

URGENT ACTION

FEARS FOR DETAINED HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDER'S LIFE

Huang Qi, founder and director of Sichuan-based human rights website “64 Tianwang” (64tianwang.com), is seriously ill with no apparent access to adequate medical care at the detention centre. Detained since November 2016, the human rights defender has reported several incidents of torture and other ill-treatment by police officers and beatings by other detainees.

Huang Qi's health has dramatically deteriorated since he was detained, raising his family's fears that he may die in the detention centre due to its lack of adequate medical facilities. Following a visit by his lawyer the week before who later told Huang Qi's 85-year-old mother about his situation, the mother posted on 17 April; “Huang Qi's body is swollen and his legs are particularly seriously swollen,” on the social media platform WeChat. She also shared that Huang Qi's creatinine level is high, which signals that he is suffering from impaired kidney function and warns of possible kidney failure.

Taken away on 28 November 2016, Huang Qi's family received notification that he had been formally arrested for “leaking state secrets” on 16 December. On 28 July 2017, during his first meeting with a lawyer since his detention, Huang Qi stated that he was being ill-treated and was made to stand for hours at a time and repeatedly questioned, and often insulted, by in total 36 police officers.

Huang Qi previously told his lawyer on 3 November 2017 that he had been beaten up by other detainees at the Mianyang City Detention Centre in Sichuan on 24-26 October, with knowledge of at least one of the detention centre's officers.

Huang Qi suffers from chronic kidney disease, hydrocephalus as well as other heart and lung conditions. Without confirmation that the 53-year-old human rights defender is receiving proper medical care at the detention centre, there are grave concerns for his well-being.

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

- Grant Huang Qi prompt, regular and unrestricted access to medical care on request or as necessary;
- Release Huang Qi unconditionally and immediately unless there is sufficient credible and admissible evidence that he has committed an internationally recognized offence and is granted a fair trial in line with international standards;
- Ensure Huang Qi is protected from torture and other ill-treatment while in detention, there is a prompt and impartial inquiry, including a medical examination for his allegations of torture or other ill-treatment, and that he is allowed, without delay, regular access to his family.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 13 JUNE 2018 TO:

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

Director
Ren Shilin
Mianyang City Public Security Bureau
17 Jiefangjie, Peichengqu,
Mianyang Shi, Sichuan Sheng 621000
People's Republic of China
Fax: +86 816 2498088
Salutation: Dear Director

And copies to:
Minister of Public Security
Zhao Kezhi Buzhang
Gonganbu
14 Dongchanganjie
Dongchengqu, Beijing Shi 100741
People's Republic of China
Tel: +86 10 66262114 (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

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date. This is the fourth update of UA 284/16. Further information:

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa17/7403/2017/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 petitioners before becoming citizen journalists to report on other petitioners' protests and arrests. The international NGO "Reporters Without Borders" announced on 7 November 2016 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.

His arrest in late 2016 was the third time Huang Qi was detained that 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 prison 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 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. Ten of "64 Tianwang"'s journalists are currently in prison, including Wang Jing, Zhang Jixin, Li Min, Sun Enwei, Li Chunhua, Wei Wenyan, Xiao Jianfang, Li Zhaoxiu, Chen Mingyan and Wang Shurong.

Huang Qi's disappearance coincided with Beijing human rights lawyer Jiang Tianyong going missing, who was then placed in incommunicado detention on 21 November 2016 and tried on 22 August 2017 on the charge of "inciting subversion of state power", as well as the detention of Hubei-based "Civil Rights and Livelihood Watch" website founder Liu Feiyue, who was criminally detained on suspicion of "subverting state power" on 18 November that year.

Name: Huang Qi

Gender m/f: m

Further information on UA: 284/16 Index: ASA 17/8311/2018 Issue Date: 2 May 2018