

The Beijing Justice Bureau has suspended the practicing certificates of lawyers Tang Jitian and Liu Wei. Following the April 22nd hearing, Tang Jitian told reporters outside the court, that this was just another method by the authorities to suppress lawyers. He warned however that the authorities risked their moral and legal standing with the Chinese people.

Despite losing his certificate, Tang stated he wasn't disheartened, on the contrary he believes the Justice Bureau will be the true loser. Mr Tang said: "This process will be challenging to us individually, but in the long run, a government needs a good image to gain trust from the people or internationally. I believe they will be affected in the long term. As for my difficulties in making a living, or other issues, they can't stop me from doing what I should be doing as a member of society!"

The People's Intermediate Court in Luzhou was responsible for suspending their certificates. Tang Jitian asserts the court has never bound itself with the law. Last year on April 22nd, a hearing was held for Falun Gong practitioner Yang Ming. The trial was conducted so that Yang Ming couldn't present an adequate defence.



Tang Jitian (SOH photo)

No justice in the court

Tang spoke to SOH about that trial: “They constantly interfere with our right to defend. There is no justice in the court, continuing the process would be conforming to illegal activity. It’s not only our interests, but those of the victim as well. Not only were we forced to withdraw from the hearing, there was an unknown person videotaping us. There has been a series of illegal issues. It actually shows the court doesn’t have any justice. He’s been struck and is serving a sentence at our suggestion. We can only say the Justice Bureau is standing on truly wrong foundations.

The suspension of Tang Jitian and Liu Wei appear to be part of a long term strategy to suppress dissidents and lawyers, Tang Jitian shared his views on the matter: “The Justice Bureau carries this out on lawbreakers and to control lawyers. They use this strategy to suppress. Through this suppression, it has the effect of killing two eagles with one arrow or killing many birds with one stone. It’s actually a warning to many others in the same profession. It doesn’t eliminate the revenge factor however, for example, in previous years we’ve demanded direct elections into the law association, or else we’ll openly publish their accounts, conduct audits and so on, it has stirred up people’s interest. “

Those who attended the hearing said the authorities were in lockdown mode and acted like they were facing a strong enemy. Security was present and roads were blocked around the front of Beijing Justice Bureau. Many people who wanted to go to the hearing were placed under house arrest and some people were arrested on site.

Sound of Hope Radio (SOH) report.