



Reported in 2023:

**6,514 Falun Gong Practitioners
Arrested or Harassed for Their Faith**



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Introduction

When 66-year-old [Ms. Zhao Ya](#)'s son bought a ticket for her to watch a basketball game at the 19th Asian Games in Hangzhou City, Zhejiang Province in late September 2023, the police from her hometown in Liquan County, Shaanxi Province traveled over 700 miles to her son's home and arrested her.

Ever since her son went to Hangzhou City for college in 2001 and later landed a job there after graduation, she had never gotten a chance to visit him during the holidays due to the persecution of her faith, Falun Gong. She and her husband had hoped to spend the Mid-Autumn Festival (September 29), a traditional holiday for family reunion, with her son's family – only to see their dream dashed.

Ms. Zhao is one of the 3,629 Falun Gong practitioners whose arrests were reported in 2023, a year which also recorded another 2,885 incidents of harassment. Ms. Zhao's ordeal provides a glimpse into the oppression and heartbreak of Falun Gong practitioners in the persecution of their faith since 1999. For remaining steadfast in Falun Gong, they face constant harassment, monitoring, detention and torture. Often, as a result of the persecution, practitioners are separated from their families, sometimes for decades.

The harassment is often intensified during periods of major political meetings, sports events or other major conferences, as the authorities tighten up the censorship to prevent the practitioners from raising awareness about the persecution.

Part 1: Overview Of Newly Reported Arrests and Harassment Cases

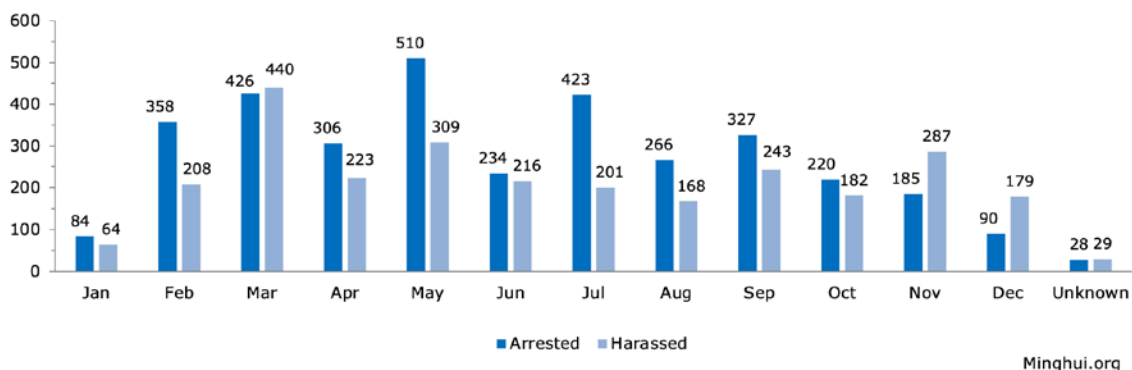
1.1 Arrests and Harassment Persist Throughout the Year, Especially Around Politically Sensitive Days

Of the 3,629 newly reported arrest cases, 4 took place in 2021, 168 in 2022, and 3,457 (95%) in 2023. The 2,885 newly reported harassment cases included 136 that happened in 2022 and 2,749 (95%) in 2023. Due to strict censorship in China, the perse-

cution cases can't always be reported in a timely manner, nor is all information readily available.

There were more combined cases of arrest and harassment that took place in the first half of 2023 (see Figure 1), with March registering the most cases at 866, followed by 819 cases in May. This is likely due to the regime's annual political meetings in March and the annual "World Falun Dafa Day" on May 13 (the anniversary of Falun Gong's introduction to the public).

Figure 1. Monthly Distribution of Arrest and Harassment Cases That Occurred in 2023





In Nongan County, Changchun City, Jilin Province, the local police harassed every known practitioner in the county and arrested more than ten practitioners in March 2023, during the “two sessions” – the annual meetings of China’s legislative body, the National People’s Congress (NPC), and its top political advisory body, the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC). When a Nongan practitioner went to Hainan Province, more than 2,000 miles away, for a business trip, three police officers followed him there, took his photo, and collected his saliva sample.

When Pan Jiqiang, the 51-year-old chief of the Sanhe City Police Department in Hebei Province, visited Yanjiao Town in Sanhe City, around May 10, 2023, he saw a banner reading “Celebrate World Falun Dafa Day on May 13.” He gave the order to arrest whomever hung the banner and swiftly prosecute the “offender.” The police station pored over surveillance videos and determined that Ms. Sui Lixian, a retired teacher around 72 years old, had hung up the banner. Ms. Sui was taken from her home by police on May 14, 2023. Her arrest warrant was approved ten days later and she is now facing prosecution.

