

**Refugee Review Tribunal  
AUSTRALIA**

**RRT RESEARCH RESPONSE**

**Research Response Number:** CHN34502  
**Country:** China  
**Date:** 26 February 2009

Keywords: China – Falun Gong – Fujian – Olympic Games – Australia

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**Questions**

- 1. Was there a crackdown on Falun Gong in Fuzhou City in Fujian province around the time of the Olympics in Beijing?**
- 2. Do the Chinese authorities spy on Falun Gong practitioners in Australia?**

**RESPONSE**

- 1. Was there a crackdown on Falun Gong in Fuzhou City in Fujian province around the time of the Olympics in Beijing?**

Sources report that there was, generally in China, an increase in activity by the authorities against Falun Gong around the time of the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing. However, no information was found in the sources consulted on the treatment of Falun Gong practitioners in Fuzhou City and little information in respect of Fujian province. In Fujian, a county government reportedly outlined on its website its tasks in implementing the central government's Falun Gong policy. Also, Falun Gong sources reported arrests in Fujian leading up to the Olympics.

According to the United States Congressional-Executive Commission on China's *Annual Report 2008* the Chinese government intensified its campaign against Falun Gong practitioners in the lead up to the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games. The United States Congressional-Executive Commission on China reported:

The central government intensified its nine-year campaign of persecution against Falun Gong practitioners in the months leading up to the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympic Games. Chinese security forces continued to detain and imprison Falun Gong practitioners and subjected some who refused to disavow the practice to torture and other forms of abuse in reeducation through labor (RTL) camps and other detention facilities. In September 2007, Zhou

Yongkang, then-Minister of Public Security and current member of the Politburo Standing Committee, ordered that all police and public security forces “strike hard on overseas and domestic hostile forces, ethnic splittists, religious extremists, violent terrorists, and the Falun Gong cult” to safeguard “social stability” for the 17th Party Congress and the Olympics. Official accounts of the crackdown were publicly available on Web sites for all 31 of China’s provincial-level jurisdictions in 2007–2008 (United States Congressional-Executive Commission on China, *Annual Report 2008*, 31 October, pp.87-88 [http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=110\\_house\\_hearings&docid=f:45233.pdf](http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=110_house_hearings&docid=f:45233.pdf) – Accessed 15 December 2008 – Attachment 1).

On a directive relating to Falun Gong and the Olympics, issued by the Chinese government’s 6-10 Office, the Commission reported:

The central government’s “6-10 Office” (established in 1999 to implement the policy that outlaws Falun Gong) issued an internal directive to local governments nationwide mandating propaganda activities to prevent Falun Gong from “interfering with or harming” the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games. Beijing and Shanghai Public Security Bureaus also issued local directives providing rewards for informants who report Falun Gong activities to the police. Stories published in the state-controlled media, as well as statements made by Chinese officials, sought to link Falun Gong with terrorist threats in the lead-up to the Olympics (United States Congressional-Executive Commission on China, *Annual Report 2008*, 31 October, p.12 [http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=110\\_house\\_hearings&docid=f:45233.pdf](http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=110_house_hearings&docid=f:45233.pdf) – Accessed 15 December 2008 – Attachment 1).

The Commission continued:

In April 2008, the central government 6-10 Office issued an internal directive to local governments nationwide mandating propaganda activities to prevent Falun Gong from “interfering with or harming” the Olympics. References to the directive appear on official Web sites in every province and at every level of government. Most official reports focus on demonstrating that local authorities have stepped up security and fulfilled the requirement to “educate” target audiences on the directive’s content. Local authorities distributed the directive widely in an effort to raise public awareness. References can be found on various Web sites ranging from public entities with indirect relations with the state (state-run enterprises, public schools, universities, parks, TV stations, meteorological bureaus, etc.) to commercial and social entities with no obvious ties to the state. Anti-cult associations also actively circulated and promoted the 6-10 Office’s Olympic directive.

