



## Chinese Human Rights Defenders (CHRD)

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Promoting human rights and empowering grassroots activism in China

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### China Human Rights Briefing

November 24-30, 2010

#### *Highlights*

- **12 Years Later, Democracy Leader Qin Yongmin Released from Prison:** Prominent democracy activist and human rights defender Qin Yongmin (秦永敏) was released from prison this week following 12 years of incarceration for "subversion of state power." However, in a bizarre turn of events, Qin had to be forced out of the prison at the end of his sentence: officials confiscated a lengthy manuscript Qin wrote while in prison, and Qin refused to leave until the text, and other personal items were returned. He was taken by guards to a local police station, where police informed him of severe restrictions on his activities to which he would be subjected in the days to come.
- **CHRD Issues Report on Right to International Travel:** On November 24, CHRD published a report on the Chinese government's restriction of citizens' right to leave China and to enter the country. The report covers the evolution of the entry-and-exit management system, and examines specific cases in which Chinese citizens have been barred from travelling internationally. The report finds that the Chinese government violates international human rights standards by preventing its citizens from leaving the country, and offers concrete suggestions for reform. For the full text of the report (in Chinese), please click [here](#).

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## **Arbitrary Detention**

### **Veteran Democracy Activist Qin Yongmin Released Following 12 Years in Prison**

On the morning of November 29, prominent democracy activist and human rights defender Qin Yongmin (秦永敏) was released from prison following 12 years of incarceration for "subversion of state power." A lengthy manuscript which Qin wrote while in prison was confiscated by officials, who also held notes written by Qin and the written verdict in his case. Qin refused to leave the prison until these items were returned, but prison guards forced him out and drove him to the local police station, where he was told to obey strict conditions such as not giving press interviews. According to a police document outlining restrictions in place for the next three years, Qin will be subject to surveillance, and is forbidden from, among other things, taking part in elections or participating in demonstrations or associations. He is required to submit weekly reports on his activities to the authorities, and obtain police approval 24 hours before attending any gathering of more than two people. He is currently at home with his family in Wuhan City, Hubei Province. (CHRD)<sup>i</sup>

### **70 Year-old Petitioner Given Suspended Sentence for Staging Protest**

On November 24, CHRD learned that 70 year-old female petitioner Liu Qingrong (刘青荣), of Liaoning Province, was sentenced to two years in prison, with the sentence suspended for three years, for taking part in a 40-hour protest atop a smokestack near Beijing's South Train Station in May 2010. Liaoning Province petitioner Han Xixuan (韩锡轩) was sentenced to four years in prison in the same case. Liu Qingrong was convicted of the same charge as Han- assembling a

crowd to disrupt the order of a public place- on August 27, 2010. A total of seven petitioners took part in the demonstration, during which they scattered documents listing their grievances and remained at the top of the smokestack until officials promised to grant them compensation for past injustices. (CHRD)<sup>ii</sup>

### **Beijing Activist Bai Dongping Criminally Detained After Posting Picture to QQ Group**

Police in Beijing have criminally detained Beijing-based human rights activist and 1989 democracy movement leader Bai Dongping (白东平), CHRD learned on November 28. Bai is currently being held at the Xicheng Detention Center. Bai's wife inquired into his case at the Xicheng District Public Security Bureau (PSB), but the officer she spoke to could not tell her what crime Bai had been accused of committing. Bai was taken from his home shortly after 1 am on November 27 by National Security officers and Xicheng District police, who also searched his home and confiscated his computer. Bai was released following four hours of questioning, and told his wife at the time that he had been interrogated about a picture of student protestors from 1989 which he had posted to a QQ group. Bai was called back to the Xicheng District PSB Station on the afternoon of November 27, at which point he was detained. (CHRD)<sup>iii</sup>

### **Tianjin Petitioner-turned-Activist Sent to Re-education through Labor**

CHRD learned on November 26 that Tianjin human rights activist Wu Xiuling (毋秀玲) has been sent to eighteen months of Re-education through Labor (RTL) by the Tianjin City RTL Committee. Ms. Wu, who is 57, was seized in Beijing by Tianjin police in October as she attempted to secure legal representation for fellow Tianjin petitioners facing prosecution for allegedly setting their car ablaze on Tiananmen Square. She was administratively detained for 10 days, but at the conclusion of her detention, she was accused by the RTL Committee of "disrupting social order" instead of being released and sent to RTL. Ms. Wu began petitioning after her daughter was lured to Shandong Province and then killed in a suspicious traffic accident in 2005. She has since become an advocate for fellow petitioners and has spoken out to the media about problems facing petitioners. (CHRD)<sup>iv</sup>

