



**Reported in 2023:**

# **209 Falun Gong Practitioners Die in the Persecution of Their Faith**

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# Introduction

Mr. Wang Haiqian, a former middle school teacher in Dazhu County, Sichuan Province, was diagnosed with colon cancer in January 2023, while serving seven and a half years for his faith in Falun Gong, an ancient spiritual and meditation discipline. The prison authorities notified his family to apply for medical parole for him, but they intentionally delayed the approval process and didn't release him until around September 2023 when his cancer had metastasized. He died one month later. He was 60 years old.

Mr. Wang's case is one of the [209 deaths](#) of Falun Gong practitioners newly reported in 2023, bringing the total documented death toll to [over 5,000](#) since the Chinese Communist Party began the persecution of Falun Gong in 1999. The actual death toll is believed to be much higher given the extreme censorship in China.

*A selection of Falun Gong practitioners whose deaths were reported in 2023:*



# Part 1: Overview of Newly Reported Death Cases

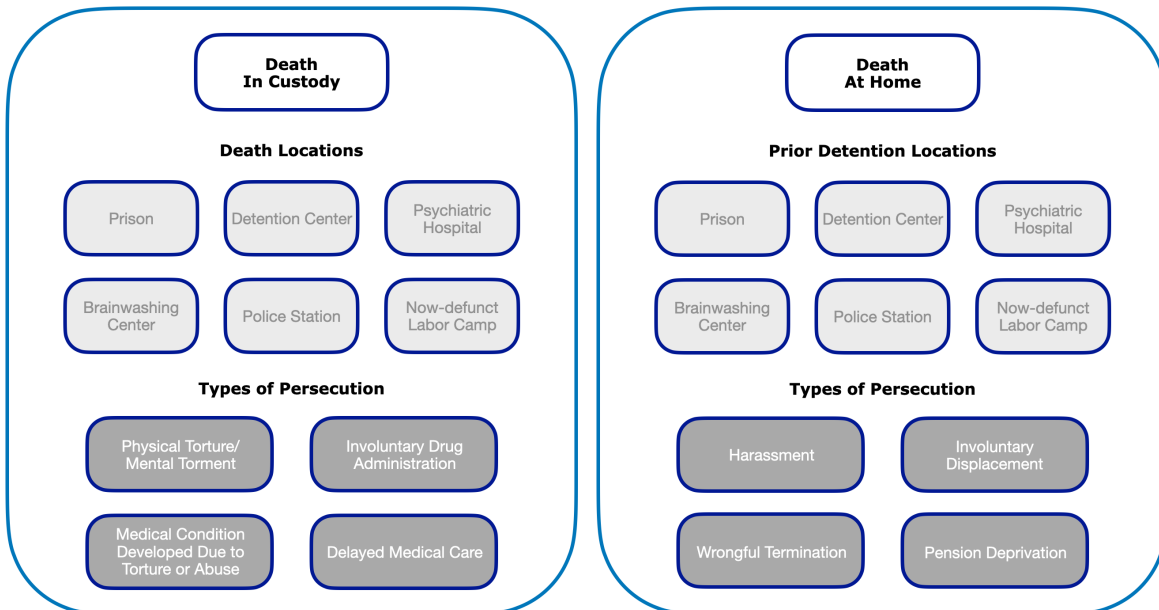
The deceased practitioners came from all walks of life, including doctors, teachers, factory workers, librarians and engineers. At least 18 of them, aged between 30 and 86, died while still in custody, including 3 deaths in detention centers and 15 deaths in various prisons. Previous years' summary reports also included death cases that took place in police stations, psychiatric hospitals, brainwashing centers, and the now-defunct labor camps.

The in-custody deaths were often preceded by brutal physical torture and mental torment (brought out by intensive brain-

washing aimed at forcing practitioners to renounce their faith), involuntary drug administration, medical conditions developed in custody, or delayed medical care (such as in the case of the aforementioned Mr. Wang).

The remaining deaths occurred either after the practitioners were released from detention or after they endured years of non-arrest persecution (such as harassment by authorities, involuntary displacement, pressure to renounce Falun Gong, wrongful termination, pension deprivation/suspension, or loss of loved ones to the persecution).

**Figure 1. Death Locations and Types of Persecution**





## 1.1 18 Die in Custody

Below we present a selection of practitioners who died after suffering brutal persecution in detention centers and prisons.

### 30-Year-Old Beaten to Death

The youngest practitioner, [Mr. Pang Xun](#), a 30-year-old radio show host, was beaten to death while serving a five-year term in a prison in Sichuan Province in December 2022. According to an insider, Mr. Pang's body was covered with bruises from the beating, as well as marks from electric shocks and being tied up tightly with ropes. He had also become incontinent due to the torture.

The prison denied having tortured Mr. Pang, but claimed that he died of hyperthyroidism, even when he was perfectly healthy and had no pre-existing conditions when he was arrested.

### Deaths from Medical Conditions Developed in Prison

Several elderly practitioners serving time for their faith were denied medical parole despite their severe medical conditions, which eventually led to their passing.

[Ms. An Fuzi](#), an 82-year-old retired college professor, passed away in May 2023 while jailed for a three-year term. A few months before Ms. An's passing, the prison notified her family that she developed pleural effusion and asked them to cooperate with the authorities in her medical treatment. Her

son and daughter, both of whom worked in South Korea at the time, asked to have virtual meetings or phone calls with her but their requests were denied. Citing the pandemic as an excuse, the prison didn't allow her other family members in China to visit her in person either.

[Ms. Fei Shuqin](#), 77, passed away in Heilongjiang Province Women's Prison on February 16, 2023, while serving a 13-year term. She developed uterine fibroids, high blood pressure, and a heart condition shortly after her imprisonment, yet the prison repeatedly denied her family's application to release her on medical parole.

[Mr. Wang Zizhou](#), a 74-year-old resident of Sheqi County, Henan Province, developed severe medical conditions in the Xinmi City Prison, but the authorities didn't take him to the hospital until 10 minutes after he died on October 14, 2023.

### Other Deaths in Custody

Two of the 18 practitioners who died in custody lost their lives six days after they were arrested.

[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.

The oldest practitioner who died in custody was 86-year-old [Mr. Li Peigao](#) from Kunming City, Yunnan Province. He died on January 4, 2023, days before he was to finish serving a four-year term for practicing Falun Gong. According to inmates who were released before him, Mr. Li was in good health in the prison and the timing of his death was shocking. Prison officials claimed he died of illness but didn't provide any further information to his family.

It was unclear what type of persecution Ms. Hu, Ms. Liang, and Mr. Li were subjected to before their passing.

