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FALUN GONG MARKS 10 YEARS OF RESILIENCE CANDLES OF HOPE



BURNING BRIGHT: Hundreds of people who practice 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

OUTPOURING OF SUPPORT FOR FALUN GONG ACROSS THE GLOBE

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 of truthfulness, compassion and forbearance—are what the Chinese mostly 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 somber 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.

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Apple Has Blowout Quarter, Tops all expectations

By ANTONIO PEREZ
Epoch Times Staff

Apple Inc. continues to impress as it reported knockout fiscal third-quarter financial results this week, proving that despite a sagging global economy, consumers continue to purchase its iconic products.

The Cupertino, Calif.-based computer and electronics maker said net income rose 15 percent from last year, to \$1.23 billion, or \$1.35 per share.

Revenues for the quarter rose 12 percent to \$8.34 billion. All of these measurements exceeded the company's performance during the same quarter in 2008.

Product sales were strong across all fronts. Apple sold 2.6 million units of Macintosh computers, 10.2 units of iPod personal music players, and 5.2 million units of iPhone smartphones.

The results for all product segments blew away analyst expectations.

"We're making our most innovative products ever and our customers are responding," Steve Jobs, Apple's CEO, said in a statement. "We're thrilled to have sold over 5.2 million iPhones during the quarter and users have downloaded more than 1.5 billion applications from our App Store in its first year."

The Apple results were unsurprising given its history of giving conservative financial projections. But the company's sales of the iPhone were nevertheless impressive—its latest model, the 3GS, went on sale last month.

Popularity of its iPhone has been well-documented. First launched in the summer of 2007, the iPhone supports tens of thousands third-party applications and games.

CEO Steve Jobs returned to work in June after a six month absence due to health reasons. At the time, some analysts were concerned for a lack of direction at Apple during Jobs' absence, but it turned out that the company did just fine without him.

Schwarzenegger, Lawmakers Agree on State Budget

SACRAMENTO (Reuters)—California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and top lawmakers agreed Monday to close a \$26.3 billion deficit in the state's budget in a deal that includes \$15.5 billion in spending cuts, they said.

The government of the most populous U.S. state, also the world's eighth-largest economy, began its fiscal year on July 1 facing the massive shortfall due to a plunge in revenues caused by the recession and rising unemployment.

Schwarzenegger, a Republican, said during a news conference the budget would be balanced through deep spending cuts and borrowing and shifting of state funds but without raising taxes.

"All around I think it is a really great, great accomplishment," said the former Hollywood action star, noting the closing rounds of budget talks, which dragged on for weeks, had been like a suspense movie.

The Legislature's top Democrats and Republicans said they would brief rank-and-file lawmakers on the agreement in the hope of holding votes in the Democratic-controlled state Assembly and Senate Thursday.

Democratic leaders acknowledged the agreement contained painful spending cuts in popular programs, the result of mounting financial woes for the state's government since 2007.

Public schools, colleges and universities would lose \$9 billion in funding, prisons more than \$1 billion and cities and counties roughly \$4 billion.

Many state employees would have to take three furlough days each month through June 2010, which amounts to a roughly 14 percent pay cut.

"There isn't a whole lot of good news in this budget," said Senate President Darrell Steinberg.

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