



Chinese Human Rights Defenders (CHRD)

Web: <http://crd-net.org/> Email: networkcrd@gmail.com
Promoting human rights and empowering grassroots activism in China

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Highlights

- **U.S. Must Deliver on Promise of Making Human Rights the Guiding Principle of its China Policy:** In a statement this week, CHRD urged President Obama to send a strong and clear public message during meetings with Chinese President Hu Jintao that the U.S. government is dedicated to standing up for the rights of Chinese citizens. CHRD called on the U.S. government to articulate a coherent and strategic approach to the promotion of human rights in China, a central part of which should be direct and vocal support for China's civil society. For the full statement (in English), please click [here](#).
- **Zeng Jinyan Again Applies for Hu Jia's Release on Medical Parole:** Following a January 14 visit with her husband, imprisoned human rights defender Hu Jia (胡佳), Zeng Jinyan (曾金燕) once again applied for his release on medical parole from Beijing City Prison. This is the seventh such application Zeng has submitted on Hu's behalf. Hu Jia, who has been in detention since December 2007, is ill with cirrhosis of the liver and has suffered from other ailments while imprisoned.
- **Ai Weiwei's Shanghai Studio Demolished by Local Officials:** On January 10 and 11, officials in Jiading District, Shanghai, oversaw the demolition of artist and activist Ai Weiwei's (艾未未) Shanghai studio. Though the demolition had been threatened for some time, the actual destruction of the building began without warning, catching Ai (who was in Beijing at the time it began) and his assistants by surprise.

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Arbitrary Detention

Health Concerns Continue for Imprisoned Activist Hu Jia; Wife Submits Seventh Application for Medical Parole

On January 14, Zeng Jinyan (曾金燕), wife of imprisoned human rights defender Hu Jia (胡佳), visited her husband at Beijing City Prison. According to Zeng, Hu Jia appeared pale, sweaty, and complained of sharp pain on the left side of his abdomen; he was so ill that he was unable to spend all of the time allotted for the visit with his wife, and had to leave early. On January 16, Zeng once again applied for Hu's release on medical parole. This is the seventh application submitted by Zeng on her husband's behalf; she has yet to receive a response to any of the previous six. Zeng and Hu have also repeatedly requested that prison officials provide them with the results of all medical tests performed on Hu since the beginning of his imprisonment, but the requests have also been ignored. Hu, who was diagnosed with cirrhosis of the liver in 2006, has lost weight and struggled with stomach ailments, persistent colds, and gallstones in addition to worsening of his cirrhosis since his transfer to Beijing City Prison in October 2008. Zeng blames poor nutrition and living conditions at the prison for the precipitous decline in her husband’s condition. Hu has been in detention since December 2007. (CHRD)ⁱ

“Olympics Protestor” Ji Sizun Released after Completing Three-Year Sentence

On January 17, Fujian Province rights activist and "barefoot lawyer" Ji Sizun (纪斯尊) was released from prison after completing his three-year sentence for "forging official documents and seals." Ji was originally detained on August 11, 2008, after he applied to protest in one of the “Protest Zones” supposedly set up by the government during the Olympics in Beijing. (CHRD)ⁱⁱ

Hebei Activist Xu Yishun Seized by RTL Camp Officials, Missing

CHRD has learned that Baoding City, Hebei Province human rights activist Xu Yishun (徐义顺) is missing one week after being seized by officials from Baoding's Gaoyang Re-education through Labor (RTL) Camp. According to Xu's wife, Liu Nanping (刘南平), three officials took Xu from the couple's home on January 6 to "handle some paperwork" and he has not been heard from since. Xu, a former reporter for *Public Opinion* (民意) magazine, was sent to one and a half years of RTL for “fraud” in April 2010 after he attempted to visit Yuan Weijing (袁伟静), the wife of imprisoned Shandong human rights defender Chen Guangcheng (陈光诚). During his detention, Xu was beaten by fellow detainees and was hospitalized after suffering a heart attack apparently brought on by the beating. On August 25, 2010, the RTL camp gave him five days of leave but then had not require him to return. It is believed that Xu has been sent back to the camp because he continued to participate in a number of public human rights activities during his release. (CHRD)ⁱⁱⁱ