## 1.2 Deaths at Home

In some cases, the authorities released the practitioners when they were on the verge of death in order to shirk responsibility, and the practitioners passed away shortly after their release.

Ma Chengxiang (gender unknown), a resident of Qiqihar City, Heilongjiang Province, was arrested on June 29, 2023 and released three days later. Ma became seriously ill upon release and died two weeks later.

[Ms. Zong Ming](#), of Wuhan City, Hubei Province, was emaciated and had difficulty talking when she was released after eight months of detention at a local brain-washing center. Her family took her to the hospital on the first day of 2023, but the doctor refused to treat her. She died in the hospital hours later, six days after she was taken back home.

[Ms. Li Guibin](#), a Qinhuangdao City, Hebei Province resident, was sentenced to four

years at the age of 76. In mid-April 2023, two years after she was taken to the Hebei Province Women's Prison, her son was informed by the prison that she was dying. He rushed to the prison and took her to the hospital. She died shortly after on April 16, at the age of 80. According to someone who saw her body, she was merely skin and bones.

Ms. Li Ailin, of Hulunbeir City, Inner Mongolia, was arrested in April 2023 after being reported for distributing informational materials about Falun Gong. Due to interrogation at the police station and the subsequent home-ransacking, she began to experience tightness in her chest and shortness of breath. Fearing that she might die in custody, the police ordered her son to take her home. She passed away a month later on May 10. She was 66 years old.

[Ms. Hu Hongmei](#), a 75-year-old woman in Jinzhai County, Anhui Province, died on March 26, 2023, merely months after she was released from an eight-month involuntary hospitalization in a psychiatric ward. In the hospital, Ms. Hu was never given enough food, and she was forced to take three pills of an unknown drug three times a day, every day. When she refused to take the drugs, the nurses grabbed her neck and slapped her in the face. Even after she was released, the authorities still placed her on residential surveillance and constantly ordered her to renounce Falun Gong. While still suffering from the complications of involuntary drug administration, she struggled to cope with the relentless pressure and passed away.

One example of death from harassment was [Ms. Luo Ying](#), a resident of Xian-



ning City, Hubei Province. She suffered a relapse of her old illnesses after being harassed at home on March 3, 2023 by the local authorities, who attempted to make her renounce her faith in Falun Gong. She never recovered and died on May 1, at the age of 70.

Some other practitioners passed away in poverty after their pensions were suspended. Mr. Li Dianxing, a resident of Huaihua City, Hunan Province, was constantly harassed by the local authorities. An employee from Yuanling County Human Resources and Social Security Office went to his home on April 3, 2023 and demanded he return a portion of the pension he received. The person claimed that because Mr. Li wasn't entitled to any retirement benefits while serving a previous prison term for his faith, he was thus required to return the funds he received during that time. Mr. Li was so angry and upset that he suffered a hemorrhagic stroke. He died later that day. He was 84 years old.

### 1.3 Family Tragedies

The persecution of Falun Gong practitioners not only caused harm to themselves, but also brought irreparable damage to their families. Some young children were orphaned when both of their parents were persecuted to death, some loving couples lost their spouses, and some elderly parents lost their adult children.

Having lost her mother, [a six-year-old girl Lily](#) (alias) in Qiqihar City, Heilongjiang Province, became an orphan when her father also died. Lily's suffering started even before she was born. Not knowing she

was pregnant, her mother, Ms. Zhu Xiumin, held a five-month-long hunger strike to protest her arbitrary detention and torture for practicing Falun Gong. It was a miracle that her pregnancy remained viable throughout her ordeals, and Lily was born on December 8, 2017. Only six days after her birth, Lily's father, Mr. Wang Yudong, was sentenced to three years. Ms. Zhu struggled to care for Lily by herself while dodging police harassment. The physical and mental trauma eventually led to her death in July 2022. Mr. Wang developed a stroke in prison and never recovered after being released in March 2020. He died in his sleep on April 9, 2023.

The passing of [Ms. Xiang Huaixiang](#), a 73-year-old resident of Chenzhou City, Hunan Province, in April 2023, was preceded by the deaths of her daughter and husband. Her only daughter, Ms. Chen Lijuan, a college student around 20, was arrested in 2000 while doing the Falun Gong exercises at Tiananmen Square in Beijing. She became mentally disordered due to torture in custody. Despite the medical treatment, her condition worsened and she died in November 2004. Following Ms. Xiang's last arrest on July 19, 2010, her husband, Mr. Chen Zhiqiang, worked tirelessly demanding her release, only to be intimidated by the authorities. Due to the mental distress, he developed liver cancer and died at home by himself. His body was discovered only after it had begun to decompose and his neighbors were alerted by the strong odor.

When [Mr. Gao Zhencai](#) was released on January 2, 2023, after serving a 3.5-year term for his faith in Falun Gong, he was emaciated, nearly blind, and incapacitated. His wife, Ms. Xu Suqin, was not home



to greet him, as she had passed away a month earlier due to the mental distress of the persecution. Mr. Gao died in less than two months on February 26. He was 71 years old.

**Ms. Liu Xinying** was arrested one month after her husband, who became a high paraplegic in 2001 after being tortured in a labor camp for practicing Falun Gong, died on February 19, 2014, at the age of 45. She was later sentenced to 5.5 years and faced continued harassment from police after she was released in March 2020. She died on April 22, 2023, at the age of 54. Even one month before her passing, the police called her and demanded to talk to her.

**Ms. Xi Xiulin** of Pingding County, Shanxi Province, was sentenced to a ten-month prison term in January 2021 for her faith in Falun Gong. She faced constant ha-

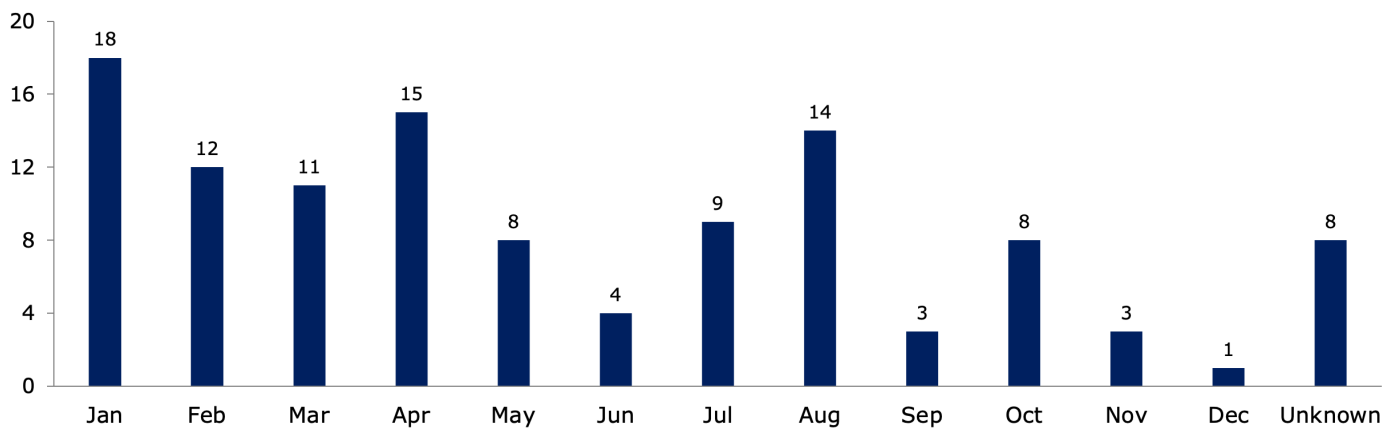
arrassment from the authorities after she was released in November 2021. She lived in fear and died in June 2023. Her daughter, Ms. Liu Yanming, was implicated after her prior arrest in 2003. Ms. Liu was so traumatized that she developed a mental disorder. She has been unable to work since the second half of 2004.

