

**A GRIM HARVEST IN CHINA'S PRISONER... READ THE PROVIDED DOCUMENT THEN ANSWER THE FOLLOWING.**

**1. WHAT PRODUCT IS HARVESTED IN CHINESE PRISONS?**

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**2. WHAT IS CAPITAL?** \_\_\_\_\_

**3. NAME THE HUMAN ORGAN THAT IS IN GREATEST DEMAND IN CHINA.** \_\_\_\_\_

**4. HOW ARE ORGAN DONORS PREPARED FOR THE TRANSPLANT?**  
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**5. HOW MUCH DID A JAPANESE CITIZEN PAY FOR A KIDNEY?**

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**6. WHAT COUNTRIES DO CUSTOMERS FOR ORGAN TRANSPLANTS COME FROM?** \_\_\_\_\_

**7. DOES A CONVICTED PRISONER GET TO APPEAL AN EXECUTION ORDER?** \_\_\_\_\_

**8. WHAT IS THE OFFICIAL COMMUNIST PARTY POLICY REGARDING ORGAN TRANSPLANTS?** \_\_\_\_\_

**9. DOES A PRISONER GET TO REFUSE AN ORGAN TRANSPLANT?** \_\_\_\_\_

**10. DO FAMILY MEMBERS GET TO CLAIM AN EXECUTED PRISONER?**

\_\_\_\_\_ **EXPLAIN YOUR ANSWER** \_\_\_\_\_

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## A GRIM ORGAN HARVEST IN CHINA'S PRISONS

China is executing more prisoners each year, reports Amnesty International—1,079 in 1992 and 1,419 in 1993. Human-rights advocates charge that the Chinese government is committing legalized murder to harvest body organs from healthy prisoners. Chinese dissident and human-rights activist Harry Wu Hongda and Sue Lloyd-Roberts of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) went to China to investigate. In the following article, Wu describes his findings. The Chinese government has denied his charges.

In China, human organs have become merchandise available to the privileged. There is a great demand for human organs such as kidneys among high Communist Party officials, who receive faster and better quality health care than do ordinary citizens. As the level of medical technology has improved, so has the number of organ transplants from executed prisoners. According to published surveys, at least 1,400 to 1,500 kidney transplants were performed in China in 1993. No longer a well kept secret, the supply of such marketable human organs has been extended to Hong Kong and to other countries.

No reliable information is available about the exact number of organ transplants done in the 1980's, but the official Chinese news agency, Xinhua, has reported that, by October, 1994, nearly 10,000 kidney transplants had been performed in some 90 hospitals throughout the country. Where did these kidneys come from? We estimate that 90% of them came from executed prisoners.

Under the guise of seeking help for a relative in need of a kidney transplant, I met with officials and staff at several hospitals. At Number 7 People's Hospital in Zhengzhou, Henan Province, a staff member named Li cautioned that information about organ transplantation "should be kept secret from foreigners... (The organs) all come from prisoners, death-row prisoners... we buy the corpses... Everything is approved." Li said that one Japanese patient had paid \$30,000 for a kidney.

He described the procedure: "We make arrangements with the executioners to shoot in the head so that the prisoner dies very quickly, instantly, and the survival rate of the organs is considerably higher (than from the shooting in the heart)... We drive the surgical van directly to the execution site... As soon as the prisoner is executed... (and) upon completion of necessary procedures by the police and the court, the body is ours... We buy the whole body... From a legal point of view, once a prisoner has been shot, he no longer exists as a human being."

At the West China University of Medical Sciences in Chengdu, the capital of Sichuan Province, Professor Yang, the director of urology, said that kidney transplants are performed several times a month. "We don't sell kidneys... The kidneys come from brain-dead people," he assured us. Wu Jingping, head of the hospital's external affairs section, gave us a tour of the hospital and fielded questions. Asked to define the term "brain-dead," she replied, "I cannot say exactly. Each country has its own standard, and therefore, the definition is different... In the U.S. even the minute of death and such trivial matters all seem to be tied to the issue of so-called human rights. It's very difficult. We act according to our laws and reality... The source of our kidneys may be donors who died in traffic accidents or brain-dead people. If the donors are brain-dead, we contact the appropriate government units to find when we can obtain the organs. State policy does not allow us to contact our donors... But we do guarantee that our kidney donors are healthy and that the organs are of excellent quality.

Wu then made the following offer: "In two to three weeks, we can get a living kidney... A team of surgeons will be dispatched for removal and delivery of the organ at a fee of \$9,500 to \$11,860... We get customers from Hong Kong, Taiwan, the U.S., and from all over the world.

The Organ Transplantation Research Center of Tongji University of Medical Sciences in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, is the largest facility of its kind in China. One of its patients told me: "All five of us in this hospital had our kidney transplants done on the same day... All came from young prisoners, all under 25 and very healthy... They were executed at 11 a.m., and we had our operations at 2 p.m."

Selling organs is strictly prohibited by Chinese law. The Chinese Communist Party holds that it is poverty and capitalism that drive the trade in human organs and that to permit their sale would result in criminal/gangs murdering people just for their organs. There has never been a known case of such gangs. In any event, China's medical system is controlled by the state. The trade in human organs would be virtually impossible unless the government allowed it.

The 1984 legalization of the prison harvesting, first made public in 1990, permits the removal of organs from executed prisoners in three cases: if the prisoner's body is not claimed, if the prisoner has consented to the organ removal, or if the prisoner's family has given its consent. In reality, however, these rules are meaningless. According to Chinese law, no prisoner may be treated as a death-row inmate until the Supreme People's Court makes a final ruling on his case. Therefore, technically, before that point no one is permitted to ask a prisoner to sign any document consenting to donate his organs or to conduct the medical test necessary to prepare for organ transplantation.

Moreover, in China executions are carried out promptly—that is, immediately after the judge has delivered the verdict. The prisoner is then taken to the execution site and shot. There is no time for the authorities to get a consent form signed. Former police official Gao Peiqi of Shenzhen City said that, in the 10 years he worked at the police bureau, he never knew of any prisoner giving consent before his organs were harvested.

In Beijing, said Police Deputy Commander Yang Guang, "executed prisoners' families are not allowed to pick up the bodies.....Almost every corpse is cut open, organs are removed, and the bodies are cremated."