

URGENT ACTION

ACTIVIST DETAINED FOR REPORTING TORTURE

Prominent human rights defender Li Qiaochu was taken away by police on 6 February 2021, shortly before the Lunar New Year. According to a detention notice her parents were asked to sign, she might be facing charges related to subversion. Li's detention is suspected to be related to her efforts to publicize the torture and ill-treatment at Linshu County Detention Centre. Detained incommunicado for a month, there is concern that Li Qiaochu is at risk of torture or other ill-treatment, as she remains without access to her family or a lawyer of her choice.

TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

*Director Li Dengquan
Linyi Shi Public Security Bureau
7 Shanghai Lu, Lanshan Qu
Linyi Shi, Shandong Sheng
People's Republic of China*

Dear Director Li:

I am writing to express my grave concern for **Li Qiaochu (李翘楚)**, who has been held incommunicado since being taken away by police on 6 February 2021. According to the detention notice that her parents were summoned by Beijing police to sign, Li might be facing charges related to subversion merely for engaging in peaceful activism.

It is alarming to learn that Li has been detained without due process and that she has had no access to her lawyer and family. On 19 February 2021, Linyi Municipal Public Security Bureau denied her lawyer's request to meet with Li.

Without any access to Li Qiaochu, it is unclear whether she has prompt, regular, and unrestricted access to medical care. Suffering from depression since June 2019, there are fears for Li's mental and physical health if she does not get the care she needs in an appropriate and prompt manner.

Li Qiaochu is a prominent researcher on labour rights and has been a peaceful advocate against gender-based violence for many years. It is deeply upsetting that Li Qiaochu has been detained on suspicion of such serious charges solely for speaking about and reporting human rights violations.

Therefore, I urge you to:

- **Immediately and unconditionally release Li Qiaochu, unless there is sufficient credible and admissible evidence that she has committed an internationally recognized offence and is granted a fair trial in line with international standards.**
- **Pending her release, ensure that Li Qiaochu has regular, unrestricted access to family and lawyers of her choice and is not subjected to torture and other ill-treatment.**
- **Allow her prompt, regular and unrestricted access to medical care on request, or as necessary.**

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Li Qiaochu (李翘楚) is a feminist and researcher on labour issues who has long been involved in issues concerning the equal rights for workers, women and other members of Chinese society. Her research has covered topics such as policies on social protection for retired workers. When Beijing authorities cleared and evicted the “low income population” in 2017, Li worked with volunteers to compile and disseminate information about the most affected communities in order to help the expelled migrant workers find new jobs and affordable alternative accommodation. Li also actively took part in various national #MeToo campaigns. She compiled data, drafted reports and posted online messages of her support for the movement.

In June 2019, Li was diagnosed with depression and had to be on regular medication. However, this did not stop her from her activism. With the outbreak of COVID-19, Li again volunteered to help both online and offline with epidemic prevention. She distributed face masks to sanitation workers and guided pregnant women of the affected communities to help each other out. Having observed the lack of gender perspective, especially with respect to prevention of gender-based violence in the practices of some hospitals, she immediately worked with a group of volunteers to set out recommendations.

Li’s activism led to frequent police harassment. In early December 2019, public security officers began to be stationed outside her house and monitored her on her way to and from work, which seriously contravened her rights to privacy and freedom of movement.

On 31 December 2019, Li was summoned by the police and held in the Beijing Public Security Bureau for 24 hours. During her detention, the police reportedly refused to give her adequate medical care. As most of the questioning related to Xu Zhiyong, Li Qiaochu decided to reveal her treatment by the police online and called for more public attention for others detained in relation to the gatherings in Xiamen. As a result, Li was arrested on 16 February 2020 and had been detained incommunicado under “residential surveillance at a designated location” before [being released on bail](#) on 19 June 2020.

Since 26 December 2019, police across the country have been summoning or detaining participants who took part in an informal gathering of lawyers and activists in Xiamen earlier that month. [Ding Jiayi](#) and [Xu Zhiyong](#) are just two of the many participants detained and are currently facing charges related to subversion.

On 6 February 2021, Li Qiaochu sent out two tweets and disclosed the complaints she filed against the ill-treatment and inadequacy of conditions in Linshu County Detention Centre. Shortly after, she received a call from a Beijing police officer and was asked to come out of her home to “have a chat”, at which point she was abruptly detained by Shandong police officers and taken to Linyi City. Li is currently in quarantine at a local hospital in Linyi City, after which she is expected to be transferred to Linyi Municipal Detention Centre.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: English or Chinese

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 4 May 2021

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Li Qiaochu (She/her)

And copies to:

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49-51 Portland Place W1B 1JL
020 7299 4049
Monday-Friday 09.00-12.30, 14.00-17.00
www.chinese-embassy.org.uk