### 1.4 Case Breakdown by Year of Occurrence

Among the 209 newly confirmed death cases, 88 took place between 2002 and 2022, 114 cases happened in 2023, and the timing of 7 cases was unknown.

For the 88 cases that occurred before 2023, one each occurred in 2002, 2003, 2004, 2007, and 2012, and two each occurred in 2013, 2014, and 2016. The

**Figure 2. Monthly Distribution of Newly Reported Deaths That Occurred in 2023**





year 2017 had 5 cases, followed by 6 cases in 2018, 5 cases in 2019, 7 cases in 2020, 5 cases in 2021, and 49 cases in 2022.

For the 114 cases in 2023, the average monthly deaths in the first half of the year was 11 and the monthly average in the second half of the year dropped to 6.

Due to strict information censorship, the persecution cases can't always been reported in a timely manner, nor is the information readily available. Given available information from the cases, the death cases that were reported in 2023 and happened before 2021 had an average of 84-month delay in reporting. The deaths cases that took place in 2022 had an average of 5.6-month delay when they were reported in 2023. For the cases that happened in 2023, 62 cases (27.2%) were reported in the same month or within a month of death, and the remaining cases had an average delay of reporting of 3.3 months.

### 1.5 Location-Year-Gender Distribution

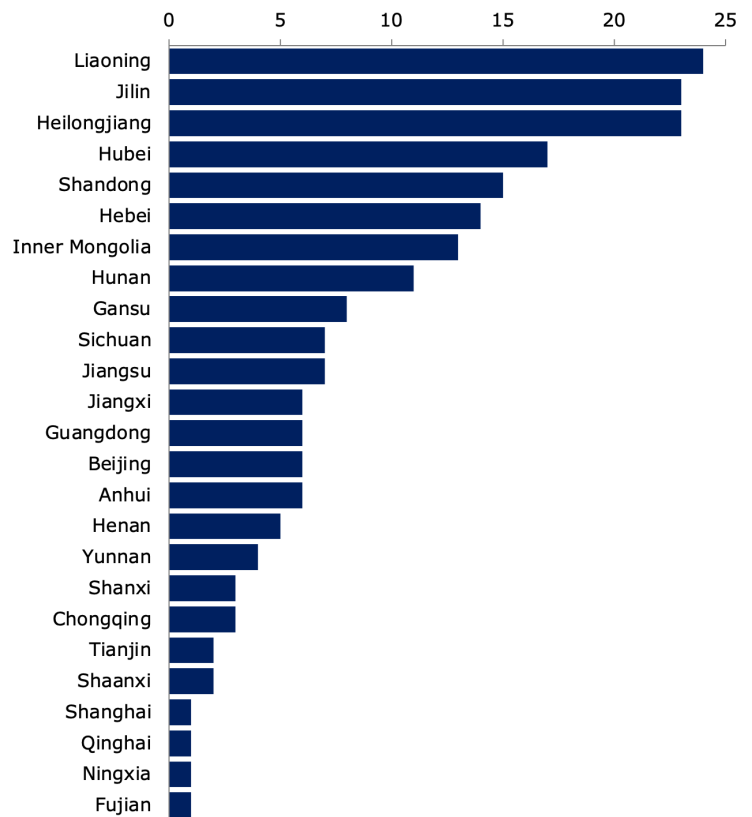
The 209 newly-confirmed deceased practitioners (132 female, 77 male, and 2 whose gender is unknown) came from 25 provinces and municipalities, with cases in each region ranging from 1 to 24. Liaoning reported the most death cases of 24, including 12 cases that occurred in 2023 and 12 cases in earlier years. Jilin and Heilongjiang each registered 23 cases, including 14 and 10 cases that happened in 2023, respectively.

The 14 cases from 2023 in Jilin were also the highest among all regions in terms of cases that were reported in the same year as occurrence.

Five other regions had double-digit reported cases between 11 and 17, and the remaining 17 regions had single-digit cases between 1 and 8 (see Figure 3).

Figure 4 also shows the gender distribution of the newly reported deaths across provinces.

**Figure 3. Geographic Distribution of 209 Newly Reported Deaths in 2023**



**Figure 4. Location-Year-Gender Distribution of 209 Newly Reported Deaths in 2023**

Region	Deaths by Year		Deaths by Gender			Total
	Deaths Before 2023 (Including Years Unknown)	Deaths in 2023	Male	Female	Unknown	
Liaoning	12	12	9	15		24
Jilin	9	14	8	15		23
Heilongjiang	13	10	8	14	1	23
Hubei	5	12	3	14		17
Shandong	7	8	7	8		15
Hebei	5	9	8	6		14
Inner Mongolia	5	8	4	9		13
Hunan	4	7	4	7		11
Gansu	8		4	4		8
Sichuan	1	6	4	3		7
Jiangsu	3	4	2	4	1	7
Jiangxi	5	1	1	5		6
Guangdong	4	2	1	5		6
Beijing	4	2	4	2		6
Anhui	1	5	2	4		6
Henan	1	4	4	1		5
Yunnan	1	3	1	3		4
Shanxi	2	1		3		3
Chongqing	2	1	2	1		3
Tianjin		2		2		2
Shaanxi		2		2		2
Shanghai	1			1		1
Qinghai	1		1			1
Ningxia		1		1		1
Fujian	1			1		1
<b>Total</b>	95	114	77	130	2	209

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## 1.6 175 Deceased Practitioners with Known Ages

Out of the 209 newly reported cases, 175 practitioners' ages at the time of their passing were known. They were between 23 and 93 years of age, including 134 who were 60 or older. Sixty-six of the 175 practitioners

were male, including 32 who died before 2023 and 34 who died in 2023. The remaining 109 practitioners were female, among which 42 died before 2023 and 63 in 2023.

