Testimony of Mr. Cheng Pei Ming – Survivor of Forced Partial Organ Extraction in China

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Mr. Cheng Pei Ming was detained and tortured multiple times in China for practicing Falun Gong. After being subjected to arbitrary detention on five separate occasions and tortured several times, in January 2002 he was sentenced to 8 years in prison. His case has been documented since 2001. Minghui.org published a letter of his[1] on July 23, 2004 about Daqing prison, where he was detained.

First encounter with police: October 1999

1n 1999, Mr. Cheng was living in his ancestral home in Guozhuang Village (Yingshang Township, Jimo City, Shandong Province). He started practicing Falun Gong in March 1998 in China. Before the persecution started in July 1999, Falun Gong practitioners openly practiced the exercises daily in the park; so the local police knew who practiced and who didn't. They knew that Mr. Cheng was a Falun Gong practitioner. On July 20th, 1999, the day the crackdown started, Mr. Cheng attended an appeal to the Jimo City Government in Shandong Province.

In mid-September 1999, the police came to his home and told him that, if he did not stop practising Falun Gong, he would be arrested and his son would be expelled from school. Mr. Cheng told the police that he would not stop practicing Falun Gong. The next morning the local police returned and arrested him. They took him to the police station in his town.

At the police station, he was taken to the operation room in the police station that was used for abortions for the one child policy. He was asked to sign an agreement to stop practicing Falun Gong. Four police officers held him violently around the neck and squeezed under his arm. Mr. Cheng refused to sign; so he was kept in detention. He started a hunger strike in protest and was released two days later. His son was expelled from school.

Second encounter with police: Late October 1999

In October 1999, Mr. Cheng went to Beijing to the Appeal Office to protest with Mr. A who

[1] https://big5.minghui.org/mh/articles/2004/7/23/程佩明自述慘遭迫害的經歷-80103p.html) Letter detailing torture at Jixi City Jiguan Branch, Jixi City No. 1 detention center, and Daqing prison. (Note: English translation provides incorrect pronoun 'her')

lived in the same village. In Bejing, Mr. Cheng was arrested and taken to a basement somewhere in Beijing. He was then detained in a small, dark cell for a week. After seven days he was released. During his time in the cell, he tried to explain to the police guards that Falun Gong practitioners haven't done anything wrong and that the practice teaches people to be good people. Mr. Cheng believes that one of the police officers was sympathetic and that is why he was released.

In November 1999, he was expelled by the Guozhuang Village Government because he practiced Falun Gong, and was forced to return to Jixi City with his wife and son. He moved to Hengshan District, Jixi City.

Third encounter with police: February 2000

Mr. Cheng went with his parents and two younger sisters to Beijing, who also practice Falun Gong, to protest the repression of Falun Gong. In Beijing, he was arrested and taken back to his home region of Hengshan District, Jixi City. He was detained at Hengshan District Detention Center. His sisters were in a different centre. Mr. Cheng was beaten and tortured by some prisoners with no explanation as to why. He was detained for one month in Hengshan District Detention Center in Jixi City then released. His mother and two younger sisters were detained for three months in the Women's Detention Center in Jixi City. Mr. Cheng and his father were released because they signed a guarantee that they would not appeal in Beijing again.

Fourth encounter with police: December 2000

Thirty-five Falun Gong practitioners from Mr. ChengJixi City, Heilongjiang Province went with Mr. Cheng to Tiananmen Square in Beijing to hold banners. They also went to Jingxiu Bridge (Goldwater Bridge) to unfold a banner saying that Falun Gong was good. Armed police arrived and violently beat everyone including Mr. Cheng. Everyone, including Mr. Cheng and his wife and family members, were detained at the East Gate Detention Centre for 1 day. Police from his home town then arrived to take them all back. As there was 35 people and only a few police officers, Mr. Cheng managed to escape. He went to the Beijing Subway Station, then took the subway to Beijing Railway Station, and then the train back to his hometown of Jixi City. Mr. Cheng didn't dare to go back to his home and needed to hide, so he rented a house next to the Jixi Mining Group General Hospital.

