

FALUN GONG MARKS 10 YEARS OF RESILIENCE CANDLES OF HOPE



BURNING BRIGHT: Hundreds of people who practise Falun Gong, also called "Falun Dafa," hold candles in formation on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. on July 16. Falun Gong has peacefully resisted 10 years of persecution from the communist regime in China. The two Chinese characters at the bottom of the photo can be translated as "righteous way." *JI YUAN/THE EPOCH TIMES*

RALLIES ACROSS GLOBE DEMAND END TO PERSECUTION IN CHINA

By CHARLOTTE CUTHBERTSON | Epoch Times Staff

NEW YORK—Millions around the world mourned this week during the 10-year anniversary of the persecution of Falun Gong in China.

Candlelight vigils, marches, and rallies were held in numerous cities and countries, including Washington D.C., Sydney, Japan, Israel, Taiwan, and London.

A decade ago, on July 20, 1999, the Jiang Zemin-led Chinese Communist Party launched a persecution and propaganda campaign against Falun Gong. Thousands have been killed, hundreds of thousands imprisoned, and millions of families broken.

Jiang ordered the communist regime to "eradicate" Falun Gong in three months and to "defame their reputations, bankrupt them financially, and destroy them physically."

Ten years later, not only has the communist regime, with its propaganda machine and military might, not eradicated Falun Gong, but the spiritual group has gained global recognition through its efforts to raise public awareness of

the persecution.

Over the past week, government leaders and human rights defenders around the globe have spoken out in support of Falun Gong's principles of truthfulness, compassion, and tolerance. They spoke of the courage and steadfast faith, and the peacefulness that Falun Gong practitioners have displayed throughout the years of harsh persecution.

Nine members of Congress spoke at a 1000-person-strong rally on Capitol Hill July 16.

Among them was Congressman Chris Smith (R-NJ), who said he will fight very hard to ensure that someday Falun Gong will be free in China.

"The Chinese government—in terms of pervasiveness, intensity, and cruelty—is the worst violator of human rights on the face of the earth," he said.

Chen Yonglin, a former diplomat who defected from the Chinese Consulate in Sydney in 2005, spoke at a rally in Australia on July 19.

"The spirit and the courage—the three Falun Gong principles truthfulness, compassion and forbearance—are what the Chinese most need," said Mr. Chen. "[Falun Gong] is a spiritual movement that can recover the nation's spirit and soul."

Alex Neve, secretary general of Amnesty International Canada, said the ten-year anniversary "is a very sombre and troubling one" that marks a decade of "severe, systematic human rights violations against Falun Gong practitioners throughout China."

Neve pointed out that the persecution is also directed at those who have tried to help practitioners.

"Those individuals who have sought to speak out about this repression and to defend the rights of Falun Gong followers have also come under attack," said Neve.

For part II of The Epoch Times' special report, 'A Decade of Courage,' please see P4 and P5.

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Calgary mulls backyard chickens

By JOAN DELANEY
Epoch Times Staff

If a group called the Calgary Liberated Urban Chicken Klub has its way, Calgary will become one of a handful of Canadian cities that allow residents to keep chickens in their backyards.

Known as CLUCK, the group, along with the Calgary Food Policy Council, has been lobbying city council to change a city bylaw that forbids raising livestock in most urban areas.

"I've met with 11 different council alderpeople," says Paul Hughes, head of CLUCK. "The game's on. It's a political issue now."

Hughes is proposing that residents be allowed to have up to six hens in their backyards. Noisy roosters would not be included.

Vancouver amended its bylaws to allow residents to keep urban hens in March. It's also legal in Victoria, and Toronto and Halifax are looking into it.

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Longest solar eclipse of the century shrouds Asia

By HITESH DEVNANI
Epoch Times Staff

BANGALORE, India—India, China, and the Asia Pacific region witnessed what has been called the biggest scientific event of the Year of Astronomy on July 22.

The longest solar eclipse of the century was best seen from Varanasi, a city on the bank of India's Ganges River. Thousands of people gathered in the holy city of Varanasi to take a dip in the river while offering prayers to the sun god, a ritual believed to cleanse the soul.

In India, a solar eclipse is considered by some to be an auspicious phenomenon, and by others as inauspicious. Rituals are performed in either case.

A special ritual known as a homa is held, which involves making an offering to a consecrated fire, followed by the performance of the Suryagrahana (solar eclipse) puja rite and the chanting of hymns.

"It is believed if we chant prayers from the beginning of the solar eclipse to the end, it helps to reduce our problems. Prayers are also offered to the tulsi [holy basil] plant," explained resident Sandhya Shenoy.

CONTINUED ON P3 WORLD

Feeding the hungry: Pepper farmer starts produce donation effort

By JOAN DELANEY
Epoch Times Staff

Food bank fare has historically been short on fresh fruit and vegetables. But a major produce donation program being initiated by an Ontario farmer endeavours to change all that.

Peter Quiring, founder and president of Nature Fresh Farms, a large greenhouse operation based in Leamington, Ontario, is donating half a million pounds of bell peppers this year to help put fresh produce on the tables of Ontario's growing number of hungry families.

Once fully operational, the pepper donation initiative will be the largest giving program of fresh fruits and vegetables in the country.

"We are facing tough times in Ontario, and we all need to do more to help each other," says Quiring, whose 67-acre, high-tech greenhouse operation is Ontario's largest producer of yellow, red, and orange peppers.

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