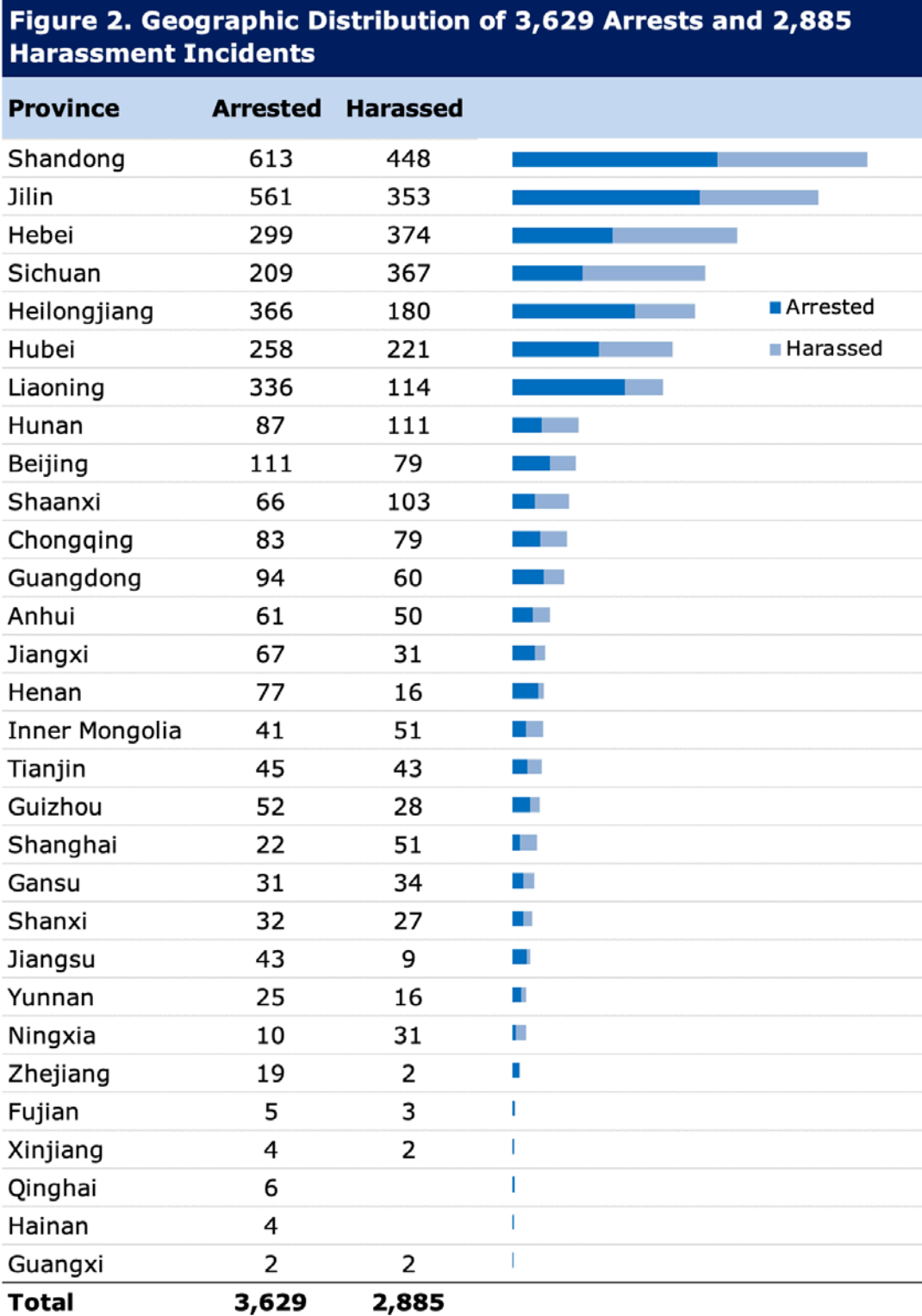
Figure 1 also shows two small peaks in July and September 2023, with combined cases of 624 and 570, respectively. The uptick of persecution cases in July might be a result of anniversary of the start of persecution on July 20 and the annual Beidaihe Meeting (also known as the “communist regime’s summer summit”) that was held in the Beidaihe District, Qinhuangdao City, Hebei Province, in early August. The September peak might be a result of the authorities’

“stability maintenance” efforts around the Mid-Autumn Festival (September 29), the 19th Asian Games (September 23 – October 8, 2023), the October 1 national holiday, and the “One Belt One Road” forum held in Beijing in mid-October.

Several Falun Gong practitioners in Daxing District in Beijing reported that the police ordered them not to go to Tiananmen Square or get close to the venue where the “One Belt One Road” forum was held. Several residential committee staffers brought rice, noodles and cooking oil to the practitioners and tried to take pictures of them with these items. They had intended to use the pictures to show how the authorities care about practitioners by gifting them those items. All of the practitioners refused to comply with this propaganda stunt.

1.2 Practitioners in 30 Provinces, Municipalities and Autonomous Regions Targeted

The newly reported 6,514 cases (including 3,629 arrests and 2,885 incidents of harassment) took place in 30 provinces and municipalities. Shandong (1,061), Jilin (914) and Hebei (673) Provinces reported the most combined cases of arrests and harassment. Sichuan, Heilongjiang, Hubei and Liaoning Provinces reported combined cases between 450 and 576. Six other regions also registered triple-digit cases, followed by twelve regions with double-digit cases from 21 to 98. The remaining five regions had single-digit cases, between 4 and 8.





In May 2023, the police in Guan County, Liaocheng City, Shandong Province dispatched a large number of police officers to harass local practitioners. Two officers grabbed a practitioner as soon as she opened the door and forcibly drew her blood sample. Another practitioner was stopped by the police on her way home after studying Falun Gong books with other practitioners. The police took the key from her motorcycle and attempted to draw her blood on the street. She shouted in protest and the police weren't successful. Several more practitioners also reported that the police attempted to collect their blood samples.

Also in Shandong Province, the authorities in Longkou City [dispatched more than 100 officers](#) to arrest local practitioners at around 5 a.m. on May 9, 2023. The officers were in plainclothes and drove their private cars to carry out the group arrests. They deceived the targeted practitioners into opening their doors by claiming to be street committee staffers or downstairs neighbors whose ceilings were leaking.

Another [group arrest of at least 13](#) Falun Gong practitioners took place in Zhucheng City, Shandong Province, on July 24, 2023. One of the practitioners was sentenced to 14 months in just one month.

1.3 1,227 Practitioners Older Than 60 Targeted

Among the newly reported 6,514 persecution cases, there were 1,227 practitioners who were 60 or older, including 402 practitioners in their 60s, 577 in their 70s, 230 in their 80s and 18 in their 90s.

