

PUBLIC

AI Index: ASA 17/020/2002

11 April 2002

Further information on UA 81/02 (ASA 17/011/2002, 15 March 2002) - fear for safety/fear of torture or ill-treatment

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC Falun Gong practitioners in Changchun City
OF CHINA

New names: Liang Zhenxing (m)

Liu Chengjun (m)

Zhou Runjun (f)

Lei Ming (m)

Zhao Jian (m)

Yun Qinglin (m)

Li Yanmei (f)

Around 20 people, including the seven named above, have reportedly been arrested in connection with the 5 March Falun Gong broadcast from a state-owned cable TV station. Scores of other Changchun residents have been detained simply for being Falun Gong members, and all are at serious risk of torture or ill-treatment.

It now appears that the Falun Gong members involved in the 5 March incident did not actually go into the TV station, but found the cable transmitting programmes from the station and used their own equipment to interrupt the studio's programmes and transmit their own material.

According to Chinese media reports, Liang Zhenxing, Liu Chengjun, Zhou Runjun, Lei Ming, Zhao Jian and Yun Qinglin have been arrested for preparing the video materials and electronically tapping into the TV network. Since their arrests have been officially confirmed, it is likely that formal criminal charges have been, or will be, brought against them.

The same reports also quote local police officials as saying that around 15 other people have been arrested in connection with the broadcast, but gives no details of their names or whereabouts. However, Falun Gong sources have named Li Yanmei as one of those detained in the crackdown.

Scores of other Changchun residents also appear to have been detained purely for being members of Falun Gong. According to a New York Times report of 5 April, an official from the Changchun "Re-education Through Labour" Bureau stated that between 100 and 200 people had been detained since the TV hijacking. He added that they would probably be sent to a labour camp for between one and three years where they would attend classes encouraging them to denounce Falun Gong.

Falun Gong sources abroad have claimed that over 5,000 people have been rounded up in Changchun and that dozens have died in police custody. Amnesty International has been unable to verify these reports.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Tens of thousands of Falun Gong practitioners have been arbitrarily detained in China since the spiritual movement was banned as a "threat to social and political stability" in July 1999. Some have been charged with crimes and sentenced after unfair trials, while others have been sent to labour camps without trial. Many of them are reported to have been tortured or ill-treated

in detention and over 350 Falun Gong practitioners have reportedly died in custody since the organisation was banned.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please continue sending appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in Chinese, English or your own language:

- urging the authorities to clarify the names and whereabouts of all those detained during the ongoing police operation in Changchun and provide immediate guarantees for their safety;
- urging the authorities to ensure that those detained have immediate access to lawyers, their families and medical attention;
- calling on the authorities to clarify the charges against those arrested and to release immediately and unconditionally all Falun Gong members detained solely for the peaceful exercise of their fundamental human rights;
- expressing your concern at repeated reports that Falun Gong members have suffered torture and other serious human rights violations, and calling on the authorities to ensure that those responsible are brought to justice.

APPEALS TO:

Premier of the People's Republic of China

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Guowuyuan

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People's Republic of China

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Telegram: Premier Zhu Rongji, Beijing, China

Salutation:Your Excellency

Director of the Jilin Provincial Department of Public Security

ZHAO YONGJI Tingzhang

Jilin Gong'anting

42 Xinfalu

Changchunshi 130051

Jilinsheng

People's Republic of China

Telegram:Director, Provincial Public Security Department, Changchun, Jilin, China

Salutation: Dear Director

Governor of the Jilin Provincial People's Government

HONG Hu Shengzhang

Jilinsheng Renmin Zhengfu

11 Xinfalu

Changchunshi 130051

Jilinsheng

People's Republic of China

Telegram: Governor, Changchun, Jilin Province, China

Salutation:Dear Governor

COPIES TO:

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and to diplomatic representatives of the People's Republic of China accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 22 May 2002.