

# Amnesty blasts China's torture tool industry

By Didi Tang  
The Associated Press

**B**EIJING — Chinese production and export of police equipment primarily used for torture, such as electric shock wands and neck-and-wrist cuffs connected by a chain, has grown dramatically, enabling human-rights violations at home and abroad, according to Amnesty International in a recent report.

More than 130 Chinese companies, up from 28 about a decade ago, are now engaged in the development, production, and export of law enforcement tools, most of which are legitimate, but many of which are inherently cruel and inhumane, the London-based human-rights group said.

The 38-page report also cited as examples spiked batons and restraint chairs with a desk-like surface in front where arms can be shackled, often with ankle cuffs beneath that force detainees into painful contortions.

"There is no excuse whatsoever for allowing the manufacturing and trade in equipment for which the primary purpose is to torture or inflict cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment on people," Patrick Wilcken, a security-trade and human-rights researcher at Amnesty International, said in a statement.

China explicitly bans torture



**SHOCKING EXPORTS.** In these undated photos supplied by Amnesty International, Chinese-made weighted leg cuffs (left photo) and side-handled and telescopic batons and spike batons (right photo) are displayed. Chinese production and export of police equipment primarily used for torture, such as electric shock wands and neck-and-wrist cuffs connected by a chain, has grown dramatically, enabling human-rights violations at home and abroad, according to Amnesty International. (AP Photo/Amnesty International)



and mistreatment of inmates, and it strongly denies widespread allegations that torture is often used by Chinese police and Communist Party investigators. Earlier this year, Zhao Chunguang, a national official overseeing police detention facilities, said there had not been a single case of torture used to coerce a confession at any detention center throughout China for the past five years.

Amnesty says it has documented a wide range of physical torture in China, including the use of electric shock batons.

The Xinhua News agency reported in late September that a court in northeastern China had convicted three police officers and

four other non-police officers of torturing suspects and killing one person. One victim said he was restrained to an iron chair while being prodded with an electric shock baton, Xinhua said.

In the report, Amnesty urged China to ban the production and export of several of the kinds of equipment it says are torture tools or inherently cruel, especially to countries with poor human-rights records. It said the tools are being shipped to Cambodia, Nepal, Congo, Egypt, Ghana, Madagascar, Senegal, and Uganda.

Faced with rising social tensions, China has been pumping in more money to maintain social

order. Its annual budget for domestic security skyrocketed over the past decade to 760 billion yuan (\$125 billion), higher than its defense budget last year.

The Public Security Ministry did not respond to requests for comment.

The report, jointly compiled with U.K.-based Omega Research Foundation, which specializes in research on military, security, and police equipment, said Chinese-made rigid restraint chairs "have no legitimate law enforcement use" and that the U.N. Committee against Torture has recommended they be abolished.

Calls to one of the companies that makes electric-shock wands,

Anhua Police Equipment Manufacturing Co., in eastern Jiangsu province, were referred to a senior manager who identified himself only by his surname Ma.

"We are at the service of the Chinese government, so I cannot answer you," Ma said. "I think China has pretty good human-rights records, and I suggest those countries finding issues with China's human-rights records look at themselves first."

A woman who answered the phone at Yuanda Industrial and Trade Co., which makes restraint chairs and neck-and-wrist cuffs, said the company was producing only what the government has approved and is not responsible for any wrongdoing.

## Texting apps required gear for Hong Kong protests

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learned about FireChat via social media and quickly downloaded it before joining protesters in the city's tense streets.

"I downloaded it mainly because we are worried the mobile network might be interfered with," said Siu, a 25-year-old nurse. "I don't use it much now, but it's

there if I need [it]."

Website developer Amy Ho said she was using the app to figure out where to go and what to bring protesters.

"If this is your first time entering the Causeway Bay protest site and are unsure where the supply stations are, the app will share that information," Ho said.

Protest leaders, meanwhile, have turned to another messaging app, called Telegram, which depends on a network to

operate but encrypts messages.

Associated Press writers Jack Chang in Beijing and Joanna Chiu in Hong Kong contributed to this report.

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