



**Reported in 2023:**

# **1,190 Falun Gong Practitioners Sentenced for Their Faith**

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## Introduction

In northern China, [Mr. Hou Lijun](#) of Taiyuan City, Shanxi Province, was sentenced to ten years less than three weeks after his arrest on April 25, 2023. No hearing was held before his sentencing, nor were any witness accounts or valid evidence included in the verdict.

Mr. Hou's latest arrest came after he'd already spent over 20 years in displacement to avoid being persecuted for his faith in Falun Gong. His mother, Ms. Kang Shuqin, who was arrested with him in 2002, was later sentenced to 11 years and died in 2020. Her passing dealt a hard blow to her husband, who suffered a stroke and became incapacitated. Mr. Hou's recent arrest further aggravated his condition and he passed away on June 23, 2023. Mr. Hou's own life is now in jeopardy due to his prolonged hunger strike to protest the latest persecution episode.

In southern China, [Mr. Wu Haibo](#), a 58-year-old Zhanjiang City, Guangdong Province, resident, was arrested on March 5, 2022, and sentenced to five years in prison on March 24, 2023. Prior to his latest sentencing, Mr. Wu, a former pharmaceutical company technician, served one labor camp term and two prison terms totaling 11 years, also for practicing Falun Gong.

In eastern China, [Mr. He Binggang and Ms. Zhang Yibo](#), a software engineer and his fiancée in Shanghai, were sentenced

to prison on June 12, 2023, to six and five years, respectively, for their involvement in developing and maintaining the firewall circumvention software oGate, to overcome the Chinese communist regime's information blockade.

In western China, [Mr. Li Wenming](#), 59, of Lanzhou City, Gansu Province, was sentenced to five years in February 2023. He was previously sentenced to 20 years in 2002 and his latest arrest came only one year after his release.

And in central China, 10 practitioners aged 42-85 in Zhengzhou City, Henan Province, were [sentenced to from one to eight years](#) in prison on September 27, 2023. Their families weren't allowed to attend their hearing.

The above are just a few of the [1,190 reported cases](#) of Falun Gong practitioners being sentenced in 2023. Out of the newly reported cases, 755 practitioners were sentenced in 2023, almost 70% more than last year's figure (446 practitioners sentenced in 2022). Some of the sentenced practitioners were in life-threatening condition shortly before or after their convictions, some have been repeatedly jailed and spent more than a decade behind bars, and some have lost their spouses, children, or parents in the persecution of their shared faith before they were sentenced themselves.

# Part 1: Overview of Newly Reported Sentences

In countries with the rule of law, the prosecution bears the burden of proof, the suspect accused of a crime is presumed innocent until proven guilty, and their right to defend themselves should be protected.

In Falun Gong cases in China, however, the prosecution has no legal basis on which to prosecute practitioners and often fails to prove the four required elements of a crime.

At the same time, the practitioners' right to defend themselves is often violated at every step of the way as China's judiciary system is merely used as a tool to carry out the persecution.

## 1.1 No Legal Basis for Prosecution

Under China's criminal law, to convict a suspect of a crime, the prosecution bears the burden of proof and must show that: 1) the suspect is mentally competent and understands the consequences of their actions, 2) the suspect must have had a criminal intent to cause harm, 3) the suspect must have committed a criminal act, and 4) the criminal act must have violated the legal rights of others.

While prosecutors in Falun Gong cases were able to prove the first element, they failed to satisfy the other three elements:

**Figure 1. Prosecution in Falun Gong Cases Fails to Prove All Four Required Elements of a Crime**

Competency to Stand Trial	Criminal Mind	Criminal Act	Violation of Others' Rights
<p><u>Proved</u></p> <p>Practitioners were indeed competent to stand trial.</p>	<p><u>Not Proved</u></p> <p>Practitioners never set out to harm others when they practiced their spiritual belief.</p>	<p><u>Not Proved</u></p> <p>Article 300 and its statutory interpretation failed to prove criminality of practitioners.</p>	<p><u>Not Proved</u></p> <p>Owning/sharing Falun Gong books and informational materials was legal and caused no harm to others.</p>

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Falun Gong practitioners strive to live by the principles of Truthfulness-Compassion-Forbearance and never set out to harm anyone when they practice their spiritual belief or exercise their constitutional right to tell others about it. As such, the prosecution cannot prove the practitioners have criminal intent.

In order to prove the practitioners have committed a criminal act, the prosecution often charges them, regardless of their gender, age, or social status, with violating Article 300 of the Criminal Law, which states that anyone using a cult organization to undermine law enforcement must be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. China's law-making body, the People's Congress, however, has never enacted a law criminalizing Falun Gong or labeling it a cult. As such, there are no legal grounds for such indictments and subsequent sentencings.

Many prosecutors in Falun Gong cases also cite as legal basis a statutory interpretation of Article 300 of the Criminal Law issued by the Supreme People's Court and the Supreme People's Procuratorate in November 1999 that required anyone practicing or promoting Falun Gong be prosecuted to the fullest extent possible. A new statutory interpretation replacing the 1999 version, however, took effect on February 1, 2017. The new interpretation made no mention of Falun Gong and emphasized that any indictment against anyone engaging in a cult must be based on solid legal grounds. Since no enacted law in China labels Falun Gong as a cult, the indictment and subsequent sentencing of Falun Gong practitioners based on the statutory interpretation again lacks a legal basis.

To show that practitioners have violated others' rights, the prosecutors often cite as evidence Falun Gong books and informational materials confiscated from their homes, referencing two notices issued by China's Administration of Press and Publications in July 1999 that banned the publication of Falun Gong books. However, the Administration repealed that ban in 2011, making it completely legal for practitioners to own and disseminate Falun Gong books and informational materials. Additionally, practitioners do not cause any harm to any individual or society at large.

## 1.2 Judiciary System Becomes a Rubber Stamp

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) carries out the persecution through three major channels: the Political and Legal Affairs Committee (PLAC), the 610 Office, and the judiciary system (which includes the public security organs, the procuratorates, the courts, and the justice bureaus). Both the PLAC and the 610 Office are extrajudicial agencies tasked with overseeing the persecution and given the power to override the judiciary system.

During the past 24 years of the persecution of Falun Gong practitioners, the judiciary has become a rubber stamp in carrying out the suppression. The police often arrest practitioners without probable cause, the procuratorates indict practitioners without any legal basis, and the courts hand down pre-determined prison sentences. The justice bureaus—the administrative arm of the judiciary system—often aid in the persecu-

tion by obstructing practitioners' and their lawyers' efforts to seek justice. There have been many cases of justice bureaus refusing to renew lawyers' law licenses without any sound reasons in their attempts to stop the lawyers from representing Falun Gong practitioners in court.

The communist regime has never followed the law in prosecuting law-abiding Falun Gong practitioners. Chinese courts are often instructed to hand down prison sentences to innocent Falun Gong practitioners simply for their spiritual belief.

