



Bu Dongwei

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“STRIKE HARD” AGAINST BELIEFS

"We must make efforts to create a harmonious society and a good social environment for successfully holding the 17th Communist Party Congress and the Beijing Olympic Games [...] We must strike hard at hostile forces at home and abroad, such as ethnic separatists, religious extremists, violent terrorists and 'heretical organizations' like the Falun Gong who carry out destabilizing activities."

Zhou Yongkang, Minister of Public Security.

Bu Dongwei, a Falun Gong practitioner who worked for the US-based NGO, the Asia Foundation, is serving two and a half years Re-education Through Labour (RTL) at the Tuanhe facility in Beijing. What did he do? He exercised his right to freedom of religious belief. With no trial, he was sent to RTL for “resisting the implementation of national laws” and “disturbing social order”. The evidence was a verbal confession and 80 copies of Falun Gong literature the police said they discovered in his home.

Seven police officers detained Bu Dongwei in May 2006. His family learned where he was held three months later. They dispute the evidence against him and the claim by the authorities that Bu Dongwei decided not to appeal his assignment. Officials at the facility where he is held have asked Bu Dongwei’s family to contribute around 400 Yuan per month (US\$52) towards his living expenses.

This is not the first time Bu Dongwei has been imprisoned for his beliefs. After petitioning the authorities to review their ban on Falun Gong in 2000, he was sentenced to 10 months RTL for "using a heretical organization to disrupt the implementation of the law". Amnesty International has been told that during RTL he was deprived of sleep, beaten and forced to sit in a small chair all day - all to make him renounce his beliefs.

The decision to assign a person to RTL is taken by the police, without charge or trial. People can be detained for up to three years, which can be extended by a further year when necessary.

Attempts to substantially reform or abolish RTL now appear to be back on the legislative agenda after being stalled for more than two years. But in the lead-up to the 2008 Olympic Games, Beijing police have used abusive detention practices such as RTL to 'clean up' the city.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

1. Write to Prime Minister Wen Jiabao

Start your letter "Your Excellency"

Prime Minister of the People's Republic of China
WEN Jiabao Guojia Zongli
The State Council General Office
2 Fuyoujie
Xichengqu
Beijingshi 100017
People's Republic of China

In your letter ask Prime Minister Wen to:

- **release Bu Dongwei immediately and unconditionally**, because he is a prisoner of conscience, detained in violation of his rights to freedom of expression, association and religious belief
- allow Bu Dongwei's **family to visit him regularly** and to ensure that he has **access to lawyers** and medical treatment while he is in detention
- guarantee that Bu Dongwei is not subjected to torture or ill-treatment during his detention
- **end the crackdown against the Falun Gong** spiritual movement and the resulting human rights violations
- **abolish "Re-education Through Labour"** and ensure that decisions on detention are no longer exclusively in the hands of the police.

2. Write a personal letter of support to Bu Dongwei

Although Chinese prisoners rarely receive solidarity cards or letters, they may result in better treatment for the prisoner if the RTL facility authorities see them. Sometimes prison wardens have been known to tell prisoners about the cards. Please send your message of support to Amnesty International's International Secretariat. We will send them in bulk to the prison, making it more likely they will be received.

Please send your cards and letters to:

Individuals Campaign Team
Amnesty International
1 Easton Street
London, WC1X 0DW
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