

In Custody: People Imprisoned in Connection with Journalism or the Internet

News reports have revealed a series of media crackdowns over the last several months, including dismissals, detentions and blacklisting, targeting traditional print media as well as the Internet. China was ranked 177 out of 194 countries surveyed in Freedom House's Global Press Freedom Rankings 2005, dropping from its place at 173 in 2003. Reporters Without Borders reported that 32 journalists remained imprisoned as of 2005.

The list below employs a broad definition of journalism to encompass a variety of activities related to free expression and access to information. Apart from professional journalists, some of the listed prisoners are members of groups who published their own journals or people who expressed their views in articles for the Internet or overseas media. As with previous lists, this one cannot claim to be comprehensive. There is no doubt but that many more people than those named here are currently languishing in prison for no crime greater than the peaceful expression of their views.

Sources: HRIC, Independent Chinese PEN Center, Human Rights Watch, Reporters sans Frontieres, Committee to Protect Journalists, International PEN, Amnesty International

Abbreviations: CDP - China Democracy Party; CDF - Chinese Democratic Federation; WAF - Workers Autonomous Federation; FLUC - Free Labor Union of China; CFDP - China Freedom and Democracy Party; RTL - Reeducation Through Labor; PSB - Public Security Bureau

NAME	LOCATION	DATE OF DETENTION/ARREST	BACKGROUND	SENTENCE	OFFENSE	PRISON
Chen Renjie	Fujian	Jul-83	In September 1982, Chen, Lin Youping and Chen Biling published and distributed a pamphlet entitled <i>Freedom Report</i> in Fuzhou. Authorities accused them of making contact with Taiwanese intelligence. Chen Biling was executed.	Aug-83, life	propaganda and incitement to overthrow of the people's democratic dictatorship	
Lin Youping	Fujian	Jul-83	See Chen Renjie above	1983, death with reprieve	propaganda and incitement	
Hu Shigen	Beijing	27-May-92	A lecturer at Beijing Language Institute, Hu was arrested for founding the Liberal Democratic Party of China (LDPC) and the Free Labor Union of China, and also for drafting documents for LDPC and articles commemorating June 4th victims in 1989.	14-Dec-94, 20 years	organizing and leading counter-revolutionary group and counter-revolutionary propaganda instigation	Beijing No. 2 Prison Beijing
Chen Meng	Guangdong	detained 14-Mar-95, formally arrested 25-May-95	b. 1961. A musician and participant in the 1989 democracy movement. Chen provided overseas media with an official document detailing "reactionaries" black-listed from entry to China.	15-Apr-97, 12 years	revealing state secrets	Dongguan Prison
Hada	Inner Mongolia	10-Dec-95	An owner of Mongolian Academic Bookstore, Hada was arrested for publishing the journal, <i>The Voice of Southern Mongolia</i> , and for founding and leading the Southern Mongolian Democracy Alliance.	6-Dec-96, 15 years espionage	incitement of separatism and Mongolia,	No. 4 Prison of Inner Chi Feng
Fan Yingshang	Hebei	7-Feb-96	Fan was convicted of purchasing fake printing authorizations to print 60,000 copies of the magazine <i>Remen Huati</i> (Popular Topics) in 1994.	7-Feb-96, 15 years	engaging in speculation and	
Hua Di	Beijing	Jan-98	b. 1937. A missile expert, Hua obtained political asylum in the U.S. after the 1989 crackdown and wrote articles about China's missile defense system. He was arrested when he returned to China in January 1998 for a family funeral.	23-Nov-00, 15 years, reduced to 10 years	leaking state secrets	Beijing PSB Detention Center

