

Droits de l'homme sans frontières
Human Rights Without Frontiers

Avenue Winston Churchill 11/33, 1180 Brussels

Phone: 32 2 3456145 – Fax: 32 2 3437491

Email: info@hrwf.net – Website: <http://www.hrwf.org>



CHINA

Religious Persecution 2008

04 January 2008

Shi Weihang, a 37 year old father of two and owner of the Holy Spirit Trading Co. Christian bookstore, arrested on 28 November 2007 for publishing Bibles and Christian literature was released on grounds of "insufficient evidence".

09 January 2008

Two prominent church leaders of a main house church in China's Gansu Province remain detained after Chinese security forces raided a worship service. Tian Mingge, Su Dean, and Wang Hongliang were detained by local police in their church in Jiuquan City on past December. While Wang was released January 5, the other two remain behind bars, apparently on charges of "gathering in an illegal assembly under the guise of religion." Tian worked closely with church leader Zhang Rongliang, who serves a 7.5 year jail sentence for his involvement in what the government sees as the "illegal" house church movement.

12 January 2008

State security officials arrived at the home of Alimjan Yimit, a Muslim convert, ethnic Uyghur and Christian house church leader in Xinjiang province, northwest China. They detained Alimjan, telling family members that the arrest was a "national security issue." They also collected his wife Gulnur for interrogation that evening, but she was later released. The arrest of Alimjan is considered as not random but part of a coordinated campaign against Uyghur Christians.

13 January 2008

A house church leader in Kashi, Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region was secretly arrested and sentenced to criminal detention. Eyewitness reports that Mr. A Li Mu Jiang was taken away by the agents of State Security Bureau from his home for accused "national security issue." His wife was also taken away for interrogation in the evening of the same day from home.

23 January 2008

Police in the southern province of Yunnan violently beat up a group of Protestants from an underground church as they filed a claim for damages after police seized and burnt hundreds of their Bibles and other religious objects during a raid on their house church. The violent episode occurred in an office of Xishan District's Public Security Bureau. Police also burnt the identity papers of three underground Christians and forced the landowner of the building where the group met to break the rental agreement he had with them.

26 January 2008

Yu Zhou, a popular folk singer and Falun Gong practitioner, was arrested along with his wife Xu Na while returning home from a concert in Beijing.

06 February 2008

The family of singer Yu Zhou was informed of his death while in custody and called to the Qinghe district emergency centre to view his body. Yu won a following among young Chinese for his mellow folk ballads. His group, Xiao Juan and residents from the Valley, released two successful CDs and appeared on the Phoenix television channel.

Yu was a graduate of Beijing University. He married Xu Na, 40, a poet and painter who was imprisoned between 2001 and 2006 for her association with Falun Gong.

13 February 2008

Mr. Wang Guiming, 40, a Falun Gong practitioner from Tonghua city in Jilin Province was arrested while selling sweet potatoes. He was taken to Changliu Detention Center and sentenced to re-education through labor.

17 February 2008

Mr. Guiming was transferred to Chaoyanggou rti camp where he was reportedly shocked with electric batons.

19 February 2008

Mr. Zhou Heng, a Han Chinese Christian and manager of the Yayi Christian Book Room bookstore is released from detention after the Shayibake District Branch of the Urumqi Municipal Public Security Bureau decided not to prosecute on charges of "illegal business operations". Mr. Heng had been in custody since August 2007 after receiving a shipment of illegally published Bibles.

29 February 2008

Mr. Guiming died, 16 days after his initial arrest. Large bruises on his face, chest and anus were found by his family.

03 March 2008

The body of Mutallip Hajim, a prominent Uyghur businessman was returned to his relatives after he had spent two months in police custody. Police said he died of heart trouble while in custody and instructed the family to bury him immediately and inform no one of his death, according to Radio Free Asia.

10 March 2008

About 300 Buddhist monks staged two protests in the capital of Tibet in a bold, public challenge to China's rule. The protest was believed to be the largest demonstration in the city since Beijing crushed a wave of pro-independence activity in 1989. Asked about the march, Foreign Ministry spokesman Qin Gang said, "Some ignorant monks in Lhasa abetted by a small handful of people did some illegal things that can challenge the social stability." He said monks were dealt with "according to the law," but gave no details. However, according to Radio Free Asia, up to 71 people - mostly monks - were detained following the protests.

11 March 2008

Thousands of Chinese security personnel fired tear gas to try to disperse more than 600 monks taking part in a second day of rare street protests in Tibet. The Tibet demonstrations followed a string of marches around the world to commemorate the 49th anniversary of an uprising against Chinese rule in the remote, mountainous region that has become a flashpoint for protesters ahead of the Beijing Olympics.

13 March 2008

Monks in Lhasa started a hunger strike and two attempted suicide as troops surrounded monasteries.

Ms. Gu Jianmin, a Falun Gong practitioner arrested on the first of March, is to be released on medical parole, an agent from the local 610 Office explained this to her husband. After spending several hours completing forms for her release, Ms. Gu's husband was taken to a local hospital, where a doctor declared her dead after a brief attempt to rescue her.

