risk of torture and other ill-treatment.

Zhou Xiangyang's wife, Li Shanshan, was released after several weeks and began appealing on his behalf. On 26 June she posted an open letter on overseas websites about his detention. In response, more than 2300 people from Zhou's hometown and vicinities signed a petition for his release organized by his family, an unusual action regarding the sensitivity of Falun Gong cases. Five people, including Zhou Xiangyang's brother and sister-in-law were taken away by security forces on 4 November, allegedly in connection with the petition. Li Shanshan was detained in October and her family has been told she has been assigned to two years re-education through labour.

Amnesty International is very concerned that the past record of his treatment in detention indicates that he is at severe risk at the moment. Zhou Xiangyang had already spent eight and a half years in detention, comprised of two and a half years in re-education through labour from 1999, and six years in Gangbei Prison from 2003-2009, in both cases for speaking out about the persecution against Falun Gong practitioners by the authorities. In May 2003 he was arrested for speaking about Falun Gong to people in public and sentenced to 9 years imprisonment, which he served in Gangbei Prison, where he is currently being held, until his release on "medical parole" on 28 July 2009. While in prison Zhou experienced severe torture, including being shocked with electric batons, being kept in solitary confinement, being subjected to the "floor anchor" torture, and being regularly beaten by other inmates. In April and May 2009 he was sent twice to the hospital for emergency treatment. When he was released, he was in very bad health and weighed only 86 lbs, despite his height of 5'9".

### Please write immediately in Chinese or your own language:

- Calling for the immediate release of Zhou Xiangyang as he has been detained solely on the basis of exercising his rights to freedom of belief and expression;
- Urging the authorities to allow Zhou's family and lawyer access to him in prison;
- Calling on the authorities to provide Zhou with any medical treatment he may require.

### PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 30 JANUARY 2012 TO:

#### Prison Warden

Xu Burong  
Gangbei Prison, Dagangqu  
Banqiao Beijinqi Xi, Tianjin City,  
Hebei Province 300270  
People's Republic of China  
Salutation: Dear Warden

#### Mayor of Tianjin

Huang Xingguo  
Tianjinshi Renmin Zhengfu  
167 Dagulu Hepingqu, Tianjin  
City, Hebei Province, 300040  
People's Republic of China,  
Telexes: 23242 TJMPG CN  
Salutation: Dear Mayor

#### And copies to:

#### Justice Bureau Chief

Zu Wenguang  
Tianjinshi Sifaju, 52 Shuishang  
Gongyuanbeidao, Nankaiqu  
Tianjinshi 300050  
People's Republic of China

**Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:**

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**



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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

On account of her open appeals, Li Shanshan was detained again on 29 October (see UA: 335/11 Index: ASA 17/047/2011: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/ASA17/047/2011/en>). On 10 November the authorities informed Li Shanshan's mother and lawyer that she had been assigned to two years "re-education. Five people, including Zhou Xiangyang's brother and sister-in-law were taken away by security forces on 4 November, allegedly in connection with the petition for Zhou. A second petition calling for Li Shanshan's release organized by her family had been signed by over 500 people by 15 November, after only a couple of days of its being circulated.

Falun Gong is a spiritual movement which gained large numbers of supporters in China during the 1990s. After it staged a peaceful gathering in Tiananmen Square in July 1999, the government outlawed the group and launched a long-term campaign of intimidation and persecution, directed by a special organization called the 610 Office. Tens of thousands of Falun Gong practitioners have been arbitrarily detained as a "threat to social and political stability" since the spiritual movement was banned. Practitioners have been held in psychiatric hospitals, re-education through labour (RTL) facilities - a form of administrative detention imposed without charge, trial or judicial review, sentenced to long prison terms, and been held in specialized detention centres whose mission is to "transform" Falun Gong practitioners, a process through which they are coerced into renouncing their spiritual beliefs, often through the use of torture and ill-treatment.

Torture and other ill-treatment are endemic in all forms of detention, despite China's ratification of the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment in 1988. Falun Gong sources have documented numerous deaths in custody of Falun Gong practitioners, believed to have been caused by torture and other ill-treatment.

Name: Zhou Xiangyang  
Gender m/f: male

UA: 357/11 Index: ASA 17/048/2011 Issue Date: 19 December 2011