

Feminism a Crime in China - After the release of the five detained activists

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A MONTH-LONG international outcry was apparently influential in winning release for the five detained feminist activists in China — Li Tingting, Wei Tingting, Wang Man, Wu Rongrong and Zheng Churan (pictured above) — held since International Women's Day on charges of "picking quarrels and creating a disturbance."

The alleged disturbance? The five were organizing leaflet distributions in Chinese cities to denounce widespread sexual harassment and groping of women. This kind of thing — not the harassment, but the public leafleting — is definitely frowned upon by the Communist Party authorities, especially during the annual meeting of the handpicked national legislature.

The five activists remain under "restricted and monitored release" while awaiting what passes for trials. A statement on the case by the Hong Kong-based Association for the Advancement of Feminism (www.aaf.org.hk) observes:

(W)e strongly question the legality and lawfulness of (these) arrests...

As a matter of fact, sexual harassment has been a social phenomenon in China continuously drawing attention and discussion. According to the survey covering four regions including Beijing and Guangdong done in 2011 by the Beijing Zhongze Women's Legal Consulting Services Center/Beijing Qianqian Law Firm, sexual harassment had been affecting the daily life of 40-60% of women in China. Among them 57.5% were young women between the age of 20 and 29, and most had chosen to either keep quiet or quit the job instead of reporting the cases.

For information, visit <https://www.facebook.com/events/892417467447737/>

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P.S.

* "Feminism a Crime in China". From Against the Current n°176, May/June 2015.

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