

PUBLIC

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Possible disappearances/
Incommunicado detention/Fear for Safety

23 August 2002

VIET NAM/
PEOPLE'S
REPUBLIC
OF CHINA

Wang Bingzhang (m), aged 54, US permanent resident
Zhang Qi (f), US permanent resident
Yue Wu (m), aged 54, French permanent resident
Yang Jianli (m), aged 38, US permanent resident

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of three foreign-based Chinese dissidents. Wang Bingzhang, Yue Wu and Zhang Qi reportedly went missing around 26 June on Vietnam's northern border with China, and their whereabouts are unknown. Fears for the safety of exiled Chinese dissident Yang Jianli have also increased following reports that he has been held incommunicado for more than three months in China.

On 16 June Wang Bingzhang, Yue Wu and Zhang Qi reportedly arrived in Vietnam from Cambodia with valid visas, allegedly to meet up with Chinese labour leaders inside Vietnam to promote the Chinese labour movement. They telephoned friends on 26 June, from Quang Ninh province, Vietnam, but nobody has heard from them since then. It is possible that they are still in Vietnam, but according to unconfirmed reports, the three dissidents were detained by Chinese authorities near the Vietnam-China border, and are currently held at an undisclosed location in China. Chinese authorities have so far denied any knowledge of their whereabouts. On 20 August, Vietnamese official sources stated that the three are not registered anywhere else in Vietnam and their names have not been seen on the list of exit passengers on any of the international border gates. They were scheduled to fly out of Vietnam on 3 July.

Yang Jianli, a Chinese pro-democracy dissident and a permanent resident in the US, was detained on 26 April in the city of Kunming, in the southern Chinese province of Yunnan. He was reportedly detained by Chinese state security police for entering China illegally, using someone else's passport. He had allegedly entered China to investigate ongoing large-scale labour unrest in northeast China, and to meet with labour activists. The Chinese authorities have so far failed to inform Yang Jianli's family where he is detained and to make public the charges against him, even though more than three months have elapsed since Yang was first detained, in breach of Chinese and international law.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Wang Bingzhang is a founder of the pro-democracy magazine "China Spring" and co-founder of two banned political groups, the China Alliance for Democracy, and the China Democracy and Justice Party. He entered China under a false name in 1998, and conducted meetings with dissidents regarding the formation of an underground political party. He was seized by the authorities and later expelled. Yue Wu was a labour leader in Beijing during the 1989 pro-democracy protest. He was granted asylum in France after fleeing China in 1989. Zhang Qi left China in 2000 and was granted political asylum in the US in 2001.

Yang Jianli heads the Foundation for China in the 21st Century, a US-based organization. In 1989 he returned to China to take part in the democracy movement, and has since been banned by the Chinese authorities from returning to China. Wang Bingzhang and Yue Wu have also been banned.

China maintains blacklists barring many overseas-based pro-democracy and human rights activists from returning to China. Several of those banned were placed on police "most wanted" notices after the crackdown against the democracy movement of 4 June 1989, in connection with alleged offences arising from the peaceful exercise of their rights to freedom of expression and association during the pro-democracy protests. In June 2002, around 170 dissidents wrote an open letter to the Chinese government, demanding the release of Yang Jianli, and the right of the exiled community to legally return to China.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to the Vietnamese authorities to arrive as quickly as possible, in Vietnamese, English or your own language:

- expressing concern that Wang Bingzhang, Yue Wu and Zhang Qi, three Chinese dissidents granted asylum abroad, have gone missing while in Viet Nam around 26 June and may have been removed from Viet Nam;
- urging the authorities to continue efforts to establish their fate and whereabouts and to ensure that they are not forcibly returned to China where they are at serious risk of grave human rights violations;

Please send appeals to the Chinese authorities to arrive as quickly as possible, in Chinese, English or your own language:

- expressing concern at reports that Wang Bingzhang, Yue Wu and Zhang Qi are missing and are presumed to be detained in China;
- urging the Chinese authorities to immediately investigate and clarify the current whereabouts of Wang Bingzhang, Yue Wu and Zhang Qi;
- urging the authorities to make public any official reason for the continued detention of Wang Bingzhang, Yue Wu and Zhang Qi, and release them immediately, unless they are charged with a recognizable criminal offence;
- urging the authorities to inform the family of Yang Jianli where he is detained and to make public the charges against him;
- urging the authorities to order that Yang Jianli is released immediately and unconditionally, unless he is charged with a recognizable criminal offence;
- urging the authorities to ensure that while they are in custody all four people named above have proper access to their families, lawyers and medical treatment.

APPEALS TO THE VIETNAMESE AUTHORITIES (on behalf of Wang Bingzhang, Yue Wu & Zhang Qi):

Le Hong Anh
Minister of Public Security
Ministry of Public Security
15 Tran Binh Trong Street
Hoan Kiem District
Ha Noi
Socialist Republic of Viet Nam

Telegram: Minister of Public Security, Ha Noi, Viet Nam

Fax: + 84 4 8260774 (Please note that this fax number can be unreliable)

Salutation: Dear Minister

APPEALS TO THE CHINESE AUTHORITIES:

Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China

TANG Jiakuan Buzhang
Waijiaobu
2 Chaoyangmen Nandajie
Beijingshi 100701
People's Republic of China

Telegram: Minister of Foreign Affairs, Beijing, China

Fax: + 86 10 6596 3374

Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Public Security of the People's Republic of China

JIA Chunwang Buzhang
Gong'anbu
14 Dongchanganjie
Beijingshi 100741
People's Republic of China

Telegram: Minister of Public Security, Beijing, China

Telexes: 210070 FMPC CN

Fax: + 86 10 6524 1596

E-mail: 110@mps.gov.cn
Salutation: Your Excellency

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

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 4 October 2002.