### **Hundreds of Shanghai Petitioners Seized in Beijing, Held in Black Jail**

On November 30, CHRD spoke with Shanghai petitioner-turned-activist Zhang Guilan (张贵兰), who reported that a group of Shanghai-based petitioners seized in Beijing on November 26 are currently being detained in a Beijing black jail. According to Zhang, a total of approximately 200 petitioners were seized by interceptors from the Beijing Liaison Office of the Shanghai municipal government and taken to a black jail. On the evening of November 29, some members of the group were forcibly returned to Shanghai, while those that remained in detention began a hunger strike in protest. Zhang believes the government detained the petitioners in Beijing because they were afraid they would attempt to return to Shanghai to take part in memorial demonstrations for victims of the November 15 apartment fire in Shanghai. The majority of

petitioners were seeking redress for the loss of their homes or land to development for the Shanghai World Expo without appropriate compensation. (CHRD)<sup>v</sup>

### **Human Rights Defender Yao Lifa Missing**

CHRD learned on November 30 that Qianjiang City, Hubei Province human rights defender Yao Lifa (姚立法) travelled to Wuhan City on November 29 to greet democracy activist Qin Yongmin (秦永敏) on his release from prison. However, Yao was last seen outside of the Hanyang Prison in Wuhan that morning, and his current whereabouts remain unknown. According to another activist who was at the scene, Yao was present when Qin's supporters were driven away by plainclothes and uniformed police officers, but did not appear at Qin's home later when the supporters gathered there, having learned Qin had already been released from prison. Efforts to contact Yao for the past two days have been unsuccessful. (CHRD)<sup>vi</sup>

### **Activists Seized by Police While Seeking to Report Earlier Detention**

On the morning of November 29, Beijing activists Ms. Ye Jinghuan (野靖环), Ms. Yang Lingyun (杨凌云), Ms. Wang Ling (王玲), and Mr. Bao Longjun (包龙军) travelled to the Ministry of Railways to discuss the outcome of lawyer Wang Yu's (王宇) appeal in Tianjin as well as circumstances outside of the courthouse during the verdict announcement. However, before they reached the Ministry offices, Ye and Yang were seized by Beijing police and taken away. According to Bao and Wang, Ms. Ye and Ms. Yang were roughly handled by the police officers who took the two into custody.

On November 18, the Tianjin Railway Court upheld the conviction of Wang Yu, who was sentenced to 2.5 years in prison for "causing bodily harm due to negligence" on September 21, 2010. According to witnesses at the scene, a number of activists and supporters who had hoped to observe the hearing, including Ye and Wang, were roughly handled by plainclothes police officers and taken away from the courthouse. (CHRD)<sup>vii</sup>

### **Harassment of Activists**

#### **Workers' Rights Advocate Interrogated, Forced to Leave Guangzhou**

On the morning of November 24, human rights lawyer Tang Jingling (唐荆陵) and Li Yuanfeng (李原风), a migrant worker and labor rights advocate, were stopped at an Asian Games-related security checkpoint in Guangzhou City, Guangdong Province for an ID inspection. When a checkpoint staffer refused to let Li pass, lawyer Tang remained behind and both were taken to a local police station. Tang was released after four hours; however, Li was held for questioning as police accused him of seeking to "incite migrant workers" to demand overdue wages during the Asian Games. That evening, Li was forced to board a train bound for Changsha City, Hunan Province. Li had arrived in Changsha at the time of writing, but his current situation is unclear. (CHRD)<sup>viii</sup>

## **Updates on Post-Nobel Harassment of Activists**

### **Dissident Liu Di, Already Under Soft Detention, Taken in for Questioning**

On November 24, Beijing National Security police took dissident Liu Di (刘荻) from her home, where she has been held under soft detention for 47 days, and interrogated her at a local police station. The questioning focused on Liu's translation of a handbook on nonviolence. Ms. Liu, who writes online under the name "Stainless Steel Mouse," has been a vocal advocate for freedom of expression and a major figure in domestic civil society since the early 2000's. (CHRD)<sup>ix</sup>

### **Human Rights Lawyer Liu Xiaoyuan Barred from Travelling to Japan**

Human rights lawyer Liu Xiaoyuan (刘晓原) was stopped at Beijing's Capital Airport on November 28, becoming the latest high-profile member of China's civil society to be told by border guards that his departure would "endanger state security." Liu had been planning to travel to Tokyo to take part in a conference at a Japanese university. Border officials refused to issue Liu a written explanation of their refusal to allow him out of the country, explaining that the decision to bar him from travelling internationally was made by the Beijing Public Security Bureau. (CHRD)<sup>x</sup>