...Chinese security officials made statements prior to the Olympics that sought to link Falun Gong with terrorist threats, but produced no evidence to substantiate these claims. Tian Yixiang, the head of the Military Affairs Department of the Beijing Olympics Protection Group, listed Falun Gong among the groups that might “use various means, even extreme violence, to interfere with or harm the smooth execution of the Olympic Games.” Li Wei, Chairman of the Center for Counterterrorism Studies at the quasi-official China Institute of Contemporary International Relations, categorized Falun Gong as among the top five terrorist threats to the 2008 Olympic Games (United States Congressional-Executive Commission on China, *Annual Report 2008*, 31 October, pp.91-92 [http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=110\\_house\\_hearings&docid=f:45233.pdf](http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=110_house_hearings&docid=f:45233.pdf) – Accessed 15 December 2008 – Attachment 1).

In a 2008 report the US State Department noted on Falun Gong and the Olympic Games that:

Overseas Falun Gong organizations alleged a surge in arrests and deaths of Falun Gong practitioners carried out in order to prevent disturbance during the Olympic Games. Reports of abuse were difficult to confirm because the Government prevented Falun Gong members from meeting with foreign reporters and government officials. These organizations also reported that the Government harassed their members in other countries, including the United States, through threatening phone calls and physical harassment. The Government frequently used harsh rhetoric against the Falun Gong. Some foreign observers estimated that at least half of the 250,000 officially recorded inmates in the country's reeducation-through-labor camps were Falun Gong adherents. Falun Gong sources overseas placed the number even higher... (US Department of State 2008, 'Abuses of Religious Freedom' in *International Religious Freedom Report 2008 – China*, 19 September – Attachment 2).

Amnesty International also reported a crackdown on Falun Gong as follows:

...The crackdown on Falun Gong intensified in the lead-up to the Olympics. Falun Gong sources reported over 8,000 arrests of Falun Gong practitioners nationwide during this period, and say that in 2007 over 100 died in detention or shortly after being released due to torture, starvation and lack of medical attention... (Amnesty International 2008, 'Fear of torture and other ill-treatment / Prisoner of conscience: CHINA Xu Na (f) aged 41, artist', 28 November, ASA 17/107/2008 <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/ASA17/107/2008/en/8cb45baa-bd56-11dd-857f-c5541b902dd7/asa171072008en.pdf> – Accessed 25 February 2009 – Attachment 3).

A Falun Gong source, the Falun Dafa Information Centre, stated that the “suppression of Falun Gong in mainland China escalated sharply in 2008”. The Centre had received reports that over 8,000 practitioners were detained in 2008. The Falun Dafa Information Centre also stated that it had “documented the deaths of 104 adherents in 2008 because of severe abuse or neglect in police custody” (Falun Dafa Information Centre 2009, *Escalated Campaign against Falun Gong in China Before and After the Olympics*, February, p.iii <http://media.faluninfo.net/media/doc/2009/02/FDIC-2008-Annual-Report.pdf> – Accessed 25 February 2009 – Attachment 4).

In respect of Fujian, the United States Congressional-Executive Commission on China reported that a notice, posted in April 2008 on the Gutian county government's website, outlined five primary tasks in implementing the central government's policy “outlawing” the Falun Gong. The Commission stated:

An April 2008 notice posted on the Gutian county government Web site in Fujian province describes the central government's “basic policy” outlawing the practice of Falun Gong and outlines five primary tasks to implement: (1) “explicitly order the dissemination of information regarding the ban [on Falun Gong],” (2) “carry out comprehensive administration [of the policy],” (3) “fully utilize all legal weapons, sternly punish the criminal activities of cult ringleaders and key members,” (4) “do a good job at transformation through reeducation for the great majority of practitioners,” and (5) “prevent external cults from seeping into the area, reduce the conditions that allow cults to propagate” (United States Congressional-Executive Commission on China, *Annual Report 2008*, 31 October, p.89 [http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=110\\_house\\_hearings&docid=f:45233.pdf](http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=110_house_hearings&docid=f:45233.pdf) – Accessed 15 December 2008 – Attachment 1).