When [Ms. Chen Qiuju](#), 54, of Pengxi County, Sichuan Province, was sentenced to three years on June 29, 2023, both the prosecutor and the presiding judge in charge of her case admitted that the local 610 Office and PLAC had ordered them to give her a heavy sentence if she refused to sign a statement to renounce Falun Gong.

A judge in Zhoukou City, Henan Province, cited the "China Anti-cult Website" and the government's persecution policy as the legal basis, instead of any enacted law, for [Ms. Xia Dongmei](#)'s two-and-a-half-year sentence.

According to the World Organization to Investigate the Persecution of Falun Gong, the directors and key members of the China Anti-Cult Association, the organization behind the "China Anti-cult Website," are members of the CCP and have been actively participating in the persecution. The website has also been used to spread hate propaganda to smear Falun Gong and justify the persecution.

When deposing [Ms. Zhao Li](#), of Chongqing, who was arrested for writing to a judge and urging her not to persecute Falun Gong, prosecutor Liu Jie blurted out when asked what law Ms. Zhao had violated, "There are laws all over the place, outside, on the street. Go find a law yourself!" Ms. Zhao was sentenced to 22 months by the Jiangbei District Court on November 17, 2023.

During the trial of [Ms. Sun Baifeng](#) of Tangshan City, Hebei Province, on February 9, 2023, the prosecutor accused her and other practitioners of "attacking the Chinese Communist Party and the government" by exposing the Tiananmen self-immolation hoax (in which several people who set themselves on fire on Tiananmen Square were labeled as Falun Gong practitioners, when in fact none of them had ever practiced Falun Gong).

The prosecutor also said, "The Constitution says that the country is governed by the Chinese Communist Party. If you are against the Party, you are violating the Constitution." He continued to say that, due to Falun Gong's influence in society (prior to the persecution), the government specifically came up with the charge "undermining law enforcement" to criminalize the practitioners. When presented with the fact that Falun Gong wasn't included in the list of cults identified by the regime in 2000, he said, "Not having it on the list doesn't mean we can't crack down on it." Ms. Sun was [sentenced](#) to two years and three months shortly after the hearing.



## 1.3 Violation of Legal Procedures

When prosecuting practitioners, the judiciary system in China not only lacks legal basis, but often violates the practitioners' legal rights every step of the way. Below are just some quick examples.

### When the case rests with the police:

- The police often arrest and raid practitioners' homes without showing their IDs or search warrants.
- The police often interrogate the practitioners with torture in order to extract "confessions." When the practitioners refuse to comply, they even fabricate evidence against them.
- The police often authenticate their own evidence when, by law, only an independent, third-party forensic agency is authorized to authenticate prosecution evidence.

### When the case rests with the procuratorate:

- After the police submit the case to the procuratorate, the latter agency often fails to investigate the police-supplied evidence and charge the practitioners without any legal basis.
- The procuratorates sometimes bar the defense lawyers from reviewing their clients' case files.

### When the case rests with the trial courts:

After the procuratorate submits the case to the trial courts, the courts often violate the practitioners' rights:

- Pre-trial, the courts often bar the practitioners from hiring lawyers or force them to use court-appointed lawyers who are often instructed to enter guilty plea for the practitioners. Even when the practitioners manage to hire their own lawyers, the lawyers are sometimes forced to drop their cases or are barred from reviewing their case files. The courts also sometimes do not notify the practitioners, their families, or lawyers of their trial date in advance as required by law.
- During trial, the courts sometimes bar the practitioners' lawyers from attending their hearings or presenting defense arguments for them.
- During the sentencing stage, the courts often hand down pre-determined prison terms or refuse to provide copies of the verdicts to the practitioners, their lawyers, or families.

### When the case rests with the appeals courts:

- Intermediate courts often bar practitioners from filing appeals, reject their requests for open hearings, uphold their original verdicts without reviewing the evidence, or disallow lawyers from presenting defense statements.



In some cases, the lawyers are also denied access to the practitioners' case files or not granted meetings with them throughout the prosecution process.

When the lawyer for [Mr. Miao Zhongjun](#), 66, from Xi'an City, Shaanxi Province, went to the Lianhu District Procuratorate to review his case documents, prosecutor Zhao Shiyuan asked if he had signed a representation agreement with Mr. Miao's family, if they had provided him with a receipt of payment, and if he had notified his local justice bureau that he was representing a Falun Gong practitioner.

Zhao also said that Mr. Miao's case involved state secrets and she would have to ask for permission from her supervisor before she could allow the lawyer to review his case documents. She refused to give her phone number to the lawyer, saying that she would contact him if she had any updates. She also asked for personal information from Mr. Miao's family member who had hired the lawyer. The lawyer said it was illegal for her to ask for private information on his client and refused to give it.

After leaving Zhao's office, the lawyer filed a complaint against her, but to no avail.

Mr. Miao stood trial at the Lianhu District Court on March 23, 2023, and was sentenced to four years with a 10,000-yuan fine on September 11, 2023.

### **More on Fabricated Evidence**

In previous years' summary reports about sentencing cases, it was reported that

the police [counted each page](#) of a Falun Gong booklet as one piece of evidence for the prosecution. But in the sentencing cases reported in 2023, the police went so far as to fabricate "evidence" in order to get the practitioners sentenced.

When [Mr. Shi Zongxi](#) of Baoding City, Hebei Province, appeared in court on February 17, 2023, for practicing Falun Gong, his lawyers were shocked to see that the prosecutor listed a villager who had died five years prior as a witness against him. The judge sentenced Mr. Shi to three years months later.

During [Mr. Li Jun's](#) first appearance in the Maonan District Court in Maoming City, Guangdong Province, on August 22, 2023, the prosecutor alleged that his oldest daughter had "testified" that he sometimes went to the local market to distribute Falun Gong informational materials. Mr. Li's daughter, who was present at the hearing, was indignant but she was not allowed to say anything. She later told Mr. Li's lawyer that she had never said any such thing and that the police had fabricated the "testimony." Mr. Li, 72, was sentenced to five years and fined 10,000-yuan fine on November 8, 2023.

In the case of [Mr. Wang Lin](#) of Jinzhou City, Liaoning Province, the police supplied video footage showing a man driving a car near a residential complex as proof that he had distributed Falun Gong materials there because the make and model of the car were the same as his. They claimed that the man in the video looked very much like Mr. Wang, but without providing a close-up screenshot of the

video to compare with Mr. Wang's photo. Additionally, the video didn't show the man passing out any materials.

The second piece of police-supplied evidence was a home surveillance video submitted to them by resident Hao in the same residential complex. The footage showed a man holding a bag outside Hao's home. The police alleged that the video was proof that Mr. Wang had hung Falun Gong materials on the doorknob of Hao's home. Mr. Wang pointed out that the video didn't show the man taking things out of his bag or putting things in the bag. Moreover, the video was not clear enough to show what the man looked like.