**Figure 5. Distribution of the 175 Newly Reported Deaths with Known Age**

Age\Death Toll	# of Practitioners Who Died before 2023		# of Practitioners Who Died in 2023		Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female	
20-29	1				1
30-39	1		1		2
40-49		1		2	3
50-59	7	10	7	11	35
60-69	12	12	6	17	47
70-79	9	15	16	25	65
80-89	2	3	4	10	19
90+		1		2	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>175</b>

### Deaths That Took Place Prior to 2023

Among the 175 practitioners with known ages, 74 died before 2023 (including 32 male and 42 female). The youngest practitioner was 23-year-old [Mr. Jin Luyi](#) and the oldest was 92-year-old [Ms. Yao Chunlan](#), whose death in August 2022 was four months prior to the persecution death of her son, 60-year-old Mr. Li Huixiang.

During the 2018 arrest of [Mr. Chen Zaishan](#), a Shandong resident, the police threatened him, “It’s fine for us to beat Falun Gong practitioners to death.” While Mr. Chen was released hours later, the mental agony from continued police harassment still haunted him. He was also dealt a hard blow when his wife, who became blind and unable to walk due to the persecution, passed away in 2021. He was found dead at home in the winter of 2022. He was in his 80s.

Two practitioners died after enduring years of harassment and involuntary drug administration, including [Mr. Xu Ji’an](#), a 77-year-old resident of Nanchang City, Jiangxi Province, and [Ms. Song Xiangzhen](#), a resident of Shenyang City, Liaoning Province. Ms.

Song became incapacitated and lost her memory after she was injected with a toxic substance following her arrest in 2002. She passed away in July 2022 after twenty years of suffering. She was 73 years old.

### Deaths That Occurred in 2023

Among the 175 practitioners with known ages, 101 of them died in 2023 (including 34 male and 67 female). The youngest was 31-year-old [Mr. Jiang Yong](#), of Changchun City, Jilin Province, who died on January 23, 2023, while serving an 8.5-year term in Gongzhuling Prison. Even though he was in critical condition from staging a prolonged hunger strike to protest the persecution, the authorities refused to release him on medical parole, citing his refusal to renounce his faith.

The oldest practitioner who died in 2023 was 93-year-old Ms. Gao Suodi from Wuhan City, Hubei Province. She passed away on an unknown date due to repeated police harassment and home raids. Even the day before her passing, several police officers had gone to her home to harass her.

## Part 2: More Select Cases

### 2.1 Deaths in Custody

While in custody, Falun Gong practitioners who refused to renounce their faith faced brutal physical torture and intensive brainwashing designed to transform them. Many were held in an isolated environment, watched by the inmates around the clock, deprived of all communication with their families, and not allowed to talk to other incarcerated Falun Gong practitioners. The physical injury and enormous mental pressure were often fatal.

Given the eradication policy from Jiang Zemin, the former head of the Chinese Communist Party who ordered the persecution in 1999, “Defame their [Falun Gong practitioners] reputation, bankrupt them financially, and destroy them physically,” most prisons and detention center were given “death quotas,” when the guards wouldn’t be held accountable if they tortured Falun Gong practitioners to death, but would receive rewards instead when they successfully forced the practitioners to give up Falun Gong. Inmates were also given incentives including term reductions and other privileges for their active participation in torturing the practitioners.

#### **Case 1: 74-Year-Old Man Given No Medical Attention Until Passing Away in Prison**

While serving 3.5 years in the Xinmi City Prison, [Mr. Wang Zizhou](#), a once-healthy

man, was abused to the point of becoming severely ill. The prison authorities didn’t render him any medical care, until ten minutes after his passing on October 14, 2023. He was 74 years old.



*Mr. Wang Zizhou*

The prison authorities declared that Mr. Wang, of Sheqi County, Henan Province, died of natural causes and they refused to provide his family with a copy of his autopsy report or surveillance videos on the grounds that the information was confidential.

Mr. Wang was arrested on June 8, 2021. He was admitted to Ward Nine of the Xinmi City Prison around late December 2022, shortly after he’d been sentenced to three and a half years. The prison guards subjected him to intensive brainwashing aimed at forcing him to renounce Falun Gong. They also forced him to do hard labor without pay. The relentless abuse took a toll on his health and he became severely ill in September 2023.



After his passing, Mr. Wang's family was allowed to take a quick look at the surveillance videos even though they were barred from getting a copy of the videos.

They saw from the videos that Mr. Wang lay in bed most of the time during the last three days of his life. He was seen pressing his abdomen with both hands from time to time and appeared to be in extreme pain. He needed help to undress before sleep. When he yelled for help to use the restroom, sometimes he got no help at all and had to lie down again. When he did manage to go to the restroom on his own at times, he was seen to be walking unsteadily and looking extremely uncomfortable upon returning to his cell.

Mr. Wang's family was heartbroken to see the final hours of his life. From 5 a.m. to 10:06 a.m. on October 14, 2023, he appeared extremely weak, and it took him a long time to put on his clothes. He had to sit down during the morning roll call and needed help to get up. When his cellmates had breakfast, he had no appetite and lay in bed. Two people helped him use the restroom once.

Despite his condition, the guards did not bother to check in on him, much less get medical care for him. They even ordered him to write a request to take sick leave from work (he was forced to do hard labor without pay). Once a teacher himself, Mr. Wang struggled to write the request because he was just too weak. His hands were shaking, yet the guards and the cellmates blamed him for being too slow in writing the request.

A few minutes before his passing, Mr. Wang was seen changing his position frequently

and in extreme pain. Yet no cellmates or guards paid him any attention.

Mr. Wang stopped breathing and moving at 10:06 a.m. Ten minutes later, someone finally noticed that he was motionless, and kicked him a few times. He did not move. Only then did the prison take his body to a hospital for "resuscitation." They then notified his family. By the time his loved ones rushed there, his body had been placed in the hospital morgue.

## **Case 2: Family Suspects Foul Play in 72-Year-Old Man's Sudden Death in Jidong Prison**

[Mr. Wang Jian](#), a resident of Zunhua City, Hebei Province, was arrested at home on July 6, 2019 and later sentenced to seven years in prison with a 5,000-yuan fine. He was still in good health when he had a physical exam on March 2, 2023. He also appeared to be fine and in good spirits when his family visited him on March 19. However, the family received a surprise phone call from the prison on April 3 with the news of his death. He was 72 years old.