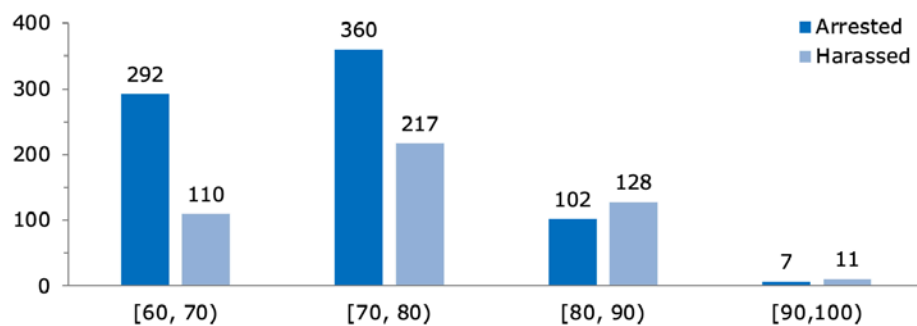
The police in Kunming City, Yunnan Province pried open [Ms. Gao Qiongxin's](#) door on May 9, 2023 and took away the 83-year-old wheelchair-bound woman in an ambulance. Neither Ms. Gao nor her family had called for any medical assistance. Her family suspected that the police intended to put Ms. Gao in jail to serve her six-year prison sentence given in April 2022. At the time of writing, her loved ones still haven't been told where she is being held.

[Ms. Miao Shuqing](#), a 74-year-old resident of Fushun City, Liaoning Province who is nearly blind, was seized by six officers on August 11, 2023, while returning from an out-of-town trip. Her family tried to stop her from being taken off the long-distance bus they were riding, but to no avail. Her latest arrest happened not long after she returned home after having been forced to live away from home in August 2022 to avoid the persecution.

[Ms. Xu Lai](#), 81, from Wuhan City, Hubei Province, was arrested at her home on September 7, 2023 and taken to the Etouwan Brainwashing Center. This is the second time she was taken to the same brainwashing center this year for practicing Falun Gong.

[Ms. Xing Yuqing](#), an 80-year-old resident of Beijing, has been detained since her arrest on October 1, 2023, after the police spotted her talking to people about Falun Gong. Her husband, who is blind and relies on her for care, is now in a dire situation with his wife in detention.

Figure 3. Elderly Falun Gong Practitioners Targeted for Their Faith Reported in 2023



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Part 2: Policy of Eradication

After Jiang Zemin, the former head of the Chinese communist regime, ordered the persecution of Falun Gong in 1999, he mobilized the entire country, including law enforcement, procuratorates, courts, detention facilities, schools, and businesses, to carry out his eradication policy of Falun Gong practitioners: “Destroy them physically, ruin their reputation, and bankrupt them.” Jiang set up the extralegal organization, the 610 Office, to work in tandem with the already-existing Political and Legal Affairs Committee (PLAC, also an extrajudicial agency) to implement his persecution policy. Both agencies were given the power to override the judicial system, and they resorted to excessive measures to ensure that the persecution penetrates all levels of government.

2.1 “Ruin Their Reputation”

Top-Down Persecution Policy

Minghui.org received a [manual](#) in April 2023 from the Shanghai 610 Office that describes how to brainwash Falun Gong practitioners based on their individual situations at different stages in the process of “transforming” them (forcing them to renounce their belief). Published sometime between 2000 and 2010, the manual was distributed to businesses and institutions to instruct on how to implement the persecution policy targeting Falun Gong.

The word “confidential” is printed on the book’s cover page. On the first page, the

“Instruction for Use” section begins: “This manual is considered confidential material and it is maintained by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) committee at the street/township level or higher. Strict confidentiality discipline will be followed to prevent leakage.”

Detailed instructions start with documentation of the personal information of the staff members on the “transforming” team, followed by detailed information on the practitioners to be “transformed,” including “personal character traits” as well as “family members and their attitudes toward Falun Gong.” It also lists previous brainwashing sessions they’d been forced to attend and other “punishment” they had received.

Further categories follow, such as “Transformation Plan,” “Progress Record,” “Control and Prevention,” “Quarterly Update,” “Annual Review,” “Follow-up Plan After Release,” “Follow-up Record After Release,” “Record of Repeated Situations,” and so on. Each category is broken down further into a situation statement, description, actions taken, and a plan for the next step.

The manual also provides comprehensive instructions on how to continue the persecution after the practitioners are released from prison or the brainwashing center.

Based on these descriptions, as long as a person is identified as a Falun Gong practitioner, he or she will be subject to continued monitoring and control by the authorities. This extends beyond their release after

detention. Even those who have been confirmed as “transformed” by the 610 Office are still subject to constant monitoring, revealing that the persecution is about comprehensive and constant control.

Furthermore, it appears from this manual that the intent of the suppression is not only to defame Falun Gong and incite public hatred against it but also aims to involve the general public in participating in this systematic crime.

Propaganda Campaign and Petition Drive

In mid-March 2023, Zhang Junyong, deputy secretary of the Party Committee, secretary of the Political and Legal Affairs Committee (PLAC), and president of the Municipal Party School in Suihua City, Heilongjiang Province, launched the initiative, “Implementing the Spirit of the 20th Party Congress and Cracking Down on Cult Organizations.” She ordered local communities to install more surveillance cameras, intensify internet surveillance, and arrange more plainclothes officers to patrol in communities, in attempts to arrest Falun Gong practitioners who talk to people about the persecution.

Following Zhang’s order, the Suihua City Education Bureau organized several seminars in the local elementary and middle schools, which claimed to “keep the students away from feudal superstition and prevent the students from being deceived by superstition.” The Beilin District No. 4 Middle School also recorded the speech of two eighth graders and published the video

online for all the students and their parents to watch. The school also encouraged the students and their parents to report anyone who talks to them about Falun Gong.

