

104 Canadian Citizens Detained in China

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Ministry of Foreign Affairs said that as on December 3, 2009, there were 104 Canadian citizens detained by Chinese authorities; however, the reasons for arrests are not disclosed due to privacy. The latest statistics from Ministry of Foreign Affairs also show that the top five foreign governments which have cases on arresting Canadian citizens were the United States, China, Mexico, the United Kingdom, and Thailand, where the numbers in the United States are 10 times higher than the cases in China.

As the Taiwan-born Canadian Zhu Zhilin and the Uighur-Canadian Yu Shanjiang (Huseyin Celil) were arrested by Chinese authorities, the reporter called the office of Ministry of Foreign Affairs few days ago to inquire how many Canadian citizens are still in custody by Chinese authorities. Spokesperson Dana Cryderman said that, as on December 3, there were 104 Canadian citizens are still detained by Chinese authorities. She refused to disclose the reasons for accusation since it involves privacy issues.

According to the latest statistics released by Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a total of 1,842 Canadian citizens have been arrested by foreign governments in 2007. The top five were the United States, China, Mexico, the United Kingdom, and Thailand. The United States has up to 1,009 people, accounting for 55 %. China ranked the second with 100 people, accounting for 5%, 97 people in Mexico, 46 in the United Kingdom, and 28 in Thailand.

According to the data in 2008, Ministry of Foreign Affairs received more than 2,000 cases of Canadian citizens arrested overseas within one year. In the annual report, there are about 1,850 Canadian citizens who have been detained abroad, of which three-quarters were jailed in the United States, and the remaining quarter were located in more than 100 countries and regions. One third of these arrests were alleged drug related crimes.

Another data from Ministry of Foreign Affairs also shows that the top five countries where the Canadian embassies have received the most emergency assistant requests from Canadian citizens in 2008 were the United States (1,509), Mexico (445), China (326), Cuba (212), and the United Kingdom (205). A quarter of the emergency assistant requests received in Mexico were involved arresting, while one third each in China or the United Kingdom. There were a total of 266,300 Canadians entered China in 2007, in which 28,754 people applied for passport renewals in local embassies, accounting for 18% of the total number for passport issuance from Canadian embassies in the world, ranking the first.

By contrast, there were only 7,895 passport renewals in the United States compared to 38.436 million Canadians entering in 2008. Ministry of Foreign Affairs stresses that Canada has diplomatic and consular offices in over 260 locations in approximately 150 foreign countries which are ready to provide necessary assistance for Canadian citizens abroad.

(Translated by Stella Guan)