Mr. Wang had large areas of deep bruises around his ears and on his back, as well as some bruises on the back of his right hand. There was a circular mark on his chest and some scratches on his back. When the coroner turned his body over, fluid came out of his left ear.

The prison claimed that Mr. Wang died suddenly of a disease, but without specifying what disease it was. They asked the family to provide proof of low income, as they intended to offer them a financial subsidy of between 8,000 and 10,000 yuan.

To the family, the bruises on Mr. Wang's head and back seemed unusual and not caused by a normal disease. They asked if they were caused by torture or other mistreatment that the prison was trying to hide.

### **Case 3: 75-Year-Old Retired Teacher Dies in Heilongjiang Province Women's Prison**

[Ms. Mou Yongxia](#), a 75-year-old retired teacher, was tortured to death at the Heilongjiang Province Women's Prison on July 13, 2023. The guards arbitrarily cremated Ms. Mou's body before notifying her family.



*Ms. Mou Yongxia*

Ms. Mou was arrested in September 2019 and sentenced to a six-year prison term by the Ranghulu District Court in May 2020. Guards at the Heilongjiang Province Women's Prison instigated the inmates to beat and verbally abuse her. Years of tortures took a toll on her health and she could barely move.

After Ms. Mou suffered fecal incontinence in August 2022, an inmate beat her and poured cold water on her. She also subsequently suffered a mental disorder, yet

the guards and other inmates continued to beat her.

A prisoner complained that Ms. Mou walked too slowly, and pushed her from behind in late December 2022. She fell to the ground resulting in bruises on her face. That night she developed frequent urination and had to get up over ten times each subsequent night. The inmates assigned to watch her often verbally abused her and beat her because of this.

Ms. Mou often woke up in the middle of night screaming because of the ongoing abuse. It was so loud that inmates in other cells could hear her. She was disoriented and could not even recognize other Falun Gong practitioners who were staying in the same cell with her.

Her son demanded that the prison authorities release her on medical parole, but his requests were repeatedly rejected.

### **Case 4: In a Vegetative State and Denied Medical Parole for Two Years, Hebei Man Dies Two Months Before Prison Release**

[Mr. Lai Zhiqiang](#)'s wife waited seven long years, eager to reunite with him, only to learn on January 3, 2023, that he had died two months before his scheduled release from serving a wrongful term for his faith in Falun Gong.

According to Mr. Lai's wife, who wasn't allowed to see his body until the next day, he was curled up and his face had been injured. Five guards held her back to keep her from getting close to or touching him.



They refused to return his body to the family and deceived his daughter into signing a consent form to have his body cremated.

Mr. Lai, of Tangshan City, Hebei Province, was arrested on March 31, 2016, and secretly sentenced to seven years. His elderly mother was so traumatized that she passed away shortly after.

Mr. Lai suffered a stroke in 2019 from being tortured in custody, but the prison denied his family's multiple requests to visit him. When his wife was finally granted a visit in January 2020, she was heartbroken to see that the guards had to carry him out. He could hardly move. He didn't appear to recognize her and didn't respond when she cried.

According to an insider, Mr. Lai was held in the prison clinic for nearly six months and was force-fed every day. The guards kept the feeding tube in his stomach. His lips became very dry and cracked. Some of the nurses occasionally used a towel to drip some water into his mouth. He often had tears in his eyes when they did that. He also moved his lips but couldn't speak.

Mr. Lai's family demanded medical parole for him, but the prison claimed that they had to wait for their superiors to make the decision. Meanwhile, they charged the family several thousand yuan, claiming it was needed to pay Mr. Lai's medical bills.

Mr. Lai's condition further deteriorated in 2020, and he contracted a lung infection in August 2020. He was in a vegetative state and had difficulty breathing. When the prison took him to the hospital, the doctor did a tracheotomy on him but nothing else. The doctor implied that there was not much hope for him to recover.

Despite Mr. Lai's condition, the prison always kept him shackled with heavy chains. He was brought back to the prison after over a month in the hospital only to be taken back to the hospital on September 9, 2020, even before his trachea was closed.

Mr. Lai's family kept applying for medical parole for him. The prison claimed that the justice bureau had denied the request. When his family went to the justice bureau themselves to submit the request, they were stopped at the door and not allowed to talk to anyone.



## 2.2 Deaths at Home

### Deaths Shortly After Release Due to Physical Abuse or Medical Conditions Developed in Custody

To shirk responsibility, some prisons released the practitioners when they were on the verge of death from torture. This was the same for practitioners who developed cancer and fell into critical condition (similar to Mr. Wang Zizhou's case mentioned above). Some passed away days or months following their release. While some didn't pass away immediately, the continued police harassment made it impossible for them to recover from the trauma, which eventually still claimed their lives.

#### Case 1: Harbin Woman Dies 11 Months After Serving 5 Years in Prison

[Ms. Zhang Chunyu](#), of Acheng City, Heilongjiang Province, was sentenced to 5 years in early 2018. She was subjected to physical abuse, mental stress, and humiliation since she was admitted to Heilongjiang Province Women's Prison on April 18, 2018. She was reduced to just skin and bones, and almost all of her teeth had fallen out when she was released on February 24, 2022.

Due to continued harassment from the local police and community administration, Ms. Zhang was forced to live away

from home to avoid further persecution. She died on January 31, 2023, at age 69. She was predeceased by her husband and their son, who both developed heart diseases after being traumatized by her repeated harassment, arrest, and detention. Her son died on September 24, 2014, and her husband passed away on February 16, 2017, nine days before her last arrest.

In addition to the 5-year prison term, Ms. Zhang, a former businesswoman, also served two labor camp terms totaling four years. While serving her second three-year forced labor term in 2002, she was struck in her left eye by a male guard and has since gone blind in that eye.



*Ms. Zhang Chunyu was blinded in her left eye due to abuse at Wanjia Labor Camp.*

#### Case 2: 51-Year-Old Man Dies Four Months After Serving 4.5 Years

[Mr. Zhao Changfu](#), a 51-year-old man in Lingyuan City, Liaoning Province, died on July 18, 2023, four months after he finished serving 4.5 years for his faith in Falun Gong.



Mr. Zhao's prison sentence stemmed from his arrest on August 22, 2018. The procuratorate twice returned his case to the police citing insufficient evidence. But the police fabricated more evidence and persuaded the procuratorate to indict him on May 9, 2019. The local court sentenced him to 4.5 years with a 2,000-yuan fine weeks after a secret hearing on June 5, 2019.

Mr. Zhao was subjected to brutal torture since the day of his arrest, and his health quickly declined. He was hospitalized multiple times throughout his incarceration, yet the authorities never approved his family's request to have him released on medical parole to seek better treatment.

