

URGENT ACTION

ACTIVIST TRYING TO SEEK MEDICAL CARE DETAINED

Xing Wangli was taken away by local government personnel in Beijing, where he had travelled to seek medical care and legal assistance for filing a lawsuit against local officials regarding a severe head injury he suffered while imprisoned in 2016. Detained since 27 February 2018, he remains at risk of torture and other ill-treatment.



Xing Wangli and his wife were taken from a train station in Beijing on 27 February 2018, by several government personnel from Xi County in Henan, Central China. While his wife was released after 20 days' detention, Xing Wangli remains detained. According to a notification from the local public security bureau, he is being detained for "picking quarrels and provoking trouble" because "he attempted to raise a petition against government authorities".

According to Xing Wangli's son, a human rights defender seeking asylum in Thailand, the couple's trip to Beijing was to seek medical treatment and legal assistance to file a lawsuit against local officials for causing severe injuries to Xing while he was imprisoned in 2016. In that incident, which the authorities claimed was a "suicide attempt", Xing Wangli received severe injuries including a fractured skull, brain tissue damage and internal bleeding. Although no longer in a critical condition, he still suffers from long-term effects such as a significant decline in cognitive abilities, frequent headache and dizziness, and other physical problems. Due to his intense distrust of local authorities, Xi Wangli did not want to seek medical attention from local services and therefore travelled to Beijing for treatment.

Despite an apparent lack of evidence to charge him, the authorities refuse to release Xing Wangli, which seems to be partly due to his son sharing information and opinions on the internet that the local authorities deem unacceptable.

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

- Immediately and unconditionally release Xing Wangli as he has been detained solely for peacefully exercising his human rights to seek legal remedies and medical care;
- Ensure that while in detention Xing Wangli has access to medical care as necessary or requested, is not subjected to torture or other ill-treatment and that his treatment is in accordance with the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules);
- Ensure that his family and lawyer has regular, unrestricted access to Xing Wangli and to ensure that his family is free from any harassment and intimidation from state authorities or others.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 9 JULY 2018 TO:

Director of Xinyang City Public Security Bureau
Houqindong Juzhang
Xinyang Shi Gonganjū
3 Guangchang Lu
Xinyang Shi 464399
Henan Sheng
People's Republic of China
Tel: +86 376 622 1181 (Chinese only)
Salutation: Dear Director

Director of Xi County Detention Centre
Xi Xian Kanshousuo
Shaolou Cun, Xiangdian Zhen,
Xinyang Shi 464361
Henan Sheng
People's Republic of China
Salutation: Dear Director

And copies to:
Minister of Public Security
Zhao Kezhi Buzhang
Gonganbu
14 Dongchangan Jie
Dongcheng Qu, Beijing Shi 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 first update of UA 202/16. Further information: www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa17/4752/2016/en/

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INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

On 26 August 2016, Xing Wangli was sentenced to four and a half years' imprisonment for "picking quarrels and provoking trouble" after he urinated in front of a courthouse sign during a protest in May 2015 against the imprisonment of his daughter, mother and mother-in-law, who had staged a protest in 2014. The family believes Xing Wangli's imprisonment was in fact due to his online campaign calling for an investigation into the suspicious death of another human rights defender. On 27 August 2016, he was badly injured and in critical condition during his imprisonment. He was released on 24 November 2017, however, after his release the family has been continuously under surveillance, harassment and intimidation of the local authorities.

Xing Wangli's 21-year-old son, Xing Jian, was a volunteer for "64 Tianwang" and was detained in 2014 for highlighting a security crackdown in Beijing for the annual parliamentary session. "64 Tianwang", founded by detained 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 petitioners before becoming citizen journalists to report on other petitioners' protests and arrests. Xing Jian continues to be outspoken about human rights violations and grassroots activism in China while now seeking asylum in Thailand.

The petitioning system in China allows individuals to seek redress for grievances by directly submitting complaints to government authorities. Amnesty International documented cases that local governments detained or escorted petitioners back to their hometowns to stop them from petitioning in Beijing. Veteran activist Xu Youchen was sentenced to death in 2017 for killing a policeman when authorities were taking him and his wife away from peaceful petitioning.

Amnesty International has documented many cases of torture and other ill-treatment as well as suspicious deaths of detained human rights defenders, including:

- Li Wangyang, a prominent figure in the labour rights movement, was claimed by the Shaoyang city authorities to have committed suicide while in hospital under the authorities' supervision in June 2012. The family does not believe that Li Wangyang, an almost blind man and unable to walk without assistance, could have managed to hang himself. After domestic and international outcries, the Hunan provincial police announced on 15 June 2012 that they had set up a task force to investigate Li Wangyang's death. Seven days later, it was reported that the autopsy report was completed, but the authorities refused to make its results available.
- Human rights activist Zhang Liumao, detained on 15 August 2015 on suspicion of "picking quarrels and provoking trouble" and "subverting state power" is believed, by his family, to have died on 4 November 2015 while in pre-trial detention at the Guangzhou No. 3 detention centre.

When the family and lawyer were allowed to view Zhang Liumao's body on 16 November, they reported seeing bruises and abrasions all over his body leading them to believe he had been beaten or tortured. Based on these observations, the lawyer asked the authorities to investigate the suspicious death and to bring those responsible for any human rights abuses to justice. On 2 December 2015, the Chinese authorities conducted an autopsy of his remains, in spite of the family's objections and their written request to appoint an independent expert to conduct the procedure.

Gender: male

Name: Xing Wangli

Further information on UA: 202/16 Index: ASA 17/8490/2018 Issue Date: 28 May 2018