14 March 2008

Protests led by Buddhist monks against Chinese rule in Tibet turned violent, with shops and vehicles torched and gunshots echoing through the streets of the ancient capital, Lhasa. A radio report said two people had been killed. Shops were set on fire along two main streets surrounding the Jokhang temple, Ramoche monastery, and the city's main Chomsignkang market, and heavy smoke rose from the area. Protesters appeared to be targeting Chinese-owned businesses.

19 March 2008

Shi Weihuan, a Christian bookstore owner, was re-arrested without the possibility of any family visits, according to his wife Zhang Jing.

23 March 2008

In the Xinjiang autonomous region of China an Uighur demonstration took place in the town of Khotan protesting Chinese rule. As many as 500 Uighurs protested in the city center.

25 March 2008

China's security chief called for stepping up "patriotic education" in Tibet's monasteries, as prosecutors for the first time charged demonstrators in the largely peaceful, monk-led protests that later exploded into riots in the region.

His call for broader "patriotic education" indicated the party would also move to exert greater control over religion in Tibet, requiring more Tibetans to accept the region as an inalienable part of China, denounce the Dalai Lama as a separatist and recognize the Chinese-appointed Panchen Lama.

At least one policeman was killed in Sichuan province, where clashes between security forces and protesters were very severe. The New China News Service identified the dead policeman as Wang Guochuan. Wang was killed by a mob wielding stones and knives, according to the report.

In Lhasa, the Tibetan capital, state prosecutors charged 13 people with "illegal assembly." They were among the 15 people originally detained for protesting in front of the Tsuklakhang Temple on March 10.

27 March 2008

Lobsang Jinpa and Ngaba Kirti, two monks from the Tibetan Monastery in Ngaba County, committed suicide as a protest against China's growing repression and Chinese police entering one monastery after another to arrest the monks.

29 March 2008

Chinese police of the PAP and PSB searched the TAKtsang Lhamo Kirti Monastery and arrested the monks.

30 March 2008

The Gomand Monastery in the Ngaba province was raided by Chinese police and 20 monks were arrested.

23 April 2008

Christian bookstore owner Shi Weihang was moved from the Beijing Municipal Detention Center to an unknown location, when questioned, officials at the Beijing detention center would only say that Shi was no longer there.

16 May 2008

Church leader Lou Yuangui of Huocheng County in Xinjiang was summoned to state security offices for questioning and detained for "inciting separatism", according to CAA.

24 May 2008

Bishop Jia Zhiguo of Wu Qiu was arrested and placed under house arrest. This date was the day "for the Catholics of the whole world to be united in prayer with the Church in China" according to Pope Benedict XVI. The underground Chinese Church was warned by the Chinese government not to participate in the pilgrimage to the Marian Shrine in Sheshan.

Two underground priests, father Zhang Jianlin and father Zhangli were arrested on their way to Sheshan and have since disappeared.

19 June 2008

The hearing against Christian bookstore owner Shi Weihang did not take place, marking the end of the allowed three months of detention without formal

charges. Mr Weihan remained incommunicado and there were no guarantees he was receiving the diabetes medicine he needs. Documentation offered by the PSB to justify a right to hold Shi seemed to have been tampered with. A copy of an arrest warrant issued to the Haidian District Sub-station giving it permission to re-arrest Shi was doctored and changed to look as though the Beijing City PSB was the authorized arresting authority.

08 June 2008

Nuns from the Samtenling Tibetan Buddhist nunnery in Dakgoe district of Tehore were arrested during a peaceful demonstration against Chinese rule.

18 June 2008

Bhu Ngawang Phuntsok, 32, of Karze Bulshur Ngangpa Taktsang was arrested by Chinese military personnel while protesting peacefully in front of the Chinese Police office in the Karze district, beaten and taken away. Following his arrest three nuns, Yangzom, Poewang, and Lhamo from Yae Tseg nunnery of Pang Rina Rinpoche were also arrested in the same location for chanting slogans protesting the Chinese presence in Tibet.

26 June 2008

More than 100 Chinese military personnel fully armed stormed the Tehore nunnery in Karze district and arrested staff nun Tsering Wangchuk.

27 June 2008

More than 300 nuns were deposited at the Samtenling Tibetan Buddhist nunnery at Dakgoe district of Tehore, Dokham. After being returned to the nunnery following their 08 June detention one nun was left at the nunnery while the rest were handed over to their respective family members by the PSB. The nuns were planning to organize a peaceful demonstration to express their support for their fellow nuns Tsering Tso, Ugyen Lhamo and Guru who remained in custody and whose whereabouts are unknown.

15 July 2008

Chinese officials requested house church leaders in Beijing to sign documents agreeing not to hold services until October 15, a total of 17 weeks which would include the Olympic games.

18 July 2008

House church pastor Zhang Mingxuan and his wife Xie Fenlang were forced to leave Beijing and go to Hebei province after being asked several times by officials to leave willingly.

10 August 2008

House church pastor and activist Hua Huigi was arrested after attempting to participate in a service at the government-approved Juanjie Protestant Church in Beijing where President Bush was scheduled to appear.