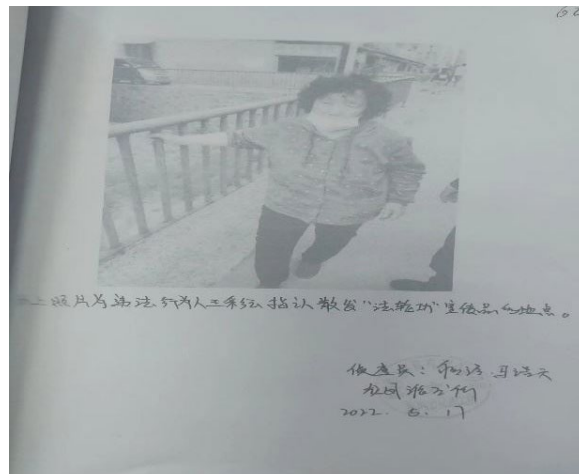
The third piece of police-supplied evidence was a photo of Mr. Wang standing by the doorknob of a house in the residential complex. He said that one day after his arrest, the police took him to that house and hung a bag on the doorknob before taking a picture of him. He pointed out that the house was not Hao's and he didn't know what was in the bag.

The fourth piece of police-supplied evidence was an interrogation record submitted to the Linghai City Procuratorate but never shown to Mr. Wang. He said that the police did show him some documents and that he acknowledged this upon noting it was indeed about what he said during the interrogation. But according to his lawyer, the interrogation record submitted to the Linghai City Procuratorate by the police contained incriminating information. He suspected that the police submitted a totally different version without letting him read it.

Judge Huang Yanchun [sentenced](#) Mr. Wang to four years in prison with an 8,000-yuan fine on June 25.

Also in Liaoning Province, prosecutor Yang Kun of the Dongzhou District Procuratorate in Fushun City introduced a mysterious witness at [Ms. Wang Caiyun's](#) hearing on July 12, 2023, but did not call the witness to the stand. The witness was named Xu Dawei but no other information (such as sex or age) was available. Xu's signatures on five different forms all looked different. Xu was said to have witnessed the police interrogating Ms. Wang and raiding her home. But according to Ms. Wang's husband, who was present during the raid, he never saw anyone named Xu at his home.

During the second hearing on September 11, 2023, Yang presented a black-white photo of Ms. Wang walking down the street and claimed that she distributed Falun Gong materials there. However, no supporting evidence was provided. The judge sentenced Ms. Wang to four years with a 16,000-yuan fine not long after.



*The photo of Ms. Wang presented by prosecutor Yang*

## 1.4 Prison Terms and Fines

For the newly confirmed sentencing cases in 2023, the practitioners' prison terms ranged from 3 months to 12 years, with an average of 3 years. A total of 161 practitioners were sentenced to 5 years or longer.

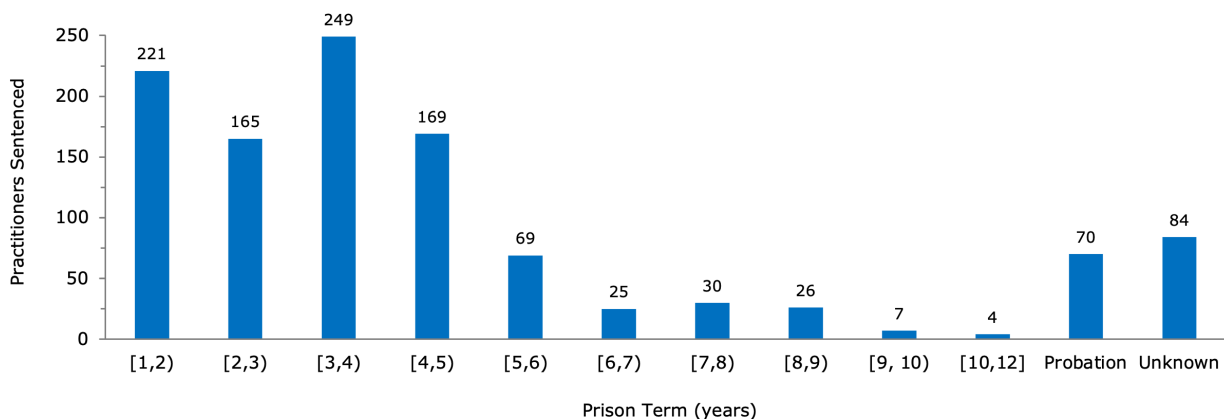
A total of 381 practitioners were fined a total of 4,880,000 yuan. One practitioner was fined 310,000 yuan. Four practitioners were fined 100,000 yuan (including two who were both sentenced to eight years), 15 were fined between 50,000 and 80,000 yuan, 155 received fines between 10,000 and 40,000 yuan, and another 206 practitioners were fined between 500 and 8,000 yuan.

When [Mr. Liu Kangfu](#) of Anshun City, Guizhou Province, was released in May 2023 after serving a three-year term, he was devastated to find that he had been fired from his job and had no household registration book. He struggled to make ends meet but was still urged to pay the remaining 10,000 yuan of his 310,000-yuan court fine.

[Mr. Wang Liqun](#), a former glass shop owner, was handed down a 12-year prison sentence for filing a criminal complaint in 2015 against Jiang Zemin, the former head of the CCP who launched the persecution of Falun Gong. While he escaped the arrest back in 2015, he was arrested in 2022 after spending seven years on the run and given the longest term of all in 2023. He will be 73 by the time he finishes serving time.

In another case, it wasn't the fine that left the practitioner or their family in dire financial straits but a scam. After [Ms. Zhao Xiping](#) of Laizhou City, Shandong Province, was arrested on May 11, 2023, her husband hired a lawyer at the recommendation of a relative who worked in the local police department. The lawyer scammed him out of 300,000 yuan and never provided any legal help. Ms. Zhao was sentenced to three years with a 10,000-yuan fine on November 8, 2023.

**Figure 2. Prison Terms of 1,190 Sentencing Cases of Falun Gong Practitioners Reported in 2023**



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## 1.5 Practitioners of All Ages Sentenced

The 559 practitioners whose ages at the time of sentencing were known were between 22 and 89. Except for the 5 in their 20s whose longest prison term was 4 years, all other age groups, including 156 practitioners in their 70s and 42 in their 80s, were given terms of between 7 and 12 years.

**Ms. Liu Guibi**, 81, of Chongqing, was sentenced to one year with a 3,000 yuan fine during a retrial on August 25, 2023, when her original, nullified, six-month sentence was doubled by the judge. Her husband, who had been bedridden for years, was devastated by her sentencing and died four days later. Ms. Liu, who had been out on bail, was taken back into custody on December 5 after losing her appeal on November 7, 2023.

