

URGENT ACTION

WEBSITE FOUNDER ILL-TREATED IN DETENTION

Huang Qi, founder of “64 Tianwang” (64tianwang.org), who has been detained since November 2016, was ill-treated by police officers in the detention centre and it is unclear if he has received adequate medical treatment.

Huang Qi, 53, who is detained at Mianyang City Detention Centre and was only allowed to meet his lawyer for first time on 28 July 2017 since he was taken away on 28 November 2016. During the meeting he described to his lawyer Sui Muqing how he has been ill-treated during detention.

Huang Qi told Sui Muqing that police officers in the detention centre ordered him to stand for six hours on one day and then four hours per day for over 20 days. He was repeatedly questioned by 36 police officers and often insulted by them.

Sui Muqing said Huang Qi has lost 10 kg since he was detained. Huang Qi was given medicine for his illness although it's unclear if he has received adequate medical treatment. He is suffering from kidney disease, hydrocephalus, and other heart and lung conditions. He was initially given the same meals as the detention centre staff, but this was later discontinued and he went back to a less nutritional diet after 5 July. Huang Qi's 84-year-old mother Pu Wenqing is very worried about Huang Qi's health condition after learning about Liu Xiaobo's death in custody, according to the lawyer.

Huang Qi's family received notification on 16 December 2016 that he had been formally arrested for “leaking state secrets” but no further explanation about the allegations were provided.

Please write immediately in Chinese, English or your own language urging the authorities to ensure that Huang Qi is:

- Protected from torture and other ill-treatment while in detention;
- Tried in line with international fair trial standards;
- Granted prompt, regular and unrestricted access to medical care on request or as necessary.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 27 SEPTEMBER 2017 TO:

Director

Qiao Yuejun
Mianyang City Detention Centre
Jianmenlu
Peicheng Qu, Mianyang Shi 621000
People's Republic of China
Fax: +86 816 2377600
Salutation: Dear Director

Director

Ren Shilin
Mianyang City Public Security Bureau
17 Jiefang Jie
Peicheng Qu, Mianyang Shi 621000
People's Republic of China
Tel: +86 816 2498088
Salutation: Dear Director

And copies to:

Minister of Public Security

Guo Shengkun
14 Dong Chang'an Jie
Dongcheng Qu
Beijingshi 100741
People's Republic of China
Tel: +86 10 66262114
Email: gabzfwz@mps.gov.cn

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

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the second update of UA 284/16. Further information: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa17/5410/2016/en/>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

“64 Tianwang”, founded by Sichuan activist Huang Qi and his wife Zeng Li in 1998, is one of the few major mainland-based websites that reports and documents petitioners’ protests in China. Most of the website’s contributors were first petitioners before becoming citizen journalists to report on other petitioners’ protests and arrests. Reporters Without Borders announced on 7 November that “64 Tianwang” had won the 2016 Press Freedom Award, along with detained Chinese bloggers Lu Yuyu and Li Tingting and Syrian reporter Hadi Abdullah.

This was the third time Huang Qi was detained last year. He was first taken away for “forced travel” – a common practice where state security police (guobao) take activists and petitioners outside of their towns during sensitive periods - following protests by land eviction victims on 22 and 24 July 2016 at the G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors meeting in Chengdu. The second occasion was on 24 October 2016 when Huang Qi was questioned by the public security officers from Chengdu, during the Sixth Plenum of the 18th Chinese Communist Party’s Central Committee in Beijing on 24-27 October 2016. He was released the following day.

Over the years, Huang Qi and other “64 Tianwang” contributors have been frequently detained or harassed by the Chinese authorities. Huang Qi has been imprisoned twice. He was first detained in June 2000 – the 11th anniversary of the Tiananmen crackdown – before being convicted of “inciting subversion of state power” and sentenced to five years in May 2003. He was again detained and later imprisoned for three years after exposing the substandard building scandal following the 2008 Wenchuan earthquake in Sichuan.

According to “64 Tianwang”, their journalists, who are mostly petitioners turned citizen journalists, have been questioned or placed under brief detention more than 100 times since President Xi Jinping took power in 2012, and at least 30 have been imprisoned or criminally detained. Eight of “64 Tianwang”’s journalists are currently in prison, including Wang Jing, Zhang Jixin, Li Min, Sun Enwei, Li Chunhua, Wei Wenyuan, Xiao Jianfang and Yang Dongying.

Huang Qi’s disappearance coincided with the disappearance of Beijing human rights lawyer Jiang Tianyong, who was last heard from on 21 November and is said to also be in police custody for allegedly “leaking state secrets”, as well as the detention of Hubei-based “Civil Rights and Livelihood Watch” website founder Liu Feiyue, who is criminally detained on suspicion of “subverting state power” on 18 November.

Further information on UA: 284/16 Index: ASA 17/6938/2017 Issue Date: 16 August 2017