In Xiantao City, Hubei Province, some schools mobilized their students to participate in a petition drive organized by the “China Anti-Cult Website” in April 2023. The petition was full of content slandering Falun Gong. The petition link was also sent to the teachers and parents’ WeChat groups (WeChat is the dominant social media app in China).

The same petition drive was also rolled out in Baoding City, Hebei Province in late August 2023. Many local schools, companies, state-owned enterprises and even street committees and villages participated in it. Students, their parents, teachers, employees or villagers were required to submit screenshots of their signatures on the petition.

According to a Falun Gong practitioner who had inside information about the petition drive, as of October 31, 2023, 14.54 million people in Henan Province have signed the petition, followed by 13.62 million in Hebei and 4.21 million in Shandong. The persecution of Falun Gong is very severe in all three of these provinces compared to other regions in the country.

In Shandong Province, the Mengyin County 610 Office organized new brainwashing sessions in October 2023 and mobilized local police and village officials to take practitioners there for “further education.” Mr. Sheng Defu was working in his farm



field on October 24 when five police officers suddenly arrested him. He was held at the brainwashing center, dubbed “Care Center,” for seven days.

In early November 2023, the PLAC in Panjin City, Liaoning Province, gave a list of 48 Falun Gong practitioners to the Liaohe Oilfield. They said that all of the 48 practitioners worked at the Liaohe Oilfield and that the leadership had until late November to get the practitioners’ signatures on statements renouncing Falun Gong. Shortly after, big posters smearing Falun Gong appeared on the plazas near the Liaohe Oilfield Central Hospital.

In another propaganda campaign, the Harbin Normal University in Heilongjiang Province published a 33-minute video titled “Be Wary of the Invasion of Cults on University Campuses” on its website on November 30, 2023. The video was produced by the “100 Studio,” a student organization under the school’s Party committee propaganda department and supervised by several professors. The video repeated the lies that the communist regime made in the “[Tiananmen self-immolation hoax](#)” and put Falun Gong practitioners in the same league as murderers and real cult members.

Hunan Woman Defamed on TV After Being Denied Access to Her Pension for 24 Years

[Ms. Tang Qingying](#), a 75-year-old retiree of the Hecheng District Bureau of Statistics in Huaihua City, Hunan Province, has been denied access to her pension account since

October 1999. She filed a complaint with the Hecheng District Organization Department (the communist regime’s human resources management department) at some point in 2023 and requested that it investigate her employer and ensure she receive all future pension benefits as well as back pay from October 1999 to the present.

Her husband received a call on August 4, 2023 saying that someone would come to their home to discuss her complaint. Six people showed up the next day. Two were from a Huaihua City agency and the other four were from the Hecheng District Organization Department. They told Ms. Tang that they received her complaint, investigated the matter, and arrived at a decision, which was to deny her request. They said the reason was her three prison terms and her insistence on still practicing Falun Gong. One of them used her cell phone and video-taped Ms. Tang without her consent.

Ms. Tang later saw a news segment on local TV showing the video the woman recorded of her. The narrator said that Ms. Tang fell ill and became incapacitated as a result of her practicing Falun Gong but she refused to seek medical care.

2.2 “Destroy Them Physically”

Surveillance

In the persecution, monitoring the practitioners’ daily lives has been a top priority of the CCP. It’s done either by having personnel staked outside the practitioners’ homes or following them on foot or in car when they go out, or by monitoring them through

surveillance cameras, tapping into their cellphones and landlines, or tracking their online activities.

Everyday Life Monitored

In February 2023, the Zhaoyuan City PLAC and 610 Office in Shandong Province [hired unemployed rogues](#) to monitor local Falun Gong practitioners and their efforts to raise awareness of the persecution of their faith. Any practitioner who talked to others at local markets would be approached by these operatives and asked about the content of the conversation.

When these rogues identified Falun Gong practitioners, some of them pretended to be interested in hearing about how Falun Gong is being persecuted. As soon as the practitioners shared some informational materials with them, they immediately took pictures of the practitioners, put on the red vests with the words “Anti-Cult Association,” and searched the practitioners’ bags. If the practitioners refused to cooperate, they held them and called the police. Several practitioners have been arrested this way in the past few months.

Some of the rogues were ordered to lie in wait outside practitioners’ homes to monitor and harass them and their family members; some went to the workplaces of the practitioners’ children to threaten them or their managers; some called practitioners’ family members to harass them, rendering their families unable to live a peaceful life.

In Mianyang City, Sichuan Province, Ms Li Shuqin, 80, and her daughter Ms. Su Nan

were often followed by people when they went out. A searchlight was aimed towards their window and remained on throughout the night. Another local resident, Mr. Li Hongzhu, had his home ransacked twice in 2023, just because he was an acquaintance of the mother and daughter.

[Mr. Bai Ruisong](#), a 68-year-old Dehui City, Jilin Province, resident, reported that he was followed by the local anti-gang office, the traffic police brigade, the Qinghua Community and the Yuanbao Community. They had people follow him on foot or in cars. They also instructed building custodians and landscape workers in his apartment complex to monitor him and report his activities.

Mr. Bai was an engineer at the local automotive hinges factory, but he lost his job due to the persecution. Afterwards, he made a living by delivering bread. One day when he was riding his tricycle to deliver bread to a local supermarket, he noticed a car following him. The car stopped and a man got out when Mr. Bai arrived at the supermarket. He learned later that the man questioned the supermarket owner that day as to what Mr. Bai did at his market and what they talked about.

Mr. Bai later bought a car to deliver bread. Officers from the local police station and the traffic police brigade followed him many times. They took pictures of his car and alleged that the vehicle exceeded the weight limit with the bread on board. They eventually used that as an excuse to confiscate his driver’s license and never returned it. They lied and said they lost it, but they did not allow him to get a replacement license.