**Ms. Yang Yuzhen**, 87, from Qingdao City, Shandong Province, was sentenced to one year and fined 5,000 yuan on September 16, 2023. She was arrested at her daughter's home on July 28, 2022, after the police suspected her of distributing informational materials about Falun Gong. The court-appointed lawyer attempted to trick her into pleading guilty by promising a lighter

sentence, but she insisted that she didn't violate any law in practicing Falun Gong.

In addition to the elderly practitioners, more and more younger practitioners were also targeted for their faith. Many of them, in their 20s and 30s, were drawn to Falun Gong's spiritual refinement and health benefits, and they took up the practice despite the ongoing persecution. Because of their courageous efforts to raise awareness about the persecution, they have also been targeted, putting some of their promising careers in jeopardy.

**Mr. Qu Xing**, 34, of Chengdu City, Sichuan Province, had been interested in spiritual cultivation since his teens. He studied Buddhism and went to Tibet to learn Tantrism. He later went to Nepal and tried to study under a famous monk. The monk didn't specify whether he would take Mr. Qu as a disciple but kept him in the monastery for over a year. Mr. Qu lived in a bamboo hut and led a very simple life.

In 2018, he came across Falun Gong on the Internet and became a devout practitioner. He moved back to China, only to be arrested on June 8, 2021, after being reported for putting up Falun Gong posters while delivering food. He was sentenced to eight years in prison and fined 30,000 yuan on February 15, 2023.

Mr. Zhao Yubo, of Anshan City, Liaoning Province, began to practice Falun Gong in July 1997 when he was 14. He said that its profound teachings and universal principles of Truthfulness-Compassion-Forbearance deeply moved him. He went from being an introverted, passive, and rebellious person to one who was outgoing, warm, and ready to help. His grades also improved quickly and he was well-regarded by his classmates.



Mr. Zhao Yubo

Because Mr. Zhao persisted in practicing Falun Gong after the persecution started, he faced constant harassment and was forced to quit school. Yet he remained positive and optimistic and eventually became an interior designer by teaching himself. The authorities didn't give up going after him. He was arrested at home on September 21, 2022, and sentenced to three years following a hearing on March 28, 2023.

**Figure 3. Prison Terms of 559 Practitioners with Known Ages**

Age	# of practitioners	Prison Term (yrs)		Average Prison Term (yrs)
		Lowest Term	Highest Term	
20-29	5	1.5	4	3.63
30-39	14	1.5	8.5	4.11
40-49	32	1	9	3.77
50-59	136	0.83	10	3.54
60-69	174	0.83	12	3.38
70-79	156	0.5	9	3.1
80-89	42	0.5	7	2.54

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## 1.6 Sentences Across Ten Years, Across the Country, and from All Walks of Life

The newly reported 1,190 sentences include 384 that took place prior to 2023, including 1 in 2014, 4 in 2015, 13 in 2016, 19 in 2017, 24 in 2018, 26 in 2019, 26 in 2020, 58 in 2021, and 213 in 2022. Of the 755 sentences handed down in 2023, the number of cases per month ranged from 20 to 82, although that information is not known for 140 cases. For 58 cases reported in 2023, it isn't clear when they were sentenced. Due to strict information censorship, these cases can't always been reported in a timely manner, nor is the information readily available.

The 1,190 practitioners came from 28 provinces, municipalities, and autonomous regions. Shandong reported the most with 166, including 108 that took place in 2023. Liaoning, Jilin, and Heilongjiang reported 139 cases (81 on 2023), 123 cases (80 in 2023) and 119 (70 in 2023) cases respectively. Twenty regions had double-digit cases between 10 and 88, while the remaining four provinces reported between 1 and 7.

The practitioners came from all walks of life, including doctors, professors, bank managers, reporters, accountants, and lawyers.

**Ms. Wang Jian**, a 35-year-old assistant communications engineer for the Harbin Railway Bureau in Heilongjiang Province, was arrested on July 11, 2022, on her way to work. She was tried on March 6, 2023, and sentenced to two years with a 100,000-

yuan fine three days later. The higher court rejected her family's request to have an open hearing for her appeal and ruled to uphold her original verdict.

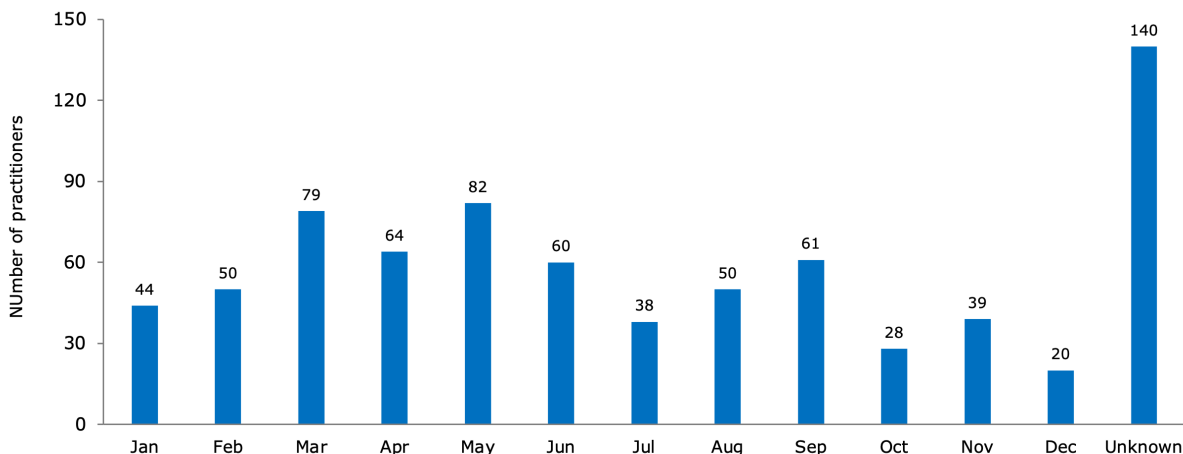
**Ms. Chen Ping**, a teacher at West China Normal University in Nanchong City, Sichuan Province, was arrested on July 26, 2020, after being reported by two middle school students for talking to them about Falun Gong. She appeared in court on April 21, 2022. Most of the evidence submitted by the police was fabricated, including forged witness signatures. There was a heavy police force stationed outside of the courthouse, claiming they were needed to prevent local practitioners from rallying. She was sentenced to two years on March 17, 2023.

After being imprisoned for 12 years, **Mr. Pang You**, a former city planning office director and real estate company manager around 60, was arrested at home on July 28, 2022, and sentenced to 15 months around late July 2023. He struggles with swollen and suppurated feet due to diabetes. It's not clear if he was given medical treatment while in custody.