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Tohti Tunyaz	Xinjiang	6-Feb-98	An ethnic Uighur historian and writer, Tohti Tunyaz was arrested for collecting sensitive materials and publishing articles on ethnic relations and on ethnic separation history.	10-Mar-99, 11 years	inciting separatism, and procuring state secrets for entities overseas	Xinjiang No. 3 Prison, Urumqi
Zhang Shanguang	Hunan	21-Jul-98	b. 1954. Originally a teacher. After completing 7-year sentence for counter-revolutionary crimes in 1996, Zhang worked in a factory, but was soon laid off. He established the Association to Protect Workers' Rights, and was arrested after being interviewed by Radio Free Asia.	27-Dec-98, 10 years	supplying intelligence to organizations outside China	Hunan No. 1 Prison
Gao Qinrong	Shanxi	Detained 4-Dec-98, formally arrested 26-Dec-98	b. 1955. A reporter with the official Xinhua News Agency, Gao was arrested after writing a report on a corrupt irrigation scheme in Shanxi Province, which was published on May 27, 1998 in an internal reference edition of <i>People's Daily</i> .	4-May-99, 12 years	bribery, embezzlement, pimping	Jinzhong Prison, Qi County,
Yue Tianxiang	Gansu	Jan-99,	A former employee of the Tianshui City Transport Agency, and a member of the CDP, Yue published <i>Zhongguo Gongren Guancha</i> (China Worker's Monitor), a journal supporting workers' rights.	5-Jul-99, 10 years	incitement to subvert state power	
Zhu Yufu	Zhejiang	detained May-99, formally arrested 21-Jun-99	A member of the Jiangsu branch of the CDP, Zhu established the magazine <i>Zaiye Dang</i> (Opposition Party) with Mao Qingxiang, Xu Guang and Wu Yilong and circulated pro-democracy writings online.	9-Nov-99, 7 years	incitement to subvert state power	Zhejiang No. 1 Prison
Wu Yilong	Zhejiang	26-Apr-99	See Zhu Yufu.	9-Nov-99, 8 years	incitement to subvert state power	Zhejiang No. 1 Prison
Mao Qingxiang	Zhejiang	19-Jun-99	b. 1949. See Zhu Yufu.	9-Nov-99, 12 years	incitement to subvert state power	Zhejiang No. 1 Prison
Gao Hongming	Beijing	29-Jun-99	CDP member involved with the <i>China Human Rights Watch Newsletter</i> .	Aug-99, 8 years	incitement to subvert state power	
Zha Jianguo	Beijing	29-Jun-99	CDP member involved with the <i>China Human Rights Watch Newsletter</i> .	Aug-99, 9 years	incitement to subvert state power	
Qing Yongmin	Beijing	29-Jun-99	CDP member involved with the <i>China Human Rights Watch Newsletter</i> .	Dec-98, 11 years	incitement to subvert state power	
Zhang Ji	Heilongjiang	Oct-99	b. 1979. A student at Qiqihar University, Zhang was accused of distributing news and information regarding Falun Gong.	8-Nov-99	disseminating reactionary documents via the Internet.	
Li Jian	Xinjiang	Nov-99	Editor of <i>Commerce in Xinjiang</i> newspaper, reportedly arrested for publishing a reader's letter accusing local authorities of corruption.			
Xu Zerong (David Tsui)	Shenzhen	24-Jun-00	An associate research professor at Guangzhou's Zhongshan University and resident of Hong Kong, Xu wrote several freelance articles for Hong Kong publications and co-founded a Hong Kong-based journal, <i>China Social Sciences Quarterly</i> . Xu was arrested after using historical materials for his academic research.	Jan-02, 13 years	revealing state secrets, economic crimes	
Zhang Haitao	Jilin	detained 29-Jul-00, formally arrested 11-Oct-00	b. 1972. Creator of only China-based Web site on the Falun Gong.	incitement to subvert state power		
Liu Weifang	Xinjiang	26-Sep-00	b. 1961. A shopkeeper, Liu posted a number of essays on the Internet under the name "lgwf" criticizing China's leaders, political system and social issues.	13-Jun-01, 3 years	incitement to subvert state power	

