

# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL UPDATE

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## Against the law: Crackdown on China's human rights lawyers deepens: Update on Background

### Background – updated 24/06/11

**Gao Zhisheng** is a prominent human rights lawyer. He has worked on cases involving Falun Gong practitioners and represented individuals facing the death penalty. He has been subject to enforced disappearance since 4 February 2009 except for a brief reappearance in March 2010. He has now been missing for more than a year, leading to serious concerns for his safety. Gao has been held incommunicado and tortured by authorities on repeated occasions, beginning in 2006.

**Tang Jitian**, a prominent human rights lawyer, has been under illegal house arrest since 5 March 2011, following a three week period of enforced disappearance beginning on 16 February 2011. He is in poor health and he and his family have been warned not talk about his experiences in detention. In early 2009 a group of Beijing lawyers, including Tang Jitian, issued a "letter of accusation" against the Beijing Justice Bureau challenging the legality of annual assessments. In May 2010 he had his licence permanently revoked after defending a Falun Gong practitioner.

On 7 April 2011, **Ni Yulan** and her husband Dong Jiqin were detained by Beijing police, on suspicion of "picking quarrels and provoking trouble". They have since been formally charged with the offence. The couple are reportedly being held at a detention centre in Beijing. A Beijing lawyer, Ni Yulan has been arrested and tortured several times since defending people forcibly evicted from their homes in the lead up to the Beijing Olympics. Ni has been permanently disbarred, and her own home demolished by the authorities. While in custody in 2002 she was beaten so badly that she is now wheelchair bound.

**Liu Shihui** is a Guangzhou-based human rights lawyer and activist. He has taken up cases involving torture and deaths in police custody. Liu was brutally beaten by a group of unidentified individuals while on his way to attend the 20 February 2011 "Jasmine Revolution" protests in Guangzhou. On 25 February he was picked up by the authorities and subjected to enforced disappearance. He was reportedly escorted back to his home to the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region on 12 June where he remains under illegal house arrest.

**Tang Jingling** is a Guangdong based lawyer. He has been missing since 22 February 2011, reportedly under residential surveillance for "inciting subversion". His friends believe he is detained at a government run training centre at Panyu city, Guangdong province. A lawyer attempting to check his whereabouts was reportedly beaten. His wife has been told he will be charged. Tang defended workers detained for protesting poor working conditions or unpaid labour. Despite being unable to renew his lawyers licence, he provided legal advice to vulnerable people including migrant workers.

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