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Zhe Jiang Beggar Murder Case

Findings from Initial Investigation of the Zhejiang Beggar Murder Case
July 3, 2003

On July 2, 2003, the Xinhua News Agency reported from Zhejiang Province an article entitled "Suspect for Poisoning 16 Beggars Is a Falun Gong Member". The subtitle was "Huge Poison-Murder Case in Zhejiang Province Solved". The reporter was Lu Jin. This article was released at 17:37:16 Beijing time. A screenshot of the web page is attached below. The article mentioned a suspect by the name of Chen Fuzhao and claimed that he was a "Falun Gong member."

频道主页 新闻中心 焦点网谈 潮起浙江 视点追踪 权威发布 商界财富 服务广场 浙江网群 政府在线

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毒死16名乞丐、拾荒者的犯罪嫌疑人系一法轮功分子

浙江特大系列投毒杀人案告破
新华网浙江频道 (2003-07-02 17:37:16)

新华网浙江频道7月2日电 (记者卢晶) 经浙江省各级公安机关全力侦查,发生在温州市苍南县的"6.26"特大系列投毒杀人案已于昨晚成功告破。犯罪嫌疑人系当地一个名为陈福兆的法轮功分子。

据介绍,6月26日,苍南县龙港镇先后发现多名外来乞讨、拾荒人员非正常死亡。经法医鉴定,这些死者胃内均发现毒鼠强成份。

公安部和浙江省委、省政府主要领导对此案高度重视,并先后做出重要批示,要求公安机关全力侦破案件。浙江省公安厅迅速组织精干力量赶赴苍南,并组织温州和苍南两级公安机关共计500多名民警全力开展侦破。通过对死者生前活动区域内的店铺、流动摊贩和过往人员进行深入详细的调查访问,获取了一条重要线索。专案组紧紧抓住这一重要线索,结合温州和苍南警方的前期调查,经过五天五夜的连续奋战,终于快速破获了此案,抓获了犯罪嫌疑人陈福兆。

经审查,现年29岁的陈福兆为苍南县龙港镇人,是一名"法轮功"分子。据他供述:乞丐、拾荒人员在人类中属最高层次,杀死乞丐、拾荒人员会有利于修炼"法轮功"。他投毒杀人的目的就是为了提高修炼"法轮功"的功法。因此,在2003年5月25日至6月26日期间,他先后投毒作案17起,使16名乞丐、拾荒者死亡,还有1人现尚处在抢救之中。

据介绍,陈福兆目前已被警方刑事拘留,此案正在深入侦办中。(完)

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Fig.1: A screenshot of the news article published at the Xinhua News Agency website (http://www.zj.xinhuanet.com/2003-07/02/content_666441.htm)

The World Organization to Investigate the Persecution of Falun Gong (WOIPFG) investigated this case. The initial findings are as follows.

The Xinhua News Agency Drew Conclusions of the Case Prematurely, Contradicting the Local Report

The aforementioned July 2 article of the Xinhua News Agency said that the June 26 poison-murder case in Cangnan County, Wenzhou City, was solved "last night." This conclusion is not consistent with published reports out of Wenzhou City. On the same day of the Xinhua News Agency's report, there was a local report published at 10:31:10 a.m. on the "Metropolitan Express" (Du Shi Kuai Bao) newspaper, written by reporter Tang Zewen, who was responsible for local criminal cases. The title of the article was "14 Beggars Die Under Unusual Circumstances in a Month in Longgang". This report presented more details than the Xinhua News Agency article: "A man on a motorcycle gave a beggar, an old lady, a bottle of spring water. The old lady fell to the ground and died shortly after drinking the water." "There were earlier major cases of murdering beggars in Lucheng District, Wenzhou City. The police arrested Chen Yongfeng on May 24 and concluded that he killed ten beggars, taking apart nine of the corpses. Between the date of Chen's arrest and June 26, when seven beggars died, another seven beggars died under unusual circumstances during the same month. So far the police are not clear whether the deaths of these 14 people have anything to do with the case of Chen Yongfeng." The report also mentioned that the Minister of Public Security Zhou Yongkang and the Secretary of Zhejiang Province issued orders, demanding the police to solve the cases quickly.

To investigate the criminal conduct of all institutions, organizations, and individuals involved in the persecution of Falun Gong; to bring such investigations, no matter how long it takes, no matter how far and deep we have to search, to full closure; to exercise fundamental principles of humanity; and to restore and uphold justice in society.

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Fig. 2: A screenshot of the local report on the "Metropolitan Express" (Du Shi Kuai Bao) newspaper

When Tang Zewen published the report at 10:31:10 on July 2, the case was not solved yet. However, in the Xinhua News Agency article on July 2, the case was solved "last night," or July 1. In China, such local criminal cases are usually followed and reported by local media. The Xinhua News Agency reported conclusions before the local media and gave a different version of the report. The local report referred to seven people killed, including six men and one woman, who were all from other areas. Their ages ranged between 50 and 70. This was a typical media report on criminal cases, with details of the victims' gender, age, and so on. The report by the Xinhua News Agency lacked detail, giving no background or specifics of the case. The article appeared to be more focused on linking the case to Falun Gong than anything else.

Result of the Initial Investigation of WOIPFG: the Case Has Not Been Solved Department of Propaganda in Cangnan County, Wenzhou City, Location of the Murder Case: A member of the Department told us that the case had not been solved. He has not heard that the suspect was a Falun Gong practitioner. "The local newspaper didn't report this. More than 500 policemen, many of them are my friends, are still assigned to investigating this case."

The Radio and TV Broadcasting Bureau in Cangnan County, Wenzhou City: A man working in the Bureau told us that there were no such local reports, nor any reports about the suspect being a Falun Gong practitioner.

The Cangnan County Government: An official at the Cangnan County government, when asked about Chen Fuzhao, told WOIPFG that Chen was a psychiatric patient.

The Ministry of Public Security Highlighted This Case Over Several Similar Cases

There have been several similar murder cases in Longgang Town, Cangnan County, Wenzhou City: the May 24 case and another 7 deaths between May 24 and June 26. However, these cases didn't get the attention of the provincial government and didn't receive much media coverage.

After the "Metropolitan Express" reported the attention of the provincial government and the high-ranking officials to the June 26 case, suddenly the case was resolved according to the Xinhua News Agency and the suspect was a Falun Gong practitioner.

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After the Xinhua News Agency article was published, many Chinese media outlets carried it. The initial version of this Xinhua News Agency article listed the Tang Zewen report from Wenzhou City as a related report. WOIPFG found this link removed when viewing the web page again at about 11 p.m. Beijing time on July 2.

Conclusion

Based on our initial findings, this appears to be another case of the Xinhua News Agency and high-ranking officials in the Ministry of Public Security framing Falun Gong with murder.