Surveillance Cameras, Peephole and Fingerprint Locks

Ms. Zhou Fengqin, a Daqing City, Heilongjiang Province resident in her 60s, was harassed by the local grid manager and five others on November 22, 2023. They verified her personal information and asked for her phone number. (China's grid-style social management system involves dividing each county into smaller zones, or grids, and tasking the grid managers with monitoring citizens and reporting suspicious activities to local governments on a regular basis.)

When Ms. Zhou went out later that day, she saw a surveillance camera flashing a red light on the heating pipe facing her apartment. She yanked the camera down and took out the two memory cards in it. It was still flashing red. She then tossed it into a trash can as she didn't want the camera to continue recording her. About two hours later, Ms. Zhou's son called her and said the police called him and ordered him to have her return the camera.

In addition to the surveillance cameras, the peepholes and fingerprint locks manufactured in recent years are also equipped with cameras. When the practitioners distributed Falun Gong materials in residential areas, their pictures might be taken by the peepholes and fingerprint locks, which would then send the photos to the homeowners and the police. During several arrests, the police described clearly what clothes the practitioners wore when they distributed the materials.

Surveillance of Social Media Activities

Between July and August 2023 alone, seven practitioners in seven different provinces were arrested for posting information about Falun Gong on social media.

Mr. Cheng Qian Yue, a farmer in Cao County, Shandong Province, was arrested on July 3, 2023 after the police discovered that he had posted messages reading "Falun Dafa is good and Truthfulness-Compassion-Forgiveness is good" on Kwai (a TikTok-type social media platform for short videos and trends).

Mr. Yao Xianmin, 53, a native of Siping City, Jilin Province, has been doing odd jobs in Changchun (the provincial capital) in recent years. He had an account on TikTok, where he used an alias to post Falun Gong information in various forms (videos, poems, etc.) from the perspective of a non-Falun Gong practitioner. It was said he had about 30,000 followers. The Internet police discovered his true identity and arrested him around July 10, 2023. He is currently held at the Zhenlai County Detention Center in Jilin Province. His family and lawyer have been denied visits with him.

Mr. Tang Zhifei, 41, is a software engineer in Hefei City, Anhui Province. He was arrested at home on August 3, 2023 for posting Falun Gong informational videos on an overseas social media platform with more than 6,000 views. The police threatened to get him sentenced to at least three years.

Mr. Mo Shanyi, a native of Pengxi County, Sichuan Province, was working in Wenzhou City, Zhejiang Province, when the local police approached him on July 20, 2023. They ordered him to relinquish his cell phone and then returned it after a quick examination. The police arrested Mr. Mo on August 7, claiming that his WeChat account had information about Falun Gong. He was also accused of posting information about Falun Gong on TikTok. Mr. Mo was transferred back to Pengxi and held at the Pengxi County Detention Center. He was released on September 14.

Not Allowed to Leave China

[Ms. Li Aiping](#), 51, of Jingshan City, Hubei Province, applied for a passport in mid-May 2023, but her local police department refused to process her application. She was later told that she was on the blacklist of Falun Gong practitioners barred from traveling abroad. She was thus unable to seek better medical treatment overseas for her 25-year-old son, who became disabled from bone tuberculosis (a condition in which the tuberculosis spread beyond the lungs and affects the joints).

Ms. Cai Qiaoling, of Kaifeng City, Henan Province, went to the immigration office in Tongxu County on January 5, 2023, to apply for a passport. She learned that the Shunhe District Police Department had banned her from traveling abroad until January 26. When she tried to get her passport on January 29 at a local office, she was told that she still had to consult the immigration office. On February 2, the immigration office told her that she was banned from leaving

the country until August 1, 2023, with no reason given. On August 2, the ban was extended indefinitely.

Ms. Tong Jing, a 57-year-old Fushun City, Liaoning Province, resident, was arrested on August 9, 2023, when she went to the Fushun City Police Station to submit her passport application. As her husband passed away when their son was 8 years old, Ms. Tong raised the boy by herself. He later went abroad to study. Ms. Tong applied for a passport to attend his graduation ceremony, only to be arrested. She was held in custody for 14 days and released on August 23.

In-Person Harassment

[Ms. Yu Shuzhen](#), a Changle County, Shandong Province, resident, was harassed three times between June and September 2023. In June 2023, a village official and two police officers went to her home. She wasn't there, so they went to the home of a friend of hers. They said they'd noticed the friend had stayed late at Ms. Yu's home several times recently and they demanded to know whether she was practicing Falun Gong with Ms. Yu. When the friend said Ms. Yu had never told her about Falun Gong, the police left.

The village official and police returned on July 11. They said that if Ms. Yu promised not to practice Falun Gong anymore, they would remove her from their list. When Ms. Yu didn't respond, the official warned her, "If you are still on the list, we can arrest you at any time and we will find you even if you try to hide." She still said nothing.



One of the police officers asked the village official, “Have you called her son?” “Yes, I did, but no one answered. I left a message on his WeChat account, but haven’t heard back.” The officer said, “If her son stands with her, we will arrest him, too.”

Ms. Yu returned home from running an errand on September 30 to see the village official standing outside his door (the official lives across the street). Shortly after, the official showed up at her door with a woman he said was from the township government and she was there to look at Ms. Yu’s home. Ms. Yu said little, and the official did most of the talking, still trying to persuade her to renounce Falun Gong.

In Shanghai, [Ms. Li Baoying](#), a resident of Yangjing residential area, Pudong New District, moved to her mother’s home in Lujiazui, Shanghai on September 12, 2023, after the elderly woman passed away.

Two staffers from the residential committee came to collect Ms. Li’s information on September 15. Ms. Li wasn’t home and her husband, who doesn’t practice Falun Gong, gave them his phone number. They also asked whether they were staying there for a short term or long term.

Hours later, a police officer arrived with three residential committee staffers. Ms. Li said she was planning to split her time between the two places. The police ordered her to list her mother’s place for rent and move back to her own home.

