

Timeline of Events Leading to a More Conservative Legal Environment in China

December 2007	Hu Jintao articulates theory of the "Three Supremes": judges & prosecutors should "always regard as supreme the Party's cause, the people's interest and the Constitution and laws."
March 2008	Party ideologue and non-lawyer Wang Shengjun elected President of the highest court in China, the Supreme People's Court. Begins to enforce the Three Supremes.
August 2008	Group of Beijing public interest lawyers organize and issue appeal for free and direct elections of governing officials in the government-controlled Beijing Lawyers Association
December 8, 2008	Human Rights Activists, many of whom are public interest lawyers, issue and sign Charter 08.
December 8, 2008	Human rights advocate and Charter 08 signatory Liu Xiaobo is apprehended and detained by police hours before the online publication of Charter 08
January 2009	Beijing Lawyers Association changes rules to allow for direct election of representatives who will vote for governing officials. Small concession to the public lawyers' appeal.
February 2009	Judicial Bureau notifies Yitong Law Firm in Beijing intention to shut down the firm for six months for allowing Li Subin, member of the group of lawyers involved with the Beijing Lawyers Association
March 2009	He Weifeng, leading law professor from Peking University, signatory to Charter '08 and outspoken critic of "The Three Supremes" sent to teach for two years in the outlying province of Xinjiang.
May 2009	Tax authorities begin investigation of Gongmeng
June 2009	Disbarment of over 20 influential public interest lawyers.
July 14, 2009	Official notice fines Gongmeng the maximum amount of \$208,000 for non-payment of taxes on donations made by the Yale University.
July 17, 2009	Gongmeng shutdown, computers and internal documents seized
Late July 2009	China's justice minister announces that "lawyers should above all obey the Communist Party and help foster a harmonious society."
July 24, 2009	Beijing Local Tax Bureau conducts a hearing concerning penalty on Gongmeng. Because the case has been declared to involve state secrets, hearing is closed to the public.
July 29, 2009, 5 AM	Head of Gongmeng, Xu Zhiyong taken by police and detained. Alleged charged is tax evasions. Currently still in police custody.
July 29, 2009	Officials from the Beijing Cultural Market Administrative Enforcement Unit inspect the offices of Yi Ren Ping for violation of the defunct "Measures to Manage Internal Material Publications." 90 copies of Yi Ren Ping's newsletter are seized but no other search (i.e. computers or files) was conducted. Yi Ren Ping remains open and operational and the newsletter in question remains available online at Yi Ren Ping's website.
August 3, 2009	Raising enough funds to pay the fines, Gongmeng issues an Announcement of Decision to Pay the Tax Bureaus' Administrative Penalty Using Donations from Society.
August 5, 2009	Beijing Public Security Bureau freezes Gongmeng's bank accounts, stopping Gongmeng from paying the fines.
August 10, 2009, AM	Gongmeng sends written request to Beijing Public Security Bureau to unfreeze their accounts. To date, Gongmeng has received no response.
August 10, 2009, PM	Gongmeng officials attempt to go to both the Beijing Local Tax Bureau office and the National Tax Bureau office to pay the fine. At both offices, Gongmeng officials are refused entry. Informed that the signature of Gongmeng's legal representative is needed to process their paperwork. Gongmeng's legal rep is Xu Zhiyong. 3% is added daily to the fine for non-payment