Mr. Zhao's condition worsened in late 2021. He became blind in one eye, and the other eye had blurred vision. He could only see things within three feet with the one eye. His legs were severely swollen, with his calves oozing fluid. Two other hospitals in Shenyang were better equipped to treat his condition, yet the authorities only allowed him to use the Shenyang City No. 4 Hospital, which was overcrowded at the time. As Mr. Zhao was waiting for a bed, his eye condition got even worse. He was then allowed to have eye surgery at the He Eye Hospital at his own expense.

After a bed became available at the Shenyang City No. 4 Hospital around April 2021, Mr. Zhao was admitted there, but as soon as he got a bit better, the authorities moved him to the Xinkang Prison Hospital, where he served the remainder of his prison term.

Everywhere he was taken, be it various detention facilities or hospitals, Mr. Zhao was always given a large amount of injections or pills, which had severe side effects

and caused damage to his body. An inmate once saw a nurse give him a large number of pills and took a look at them after the nurse left. He told Mr. Zhao to not take a particular pill because he had seen it before and knew it'd not be good for Mr. Zhao. This inmate used to be a prosecutor and had inside knowledge of how the regime used involuntary drug administration as a means of persecuting people.

After Mr. Zhao was released on February 21, 2023, he never recovered, and was also traumatized by the fear that his wife, also a Falun Gong practitioner, would be arrested again. She had been arrested with him on August 22, 2018 but was released much sooner, on January 30, 2019. Prior to that, she had been arrested multiple times over the years, also for practicing Falun Gong. His own physical suffering and the anxiety about his wife's wellbeing eventually took his life on July 18, 2023.

### **Case 3: Former Assistant Engineer Dies Months After Serving Five Years in Prison**

Mr. Wei Yongqing, formerly an assistant engineer at Xihua University in Chengdu City, Sichuan Province, was in a delirious state when he was released in February 2023 from serving a five-year term for practicing Falun Gong. He did not even know to use the restroom and relieved himself anywhere when nature called. He passed away months later on August 29. He was 83 years old.

Mr. Wei was arrested on February 3, 2017 and sentenced to five years with a 20,000-yuan fine by the Pidu District Court on May 31, 2018. Judge Yang Rong deceived him into giving up his appeal by promising that

she wouldn't enforce the prison term. But five days after the ten-day appeal window expired, Yang ordered two bailiffs to take Mr. Wei to the Jiazhou Prison.

As Mr. Wei refused to renounce Falun Gong, he was pepper sprayed, forced to sit under the sun for long periods of time until his buttocks festered, and shocked with electric batons. The guards also forced him to finish his meals in seconds, a torture invented by the guards in Jiazhou Prison.

Mr. Wei was still reeling from the mental trauma and abuse-induced medical conditions when he was released. To make things worse, the local social security office also suspended his pension. His wife had to rent out their home in the city to earn some income, while she and Mr. Wei lived in the countryside, where the village officials closely monitored their daily activities. Mr. Wei took a fall in late August and passed away days later.

#### **Case 4: Sichuan Woman Dies Eight Months After Release from Prison in a Vegetative State**

[Ms. Liao Guanghui](#) was in a vegetative state when she was released on July 20, 2022, after serving a three-year prison term for practicing Falun Gong. The Mianyang City, Sichuan Province, resident died eight months later on March 23, 2023. She was 70 years old.

Ms. Liao took a fall on March 10, 2021, while incarcerated in the Sichuan Province Women's Prison. The prison denied her family's request to release her on medical parole, and held her in custody

until the end of her term, despite the fact that she remained in a coma after the fall.



*Ms. Liao Guanghui in a coma*

Because the prison hospital didn't properly fix her skull during the craniotomy, there was a large sunken area on the right side of her head. She also had a suction tube in her throat, a feeding tube in her nose, and a urinary catheter. Her entire body was stiff.

#### **Forced to Take Toxic Drugs or Given Suspicious Injections**

In addition to the physical torture and mental pressure, many detained practitioners were also subjected to involuntary administration of toxic drugs. Some of them were maimed, some were driven insane, and some eventually passed away as a result.

#### **Case 1: 75-Year-Old Anhui Woman Dies Months After Being Held in Psychiatric Ward for Eight Months**

[Ms. Hu Hongmei](#), a 75-year-old woman in Jinzhai County, Anhui Province, died on March 26, 2023, merely months after she was released from an eight-month involuntary hospitalization in a psychiatric ward.



Ms. Hu did not have any mental disorder, but it's common practice for the authorities to send healthy practitioners to psychiatric hospitals and subject them to involuntary drug administration and physical torture.

Ms. Hu was arrested on February 25, 2022 and taken straight from her home to the psychiatric department of Baiyun Hospital. The police put her in a ward with eight other people, including human rights activists. The management of the hospital was similar to that of a prison. Ms. Hu was never given enough food, and she was forced to take three pills of an unknown drug three times a day, every day. When she refused to take the drugs, the nurses grabbed her neck and slapped her in the face.

Five nurses sometimes held Ms. Hu while forcing her to take the drugs. Her ribs were almost broken as a result. The nurses also force-fed her, accusing her of eating too slowly. They sometimes blew air into her stomach through the feeding tube to increase her suffering. While other detainees could go outdoors for a break, Ms. Hu was never allowed to leave the room. The guards could kick her and tie her up at will. She also had a blood sample taken every month.

After over eight months of detention, the police videotaped Ms. Hu and took her photo. They also ordered her to sign a statement promising to never practice Falun Gong again. As Ms. Hu wasn't married, her brother was asked to pick her up from the hospital in October 2022 and take her to the Youdian Township Nursing Home, where she was placed on residential surveillance.

The nursing home president Wang Long-fei and his staff kept pressuring Ms. Hu to

renounce Falun Gong. While still suffering from the complications of involuntary drug administration done at the hospital, she struggled to cope with the relentless pressure and died on March 26, 2023.

## Case 2: Liaoning Man Dies Ten Months Following Latest Arrest, Given Suspicious COVID-19 Vaccine in Custody

Mr. Tian Xiaofei in Benxi City, Liaoning Province, was forcibly injected with a so-called COVID-19 vaccine and started suffering severe side effects two days later. After having a persistent fever and cough for ten months, Mr. Tian Xiaofei passed away on May 5, 2023. He was 65 years old.

Mr. Tian was arrested at home on July 13, 2022. The police covered Mr. Tian's head with a black hood and took him to the police station for interrogation. They said to him, "We protect bad people and arrest good people."

The police locked Mr. Tian in a metal cage, where he couldn't stand up or stretch his legs. He held a hunger strike for two days. The police kept interrogating and threatening him, but he didn't back down.