Wu Ruishen of the residential committee came to find Ms. Li again on September 18. She didn’t allow him to enter her home but

talked to him at the door. Wu threatened that she must move back to her own place, or they would place her under 24/7 surveillance.

When Ms. Li was accompanying her husband to a dental appointment on October 1, he received a call from the police. After he revealed his location, two officers arrived in less than five minutes. They checked their IDs, took their photos, and searched her husband’s bag.

On November 29, Wu came to harass Ms. Li again with a police officer and a street committee staffer. When Ms. Li demanded to see the police ID, he flashed it in front of her. He wouldn’t tell her his name, but let her record his police badge number (012329). He asked her, “You said you would live in both places, have you gone back to your residence in Yangjing recently?” Ms. Li responded, “It’s my freedom to decide where to stay. You have no right to interfere with that.” Before they left, the officers threatened to check on her every month.

Outright Arrests

On many occasions, the police simply arrest targeted practitioners without long-term surveillance or harassment. Many practitioners were arrested while out and about or raising awareness of the persecution of Falun Gong. Below are a few such “outright arrest” cases.

[Mr. Cheng Panfeng](#), in his 40s, has been working at the Songyuan Middle School in Zhongshan City, Guangdong Province since

he graduated from college in 2002. While he was working on April 27, 2023, a school administrator called him to the office. He went there, only to be arrested and taken to the local police station.

His family went to the police station in the evening several times to inquire about his case, but the police refused to provide any information, with the excuse that his case was confidential. The police also denied the family's request to visit or call him.

Several plainclothes officers and residential committee staff members harassed his family at home on May 2, warning them not to seek information about Mr. Cheng's case. Despite the family's strong demand, only one officer showed his ID.

Having served 7.5 years in prison for his faith in Falun Gong, [Mr. Hao Jingming](#), 58, a former director of the Baishiyi Air Force Meteorological Observatory in Chongqing, was arrested again on July 3, 2023 while attending a gathering of Falun Gong practitioners.

The police raided Mr. Hao's residence that he shared with his mother. According to a witness, more than ten police cruisers were parked outside of his home. Mr. Hao's mother, who was in her 70s and suffered a comminuted fracture not long ago, called her daughter, who had left not long after delivering some food to them. Her daughter rushed back and questioned the police as to why they were arresting her brother. The police insisted that they had to do it.

According to an insider, the police had started to monitor Mr. Hao in November 2022. They staked out another practitioner's home for three weeks in order to catch him.

Mr. Hao started a hunger strike to demand his unconditional release. Despite his weak physical condition, the police still kept him handcuffed and shackled. He vomited blood when the detention center guards tried to force-feed him. Mr. Hao was indicted on December 18, 2023 and is now facing trial.

[Mr. Cao Yang](#), a Xinmin City, Liaoning Province, resident around 46, was arrested on July 26, 2023. More than twenty other local Falun Gong practitioners were also arrested at the same time. Multiple police stations across the city were mobilized to carry out the group arrest. He is now facing trial after being indicted around December 2023.

Mr. Cao is not the only person in his family who has been targeted for practicing Falun Gong. His wife, Ms. Hui Liqi, and his parents, Mr. Cao Guangfu and Ms. Zhao Min, have all been arrested at one point or another during the past 24 years of persecution. Mr. Cao has previously served two prison terms totaling 15 years.

[Ms. An Shunlian](#), a 76-year-old resident of Kunming City, Yunnan Province, was arrested outside a local hospital on August 10, 2023, after being reported by a young man with leg problems for telling him about the health benefits of Falun Gong. The police soon arrived and arrested Ms. An. She urged them to stop participating in the



persecution of Falun Gong. They refused to listen and cursed at her instead.

After the local detention center declined to admit Ms. An given her advanced age, the police released her the next day and placed her under house arrest. They also demanded her 86-year-old husband, who practices Falun Gong as well, to report to them along with her on the following Monday.

In Detention

After arresting Falun Gong practitioners, the police often keep their families in the dark about their situation and secretly submit their cases to the procuratorate, in an attempt to prevent the families from taking action to seek justice for their loved ones. Some practitioners also face torture and interrogation when they refuse to answer the police's questions. Some have developed medical conditions due to physical abuse and mental distress sustained in custody. Some practitioners have started hunger strikes to protest the persecution, only to be punitively force-fed by the authorities.

Arbitrary Arrest and Detention

[Ms. Yuan Jingxiu](#), a 54-year-old electrical design engineer from Liaoyang City, Liaoning Province, has been detained incommunicado for more than six months, after she was arrested at work on June 26, 2023 for practicing Falun Gong.

According to Ms. Yuan's family, they received a call from her after her arrest. She described being held in a dark room, but

she had no idea where it was. Her family have not heard from her since then.

When [Mr. Liu Hongshu](#) was released on September 26, 2023 after serving three years for practicing Falun Gong, he was devastated to learn that his father had passed away while he was jailed. The elderly man had gone to the police department to seek his son's release, but was refused. He was so distraught that he took a fall in the courtyard of the police department. He passed away not long after, without seeing his son one last time.

Saddened by his father's death, Mr. Liu, a 56-year-old resident of Qishan County, Shaanxi Province, filed complaints against the police department, the procuratorate, and court for his wrongful arrest, indictment, and sentencing. It's unclear when exactly he submitted his complaints to each agency, but he has not been heard from or seen since around that time. His family suspects he was likely arrested again for filing the complaints.

Deaths in Detention

Among the practitioners who were arrested in 2023, two died six days following their arrests.

[Ms. Hu Yongxiu](#), a 64-year-old Wuhan City, Hubei Province, resident, died six days after being arrested on March 30, 2023, for talking to people about Falun Gong outside of a hospital.