Forced Demolition and Eviction

Shanghai Officials Raze Artist and Activist Ai Weiwei’s Shanghai Studio

Beginning on the evening of January 10, and continuing through the afternoon of January 11, officials in Shanghai forcibly demolished artist and activist Ai Weiwei's (艾未未) Jiading District studio. Though the demolition had been threatened for some time, the actual destruction of the building began without warning, catching Ai (who was in Beijing at the time it began) and his assistants by surprise. After learning in November 2010 that the studio would be demolished because it was an “illegal structure,” Ai organized a “River Crab Grand Banquet,” part performance art and part collective protest, to mock the authorities’ suppression of criticism and dissent in the name of maintaining “social harmony” (the Chinese word for river crab, *he xie*, is similar to that for harmony). Approximately 1,000 people made their way to the studio for the gathering, though Ai and a number of Shanghai activists were placed under soft detention to prevent them from attending. (CHRD)^{iv}

Beihai Court Violates Regulations, Changes Hearing Date for Detained Village Representative

A hearing originally scheduled for January 11 in the "obstructing official business" case against Baihutou villager He Xianfu (何显福) was changed after the close of business on January 10 by the Yinhai District Court in Beihai City, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. The hearing, originally scheduled for January 11, is now re-scheduled for January 20. Lawyer Xie Yanyi (谢燕益) traveled to Beihai from Beijing for the hearing, and He's relatives had traveled to be in attendance as well. According to the relevant regulations, a defendant's lawyer and family must be notified of any changes to the date of a hearing a minimum of three days in advance of the original date. He, a village representative, was detained in November 2010 for standing up to developers and local officials carrying out forced evictions and demolitions in Baihutou Village. Altogether, eight villagers have been detained for their opposition to the land grab in Baihutou, including three who have been sentenced to prison for "obstructing official business. (CHRD)^v

Well Polluted in Guangxi to Drive out Villagers

CHRD learned on January 15 that residents of Tietengshan Village, who have been holding out against forced expropriation of their farmland for nearly four years, discovered last week that the sole source of water for their village, a recently-dug well, had been polluted with a large amount of motor oil. The villagers believe the local government to be responsible; in October 2010, officials cut off the village's supply of running water and electricity in an attempt to force the villagers to abandon their homes. Approximately 105 of the village's original 700-odd residents currently remain in the village, fighting the expropriation of their farmland on the grounds that the compensation offered by the government is too low. Tietengshan is located in the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region's Qinzhou City. (CHRD)^{vi}

Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

Elderly Shaanxi Petitioner Hospitalized in Critical Condition after Beating from Local Official

CHRD learned on January 13 that 72 year-old retired worker Zhang Suidong (张岁栋), of Shaanxi Province, is in critical condition after being beaten by a local government official. On January 10, Zhang traveled from his home in Biaojiao Town to the Fengxiang County government offices to petition regarding a construction dispute. There, he was attacked and beaten by the director of the county letters and visits bureau, suffering serious head injuries. Zhang is currently hospitalized in Baoji City's Number Three Military Hospital. Prior to the beating, Zhang had been detained 15 days by Fengxiang County police for petitioning in Beijing. (CHRD)^{vii}

Harassment of Activists

Beijing Human Rights Defender Wang Lihong Enters Fourth Month of Soft Detention

CHRD learned on January 18 that human rights activist Wang Lihong (王荔蕙) remains under "soft detention" in Beijing, more than three months after police began limiting her freedom of movement in response to the news that Liu Xiaobo (刘晓波) had been awarded the 2010 Nobel Peace Prize. Wang was seized by police at a celebratory gathering on October 8, and later administratively detained for eight days. Following her release from detention, police placed Wang under "soft detention," first at a local hotel and then at her home. She was also taken to the outskirts of Beijing for a period of 18 days surrounding the Nobel award ceremony. As of the time of writing, Wang is still required to travel in a police vehicle whenever she leaves her home, and is under constant police surveillance. (CHRD)^{viii}

