

URGENT ACTION

VILLAGERS DETAINED, AT RISK OF TORTURE

Six villagers from Zhengding County, Hebei Province in China have been detained after petitioning for the release of a local Falun Gong practitioner. Three have been sentenced to Re-education through Labour (RTL) and three have been criminally charged. They are at risk of torture and other ill-treatment.

After a petitioning movement that began in June which has gathered over 1,000 signatures, **Gao Suzhen** and her husband **Zhang Tianqi** were detained on 7 August. On 13 August **Jia Zhijiang** was also detained. They have all been charged with criminal offences and are being held in Zhengding County Detention Centre. On the night of Gao Suzhen's arrest she was rushed to No.260 hospital for emergency treatment, it is believed as a result of being tortured. She was then transferred to a Zhengding County special investigative group, where it is believed she was further tortured during interrogation. She is currently being held at Shijiazhuang No.2 Detention Centre.

Three women in their 50s – **Bai Suqin**, **Wang Yuexia** and **Yang Rongxia** – were detained on 7 August and transferred to the Shijiazhuang Women's RTL camp on 29 August. They are at a high risk of torture. It is reported that the families of those detained have been prevented from hiring lawyers of their choice.

The petitions have been calling for the release of local Falun Gong practitioner **Li Lankui**, after he was detained on 7 June and later sent to RTL following a "police clean-up" before a visit to the province by Vice President Xi Jinping and US Iowa governor Terry Branstad. Following mobilization of local villagers in support of Li Lankui, police began a widespread crackdown on local villages in July and August. Security forces detained at least 16 individuals, some of whom reported on release that they had been tortured. One woman reported that she had been tortured by being tied to an iron chair for 10 consecutive days and beaten with electric batons as the police tried to extract information about who had organized the petition and sent information overseas. Several others are reported to have been beaten and ill-treated. Of the 16 known to have been detained, six remain in detention.

Please write immediately in Chinese or your own language:

- Calling for the release of all six individuals as they have been detained solely for exercising their rights to freedom of expression;
- Calling on the authorities to ensure that none of the detained individuals are tortured or ill-treated while in custody;
- Allowing these individuals access to lawyers of their choice.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 3 DECEMBER 2012 TO:

Governor, Hebei Province

ZHANG Qingwei (张庆伟)

Daili Shengzhang Hebeisheng Renmin
Zhengfu

10 Weimingjie Shijiazhuangshi,
Hebeisheng

050053 People's Republic of China

Fax: +86 311 87026092 Telexes: 26229

HBFOE CN or 26232 SHMPG CN

(Please forward to the Governor)

Salutation: Dear Governor

Director, Hebei Province Department of

Public Security

ZHANG Yue Tingzhang

Hebeisheng Gong'anting

469 Zhongshanxilu

Shijiazhuangshi, Hebeisheng,

050051 People's Republic of China

Email: yznzhaojingshiwang@126.com

Salutation: Dear Director

And copies to:

Secretary, Political and Legal

Committee, Shijiazhuang City

LIU Zhipeng shuji

2 Qingyuanjie, Shijiazhuang

Hebeisheng, 050020

People's Republic of China

Tel: +86 311 86686357

Salutation: Dear Secretary

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.

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

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Falun Gong is a spiritual movement that 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. Practitioners have been held in psychiatric hospitals, RTL facilities (a form of administrative detention imposed without charge, trial or judicial review), sentenced to long prison terms, and held in specialized detention centres, where the mission is to “transform” Falun Gong practitioners via coercion into renouncing their spiritual beliefs, often through the use of torture and ill-treatment. Torture and other ill-treatment are routine 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 their practitioners, believed to have been caused by torture and other ill-treatment.

Name: Gao Suzhen (f), Zhang Tianqi (m) Jia Zhijiang (m), Bai Suqin (f), Wang Yuexia (f), Yang Rongxia (f), Li Lankui (m)
Gender m/f: both

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