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Zhang Yuhui	Macao	16-Dec-00	A manager of a foreign capital company and freelance writer, Zhang was arrested for writing and editing articles critical of the Chinese authorities on the Web site of <i>The Epoch Times</i> .	end of 2001, 10 years	incitement to subvert state power	Sihui Prison, Biqing City, Guang- dong Province
Dong Yanhong	Beijing	Jan-01	b. 1972. An award-winning calligraphy artist and staff member at Tsinghua University, Dong was arrested along with Liu Wenyu, Yao Yue, Wang Xin, Meng Jun and Wang Xuefei after downloading and disseminating information through the Internet about the Falun Gong.	13-Dec-01, 5 years	using an illegal cult to undermine the law	
Yao Yue	Beijing	Jan-01	b. 1973. A microelectronics researcher at Tsinghua University, and wife of Liu Wenyu. See Dong Yanhong.	13-Dec-01, 12 years	using an illegal cult to undermine the law	
Meng Jun	Beijing	Jan-01	b. 1973. An electronics professor at Tsinghua University. See Dong Yanhong.	13-Dec-01, 10 years	using an illegal cult to undermine the law	
Wang Xin	Beijing	Jan-01	An academic at Tsinghua University. See Dong Yanhong.	13-Dec-01, 9 years	using an illegal cult to undermine the law	
Wang Xuefei	Shanghai	Jan-01	A graduate student at a Shanghai City University. See Dong Yanhong.	13-Dec-01, 11 years	using an illegal cult to undermine the law	
Yang Zili	Beijing	13-Mar-01	b. 1973. Yang, along with Zhang Honghai, Xu Wei and Jin Haike, formed the <i>Xin Qingnian Xuehui</i> (New Youth Study Group) and operated a Web site, Yang's Garden of Thought (<i>Yangzi de Sixiang Jiayuan</i>), featuring essays, poems and reports on political and social issues.	28-May-03, 8 years	incitement to subvert state power	
Zhang Honghai	Beijing	13-Mar-01	See Yang Zili.	28-May-03, 8 years	incitement to subvert state power	
Xu Wei	Beijing	13-Mar-01	b. 1974. A reporter with <i>Xiaofei Ribao</i> (Consumer Daily). See Yang Zili.	28-May-03, 10 years	incitement to subvert state power	
Jin Haike	Beijing	13-Mar-01	See Yang Zili.	28-May-03, 10 years	incitement to subvert state power	
Chi Shouzhu	Jilin	18-Apr-01	b. 1956. A worker in Changchun, Chi was arrested while in possession of political articles downloaded from overseas Web sites. He had only recently been released from 10 years' imprisonment for his participation in the 1989 democracy protests.	?		Lingyuan Prison, Liaoning Province
Wang Sen	Sichuan	30-Apr-01	A CDP member, Wang posted allegations on the Internet that a medical center in Dachuan was selling donated tuberculosis medicine at inflated prices.	30-May-02, 10 years	incitement to subvert state power	Dazhou Municipal PSB Detention Center
Lu Wenbin (Lu Wanbin)	Jiangsu	22-Dec-01	b. 1982. An electrician and special correspondent for the <i>Textile Daily</i> newspaper, Lu was arrested after investigating massive worker protests at the privatized Huainan Textile Factory in Dafeng City.	?		current whereabouts unknown
Fang Guokun	Guangxi	2002	A 30-year-old railroad worker, Fang was arrested after posting an article regarding persecution of Falun Gong on the Internet.			
Cai Lujun	Hebei	detained 21-Feb-02, arrested 8-Apr-03	An owner of a foreign trading company and a freelance writer, Cai was arrested for writing and publishing dissident articles.	10-Sep-03, 3 years	incitement to subvert state power	No. 1 Detention Center, Shijiazhuang City, Hebei Province

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Yang Jianli		Apr-02	A permanent resident of the U.S., Yang established the 21st Century Foundation for China and edited the online magazine <i>Yibao</i> (China Weekly). He was arrested after entering China under a friend's passport to investigate labor strikes.	13-May-04, 5 years	espionage, illegally entering Chinese territory	
Li Dawei	Gansu	detained 14-Apr-02, formally arrested 22-Apr-02	b. 1962. A former policeman in Tianshui, Li became a political dissident and was arrested after downloading June 4th materials from Web sites onto his computer.	24-Jul-02, 11 years	incitement to subvert state power	
Tao Haidong	Xinjiang	9-Jul-02	b. 1957. Editor of a book, <i>Imaginations of a New Human Race</i> , and participant in Internet discussion groups, Tao was accused of slandering Party officials.	Feb-03, 7 years	incitement to subvert state power	Urumqi Dadaowan Detention Center
Zhang Wei	Chongqing	19-Jul-02	Zhang was arrested after publishing and selling two underground newspapers, <i>Shishi Zixun</i> (Current Events) and <i>Redian Jiyao</i> (Hot Topics), which included materials downloaded from the Internet.	25-Dec-02, 6 years	illegal publishing	
Zuo Shangwen	Chongqing	19-Jul-02	Business associate of Zhang Wei (above).	25-Dec-02, 5 years	illegal publishing	
Abdulghani Memetemin	Xinjiang	26-Jul-02	A 40-year-old writer, teacher, translator and advocate for Xinjiang's Uighur ethnic group, Memetemin was convicted on the basis of articles he translated for the German-based East Turkistan Information Center, and for recruiting additional reporters for ETIC.	Jun-03, 9 years	leaking state secrets overseas	
Liang Changying	Guangxi	5-Sep-02	A teacher and Falun Gong practitioner, Liang was arrested after posting an article regarding persecution of Falun Gong on the Internet.	25-Jul-03, 5-1/2 years		
Jiang Lijun	Liaoning	6-Nov-02, formally arrested 14-Dec-02	Believed to be a close friend of Internet activists Liu Di, Li Yibin and Ouyang Yi. Signatory of an open letter to the 16th Party Congress published on the Internet.	28-Nov-03, 4 years	incitement to subvert state power	Beijing Qincheng Prison
Zhao Changqing	Xi'an	7-Nov-02	A freelance writer and a former secondary school teacher, Zhao was arrested after writing and publishing the open letter for political reform to the 16th Party Congress on the Internet.	4-Aug-03, 5 years	incitement to subvert state power	Weinan Prison, Shaanxi Province
He Depu	Beijing	detained 14-Nov-02, arrested 30-Jan-03	A freelance writer, He Depu was arrested for leading the CDP and for participating in the open letter to the 16th Party Congress.	6-Nov-03, 8 years	incitement to subvert state power	Beijing No. 2 Prison
Li Jian	Chongqing	2003	A Falun Gong practitioner, Li was convicted with four others in connection with information posted on the Internet regarding the treatment of another Falun Gong practitioner.	19-Feb-04, 13 years	libeling the government and spreading fabricated stories	
Lu Zengqi	Chongqing	2003	A Falun Gong practitioner and executive of a technology company. See Li Jian, above.	19-Feb-04, 10 years		
Yan Qiuyan	Chongqing	2003	A Falun Gong practitioner accused of helping Lu Zengqi publish articles on the Internet. See Li Jian, above.	19-Feb-04, 10 years		
Chen Shumin	Chongqing	2003	A Falun Gong practitioner, and head of the technology company where Lu Zenqi worked. See Li Jian, above.	19-Feb-04, 14 years		
Yin Yan	Chongqing	2003	A Falun Gong practitioner accused of helping Lu Zenqi. See Li Jian, above.	19-Feb-04, 5 years		
Luo Changfu	Chongqing	13-Mar-03	b. 1963. Luo was arrested after posting articles on the Boxun.com Web site calling for the release of Liu Di.	16-Nov-03, 3 years	incitement to subvert state power	Chongqing No. 2 Prison