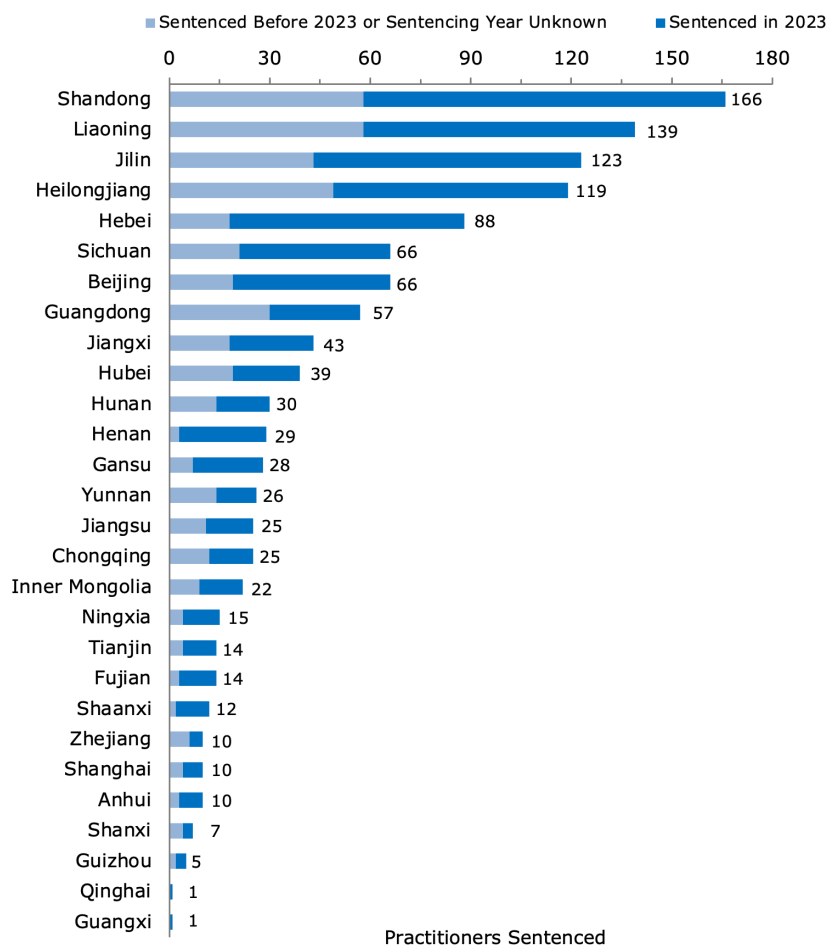


*Mr. Pang You with his wife and son*

**Figure 4. Monthly Distribution of Newly Reported Sentencing That Occurred in 2023**



**Figure 5. Geographic Distribution of 1,190 Sentencing Cases of Falun Gong Practitioners Reported in 2023**





## Part 2: Long-Lasting Damage To Sentenced Practitioners And Their Families

The wrongful sentences not only damaged the affected practitioners physically, psychologically, and financially, but also traumatized their loved ones, who became secondary victims of the relentless persecution.

### 2.1 Abuse Leads to Medical Conditions in Custody

Many practitioners developed serious symptoms due to the physical abuse and mental pressure while in custody. Even when their lives were in danger, the authorities still refused to release them, sentenced them to prison, and didn't allow their family members to visit them.

[Ms. Yu Hongying](#), 60, of Xichang City, Sichuan Province, was arrested on July 15, 2022, for writing to the local police chiefs, urging them not to persecute Falun Gong. The police spent five months tracking her down. They deemed her letter “anti-CCP” propaganda, because “Falun Gong” was mentioned in it. She developed extremely high blood pressure in January 2023 and was taken to the hospital. When she was discharged, her blood pressure remained very high. She also had a lacunar cerebral infarction and type II diabetes.

Despite Ms. Yu's condition, she was made to stand trial on June 1, 2023. The judge denied her lawyer's request to halt the hearing even when she looked very ill. She was sentenced to 3.5 years eleven days later.

[Ms. Han Liping](#), 73, of Chengde City, Hebei Province, was arrested at home on July 22, 2022. The detention center never informed her family of her deteriorating health, nor did the court notify them of her trial or five-year prison sentence handed down on January 19, 2023.

Before Ms. Han was admitted to Hebei Province Women's Prison on April 18, she had coughing fits and elevated blood pressure. She lost consciousness one night and was hospitalized for one week. A month after her prison admission, she was diagnosed with late-stage lung cancer, yet the authorities barred her family from visiting her and refused to grant her medical parole.

In the case of [Ms. Zhu Yanhua](#) of Mudanjiang City, Heilongjiang Province, although the judge gave her six months of house arrest due to her high blood pressure, after sentencing her to 4.5 years on April 25, 2023, he ordered her to be admitted to a local hospital against her will after just one month. He instructed the bailiffs to transfer her to the prison as soon as her blood pressure returned to a normal level.



## 2.2 Families Torn Apart

The persecution of Falun Gong doesn't only affect the practitioners themselves, but also their family members. Sometimes several family members are persecuted together. Young children are deprived of their parents' care. Elderly parents with serious ailments are no longer able to be cared for by their adult children.

A court in Shandong Province sentenced [Mr. Qin Songfa](#), 70, to 2.5 years in prison around late December 2023, after previously giving his wife, Ms. Xu Xiuzhen, and their daughter, Ms. Qin Shaohua, the same sentence. The family's ordeal from Ms. Qin's latest arrest on May 31, 2022. To seek justice for their daughter, Ms. Xu and Mr. Qin wrote more than 400 letters of complaint to different government agencies. In retaliation, they were arrested on November 7 and 8, 2023, respectively. Ms. Xu was sentenced to 2.5 years, followed by her husband's sentencing.

[Ms. Gao Yu](#) is a young mother of a four-year-old in Beijing. She was arrested on February 6, 2023, after being reported by a man for talking to him on bus about Falun Gong. Her husband, who was unable to care for the girl himself, had to turn to his mother, who is in her 60s and already the main caregiver for her husband with poor vision. Ms. Gao was sentenced to one year in prison on July 20, 2023.

The arrest of [Ms. Liu Aihua](#), 69, of Shaoyang City, Hunan Province, on July 7, 2022, was the eleventh time she has been arrest-

ed for practicing Falun Gong. It also came only two years after she finished serving a previous three-year term. The Liuyang City Court sentenced her to four years on March 10, 2023.

When Ms. Liu's son, Steven Wang, a principal dancer with Shen Yun Performing Arts, got married in 2017, he invited his mother to the U.S. to attend his wedding, only to be told that she'd been arrested before she could leave China. That arrest led to a three-year prison sentence. Now a father himself, Steven looks forward to the day when he can reunite with his mother and have a place he can call a complete home.

## 2.3 Family Members Implicated

In some cases, the practitioners' families were arrested or even sentenced themselves for seeking justice for them. Some were under so much pressure that they passed away.

The husband of [Ms. Yu Yanhua](#) put in much efforts seeking her release following her arrest on July 30, 2022. The man in Anda City, Heilongjiang Province, was arrested himself days later. He was tortured in the detention center. His health quickly deteriorated and he was then released under house arrest. At home, his health continued to worsen and he was diagnosed with numerous ailments, including conditions with his heart, kidneys, and blood. Despite this, he was sentenced to 4.5 years and taken back into custody. Ms. Yu, 64, who was released on bail at one point, was also taken back into custody to serve a 5-year term.



