

Five charged in stalking scheme targeting Chinese dissidents

A sculpture depicting President Xi Jinping as a coronavirus particle inspired an alleged scheme to destroy.

NINA PULLANO / March 16, 2022



A pile of rubble is all that remains of a sculpture that depicted Chinese President Xi Jinping as a coronavirus particle. Three men are charged with planning to destroy the piece to silence opposition to the Chinese government. (Courthouse News)

BROOKLYN (CN) — Five men teamed up with Chinese intelligence agents to harass U.S.-based critics of the country, including planning to ruin a congressional candidate's campaign and destroy political artwork, federal officials said Wednesday.

Prosecutors unsealed three criminal complaints in the Eastern District of New York that involve stalking, harassing and spying on U.S. residents.

In one case, the target was a Long Island man running in the November 2022 election who previously served in the U.S. military and, as a student, was part of the 1989 protests in Tiananmen Square. He became a U.S. citizen after escaping from China, government officials said.

Qiming Lin, working on behalf of the People's Republic of China's Ministry of State Security, hired a private investigator to find dirt on the congressional candidate and undermine him.

"Go deep and dig up something," Lin, 59, said in a voicemail quoted in the [complaint](#) against him. "For example, past incidents of tax evasion. For example, if he used prostitutes in the past. For example, if he had a mistress."

The threats even extended to physical violence, prosecutors say, citing another voicemail: "But in the end, violence would be fine too. Huh? Beat him [chuckles], beat him until he cannot run for election. Heh, that's the-the last resort. You-you think about it. Car accident, [he] will be completely wrecked [chuckles], right?"

A [separate complaint](#) charges Shujung Wang, who started a pro-democracy