

Police Detain Maoist Labor Activists on Campuses Across China: Group

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Authorities in China have detained more than a dozen student labor activists in a fresh crackdown on Marxist and Maoist groups over the weekend.

The students were detained by police from the southern province of Guangdong, where dozens of student activists had supported a workers' campaign to form an independent trade union at a factory belonging to Jasic Technology in Shenzhen.

"At 9:00 p.m. on Nov. 9, 2018, Guangdong police violently broke into the dormitories of members of the Jasic Workers' Solidarity Group in Guangzhou, Shanghai and Beijing, and took away our comrades," the group said in a statement posted to Github.

"Among them, Peking University graduate Zhang Shengye was kidnapped right there on the campus of Peking University," the statement said. "The missing people include ... Peking University graduates Sun Min and Zong Yang, Liang Xiaogang from Shanghai, and Wang Guixia from Guangzhou."

It said Shenzhen-based labor activist He Pengchao was also incommunicado, and labor leader Wang Xiangyi had also been "violently kidnapped" by Guangdong police.

The group hit out at Peking University's "collusion with kidnapping," accusing vested interests in Guangdong of "sinister intentions."

It said the students could have gone on to enter the elite levels of society, but instead chose to work alongside migrant workers based on their socialist ideals, "for the liberation of the working class."

A source close to the movement told RFA that the social media accounts of dozens of activists have been deleted in recent weeks, as the crackdown on Maoist and Marxist student activists continues.

"I heard they were detained, but not by authorities in Beijing," the source, who gave only his surname Chen, said. "I heard that Tang Xiangwei, who was a Jasic worker, was detained, released on bail and then re-detained by authorities in Wuhan."

"The people they are detaining this time around are all linked to the Jasic campaign," he said. "The crackdown is only going to get harsher, and will expand to include anyone who took part in, or supported through any channels."

A Peking University alumni organization also issued a statement saying that plainclothes police had entered the university campus on Friday, sparking widespread concern. It called on the school to protect its students.

The university confirmed in a statement on Sunday that police had entered the campus on Friday night, but had been in pursuit of an individual not connected to the university, on a matter unconnected to staff or students there.

Campaign backfire

Political commentator Xiao Xiao said a recent campaign to instill Marxism in students in a bid to combat liberal tendencies on campus appeared to have backfired against the ruling Chinese Communist Party.

"There has been a huge emphasis on Marxism when recruiting for higher education places in recent years," Xiao said. "They have basically erased liberals from colleges and universities ... and they have pointed to Marxism as a guide to fill the vacuum they left behind."

"So there was no competing ideology for the Marxist dogma they were force-feeding the students with," he said.

The ruling Chinese Communist Party has been quick to clamp down on student support for workers' rights in recent months, detaining, assaulting or harassing some 70 workers, activists and students since July, according to the text of a petition on the overseas site Action Network.

Marxist and Maoist activists, many of them students, had flocked to Shenzhen to support the Jasic workers' cause, with some of them taking jobs in the factory.

However, dozens of members of the Jasic Workers' Solidarity Group (JWSG) were themselves detained in a mass raid on their temporary accommodation on Aug. 27. According to Hong Kong labor groups, many were subsequently released, but 11 remain under some form of house arrest.

The authorities responded with a clampdown on student activism on campus, banning Marxist study groups, and punishing students at Peking University, Renmin University and Nanjing University.

Last week, a rare protest on the campus of Nanjing University in the eastern province of Jiangsu over the authorities' banning of a Marxist study group sparked beatings by the authorities.

A similar fate has befallen the Marxism-Leninism Society at Peking University, while Cornell University recently withdrew from a partnership with Renmin University, citing the punishment of students who had supported the Shenzhen labor movement.

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Jasic Technology support groups from Peking University and other colleges pose for a group photo in Shenzhen, southeastern China's Guangdong province, Aug. 21, 2018.

Photo courtesy of activists



From the so-called “Radio Free Asia” website at:

<https://www.rfa.org/english/news/china/activists-11122018122436.html>