[Ms. Liang Lixin](#), of Hinggan League, Inner Mongolia, also died six days after she was

arrested in March 2023 while visiting her daughter in Changchun City, Jilin Province. She died in the Jiutai Detention Center when the police were in the process of building a case against her.

Other persecution deaths reported in 2023 can be found in the related report, [“Reported in 2023: 209 Falun Gong Practitioners Die in the Persecution of Their Faith.”](#)

Tortured in Custody

Often during arrests, practitioners face excessive violence by the police. Once in custody, they may be victims of torture as the police attempt to force them to renounce Falun Gong or provide information about what they have done to raise awareness about the persecution or their interactions with other practitioners.

[Ms. Han Yuzhen](#) had been living in Shenyang City, Liaoning Province in the past few years to help care for her grandson. In her spare time, she went out to talk to people and raise awareness about the persecution of Falun Gong. While talking to a young woman on January 29, 2023, the woman secretly recorded her and reported her to the police. The police arrested Ms. Han moments later outside a supermarket and took her to the police station.

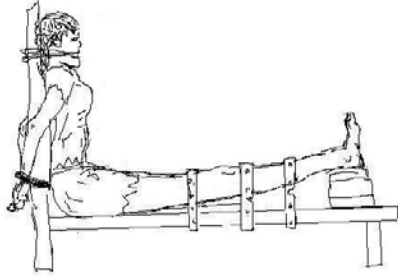
Police chief Ma sprayed spicy water into Ms. Han's eyes, face, and on her head. She felt her scalp and face burn and she couldn't open her eyes. Ma also handcuffed her. When taking her to the hospital for a

physical examination, Ma stepped on her head, neck and back in the police car. Due to high blood pressure and a rapid heart beat, she was denied admission by the local lockup.

Before the police forced the lockup to take Ms. Han on January 31, she was sprayed with the spicy water four times. Her blood pressure reached a dangerously high level. The lockup forcibly took Ms. Han's photo and fingerprints on February 1. She couldn't turn her body while sleeping, due to the enormous pain in her neck and back. She also needed help getting up.

Ms. Han had excessive bleeding from her nose on February 2. She felt nauseous and dizzy and her blood pressure continued to increase. When Ma went there to check on her situation, he slapped her on the back of her head. He also threatened her after taking her to the hospital, “I will torture you to death and bury you here.”

[Ms. Zhang Jue](#), 26 and of Nanjing City, Jiangsu Province, was arrested on February 20, 2023, after being reported for talking to people about Falun Gong on the street. The police tied her up on a tiger bench, beamed a very bright light into her eyes, and interrogated her for the entire night without allowing her to sleep. They took her to the hospital the next day for a physical examination and obtained a blood sample from her against her will. Three officers took Ms. Zhang back to where she was arrested and took photos of her to be used as evidence. She was released on February 27.



Torture illustration: Tiger bench

Ms. Yu Mei, of Zhanjiang City, Guangdong Province, had her finger slit and she was sexually abused after she was arrested for exposing the persecution of Falun Gong.



Ms. Yu Mei

Ms. Yu, 56, and another Falun Gong practitioner, Ms. Wu Shaochuan, were seized on May 14, 2023 after a college student reported them for talking to her about the persecution. They were searched by the police. Ms. Yu struggled when the police tried to photograph her and collect her fingerprints. Several large, muscular officers then held her down and slit one of her fingers with a sharp blade. They then smeared her blood on their interrogation records.

The police took Ms. Yu and Ms. Wu to the hospital the next day around 6 p.m. for physical examinations. Ms. Yu refused to have her blood pressure measured and blood drawn. Two officers held her shoulders tight, and a third officer pulled her arm so the nurse could draw her blood.

Next, she was given an electrocardiogram. The police carried her to the exam table and ripped open her shirt and skirt for the male doctors to examine her against her will. After that, two officers forcibly took her to have an X-ray.

Ms. Yu and Ms. Wu were taken straight to the Zhanjiang City Lockup after the physical examinations. A guard at the lockup ordered Ms. Yu to squat upon arrival. She refused and two strong men kicked the backs of her knees, forcing her to kneel down. She couldn't breathe and struggled with all her might. When the guard raised his hand to punch her, she yelled, "The guard is beating people!" Since many inmates were watching, the guard gave up his attempt to strike her.

Several guards dragged Ms. Yu to a locker room and ordered her to change into the inmate's uniform. She refused, and two guards immediately stripped her to her underwear. They then cuffed her hands behind her back. A female guard pulled Ms. Yu's underwear loose and told the male guards to look inside her underwear.

Physical Well-Being in Jeopardy

Ms. Kong Jiuhong, a former textile factory employee, has been on a hunger strike since she was arrested on October 24, 2023. Because her husband and child live in a different city, they didn't find out about her arrest until several days later when her husband returned to their home in Anlu City, Hubei Province. Their front door had been pried open, the garage searched, and Ms. Kong's computer, printer, and Falun Gong

books confiscated. Her husband looked for her everywhere and finally found her at a brainwashing center.

Ms. Kong's husband confirmed that she'd started a hunger strike on the day of her arrest to protest the persecution. He demanded her immediate release, but was refused by the Anlu City Police Department.

In addition to Ms. Kong, another practitioner from Anlu, [Ms. Yang Furong](#), 57, is also experiencing illness symptoms while in custody. Ms. Yang was arrested on November 15 and taken to the Changsong Brainwashing Center. Due to the intimidation and intensive brainwashing to pressure her to renounce Falun Gong, she began to experience high blood pressure and numbness in her hands and feet. The authorities secretly transferred her to a hospital on November 18. When her family found out about her whereabouts and went to the hospital to visit her, a female officer took photos of her children.

