

EXTERNAL

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*MEDICAL CONCERN*

Health concern: Yan Zhengxue

**CHINA**

Yan Zhengxue, a 50-year-old painter in Beijing and deputy from the People's Congress of Zhejiang province, was assigned to two years "re-education through labour", a form of administrative detention, in a forced labour camp in Heilongjiang province, northern China, in April 1994. He was accused of theft of a bicycle at Beijing University in September 1993, and was sentenced by a committee of the Beijing Municipal Government without formal charge or trial. Yan Zhengxue's sentencing came one week after a police officer was given a one-year suspended sentence for severely beating him in July 1993.

**The beating: July 1993**

In a report published in the *Southern Daily* on 6 August 1993, Yan Zhengxue said that on 2 July 1993, while taking a bus to Beijing University, he accidentally knocked the money-bag of the bus conductor to the floor. The conductor told him that he would owe 1000 yuan (\$120 US) compensation if any money were missing, and at the next stop, where all the other passengers left the bus, Yan Zhengxue was prevented from alighting. The driver took the bus directly to the terminus at Yiheyuan (the Summer Palace) where three policeman from Haidian District Police Station soon appeared, dragged him off the bus and began to beat him on the way to the station.

*When we arrived at the station the tall thin one boxed my ears five or six times, then hit me with his electric truncheon, forcing me to the floor. Then they put handcuffs on me. Up till now I had made no reaction to the beating, only asked them why they were doing it. They fastened the handcuffs very tightly, after a few minutes my hands were red, swollen and painful. I said to them: "I am a city level People's Congress representative. It is illegal to handcuff me without due cause." Who could have imagined that on hearing this they started to beat me all over my body even more viciously? The tall thin man beat me while shouting: "So what if you're a People's Congress representative? I am the Premier. I'll fix you. It's my business to fix people like you." After several blows to my head and face I saw stars and fell to the floor. They pulled me to my feet by my hair and continued the beating.*

During the course of this assault Yan Zhengxue was hit and kicked in the head, back, ribs, loins, arms and groin. After approximately half an hour the beating ceased and he was interviewed by an older policeman, a police record was filled out and then Yan Zhengxue was pushed out the main gate of the police station onto the street. He found it difficult to walk due to pain in the lower back. After having walked a short distance he vomited and fainted, and was later taken to Xiyuan hospital by a security officer and another passerby. The medical report completed at the Xiyuan hospital emergency ward listed multiple bruises and abrasions to the

back, head, hands, shoulders and groin. Subsequently Yan Zhengxue began to pass blood in his urine.

### **Challenging impunity: July 1993 - April 1994**

Yan Zhengxue lodged a complaint over his ill-treatment with the Haidian People's Court, Beijing. He persisted in his aim of bringing those responsible to justice, despite an offer from the Public Security Bureau Sub-office, which had initially refused to write a certificate of his injuries, to arrange compensation if he dropped the case. The court ordered its own medical examination of Yan Zhengxue, but this did not take place until three months after the beating and neither Yan Zhengxue nor his lawyer have been able to see this medical report. The Haidian court was due to hear the case brought by Yan Zhengxue on 23 December but the trial was postponed shortly before this date without a new date being set. The prolonged inaction by the court prompted 350 people, including prominent writers and dissidents, to sign a petition in January 1994 calling for the court to bring the case to judgement. Finally, the case was heard two months later. Only one of the three police officers who were involved in beating Yan Zhengxue was charged, and he received a one-year suspended sentence. Shortly after the trial, Yan Zhengxue himself was detained.

Yan Zhengxue's detention came against the background of a wave of arrests of dissidents in Beijing that began in the early part March 1994. He was accused of stealing a bicycle at Beijing University in September 1993, following an incident in which officers of the Haidian District Public Security Bureau allegedly substituted a bicycle for Yan Zhengxue's own bicycle and then accused him of stealing the substituted bicycle. Yet no action was taken immediately after this alleged theft, nor had any charges been made for a further six months until one of the policemen who had assaulted Yan Zhengxue in July 1993 had been brought to trial.

