

URGENT ACTION

DOZENS OF LAWYERS TARGETED IN CRACKDOWN

At least 24 human rights lawyers and activists have been detained or are missing in China in an unprecedented nationwide crackdown. Many more have been questioned by police and at least three law firms have also been searched.

In the early hours of 9 July, human rights lawyer **Wang Yu** went missing after sending a text message to friends saying that her internet and electricity had been cut off and people were trying to break into her home. Many more reports then emerged of lawyers across the country being targeted, including in Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou. Among those missing are prominent human rights lawyers **Zhou Shifeng, Sui Muqing** and **Li Heping**.

An article published on 12 July in *The People's Daily*, an official newspaper of the Chinese Communist Party, said that the Ministry of Public Security had launched an operation to destroy a "major criminal gang" that was using the Fengrui Law firm in Beijing to draw attention to "sensitive cases". The article also claimed to expose the "severe harm" that a group of "rights defence" lawyers had brought to society.

Many of those detained were part of a group of over 100 lawyers and rights activists who signed a public statement on 9 July condemning Wang Yu's disappearance. Several of those who have been brought in for questioning by police have said that the authorities particularly focused on the statement and wanted to know whether they were involved.

Please write immediately in Chinese, English or your own language:

- Demanding the authorities immediately confirm the whereabouts and legal status of all the lawyers currently missing, including Wang Yu, Zhou Shifeng, Li Heping and Sui Muqing;
- Calling on them to ensure that if detained, they all have regular, unrestricted access to their lawyers and family and are protected from torture and other ill-treatment.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 24 AUGUST 2015 TO:

Minister of Public Security
Guo Shengkun
Ministry of Public Security
No.14, Donchang'anjie,
Dongchengqu, Beijing 100741
People's Republic of China
Tel: +86 10 66262114 (Chinese
speakers only)
Email: gabzfwz@mps.gov.cn
Salutation: Your Excellency

The President
Xi Jinping
The State Council General Office
2 Fuyoujie
Xichengqu
Beijingshi 100017
People's Republic of China
Salutation: Your Excellency

And copies to:

President
Wang Junfeng
All China Lawyers Association
5/F., Qinglan Plaza
No. 24, Dongsishitiao,
Dongchengqu, Beijing 100007
People's Republic of China
Tel: +86 10 64060213 (Chinese
speakers only)
Fax: +86 10 84020216

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the first update of UA 157/15 Further information:

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa17/2071/2015/en/>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

At around 3am on 9 July, Wang Yu, a human rights lawyer with the Fengrui Law firm in Beijing, sent a text message to friends saying that her internet and electricity had been cut off. At 4:17am she sent another message saying that there were people trying to break into her home. Later that morning, friends were unable to reach her and she was not at home when a group of activists went to check on her. Wang Yu's husband Bao Longjun is also missing. Their 16-year-old son Bao Zhuoxuan was handed over to his aunt by police on 10 July. Wang Yu has taken on many important human rights cases that the government has deemed "sensitive" in recent years, including: the defence of Cao Shunli, the Jiansanjiang case, the defence of prominent Uighur scholar Ilham Tohti, the Fan Mugen forced eviction case.

At around 7am on 10 July, lawyer Zhou Shifeng, director of the Fengrui Law Firm, was witnessed being taken away from his hotel room in Beijing with a black hood over his head by three unidentified people. The law firm's financial director Wang Fang has not been heard from since he left his home to go to the office the same morning.

The sister of Li Shuyun, another lawyer at the firm, reported that at 11am on 10 July approximately ten plain-clothes police officers took her away from her home. One of the officers said that she was being taken away in relation to the investigation of a criminal case.

Name: Wang Yu (f), Zhou Shifeng (m), Sui Muqing (m), Li Heping (m), Bao Longjun (m), Bao Zhuoxuan (m), Wang Fang (f), Li Shuyun (f)
Gender m/f: Both

Further information on UA: 157/15 Index: ASA 17/2076/2015 Issue Date: 13 July 2015