## **Citizens' Actions**

### **Ai Weiwei Calls for "Citizens' Investigation" Into Toll of November 15 Shanghai Fire**

On the morning of November 24, prominent artist and activist Ai Weiwei (艾未未) announced the launch of a "citizen's investigation" into the November 15 fire in a Shanghai apartment building which claimed the lives of dozens of residents. Much as citizen activists, including Ai and imprisoned environmentalist Tan Zuoren (谭作人), had done following the 2008 Sichuan earthquake, Ai called for the compilation of a list of the deceased. The action comes in response to the Shanghai government's refusal to make public such a list. Ai and volunteers are in the process of collecting information from netizens and concerned citizens and are making the names public as they independently confirm them. (CHRD)<sup>xi</sup>

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Chinese Human Rights Defenders (CHRD) is a China-based, non-political, non-governmental network of grassroots and international activists promoting human rights and empowering grassroots activism in China. CHRD's objective is to support human rights activists in China, monitor human rights developments, and assist victims of human rights abuses. CHRD advocates approaches that are non-violent and based on rule of law. CHRD conducts research, provides information, organizes training, supports a program of small grants to human rights activists and researchers, and offers legal assistance.

*Chinese Human Rights Briefing* (CHRB) is a daily newsletter providing the latest information on China's human rights developments. Our information originates from Chinese human rights defenders and groups at the grassroots. CHRD is responsible for all information published in CHRB. A compilation of each week's CHRBs, updated daily, is available on our website.

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i "Democracy Activist Qin Yongmin Released from Prison; Written Verdict, Manuscripts, and Other Documents Confiscated" (民主维权人士秦永敏出狱, 判决书、手稿等全部被抢走), November 29, 2010, <http://news.boxun.com/news/gb/china/2010/11/201011291217.shtml> and "After Release from Prison, Qin Yongmin Receives Strict Fixed-Period Accessory Penalty" (秦永敏出狱后受到极为苛刻的附加刑期限制), November 29, 2010,

<http://news.boxun.com/news/gb/china/2010/11/201011291841.shtml>

ii "Seventy Year-old Female Petitioner Liu Qingrong Sentenced for Scaling Tower to Voice Grievances" (爬高塔喊冤的 70 岁女访民刘青荣被判刑), November 24, 2010,

<http://news.boxun.com/news/gb/china/2010/11/201011241615.shtml>

iii "Beijing Charter 08 Signatory, Human Rights Activist Bai Dongping Criminally Detained" (北京《零八宪章》签署人、维权人士白东平被刑拘), November 28, 2010,

<http://news.boxun.com/news/gb/china/2010/11/201011281500.shtml>

iv "Tianjin Activist Wu Xiuling Sent to Re-education through Labor" (天津维权人士毋秀玲被劳教(图)),

November 26, 2010, <http://www.peacehall.com/news/gb/china/2010/11/201011262133.shtml>

v "Shanghai Petitioners Begin Hunger Strike to Protest Detention in Black Jail, Some Petitioners Forcibly Returned" (上海访民在北京救济站“黑监狱”绝食抗议, 部分访民被送回), November 30, 2010,

<http://news.boxun.com/news/gb/china/2010/11/201011301659.shtml>

vi "Elections Expert Yao Lifa Missing as Qin Yongmin is Released from Prison" (选举专家姚立法迎接秦永敏出狱时失踪(图)), December 1, 2010,

<http://news.boxun.com/news/gb/china/2010/12/201012010019.shtml>

vii "Human Rights Activist Ye Jinghuan and Others Beaten, Detained While Presenting Grievances outside Railway Ministry" (维权人士野靖环等在铁道部门前反映情况被殴打抓走), November 29, 2010,

<http://news.boxun.com/news/gb/china/2010/11/201011291046.shtml>

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viii "Human Rights Lawyer Groundlessly Interrogated, Forcibly Returned" (维权律 师无故被盘查并遣返), November 24, 2010, <http://news.boxun.com/news/gb/china/2010/11/201011242327.shtml>

ix "Dissident Liu Di, Under Soft Detention, Interrogated by Police" (软禁中的异议人士刘荻受到警方传讯(图)), November 25, 2010, <http://www.peacehall.com/news/gb/china/2010/11/201011252021.shtml>

x "Human Rights Lawyer Liu Xiaoyuan Prevented from Leaving Country by Beijing Border Guards" (维权律师刘晓原被北京边检拒绝出境), November 28, 2010, <http://www.peacehall.com/news/gb/china/2010/11/201011281202.shtml>

xi "Ai Weiwei Launches Shanghai Fire Victim 'Citizens' Investigation' Action" (艾未未发起上海火灾遇难者“公民调查”行动), November 24, 2010, <http://news.boxun.com/news/gb/china/2010/11/201011242259.shtml>