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Huang Qunwei	Beijing	May-03	A 25-year-old unemployed man, Huang was arrested for "spreading false and sensational information" regarding SARS over the Internet.	12-Jun-03, 3 years		
Li Zhi	Sichuan	Aug-03	A former employee of Dazhao's municipal finance department, Li was arrested after posting an essay on an overseas Web site accusing Sichuan officials of corruption. The essay was reportedly traced back to Li through records supplied by Yahoo!	11-Dec-03, 8 years	incitement to subvert state power	
Luo Yongzhong	Jilin	13-Jun-03, formally arrested 7-Jul-03	b. 1967. A handicapped shop worker, Luo posted more than 150 articles on the Internet, and was arrested after an article criticizing the government's handling of SARS.	14-Oct-03, 3 years	incitement to subvert state power	Changchun No. 3 PSB Detention Center
Huang Jinqiu	Jiangsu	13-Sep-03	A veteran journalist, Huang posted essays on the Boxun Web site under the name <i>Qing Shuijun</i> (Lord Clearwater), and in January 2003 stated his intention to found the China Patriotic Democracy Party. He was arrested soon after returning to China from a journalism course in Malaysia.	27-Sep-04, 12 years	incitement to subvert state power	Changzhou Detention Center, Jiangsu Province
Liu Fenggang	Hangzhou, Zhejiang	13-Oct-03	A Beijing-based Christian activist, Liu was arrested after publishing articles in an overseas magazine on the demolition of a house church in Hangzhou.	6-Aug-04, 3 years	revealing state secrets	
Du Daobin	Hubei	detained 28-Oct-03, formally arrested 12-Nov-03	A civil servant, Du was arrested on the basis of 26 essays he posted on the Internet in 2002 and 2003 regarding official policies and social issues.	11-Jun-04, 3 years, suspended for 4 years under house arrest	incitement to subvert state power	
Kong Youping	Liaoning	Nov-03	Kong was arrested for posting articles and poems on an overseas Web site criticizing corruption and supporting the CDP.	16-Sep-04, 15 years	incitement to subvert state power	
Ning Xianhua	Liaoning	Nov-03	Ning was arrested after posting articles on the Internet supporting the CDP.	16-Sep-04, 12 years	incitement to subvert state power	
Li Mingying	Guangzhou	Mar-04	Editor of <i>Nanfang Dushi Bao</i> (Southern Metropolitan Daily), Li was detained along with deputy editor-in-chief Yu Huafeng after a series of controversial articles were published in the newspaper.	19-Mar-04, 11 years reduced to 6 years	bribery	
Yu Huafeng	Guangzhou	Mar-04	Deputy editor-in-chief and general manager of <i>Nanfang Dushi Bao</i> . See Li Mingying, above. Yu's sentence was reduced to 8 years on June 15, 2004.	19-Mar-04, 12 years reduced to 8 years	corruption	
Liu Shui	Shenzhen	2-May-04	A 37-year-old freelance journalist for <i>Nanfang Dushi Bao</i> and <i>Shenzhen Evening News</i> , Liu was arrested after posting sensitive material on the Internet regarding the 1989 Tiananmen crackdown.	May-04, 2 years RTL	soliciting prostitutes	Xili Detention Center, Shenzhen
Zhao Yan	Shanghai	17-Sep-04	A news assistant at the Beijing Bureau of <i>The New York Times</i> and a former reporter and editor at <i>China Reform</i> magazine, Zhao was arrested for allegedly revealing the news of Jiang Zemin's resignation from the Central Military Commission.	awaiting trial	illegally providing state secrets to foreigners	State Security Bureau Detention Center, Beijing
Shi Tao	Shanxi	24-Nov-04	A 36-year-old freelance journalist for <i>Dangdai Shangbao</i> and other newspapers and Web sites, Shi Tao was detained after posting an article under a pen name on the overseas Web site <i>Minzhu Tongxun</i> . The article was traced back to Shi Tao with the assistance of Yahoo! Hong Kong.	27-Apr-05, 10 years	illegally providing state secrets to foreigners	Chishan Prison, Yuanjiang City, Hunan Province