2.3 “Bankrupt Them Financially”

When [Mr. Liu Kangfu](#), an Anshun City, Guizhou Province resident, was released in May 2023 from serving a three-year prison term for practicing Falun Gong, he not only was fired from his job, but his household registration had been suspended and the local police attempted to transfer it to the district where he was arrested. Without a household registration, he was unable to apply for a low-income subsidy or find a

new job. He struggled to make ends meet but was still pressured to pay the remaining 10,000 yuan of his 310,000-yuan court fine.

Similar to Mr. Liu, many other Falun Gong practitioners face financial persecution for upholding their faith. Some were terminated by their employers with no valid reason, some were unable to find a job after their IDs or household registration were confiscated, and elderly practitioners have had their pension suspended.

Arrested for Seeking Redress for Financial Persecution

[Ms. Xiong Xiulian](#), 70, is a retired teacher at the Baota Elementary School in Huanggang City, Hubei Province. Between July 2000 and May 2003, she was detained three times and had 35 months of her salary withheld. In addition to the financial persecution, she was also tortured while in custody, including being whipped by metal chains, kicked and beaten, and force-fed while being handcuffed and shackled by eight detention center guards. When Ms. Xiong retired in 2008, her pension benefits were based on a pay grade one notch lower than her actual salary level, as punishment for her not renouncing Falun Gong.

Because she wrote numerous letters to various government agencies seeking reimbursement of her suspended pay and unlawful cut in her pension, Ms. Xiong was arrested on December 14, 2023 while grocery shopping. The police threatened to sentence her to prison.



Hubei Woman's Subsidy Cut Off in Retaliation for Her Efforts to Reinstate Her Pension Suspended Since 2018

Ms. Qian Youyun, a 58-year-old resident of Wuhan City, Hubei Province, had her monthly subsidy stopped on October 21, 2023, as she sought to reinstate her pension that has been suspended since April 2018.

Ms. Qian's ordeal stemmed from her three prison terms for her faith in Falun Gong. She was sentenced to three years in 2000 and brutally tortured in prison. She took early retirement in August 2014 at the age of 49 and was arrested four months later and sentenced to four years in prison. While she was serving her second prison term, her local Social Security Office issued a notice in April 2018 ordering her to pay back the pension benefits issued to her between 2000 and 2003 (during her first prison term) and between December 2014 and April 2018 (the majority of her second prison term). She didn't have the money to pay and the social security office suspended her pension to pay back her past "pension debt."

When Ms. Qian finished her second prison term in December 2018, she tried to have her pension reinstated. But before her efforts bore fruit, she was arrested again in April 2019 and sentenced to two years in prison. After she was released in April 2021, Ms. Qian resumed her efforts to reinstate her pension. The social security office agreed to issue her a 1,000-yuan monthly

subsidy after she appealed to various government agencies. Since they still refused to reinstate her pension, she filed a lawsuit against the social security office with the local court.

The court, however, worked to frame Ms. Qian instead of upholding justice for her. A few court workers alleged that Ms. Qian had mailed them Falun Gong informational materials and reported her to the Jiangxia District 610 Office and PLAC. The two agencies then directed the police to arrest her on September 14, 2023. They gave her 15 days of administrative detention at a local lockup.

On September 26, 2023, the police took Ms. Qian from the lockup to attend her court hearing. Judge Song Yaojing ruled to dismiss the case because Ms. Qian "had voluntarily withdrawn her case against the social security office," which couldn't be further from the truth.

Ms. Qian proceeded to file an appeal with the Wuhan City Intermediate Court. She also mailed an administrative reconsideration request to the Jiangxia District Judicial Bureau, requesting the agency to investigate the social security office's unlawful decision to suspend her pension. By law, no government agency should forfeit any retiree's retirement benefits, which are lawfully earned assets.

Peng Peng of the Jiangxia District Political and Legal Affairs Committee summoned Ms. Qian to his office on October 21, 2023. He defamed Falun Gong and ordered her to sign some paperwork to consent to the

social security office's decision to suspend her pension. She refused to sign, only to see the social security office stop her monthly subsidy of 1,000 yuan starting that day.

Ms. Qian's husband only has 2,000 yuan in monthly pension income. They are struggling to make ends meet.

Former Bank Employee Wrongfully Terminated and Not Allowed to Apply for Retirement Benefits

Mr. Tian Haitao, a Jiamusi City, Heilongjiang Province resident, used to work as an IT technician at Fujin City Agricultural Bank. Because he refused to renounce Falun Gong, he hasn't been allowed to report to work, nor issued any pay, since 2000. No formal termination notice was ever issued. When he wrote to his then-manager seeking reinstatement of his job, the then-bank president Liu Zhimin said to him, "There is no way for me to arrange work for you. Feel free to file a complaint against me wherever you like."

When Mr. Tian reached retirement age in May 2023, he contacted the bank again to submit his retirement application. But the bank refused to accept it, and Zhang Ruifeng, the current bank president, said to him, "You were already fired in 2000 because you were absent from work. You can file a complaint against us at the disciplinary committee."

Rideshare Driver Loses His Job for Talking to Passenger about Falun Gong

Mr. Gao Xiang, 54, was a driver for DiDi Chuxing Company in Beijing. Because he was reported for talking to a passenger about Falun Gong, he was detained for ten days and fired in September 2022. He filed several appeals with the local government and the court. Instead of upholding justice, the authorities sent police to harass him.

At 6:40 a.m. on June 20, 2023, the police knocked on Mr. Gao's door, claiming that he hit someone and the victim was outside waiting to talk to him. As Mr. Gao hadn't had any accident that day, he refused to open the door and the police left shortly after.

That evening, Mr. Gao received several calls from the police, asking whether he worked for DiDi and other details about his job. Without thinking too much, Mr. Gao answered all the questions. He was deceived into reporting to the police station on July 18, 2023, only to be arrested and taken to the detention center the next day. While he was released soon after, the police harassed him a few more times in the next several months. He is now facing prosecution after the police submitted his case to the procuratorate.