In contrast to the policeman who was found guilty of assaulting him, Yan Zhengxue did not have the opportunity to refute the accusation made against him. He was not formally charged with theft or tried in a court of law. He was condemned by a committee of the Beijing Municipal Government, without the right to defend himself, and sentenced to two years of "re-education through labour", which is a form of administrative detention. In May 1994 he was sent to a forced labour camp in Heilongjiang, China's northernmost province.

### **Health concern**

Yan Zhengxue has recently been found to suffer from hypertension. His last known blood pressure measurement was 190/100 mmHg. It is unknown whether this is related to renal damage he may have sustained during his beating at the hands of the Haidian police, following which he developed haematuria. The labour camp to which he has been sent in Heilongjiang province is reportedly lacking in facilities for medical treatment and to the knowledge of Amnesty International Yan Zhengxue's hypertension has not been investigated or treated.

### **Conclusion**

Amnesty International believes that Yan Zhengxue was arbitrarily detained and sentenced because of his efforts to seek justice against the police officers who assaulted him. He had no

opportunity to defend himself from charges which appear to have resulted from an incident engineered by colleagues of these police officers. He has developed hypertension but has been sent to a forced labour camp where there is no provision for treatment of this condition. Amnesty International is calling for the Chinese authorities to transfer Yan Zhengxue immediately to Beijing to enable him to receive adequate medical assessment and treatment, and to review his case with a view to releasing him unconditionally.

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To: Medical professionals  
From: Medical Office / Research Department - ASA  
Date: 1 September 1994

## MEDICAL LETTER WRITING ACTION

Health Concern: Yan Zhengxue  
CHINA

Theme keywords: medical care/ill-health

### Summary

Yan Zhengxue is a 50-year-old painter and deputy of the People's Congress of Zhejiang province, who has been assigned without formal charge or trial to two years of "re-education through labour", a form of administrative detention, on the pretext of an alleged bicycle theft, apparently as a result of his efforts to bring to justice three police officers who assaulted him in Haidian District Police Station in July 1993. Following this beating he developed haematuria and now has hypertension. The labour camp to which he has been sent reportedly lack facilities for medical care and to the knowledge of Amnesty International Yan Zhengxue's hypertension has not been investigated or treated.

### Recommended actions

Letters from health professionals, preferably written in English or your own language, should be sent to the addresses below:

- raising the case of Yan Zhengxue, noting that he was severely beaten by police officers at Haidian District Police Station in July 1993 and that one police officer has since been found guilty of this assault
- noting that in April 1994 Yan Zhengxue was sentenced for alleged theft of a bicycle to two years of re-education through labour by a committee of the Beijing Municipal Government, without having the opportunity to defend himself from the accusation
- noting that Yan Zhengxue is now reported to have high blood pressure, possibly resulting from kidney damage sustained in the police attack on him, but that there is said to be no provision for adequate medical care in the labour camp in Gannan county, Henan province, to which he has been sent

**Please send a  
copy of each  
reply  
received to  
the Medical  
Office at the  
International  
Secretariat.**

- calling for Yan Zhengxue to be transferred back to Beijing immediately and for his medical condition to be investigated and appropriately treated
- calling for the case against Yan Zhengxue, involving the alleged bicycle theft, to be reviewed with a view to Yan Zhengxue's unconditional release

### Addresses

#### Premier of the People's Republic of China

**LI Peng** Zongli

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People's Republic of China

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

#### Minister of Public Health of the People's Republic of China

**CHEN Minzhang** Buzhang

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People's Republic of China

**Salutation: Your Excellency**

#### Governor of the Heilongjiang Provincial People's Government

**SHAO Qihui** Shengzhang

Heilongjiangsheng Renmin Zhengfu

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#### Director of the Heilongjiang Department of Justice

**YUAN Baoshan** Tingzhang

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