Fifth encounter with the police: May 2001

On May 11th, 2001, Mr. Cheng went to a nearby mountain in Jixi City, with 5 other Falun

Gong practitioners (3 female, 2 male), to collect vegetables to eat. It was spring time, and there were very few vegetables in the Northeast China, but there were wild vegetables in the mountains[2]. When they were there the police arrived and arrested everyone who was at the mountain. The police beat him and the other male practitioners. They forced him into the trunk of a car, pushing him in even though he would not fit easily. He was taken to the Public Security Office in Jixi City – his home town. Mr. Cheng was tortured for over 30 hours continuously. He was stripped of his clothes and stretched on a 'tiger bench' with all 4 limbs tied to the bench. Police head, Chief Zhao led a group to torture him on the 'tiger bench'. There were 6 police at different positions to beat under his shoulders and between his legs. When he resisted the bindings holding his arms and legs would cut the skin, causing bruising or bleeding. Chief Zhao asked him, "What have you done?" Mr. Cheng answered, "Nothing, I am just a good man." Mr. Cheng lost consciousness from the pain. Once he regained consciousness the torture continued. After the 2nd round of torture, Chief Zhou left and 3 guards stayed. They poked his nipples with sharp belt buckle pins for several hours. At the same time, another person inserted a belt buckle pin *(see images)* into the gap between the ribs and rubbed back and forth for hours.

Mr. Cheng was held in detention for one year. During the year he was given a 'body health check' where he was blood tested. No results of the medical tests were ever provided to Mr. Cheng.

The blood tests were administered by people in white medical coats with medical masks on. The forced blood tests were taken 3 times during the year. Mr. Cheng was tortured multiple times during the year. Each time the blood tests were done there was a waiting room filled with prisoners. There were many Falun Gong practitioners detained but Mr. Cheng doesn't know if everyone was a Falun Gong practitioner or not. They were not allowed to talk.

During his time in detention, Mr. Cheng was made to do forced labour - stitching textiles. He was regularly asked to sign a statement saying he would stop practicing Falun Gong and when he refused, he was tortured.

After the 12-month detention, Mr. Cheng was sentenced to 8 years in jail. The charge was "Crime 300 – Sabotaging the enforcement of law". In the court Mr. Cheng was told he had representation by a lawyer assigned by the 610 Office. The assigned lawyer did not try to help or protect him. During the hearing Mr. Cheng was allowed to say something. He stated "I am a good person. The Falun Gong practice is Zhen Shan Ren (Truthfulness,

[2] The land in Heilongjiang is fertile. There are many wild vegetables growing there, and they are delicious and more expensive than cultivated vegetables including dandelions, bracken, four-leaf vegetables, kohlrabi

Compassion, Tolerance) and benefits society. We are good people." When he said this the police present hit him 5 times in the courtroom. (Afterwards he was given electric baton torture for speaking out in court.) Mr. Cheng pleaded not guilty. There was no evidence filed against him or witnesses who spoke about any crime he had committed. No outsiders were present, no relatives. Mr. Cheng's relatives didn't know about the trial. It was a secret trial.

After being sentenced, Mr. Cheng was first imprisoned in Harbin Prison (formerly called Harbin No. 3 Prison) on April 1, 2002, and transferred to Daqing Prison on July 1, 2004.)

In December 2002, Mr. Cheng swallowed 6 needles he used to stitch textiles with during forced labour. Mr. Cheng was distressed from constant ill treatment and regular torture of different kinds which were very painful and unbearable. After swallowing the needles, he told the guards what he had done. Mr. Cheng was taken to the Heilongjiang Provincial Hospital at Xiangfang District of Haerbing City and the needles were removed using an endoscopic procedure. He was then taken back to Harbin prison.

In 2004, Mr. Cheng was transferred to Daqing prison where the torture continued in an effort to force him to renounce Falun Gong. On November 16, 2004, aged 39, Mr. Cheng was strapped, as in previous times, onto a torture apparatus known as the "Big Stretch" (where the victim's four limbs are tied up and stretched. The guards who had been torturing him left the cell. In the absence of the guards, Mr. Cheng, who had skinny hands at the time due to the conditions in the prison, struggled and his left hand came out of the hanging straps. He then managed to get his other arm and legs from the torture apparatus. He saw a blunt nail and a small rusty blade *(see images)* on the windowsill of the torture chamber and swallowed them. The prison guards rushed back in. Mr. Cheng assumes they saw that he had escaped and swallowed the objects, on the video camera that was monitoring the room.

The guards knocked Mr. Cheng down. As he fell, his head hit against the doorknob of the cell door, causing a laceration. He was taken to the prison clinic where a medical person put four stiches into the wound on his head. He was then taken to Daqing No. 4 Hospital.

At the hospital Mr. Cheng was told to sign surgery consent forms, but he refused. His elder sister, younger sister and younger brother-in-law then entered the room. The hospital staff told his family members that there was an 80% death rate for the surgery that was needed to remove the small blunt blade and rusty nail. Mr. Cheng heard this happen because he was sitting in the corner of the room. He was not allowed talk and was also very weak and traumatized but indicated to his sister not to sign the agreement for the operation. His family members were then asked to leave the room. Warden Chief Tang Yongfu, two men in white shirts, and 610 Office Director Guo Chuntang, filmed him

with video cameras, and tried to coerce him to sign and agree to the operation. Mr. Cheng said, "I have committed no crime and I will not sign. If I die, it will be because of your persecution."