Guiyang Activist Chen Xi Summoned, Threatened by Police

On January 13, National Security officials in Guiyang City, Guizhou Province summoned human rights activist and Guizhou Human Rights Forum member Chen Xi (陈西) for questioning. During the questioning, officers repeatedly threatened Chen as well as his wife and daughter, saying they would take away the family's jobs and possessions if Chen participated in any activities related to the China Democracy Party. Chen believes the threats were related to online comments by overseas democracy activists who recently called him the "honorary president" of the China Democracy Party. He was held by police for approximately 10 hours before being released. (CHRD)^{ix}

Citizens' Actions

Nineteen Prominent Human Rights Lawyers Issue Joint Letter Calling for End to Torture

Citing the continued "disappearance" of human rights lawyer Gao Zhisheng (高智晟), now in its ninth month, as well as the kidnapping and torture of Beijing scholar Fan Yafeng (范亚峰) this past December, a group of nineteen prominent human rights lawyers issued a public letter on January 17, calling for the Chinese government to live up to its responsibility to put an end to the practice of torture. The letter, which lists a number of recent victims of torture and calls attention to the growing trend of police violence and torture of dissidents and activists outside of criminal proceedings, cites the Convention against Torture, which China has ratified, as well as the Chinese Constitution and Chinese law as the basis for its demands. For the full text of the letter (in Chinese), please click [here](#). (CHRD)^x

Editors: David Smalls and Lin Sang

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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 "Zeng Jinyan Once Again Applies for Hu Jia's Release from Prison on Medical Parole" (曾金燕再次就胡佳狱中病情申请保外就医), January 17, 2011,

<http://news.boxun.com/news/gb/china/2011/01/201101171208.shtml>

ⁱⁱ "Ji Sizun Released from Prison, Many Rights Activists Greet Him" (纪斯尊出狱, 众维权人士前往迎接), January 18, 2011, <http://news.boxun.com/news/gb/china/2011/01/201101180016.shtml>

ⁱⁱⁱ "Hebei Rights Activist Xu Yishun Taken Away by RTL Police" (河北维权人士徐义顺被劳教所干警带走), January 13, 2011, <http://news.boxun.com/news/gb/china/2011/01/201101131153.shtml>

^{iv} "Ai Weiwei's Shanghai Workshop Forcibly Demolished" (艾未未上海工作室被强制拆除), January 11, 2011, <http://www.newcenturynews.com/Article/china/201101/20110111185021.html>

^v "Yinhai District Court in Beihai Illegally Changes Court Hearing Time, Mocking Lawyers and Villagers" (北海银海法院违法变更开庭时间, 捉弄律师与村民), January 11, 2011,

<http://www.newcenturynews.com/Article/china/201101/20110111183544.html>

^{vi} "New Provocation in Qinzhou, Guangxi Forced Expropriation: Well Polluted to Force Move" (广西钦州征地新招 污染水源 逼迁), January 15, 2011,

<http://news.boxun.com/news/gb/china/2011/01/201101150932.shtml>

^{vii} "Fengxiang County, Shaanxi Province Letters and Visits Bureau Director Beats 72-Year Old Petitioning Worker into Critical Condition" (陕西省凤翔县信访 局长殴打 72 岁上访工人致生命垂危), January 13, 2011, <http://news.boxun.com/news/gb/china/2011/01/201101132155.shtml>

^{viii} "Rights Activist Wang Lihong Has Been under Soft Detention since Liu Xiaobo Won the Nobel Prize" (维权人士 王荔蕻自刘晓波获奖后被软禁至今), January 18, 2011,

<http://news.boxun.com/news/gb/china/2011/01/201101181206.shtml>

^{ix} "National Security Police Threaten to 'Wreck the Home and Disperse the Family' of Chen Xi" (陈西受到国保“家破人亡”威胁), January 14, 2011,

<http://news.boxun.com/news/gb/china/2011/01/201101141204.shtml>

^x "Nineteen Lawyers Jointly Sign Appeal: The State's Respect and Protection of Human Rights Begins with the Strict Prohibition of Torture" (19 名律师联 署呼吁: 国家尊重和保障人权从严禁酷刑开始), January 18, 2011, <http://news.boxun.com/news/gb/china/2011/01/201101180146.shtml>