An article, dated 25 May 2008, accessed on the Falun Gong website Clearwisdom refers to Falun Gong practitioners being followed, monitored and arrested in Fujian when the Olympic Torch Relay started in the province. The article named four practitioners who were arrested

when Falun Gong materials were found in their homes. It also stated that many unidentified practitioners were arrested. The article also named two brothers who were said to have been arrested two days before the torch relay set off. Another named practitioner was reportedly arrested by “CCP [Chinese Communist Party] personnel” (‘Olympic Torch Relay Sets Off in Fujian Province; Falun Gong Practitioners under Surveillance or Being Arrested’ 2008, Clearwisdom.net website, 25 May <http://www.clearwisdom.net/emh/articles/2008/5/25/97628.html> – Accessed 25 February 2009 – Attachment 5).

An earlier Falun Gong article, dated 12 March 2008, noted that five practitioners were arrested in Fujian province between 1 January 2008 and 11 March 2008 (‘Mass Arrests – The CCP Intensifies the Persecution of Falun Gong in the Name of Protecting the Olympics’ 2008, ClearWisdom.net website, 12 March <http://www.clearwisdom.net/emh/articles/2008/3/12/95286.html> – Accessed 18 September 2008 – Attachment 6).

## **2. Do the Chinese authorities spy on Falun Gong practitioners in Australia?**

Country information notes that it is likely that activists who have participated in protest activities against the Chinese government in Australia, including Falun Gong organisations will be monitored and questioned or detained on return to China. For information on this issue see RRT Research & Information 2007, *Research Response CHN32643*, 21 November – Attachment 7.

In addition, *The Australian* article dated 31 May 2008 reported that:

Security sources admit the number of Chinese agents in Australia is greater than the ranks of Russian spies who dominated Canberra during the Cold War.

They say Chinese spies perform three roles in Australia; acquiring sensitive technology for military and strategic advantage; stealing technology and information for commercial gain; and monitoring and infiltrating groups that Beijing tries to suppress, such as Falun Gong (Stewart, Cameron 2008, ‘Chinese spying role confirmed’, *The Australian*, 31 May – Attachment 8).

## **List of Sources Consulted**

### Internet Sources:

Google search engine <http://www.google.com/>  
Human Rights in China (HRIC) <http://www.hrichina.org/public/index>

### Databases:

FACTIVA (news database)  
BACIS (DIAC Country Information database)  
REFINFO (IRBDC (Canada) Country Information database)  
ISYS (RRT Research & Information database, including Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, US Department of State Reports)  
RRT Library Catalogue

## List of Attachments

1. United States Congressional-Executive Commission on China, *Annual Report 2008*, 31 October [http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=110\\_house\\_hearings&docid=f:45233.pdf](http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=110_house_hearings&docid=f:45233.pdf) – Accessed 15 December 2008.
2. US Department of State 2008, *International Religious Freedom Report 2008 – China*, 19 September.
3. Amnesty International 2008, 'Fear of torture and other ill-treatment / Prisoner of conscience: CHINA Xu Na (f) aged 41, artist', 28 November, ASA 17/107/2008 <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/ASA17/107/2008/en/8cb45baa-bd56-11dd-857f-c5541b902dd7/asa171072008en.pdf> – Accessed 25 February 2009.
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5. 'Olympic Torch Relay Sets Off in Fujian Province; Falun Gong Practitioners under Surveillance or Being Arrested' 2008, Clearwisdom.net website, 25 May <http://www.clearwisdom.net/emh/articles/2008/5/25/97628.html> – Accessed 25 February 2009.
6. 'Mass Arrests – The CCP Intensifies the Persecution of Falun Gong in the Name of Protecting the Olympics' 2008, ClearWisdom.net website, 12 March <http://www.clearwisdom.net/emh/articles/2008/3/12/95286.html> – Accessed 18 September 2008.
7. RRT Research & Information 2007, *Research Response CHN32643*, 21 November.
8. Stewart, Cameron 2008, 'Chinese spying role confirmed', *The Australian*, 31 May. (FACTIVA)