After Mr. Cheng refused to sign the consent papers for the operation, he was knocked down and restrained by six policemen and forcibly injected with an unknown substance. Mr. Cheng then lost consciousness.

Mr. Cheng had periods of semi-wakefulness before regaining full consciousness on Nov 19, three days after he was taken to hospital. He found himself shackled to a hospital bedpost with an IV tube taped to his foot, a drainage tube in the left chest, oxygen tubes in his nose, and a 35 cm long incision on the left side of his chest *(see image).* Sometime after the operation, while Mr. Cheng was still unconscious, someone took photos of him *(see images)* and sent them to Minghui.org who published them online. As Mr. Cheng was unconscious during this time, he knew nothing about the photographs.

4 days later on Nov 23, 2004, Mr. Cheng was taken back to the Daqing Prison and put into the clinic in Daqing Prison. He was interrogated by 3 public security guards regarding the photos on minghui.org[3]. Mr. Cheng didn't know who took the photographs. It is possible that Mr. Cheng was transferred from the hospital early due to his situation becoming public.

Sometime later while back in the prison, Mr. Cheng heard from another prisoner that a prison guard who had been at the hospital during his ordeal, told him that he had heard a nurse at the time say that she has been in hospital for 30 years and it was the first time she had seen a transplant operation.

Mr. Cheng remained in custody in Daqing Prison for another 2 years, during which time he suffered from shortness of breath and fatigue. On March 2, 2006, after continued torture, Mr. Cheng started a hunger strike and refused food for 7 days. The prison guards forcibly transported him to Daqing Longnan Hospital, a Grade III, Class A facility situated 13 km from Daqing Prison.

When Mr. Cheng arrived, his younger sister, who was not a Falun Gong practitioner, was at the hospital. Mr. Cheng heard the prison guard tell his sister that he had ingested a knife and the medical procedure Mr. Cheng needed had a high mortality rate estimated at 80%. (This was the second time that his family had been told that he needed an operation with a very high mortality rate. They had also been told this same statistic prior to him being forced to have the operation November 2004.) Mr. Cheng was very weak

[3] https://www.minghui.org/mh/articles/2004/11/19/89584.html

and was being watched by prison guards. He was not allowed to speak during this time. This time the prison and hospital staff did not consult him or his family regarding consent for the operation. Mr. Cheng asserts that, prior to being forcibly taken to the hospital this time, he neither swallowed any object nor had a medical condition warranting surgery. Upon his arrival, after a doctor's preliminary examination, a nurse gave Mr. Cheng a high protein drip. Mr. Cheng kept pulling the drip out. He was told that surgery was scheduled for the following day. They did not give him the right to speak, and no one explained the purpose of the surgery. He was then shackled to the hospital bed. Mr. Cheng thought at the time that they were planning to kill him.

In the early hours of March 3, 2006, Mr. Cheng requested to be unshackled from the hospital bed to use the restroom across the hall. There was only one guard on duty at the time. On the way to the restroom Mr. Cheng noticed the fire stairs. When the guard who took him to the bathroom returned to the room, he forgot to shackle Mr. Cheng to the hospital bed and fell asleep himself, providing Mr. Cheng an opportunity to flee via the hospital's internal fire stairs. He hailed a taxi from in front of the hospital, offering canned fruit that he had grabbed from the hospital room (previously given to him by his sister) as fare payment. He had grabbed the canned fruit as he fled the hospital room thinking he would need food while hiding from police.

Subsequently, after 14 years of evasion, including 9 years in China then 5 years in Thailand, where Mr. Cheng was granted UN refugee status, Mr. Cheng reached the United States in July 2020.

Mr. Cheng underwent medical examinations during July and November of 2020 to investigate what happened during his 2004 operation. These investigations showed that segments 2 and 3 of his liver and half of the left lower lobe of his left lung were missing.

When asked if Mr. Cheng saw any other inmates disappear during his time in detention, Mr. Cheng said he witnessed people disappear. However, he did not know why. He noted that the people who disappeared were usually quite young. The guards told the inmates that the missing persons had been transferred to a different prison.

IMAGES

Example small nail and blunt blade

Example belt buckle pin

Photographs of Mr. Cheng while in the hospital

Photos from Miinghui.org (Chinese) on Nov 19, 2004.