Illustration: Held in a metal cage

An officer surnamed Chen said to him, “Even if I had to spend the money myself, I would bribe someone to have you sent to the detention center and sentence you to another ten years.”

The police took Mr. Tian to the hospital for a physical exam. They held him and forcibly gave him an injection, which they claimed was a COVID-19 vaccine. When Mr. Tian failed the physical, the police attempted to force the doctor to issue a false report about his health. The doctor refused to comply and the detention center denied Mr. Tian admission.

Mr. Tian was taken home on the evening of July 15, 2022. He couldn’t eat, and struggled with persistent fever and coughs. He also had significant weight loss. He passed away less than ten months later.

Prior to his last arrest, Mr. Tian was seized by the Beijing police on December 26, 2000, when he went there to appeal for Falun Gong. He was arrested again on February 26, 2002, and secretly sentenced to ten years in prison.

### **Deaths Induced by Financial Devastation**

In recent years, many elderly practitioners also faced another type of persecution – suspension of their pension after serving prison terms. In most cases, the practitioners were ordered to pay back the pension they received during their prison terms. The authorities cited a new policy, claiming that these practitioners weren’t entitled to any retirement benefits while serving time in prison, despite the

fact that no Chinese labor law has such a stipulation. Some practitioners also faced cuts in their pension benefits, while others couldn’t even get their pensions reinstated after they managed to pay back the “debt.” The financial devastation, along with the mental and physical trauma they had endured, was also the cause for some practitioners’ deaths.

### **Case 1: Jilin Man in His 70s Has Pension Suspended and Dies in Poverty**

Mr. Jin Dejun, of Yanji City, Jilin Province, lost his pension in July 2020 and struggled to make ends meet. He passed away in spring 2023 after suffering poverty and illness. He was 74 years old.

Mr. Jin, born on May 17, 1949, was sentenced to nine years in prison in 2000. He was tortured in multiple prisons in the cities of Changchun, Jilin, and Gongzhuling during the nine years. Unable to bear the pressure of the persecution, his wife divorced him while he was in prison. When he was released, he was homeless and destitute.

The Yanji City Social Security Bureau suspended Mr. Jin’s pension in July 2020. At the time he was 71 and could not even afford the cheapest rent, let alone the cost of daily necessities. He died three years later, penniless and ill.

### **Case 2: 77-Year-Old Former Government Official Loses His Life to the Relentless Persecution of Falun Gong**

For practicing Falun Gong, Mr. [Liu Jishun](#), of Qidong County, Hunan Province, was



twice sentenced to a total of 6.5 years and once given one year of forced labor during the past 24 years of persecution. He suffered brutal torture during each detention and was on the verge of death multiple times. He was also fired from his job in 2001 and not allowed to apply for a pension when he reached the retirement age of 60 in 2006. With no income and facing constant harassment from the authorities, his health kept declining and he passed away on July 27, 2023, at age 77.

### ***Sentenced to Three Years and Fired from Job in 2001***

Mr. Liu was fired from his job not long after he was sentenced to three years in prison in 2001. Guards and inmates punched and kicked him, had him stand facing the wall for long periods of time, and even forced him to eat pig feed and dog food. By the time he was released in 2004, he had become unrecognizable. His body was swollen and he could not stand steadily.

Mr. Liu appealed to have his job reinstated but was turned down. After he turned 60 in 2006, he applied for his pension, only to be rejected again. With no income, life was extremely difficult.

### ***One Year of Forced Labor in 2006***

Mr. Liu was seized from his home on July 5, 2006, by about seven officers. He was only wearing shorts and barefoot at the time, but the police didn't allow him to put on a shirt or shoes. They targeted him because he had visited a dying practitioner days prior.

Mr. Liu was given 15 days of criminal detention and then one year of forced labor. The guards at the Xinkaipu Labor Camp forced

him to stand facing a wall for extended periods of time and ordered him to renounce Falun Gong. In just a few months, he developed high blood pressure and heart disease. The labor camp then released him ahead of time.

### ***Sentenced to 3.5 Years Following Arrest in 2014***

Mr. Liu was arrested again on October 16, 2014, for mailing complaint letters to various levels of government agencies, against his perpetrators for sentencing him in 2001, terminating him from his job, and depriving him of the right to apply for a pension. Although the local detention center initially refused to admit him due to his extremely high blood pressure, the police forced them to accept him with the help of a high-up official. He was later sentenced to three and a half years.

### ***Living in Poverty and Under Tremendous Pressure in Final Years***

Mr. Liu's health quickly declined in detention and he was released on medical parole. The local police, judicial bureau, and street committee kept harassing him at home and monitored him closely. They had people shadow him everywhere and didn't allow him to contact other practitioners or go out of town. They also forced him to report to the county judicial bureau every day to sign and fingerprint certain documents.

The police also often broke into his home to search for his Falun Gong books and other valuables. They snatched any cash or bankbook they could find in his home.

Mr. Liu appealed to the county government, the grain bureau, and the social security

office many times regarding his lost pay during his imprisonment and his pension income. No one ever responded to him. He struggled to make ends meet in his final years.

Due to the enormous pressure, Mr. Liu became critically ill in March 2021 and was hospitalized. The police twice harassed him at home after he was discharged from the hospital. They took photos of him. The street committee workers also went to his home and ordered him to write statements to renounce Falun Gong.

On October 12, 2021, a branch office of a provincial government agency summoned Mr. Liu and questioned if he still practiced Falun Gong. He responded, “I’ve been persecuted to the verge of death multiple times and I am having difficulty walking as a result of the torture. I’ve also been fired from my job for more than ten years. You only ask me if I still practice Falun Gong, yet you cared nothing about my health and financial situation. Can you help me receive my lawfully earned pension income?” They were speechless and let him go.

Mr. Liu’s health continued to decline and he eventually passed away on July 27, 2023.

### **Case 3: Jiangsu Man Dies After Two Decades of Harassment and Extortion, Mother Not Allowed to Contact Him**

[Mr. Li Jianping](#), a Falun Gong practitioner in Nanjing City, Jiangsu Province, was arrested several times for upholding his faith during the past 24 years of persecution. When he wasn’t detained, he was

forced to move frequently to hide from the police. After he returned home, he faced constant harassment from the police and lived in fear that he might be arrested at any time.

Eyeing Mr. Li’s private company and his real estate properties, the police found all kinds of excuses to extort money from him. The surveillance was escalated beginning in late 2019. The police and the residential committee staff members even began to play mahjong (a gambling game) at his home, and forced him to play with them in order to extort money from him.

