

URGENT ACTION

FALUN GONG WOMAN AT RISK OF TORTURE

Li Shanshan (李姗姗) was detained in Tangshan, Hebei Province, northern China, on 29 October. The Chinese authorities say they have assigned her to two years "re-education through labour" but are refusing to give details of where she is imprisoned. She is at risk of torture and other ill-treatment.

Li Shanshan was detained on 29 October by public security officers from the Tangshan Domestic Security Department while she was at a supermarket in Tangshan. Li Shanshan was detained following her open campaigning for the release of her husband, Zhou Xiangyang (周向阳), who had been rearrested on 5 March after spending six years in prison from 2003-2009. On 10 November the Tangshan City Public Security Bureau provided confirmation to Li Shanshan's mother, and lawyer that she had been assigned to two years "re-education through labour".

Li Shanshan's family last saw her on 4 November, when they happened to catch sight of her at the Fengrun Legal Education Centre, a facility designated for the "transformation" of Falun Gong practitioners, a process that seeks to force them to renounce their beliefs, often using torture. From January 2006, Li Shanshan served 15 months of "re-education through labour". This was punishment for her persistent campaigning on behalf of Zhou Xiangyang during his imprisonment.

On 26 June Li Shanshan posted on overseas websites an open letter entitled "A Young Couple's Hardship: Waiting Seven Years, Nine Years of Unjust Imprisonment". She described the letter as a "love story", that recounts the hardships the couple experienced as they waited seven years to be able to marry, which they did after Zhou's release from prison in 2009, only to have him rearrested in March this year.

Please write immediately in Chinese or your own language:

- Calling for the immediate release of Li Shanshan as she has been detained solely on the basis of exercising her rights to freedom of expression and association.
- Urging the authorities to inform Li Shanshan's family of her whereabouts.
- Calling on the authorities to allow Li Shanshan's family and lawyer to visit her in detention.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 29 DECEMBER 2011 TO:

Governor of Hebei Province

Zhang Qingwei, Shengzhang

Weiming jie 122

Shijiazhuang City Qiaoxi

Hebei Province 050051

People's Republic of China

Fax: + 86-311-87026092

Salutation: Dear Governor

Mayor of Hebei Province

Chen Guoying Shizhang

Xishandao, 3

Tangshanshai, Hebei Province

People's Republic of China, 063000

Fax: +86-315-2812404

Salutation: Dear Mayor

And copies to:

Public Security Bureau Chief

Jiawenya Zhuzhang

Tangshanshi, Hebei Province, Gonganjue

Lubeiqu, Xishandao, 8

People's Republic of China, 063000

Email: gai@tangshan.gov.cn

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

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Since September, more than 2,300 individuals from over 10 towns in Changli County, Hebei province have signed a petition for Zhou Xiangyang's release that was organized by his family. This petition was signed by over 1,500 residents of his hometown. A second petition calling for Li Shanshan's release, organized by her family after they received news that she had been sent to re-education through labour, had been signed by over 500 people on 15 November.

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: Li Shanshan (李姗姗)

Gender: f

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