After serving five labor camp terms totaling ten years, [Ms. Lang Dongyue](#) from Beijing was arrested again on December 14, 2021, and sentenced to nine years in prison with a 15,000-yuan fine around July 2023. Despite their financial difficulties, her husband, Mr. Wang Lianyi, hired a lawyer for her. Due to the mental strain from the persecution, he collapsed on the street on April 24, 2022, when he noticed two police cars parked in front of the law firm he was about to visit. After he calmed down, he and a friend walked into the law firm. He suddenly dropped dead in his front yard the next day.

## 2.4 Family Business Affected

[Mr. Tian Shihong](#) was the founder of a tapestry factory in Weihai City, Shandong Province. He died at the age of 64 in November 2019 after suffering years of persecution. After his passing, his wife, Ms. Li Shuhong, and their daughter, Ms. Tian Tian, took over the business, with the former serving as the legal representative (every business in China is required to appoint a legal representative to act on behalf of the company) and the latter being the operations manager.

On July 20, 2022, over 200 police officers were dispatched to raid the factory. Many structures in the factory were vandalized. The police also put up banners slandering Falun Gong all over the factory. Every employee was interrogated by two officers. Some of the female workers cried in fear.

While the police allowed Ms. Tian to keep running the factory after her release, they stayed there for at least six days, during which time they questioned workers at will and severely disrupted the business' operation. Because accountant Ms. Liu Mingming's computer had been confiscated, Ms. Tian was unable to pay her workers (who also lived on the factory campus) or deposit money into their meal accounts. She had to record everyone's meal purchase in the factory cafeteria for them to reimburse later.

After one year of prosecution, Ms. Tian Lisha, who was Mr. Tian's sister and also worked at the factory, was sentenced to nine years. Ms. Li was sentenced to two years. The factory accountant Ms. Liu was sentenced to nine months. Six other factory workers were also tried together with the above three on August 24, 2023, but it's not clear whether they were sentenced.

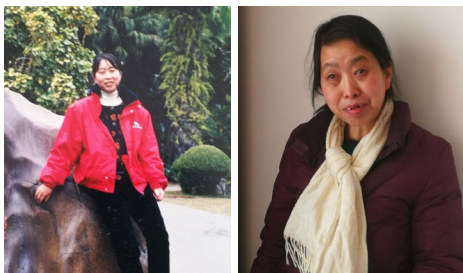
## Part 3: More Select Cases

### 3.1 Repeated Persecution

#### Blinded from Torture, Yunnan Woman Sentenced to Seven Years

[Ms. Yang Xiaoming](#), 54, of Kunming City, Yunnan Province, had an eye disease, constant fever, and rheumatoid arthritis when she was little. She only completed elementary school. After taking up Falun Gong in 1995, by reading the books and doing the exercises, she recovered her eyesight completely and could even read the small annotations in a dictionary.

Because she refused to give up her faith after the persecution started, she was forced to have an abortion, and her husband divorced her out of fear of the communist regime's retaliation. She was given two forced labor camp terms between 2001 and 2008 for a total of 5 years. Her eyes were injured from the beatings, and she went completely blind in 2012.



*Ms. Yang Xiaoming*

Ms. Yang was arrested again on May 28, 2022. The police attempted to deceive her into opening the door by claiming to be from property management to check if her

pipes were leaking. When Ms. Yang refused to open up, the police broke in and handcuffed her.

While forcing her to have a physical exam at the hospital, a doctor opened her shirt and pants to examine her. He glided a scanning device over her body up and down as the male police officers watched. She was humiliated.

Although Ms. Yang was denied admission due to her poor health and released on bail, the police still submitted her case to the procuratorate. She was taken to the court for a hearing on February 1, 2023. A judge went to her home on March 14, 2023, to deliver the verdict of a seven-year sentence with a 20,000-yuan fine.

#### Electrical Engineer Admitted to Prison to Serve Three Years for His Faith

After [Mr. Gao Hong](#) graduated from the China University of Petroleum with a major in automation in 1991, the Zibo City, Shandong Province, resident, landed a job at the Qilu Petrochemical Research Institute. In 1997, after witnessing the positive changes in his parents from practicing Falun Gong, he followed in their footsteps and became a practitioner, too. The practice gave him wisdom and he won several awards for technological innovation at work.

For upholding his faith and speaking up about the persecution, he was repeatedly



arrested and given two years of forced labor on August 26, 2008, after being forced to live away from home for nearly a decade. He was fired by his employer during his displacement.

In the Shandong Province No.2 Forced Labor Camp, Mr. Gao was deprived of sleep for seven days, beaten, and handcuffed behind his back. He protested by going on a hunger strike and refusing to do the forced labor. In retaliation, the guards forced him to stand for three days and sit on a small stool from 5:30 a.m. to 11 p.m. every day for 81 days. He was merely skin and bones and released on medical parole on October 3, 2009.



*Mr. Gao Hong was reduced to skin and bones after being tortured in the labor camp.*

The police arrested Mr. Gao again on August 29, 2022, despite the fact that he was the sole caregiver for his 85-year-old mother. The Zichuan District Court sentenced the 55-year-old man to three years on December 5, 2022, leaving his mother, who struggled with high blood pressure and a severe heart condition, to fend for herself.

## Having Lost His Wife to the Persecution of Falun Gong, Liaoning Man Gets Second Prison Term for His Shared Faith

[Mr. Ma Jiang](#) of Shenyang City, Liaoning Province, was admitted to the Shenyang City First Prison on August 1, 2023, to serve a four-year term.

Mr. Ma, a former employee of Dawn Aerospace Engine company, took up Falun Gong in 1996 at the recommendation of his father-in-law, Mr. Wu Yu. His wife Ms. Wu Shuyan, her brother Mr. Wu Shuming, her daughter Ms. Ma Hongyang and son-in-law Mr. Zhao Wei soon started practicing too.

Over the past 24 years of persecution, they were repeatedly targeted for upholding their faith. Ms. Wu died at 47 in 2013 after being tortured in prison, and her father passed away on May 19, 2015 after enduring years of persecution. Mr. Ma was previously given three years in prison in 2015, five months after his brother-in-law Mr. Wu was also sentenced to three years. Mr. Ma's daughter and son-in-law were both sentenced to one year and four months in 2022.



*Left: Mr. Ma's wife before the persecution. Right: Mr. Ma's wife after the persecution, suffering from severe liver ascites*

## 3.2 Practitioners from All Walks of Life Sentenced

### Senior Geological Engineer and Father of U.S. Resident Sentenced to Eight Years and Fined 100,000 Yuan

Targeted in a group arrest in Dongying City, Shandong Province, on April 23, 2021, [nine practitioners and a family member](#) were later sentenced to prison, for mailing letters to the public exposing the persecution. Their prison terms ranged from 1.5 years with 2 years' probation to 8 years. [Mr. Zhou Deyong](#), a senior geological engineer and father of a U.S. resident, was given the heaviest term, also with a 100,000-yuan fine.