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Zheng Yichun	Yingkou	3-Dec-04	A Internet journalist and former professor, Zheng was detained after posting essays critical of China's leadership on overseas Web Yingkou sites such as <i>Epoch Times</i> .	9-Sep-05, 7 years	incitement to subvert state power	Xinsheng Farm Prison,
Zhang Qianfu	Henan	Sep-04	A 70-year-old writer, Zhang was arrested with Zhang Zhengyao and charged with charged with subversion after publishing an article commemorating the anniversary of Mao's death. Both were subsequently convicted of libel.	24-Dec-04, 3 years	libel	
Li Changqing	Fuzhou	Early 2005	A journalist with the newspaper <i>Fuzhou Daily</i> , Li was detained after supporting whistleblower Huang Jingao. However, the government based its charges against Li on an article on the Boxun Web site that reported an outbreak of dengue fever in Fujian Province.	24-Jan-06, 3 years	spreading false and alarmist information	Fuzhou No. 2 Detention
Zhang Lin	Anhui	29-Jan-05	A veteran of the 1989 democracy movement, Zhang Lin posted many essays on China's current social conditions on overseas Web sites.	28-Jul-05, 5 years	incitement to subvert state power	Anhui Hefei Nanjiao Chayouji Prison
Ching Cheong	Beijing	22-Apr-05	A China correspondent for the Singapore-based <i>Straits Times</i> , Ching was detained while reportedly attempting to obtain materials from a contact in China. A veteran Hong Kong reporter, he is accused of spying for Taiwan.	awaiting trial		
Li Jianping	Zibo	27-May-05	A freelance journalist, Li frequently posted essays critical of the Chinese leadership on overseas Web sites such as <i>Boxun News</i> and <i>The Epoch Times</i> . He was formally indicted in August 2005.	Awaiting trial	incitement to subvert state power	
Zhu Wanxiang	Zhejiang	Aug-05	Zhu was arrested with 2 others after reporting on land confiscation and illegally publishing a magazine, <i>New China Youth</i> . A total of 7 were tried, and 3 were convicted, including Zhu and Wu Zheng. The identity and sentence of the third was unclear.	17-Jan-06, 10 years	illegal publishing, fraud, and extortion	
Wu Zheng	Zhejiang	Aug-06	See Zhu Wanxiang.	17-Jan-06, 6 years	illegal publishing, fraud, and extortion	
Li Yuanlong	Bijie	29-Sep-05, formally indicted 9-Feb-06	A journalist with the <i>Bijie Ribao</i> , Li was detained after posting essays on the Internet regarding unemployment and rural poverty and calling for freedom and democracy.	Awaiting trial	incitement to subvert state power	Bijie Detention Center
Yang Tianshui	Nanjing	23-Dec-05	An online journalist and freelance writer, Yang posted a number of essays on the Internet criticizing the government, official corruption, unemployment and the abuse of inmates in Chinese prisons.	Awaiting trial	divulging state secrets	