The lead officer warned Mr. Li, “You’d better be smart. Do you think we are here to play with you? Let me tell you, for stubborn people like you, we can kill you at any time and remove your heart and liver. Tell your wife, if we stop coming to your home, she has to go to my place. I’m afraid you won’t be able to find her anymore if that’s the case. No one will help you. You can also tell your children. With us coming here, you get to keep your company and properties. Your family can also spend time together. How good is that!”

The harassment and the extortion caused Mr. Li tremendous emotional distress. He passed away in mid-April 2023. He was 61 years old.

Mr. Li wasn’t the only one in his family to be victimized during the 24-year-long persecution. His mother, also a practitioner, was threatened by the police not to contact him. If she did, both she and he would face grave consequences. In her 80s, she died in distress in late 2017.

## Deaths Due to Harassment and Mental Distress

As the persecution of Falun Gong remained unabated after 24 years, many practitioners in China lived in fear every day. Such prolonged mental distress caused serious health problems in them and claimed some of their lives.

### Case 1: Having Had Family Factory Seized and Lost His Wife to the Persecution, Elderly Man Dies Ten Days after Police Harassment

A Jilin City, Jilin Province, resident passed away in early August 2023, ten days after being harassed by the police. He was 78 years old.



Mr. Zhao Xudong



Mr. Zhao's family

Mr. Zhao Xudong was repeatedly harassed between August and September 2022. The police and community workers took photos of his home without his permission and questioned him as to whether he still practiced Falun Gong. He was arrested on September 27, 2022 and released that evening.

Mr. Zhao was arrested again on May 4, 2023. Despite his high blood pressure, the police still held him in custody and didn't release him until May 26.

An officer harassed Mr. Zhao at home on July 31, 2023 and ordered him to go to the police station. Mr. Zhao refused to comply. He passed away ten days later, early on the morning of August 10.

Mr. Zhao wasn't the only one in his family who had been targeted for practicing Falun Gong. His wife, Ms. Li Yan, passed away on February 5, 2012, after succumbing to the fear and mental distress stemming from the persecution. Their son, Mr. Zhao Guoxing, was incarcerated and tortured for over thirteen years. His sister, Ms. Zhao Guokun, is now facing a prison sentence after being indicted on July 18, 2023.

Mr. Zhao Xudong's family factory for producing electronic control instruments was seized by the government. When he reached his retirement age of 60 in 2006, the social security office couldn't find the record of his previous service at a state-owned enterprise, which prevented him from receiving any retirement benefits.

### Case 2: Heilongjiang Woman Dies After Being Repeatedly Harassed by Police

[Ms. Tang Chunhua](#), of Ning'an City, Heilongjiang Province, took up Falun Gong in 2010, and she credited the practice for helping her recover from a severe kidney disease she had since childhood. For the first time in two decades, she experienced



what it felt like to be illness-free. She was able to take care of herself, do household chores, and tend to her family-run convenience store. Many local residents who frequented her convenience store witnessed her dramatic changes.

Ms. Tang and her mother, also a Falun Gong practitioner, worked hard to help people see through the regime's lies and appreciate the goodness of Falun Gong. Her mother was arrested in 2022 for talking to people about Falun Gong. She was released later, but the police often harassed them at home and frequently summoned Ms. Tang to the police station for interrogation in an attempt to make her renounce Falun Gong.

Under the mounting pressure, Ms. Tang had a stroke in August 2023 and died soon afterward. She was 52 years old.

### **Case 3: Forced to Move Four Times in Two Years to Avoid Police Harassment, 76-year-old Man Dies Due to Mental Distress**

[Mr. Liang Weisheng](#), a 76-year-old Falun Gong practitioner in Beijing, passed away on February 28, 2023, after serving a five-year prison term and being forced to move from place to place yet still unable to avoid police harassment.

Police officers broke into Mr. Liang's home at 10: 30 p.m. on April 26, 2011 and arrested him. He was sentenced to five years on December 20, and admitted to Qianjin Prison shortly after.

Due to the long-term torture in prison, he suffered a stroke in late 2015 and was in the prison hospital's intensive care unit for a month. He was released on April 26, 2016. Despite his mobility issues (a side effect of the stroke), he still joined his brothers in taking turns caring for their mother.

To avoid police harassment, Mr. Liang and his wife moved to a new apartment in 2017. The police located them soon and pressured their landlord into terminating their lease in just three months. Not long after the couple moved elsewhere, the social security bureau suspended Mr. Liang's pension. He filed a lawsuit against the bureau, but the court declined to hear his case and ordered the police to pressure his landlord into evicting him and his wife again. The police followed the couple when they moved a third time and constantly harassed them.

Mr. Liang's 97-year-old mother fell ill and became incapacitated in 2019. Shortly after he returned home on September 5, 2019, after feeding her breakfast, the police broke in, arrested him and his wife, and took them to the Nihe Detention Center. Because both of them had disqualifying medical conditions, the detention center refused to admit them. The police released them on bail but pressured their landlord and forced the couple to move again, the fourth time in two years.

No matter where the couple was, the police never stopped harassing them, usually once or twice every month. Mr. Liang wrote to the police directors, urging



them not to participate in the persecution. Seeing that the letter was printed instead of handwritten, the police suspected that Mr. Liang was printing Falun Gong informational materials at home.

Neighborhood security guards subsequently began to monitor the couple, following them wherever they went. The monthly harassment by the police also continued.

Unable to bear the mental distress, Mr. Liang passed away on February 28, 2023. He was 76 years old.

#### **Case 4: 54-Year-Old Shop Owner Dies Days After Being Tried at Home for Her Faith in Falun Gong**

[Ms. Zhu Yuxia](#), a resident of Changchun City, Jilin Province, died in mid-July 2023, just a few days after the local court tried her at her home for her faith in Falun Gong. She was 54 years old.

Ms. Zhu was arrested at home on September 29, 2022. During the required physical examination, she was found to have hepatitis B and cirrhosis. She was then released

on house arrest, with her phone closely monitored.

Two officers showed up at the shopping mall where Ms. Zhu ran a shop, at 3 p.m. on November 7, 2022, and ordered her to go to the procuratorate to be deposed. Ms. Zhu said she didn't have time, but the police threatened to use force. She thus went with them. She saw a police officer holding a form titled "Judgment in a Criminal Case" with her name on it. She felt tremendous pressure upon returning home and feared possible prison sentence. She was unable to work for two days.

Ms. Zhu was formally indicted by the Kuancheng District Procuratorate on June 5, 2023. At that time, her health had already declined as a result of the pressure from the relentless persecution. Her abdomen and lower body had become very swollen, and she fell into a coma on July 7.

A group of people from the Kuancheng District Court showed up at Ms. Zhu's home in July and held a hearing of her case right there. They threatened to finish up prosecuting her in a bit. She died a few days later.