During a [briefing](#) on “Religious Persecution of Falun Gong by the CCP (Chinese Communist Party)” held by the U.S. Congressional International Religious Freedom Caucus on May 23, 2023, Mr. Zhou’s son, Mr. Zhou You, recounted his father’s ordeal.

“My father is 62 years old. He has lost all of his teeth and is unable to eat meat, vegetables, or even rice. His diet is limited to soup every day,” said Mr. Zhou You. He added, “Please help my father and all Falun Gong practitioners who are being persecuted in China.”



*Congressional briefing on “Religious Persecution of Falun Gong by the CCP” on May 23, 2023*



*Mr. Zhou You, a software engineer from Florida, speaks about his father’s recent eight-year prison sentence by the CCP at a briefing on May 13, 2023.*



## Renowned Doctor of Chinese Medicine Sentenced to 5.5 Years

Dr. Li Jianxi, a renowned doctor in Xiamen City, Fujian Province, was sentenced to 5.5 years with a 50,000-yuan fine on November 23, 2023, for practicing Falun Gong.



Dr. Li Jianxi

Dr. Li, 54, was arrested at home at 8:30 a.m. on June 19, 2022, during a police sweep. His wife and son, as well as staff members of his clinic, were also taken away and briefly detained. His other residence in his hometown in Zhangping City, about 100 miles from Xiamen, was ransacked as well.

The Jimei District Procuratorate approved Dr. Li's arrest on August 10, 2022. To collect information against him, the police confiscated the medical records of his patients in the past eight years and called them about whether Dr. Li had given them Falun Gong materials.

The Jimei District Court scheduled a court date for November 24, 2023, but suddenly called Dr. Li's family on the evening of November 22 to say that the virtual hearing was rescheduled for the next morning. The

presiding judge, Tu Xuebin, simply announced at the hearing that Dr. Li was sentenced to 5.5 years with a 50,000-yuan fine. It was unclear whether there was a prior hearing for the prosecution and the defense to debate the case as required by law or whether the November 23 hearing was the only hearing held in Dr. Li's case.

Since he was a child, Mr. Li was interested in the universe and the mysteries of life. He read books about various religions, philosophy, and ancient magic, but he didn't find the answers until he read Falun Gong's teachings. The idea that the purpose of one's life is to be a good person and return to one's true, original self resonated with him.

Despite being a doctor himself, Dr. Li suffered from stomachaches and joint pain since he was a child. He couldn't eat raw or cold food, nor could he bear the discomfort of skipping or delaying a meal. After taking up Falun Gong, his symptoms disappeared and he easily quit his addiction to alcohol. Despite his intense work schedule, he always had energy, something he had never experienced before.

In his over 30 years of practicing Chinese medicine, he has seen over 100,000 patients. He specialized in treating patients who were in critical condition. He once treated a 750-gram premature baby with a severe lung condition and helped the baby to breathe on its own a month later. He was often invited to give talks at various seminars or conferences.

## **Jiangsu Businessman Given Second Prison Term for His Faith**

[Mr. Hu Yuanqin](#), a 69-year-old businessman in Nanjing City, Jiangsu Province, was sentenced to one year and four months around mid-October 2023. He was arrested on January 4, 2023, for distributing Falun Gong informational materials. Details of his indictment, trial, and sentencing aren't clear at the time of writing.

Mr. Hu used to be the head of the Nanjing City Cement Factory, a state-owned enterprise. Because of the dust and pollution, he developed asthma and vertigo. His symptoms got worse over time but disappeared not long after he took up Falun Gong in December 1996. He also quit drinking. He shared his miraculous recovery with his employees and some of them joined him in practicing Falun Gong.

Because of his stellar job performance, he was promoted to be the chair of the Board of Directors and the CEO of the Nanjing Shuangning Group (the parent company of the Nanjing City Cement Factory, the Nanjing City Plastic Factory, and the Nanjing City Industrial Park). At the time, the Nanjing Shuangning Group was deep in debt (nearly 10 million yuan, including more

than 6 million in owed wages and pension payments).

Whenever he went to inspect a subsidiary, he would be swarmed by workers and other creditors asking for money. They threatened to cut off his limbs if he didn't pay them back. He even sustained a head injury one time after someone hit him.

As a Falun Gong practitioner, Mr. Hu was able to put himself in others' shoes and remain calm. He reorganized the Group and managed to pay off all the debt.

After he turned the dying business around, the authorities decided to promote him to deputy director of the Nanjing City Finance Bureau. However, the communist regime launched the persecution of Falun Gong at that time. Under pressure, the higher-ups made the decision to remove him from all managerial positions. One official, however, fought for him and assigned him to be the manager of the Nanjing City Industrial Park. He turned the industrial park into a real estate company and distributed ownership shares to all the employees but not himself. His employees commented that only a Falun Gong practitioner could be so righteous and selfless.



### 3.3 Practitioners of All Ages Sentenced

#### 87-Year-Old Woman Sentenced a Third Time, Ordered to Re-Serve the Last 3 Years of Her Second Prison Term

Ms. Liao An'an, 87, in Baiyin City, Gansu Province, was sentenced to three years and nine months on September 5, 2023, for her faith in Falun Gong.

This was not the first time that Ms. Liao An'an had been targeted for her faith. She was sentenced to five years following her arrest on August 18, 2008, and given another five years following her arrest on September 19, 2014. Due to health reasons, she was allowed to serve the last three years of her second prison term outside of prison.

The Baiyin District Court, however, added the three years from Ms. Liao's second prison term to her latest one, ordering her to serve a total of six years and nine months. She filed an appeal against the wrongful conviction.

#### Twice Jailed for a Total of Eight Years, 74-Year-Old Legally Blind Woman Sentenced to One Year for Practicing Falun Gong

Ms. Miao Shuqing, 74, of Fushun City, Liaoning Province, was arrested on June 15, 2022, for distributing Falun Gong informational materials at a community fair.

After she was released on bail, she went into hiding to avoid being prosecuted. She returned home several months later, only to be arrested on August 11, 2023, when she went on a trip with her family to Dalian City, a metropolis about 280 miles to the south of Fushun City. She was admitted to the Fushun City Detention Center.

The Wanghua District Court held a hearing in the detention center on November 7, 2023. The prosecutor said that Ms. Miao and three other practitioners who went with her to distribute Falun Gong materials on June 15, 2022 each testified during the police interrogation that they agreed to meet at a certain place at the fair and also described the clothes they wore that day when they saw each other.

Ms. Miao refuted this and said that she never "confessed" to such a thing. She pointed out that the so-called confessions were undoubtedly fabricated by the police. She told how she was previously twice jailed for practicing Falun Gong and brutally tortured each time. During one torture session, the guards shocked her on the eyes with electric batons. She became completely blind in her left eye and had only 20/200 visual acuity in her right. Being legally blind, she couldn't make out the shape of a person right in front of her, much less the color of the clothing the person wore.

