

URGENT ACTION

WEBSITE FOUNDER FACES AN ADDITIONAL CHARGE

Formally arrested for “inciting subversion of state power” in December 2016, Liu Feiyue, founder and director of Hubei-based human rights website “Civil Rights and Livelihood Watch” (www.msguancha.com), is to face an additional charge of “leaking state secrets”. He could face a sentence of life imprisonment if convicted of this additional charge.

Liu Feiyue may face an additional charge of “leaking state secrets” following a submission by the public security bureau on 8 August 2017 stating it had sufficient evidence against him to support adding the charge. According to Liu Feiyue’s lawyer, most of the case materials against Liu Feiyue are related to him exercising his right to freedom of expression through personal opinions he had made in public and posted on the website “Civil Rights and Livelihood Watch”.

Liu Feiyue was formally arrested on 23 December 2016, for “inciting subversion of state power”. On 8 July 2017, the procuratorate remanded the case to the Suizhou City Public Security Bureau for a supplementary investigation. A decision still needs to be made by the procuratorate whether to proceed to indict him on the two charges. While no deadline has been given for this, if convicted of “leaking state secrets”, Liu Feiyue may face a sentence of life imprisonment.

Liu Feiyue’s lawyer said that the public security bureau continued to question Liu Feiyue in the detention centre until 11 August, three days after the period of supplementary investigation had ended on 8 August. He criticized the authorities for violating the rules prescribed in the Criminal Procedure Law which limits the supplementary investigation period to one month.

Although detained since November 2016, Liu Feiyue remains determined and in good spirits according to his lawyer who visited him on 15 August 2017.

Please write immediately in Chinese, English or your own language urging authorities to:

- Immediately and unconditionally release Liu Feiyue for exercising his right to freedom of expression and
- Ensure that Liu Feiyue has regular, unrestricted access to family and lawyers of his choice, and is not subjected to torture or other ill-treatment.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 5 OCTOBER 2017 TO:

Director

Xiong Lingxian
Suizhou City People’s Procuratorate
No. 38 Mingzhu Lu Sui Xian
Suizhou Shi
Hubei Sheng 441300
People’s Republic of China

Salutation: Dear Director

Director

Tang Wenjiang
Suizhou City Public Security Bureau
No. 666 Jiaotong Dadao
Suizhou Shi,
Hubei Sheng 441300
People’s Republic of China

Salutation: Dear Director

And copies to:

Minister of Public Security

Guo Shengkun
14 Dong Chang’an Jie
Dongcheng Qu
Beijing Shi 100741
People’s Republic of China
Tel: +86 10 662 62114 (Chinese only)

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. HIS EXCELLENCY MR LIU XIAOMING, Embassy of the People’s Republic of China, 49-51 Portland Place W1B 1JL, 020 7299 4049, press_uk@mfa.gov.cn Salutation: Your Excellency

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the second update of UA 274/16. Further information: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa17/5479/2017/en/>

**AMNESTY
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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The website “Civil Rights and Livelihood Watch” reports on human rights violations suffered by members of grassroots communities in China, particularly those who have lost their homes due to forced land evictions and have petitioned the government to seek redress. The website also posts and reposts other activists’ statements on the detentions of human rights defenders and calls for their release.

State security officers have previously placed Liu Feiyue under house arrest as well as taken him for “forced travels” during politically sensitive periods, including the annual National People’s Congress’ session in March and prior to the Tiananmen crackdown anniversaries on 4 June.

On 17 November 2016 Liu Feiyue sent a text message to his colleagues saying that state security officers had taken him to an unspecified village. His home was raided the next day by public security officers who confiscated his computers, some printed materials and other personal items. He has not been heard until 10 January 2017, when human rights organization Chinese Human Rights Defenders posted on its website a written notice, stating Liu Feiyue’s location and arrest details.

According to official documents, he was criminally detained on 18 November 2017 and formally arrested for “inciting subversion of state power” on 23 December 2017. Following the notification of his formal arrest, Liu Feiyue’s lawyer made several attempts to visit him however, without any reason provided, was prevented from seeing him by the officers on duty. It was not until 25 May 2017 that Liu Feiyue’s lawyer was finally allowed to visit with him in the detention centre.

Liu Feiyue’s family cannot be reached and, according to his lawyer, they have been warned by police not to disclose any information about Liu Feiyue’s situation. Liu Feiyue’s previous lawyer had also been pressured by authorities and was forced to end his involvement in the case.

His arrest is the latest incident in the most recent crackdown on human rights defenders and those affiliated with websites reporting on the plight of grassroots activists in China.

Further information on UA: 274/16 Index: ASA 17/6980/2017, Issue Date: 24 August 2017