Ms. Miao's daughter also defended her constitutional right to freedom of belief and testified how Falun Gong restored her health and helped her become a better person. She said that her mother's distributing Falun Gong materials was out of a simple wish to help more people get to know Falun



Gong and possibly enjoy its health benefits like she did. Such an act caused no harm to any individual or society at large, and should never have been used as evidence to prosecute Ms. Miao.

Judge Gang Jia ignored Ms. Miao's and her daughter's request for her acquittal and proceeded to sentence her to one year with a 3,000-yuan fine around November 2023.

### **Grateful for Falun Gong for Improving Her Health, 38-Year-Old Sentenced to Nearly Seven Years**

[Ms. Yang Chunrong](#), 38, of Chongqing, suffered all kinds of ailments from head to toe in her 20s. She tried all kinds of treatments, but none had any effect. In August 2012, she learned about the persecution of Falun Gong and realized that she had been deceived by the communist regime into hating the ancient mind/body practice. She read Falun Gong books and was drawn to the profound teachings. She took up Falun Gong and was surprised to see her health quickly improve.

Ms. Yang and three other practitioners were arrested on April 22, 2021, while they were studying the Falun Gong teachings together. During her hearing at the Jiulongpo District Court on October 24, 2022, the prosecutor cited evidence fabricated by the police, accusing her of possessing over 10,000 copies of Falun Gong materials. The police-provided evidence also included audio recordings of her young child being forced to read slanderous lies about her. She was sentenced to six years and nine months around early April 2023.

### **College Graduate in His 20s Sentenced to 5.5 Years for Practicing Falun Gong**

The family of a Nanchang City, Jiangxi Province, man recently confirmed that he was sentenced to 5.5 years in September 2023 for his faith in Falun Gong.

[Mr. Wang Fuming](#), in his 20s, is a native of Ganzhou City in the same province. He attended a college in Nanchang and landed a job there two years ago after graduation. On August 3, 2022, he was arrested in his rental place. The police suspected him of distributing informational materials about the persecution of Falun Gong. His ID, cell-phone, driver's license, and an electric bike were confiscated.

The police first held Mr. Wang in a hotel and then put him under criminal detention at an unknown facility. When his parents, who don't practice Falun Gong, inquired about his case status, the police refused to give any information and even threatened them, telling them not to expose his persecution to Minghui.org, or he would face a heavier prison sentence.

Fearing retaliation, Mr. Wang's parents didn't do anything to seek justice for him. They couldn't afford to hire a lawyer for him, either. They never received any updates about his case over the past year and only recently found out about his prison sentence. No details of his indictment or court hearing were available.



## Traumatized By Her Mother's Wrongful Arrests Since Age 6, 30-Year-Old Woman Gets 4.5 Years

Ms. Zhang Xiwei, 30, of Xi'an City, Shaanxi Province, was taken to the Shaanxi Province Women's Prison on June 29, 2023, after her appeal of a 4.5-year prison term for practicing Falun Gong was denied.

Ms. Zhang's family traveled to the prison in Xi'an City on July 25 and August 25 but were denied visits with her both times. They were told they could not see her, "because she had not yet renounced Falun Gong." Her family, who know how brutally Falun Gong practitioners are tortured in Chinese prisons, is now very worried about her.

Ms. Zhang was arrested at home on July 21, 2021. When the police learned that Ms. Zhang's family had hired a lawyer for her, they went to her mother's home in Liquan County on August 18 and asked the older woman who hired the lawyer and who reported her daughter's case to Minghui.org. They threatened to arrest her if she did not cooperate. She refused to give any information and condemned the police for violating the law by threatening her.

The Yanta District Court tried Ms. Zhang via a video hearing on May 30, 2022. Citing insufficient evidence, the judge later returned the case to the prosecutor, who then managed to persuade the judge to try Ms. Zhang again. The judge held a second video hearing on August 16, and the prosecutor presented the same evidence as new evidence. The judge sentenced Ms. Zhang to 4.5 years with a 10,000-yuan fine on November 22, 2022.

When the persecution of Falun Gong started in 1999, Ms. Zhang was only six years old. She once described her experience:

"My mother was arrested by Liquan County police officers in 2000. She was later given an 18-month term in the Xi'an City Women's Forced Labor Camp. During that time, my paternal grandparents, who were in their 70s, had to take care of me and my two siblings, while still working the family's farmland. In addition to their physical exhaustion, they also constantly worried about my mother, which caused them tremendous mental distress.

"After my mother was released in 2002, I noticed several large bruises on her legs. I asked her what had happened, but she didn't tell me anything. I later learned that she was tortured in the labor camp. I also read on Minghui.org about the torture Falun Gong practitioners are subjected to while in custody, including beatings, electric shocks, force-feeding, and even organ harvesting.

"When I returned home from school one day in 2007, several people were attempting to arrest my mother again. Fearing that the police might hurt us, my aunt told me and my siblings to leave the house. The three of us ran to the fruit farm in front of the house. When we returned, our mother was gone. This was a blow to my paternal grandfather, who was in his 80s. He passed away a few days after my mother was released.

"When my 13-year-old younger brother and I were at home by ourselves one evening in 2008, someone knocked on the door. I

opened it and the person asked where my mother was. I said I didn't know. They told one person to stay at our home to watch us and the rest of them drove to my uncle's home to look for my mother.

"When they returned at around 10 at night, I ran to the car. The driver laughed at me and casually said, 'Your mother isn't in the car.' He might have thought my anxious look was funny, but he didn't know how much harm they caused our family each time they arrested my mother and what trauma it caused a 15-year-old me."

### **Liaoning Man Appeals Prison Sentence for Publishing Articles on Overseas Falun Gong Websites**

When [Mr. Gong Yubo](#), 45, returned home from working out of town on January 21, 2022, to spend the upcoming Chinese New Year holiday with his family, plainclothes police and village officials descended in a car with the license plate covered by a surgical mask and arrested him.

The Liaozhong District Procuratorate in Huludao City, Liaoning Province, indicted Mr. Gong on December 6, 2022. The prosecutor accused him of publishing 208 articles on the PureInsight website (a site for Falun Gong practitioners to share their cultivation experiences) and 3 articles on the Minghui website between 2002 and 2022 using various pen names including "Xiao Lian," "Shi Fangxing," "Lan Xin" and "Yu Bo." He was charged with "undermining law enforcement with a cult organization," a standard pretext used to criminalize Falun Gong.

The Liaozhong District Court announced on May 18, 2023 that Mr. Gong had been sentenced to four years with a 20,000-yuan fine. With him being the sole breadwinner, his wife struggles to provide for their college-age daughter and one-year-old son. Her bedridden father, who lives with them, also relies on her for care.