



Chinese Human Rights Defenders (CHRD) 维权网

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Promoting human rights and empowering grassroots activism in China

China Human Rights Briefing

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Highlights

- **Updates on Detentions and Disappearances Related to the “Jasmine Revolution” Crackdown:** On June 18, the case against Beijing-based rights activist **Wang Lihong** (王荔虹), for “gathering a crowd to disrupt traffic order,” was transferred to the procuratorate. Wang was detained on March 21 and arrested on April 21, and her case is likely tied to the gathering of a crowd that voiced support outside the courthouse when the “Fujian Three” netizens’ were sentenced over a year ago.
- **Gao Zhisheng’s Brother: No Official Information in 15 Months: Gao Zhiyi** (高智义), the elder brother of disappeared lawyer **Gao Zhisheng** (高智晟), recently told CHRD of his unsuccessful attempts over the past 15 months to find out from authorities the whereabouts of his brother.

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Arbitrary Detention

Updates on Detentions and Disappearances Related to the “Jasmine Revolution” Crackdown

On June 18, the case against **Wang Lihong** (王荔蕪), a Beijing-based human rights activist, for allegedly “gathering a crowd to disrupt traffic order” (聚众扰乱交通秩序) was transferred to the procuratorate for review for prosecution. Lawyer **Han Yicun** (韩一村) recently went to the Chaoyang District Detention Center to meet with her because Wang’s lawyer, **Liu Xiaoyuan** (刘晓原), has not yet been able to get his lawyer’s license renewed and thus is unable to review the case files or see Wang (see story below). After Han met Wang, he stated that Wang’s health and spirits were better than the previous time they had met. He also said that Wang told him the food in the detention center was sufficient, and that the guards had not insulted or beaten her. Han described Wang as optimistic, cool, and calm, and said that she wants her son to take good care of his own life and situation.

Wang’s case has been with the procuratorate for almost a month. Liu Xiaoyuan thinks that there should be some news around July 19. In any event, either the procuratorate will decide to indict and transfer the case to court, or it could send the case back to public security for further investigation if it deems the evidence to be insufficient. Han Yicun also mentioned that it’s possible that Wang could be released at any point.

An active voice for rights defense cases since 2008, Wang Lihong was criminally detained for “creating a disturbance” (寻衅滋事) on March 21 of this year, and formally arrested on April 21. The charge against her was later changed to “assembling a crowd to disrupt traffic order,” and is believed to stem from the gathering of a crowd who, along with Wang, put on a vocal show of support outside the “Fujian Three” netizens’ sentencing hearing on April 16, 2010. On May 13 of this year, Liu Xiaoyuan applied for her release on bail to await trial, but the request was rejected. (CHRD)^[1]

Jinan Petitioner Sent to 21 Months of RTL, Had Filed Suit in 2010 Challenging Black Jail Detention

Li Hongwei (李红卫), a petitioner from Jinan City, Shandong Province, who filed a landmark lawsuit against the Lixia District government for illegally detaining her in a black jail for 17 days in 2010, was ordered on July 11 to serve 21 months of Re-education through Labor (RTL). Li has been petitioning about the forced demolition of her home since 2007, and has made numerous trips to Beijing to seek redress, all without success.

The Lixia District Public Security Bureau issued a notice summoning Li to appear at the Dongguan Police Station on the morning of July 11, 2011. The notice stated that she was being called in on suspicion of “disrupting public order” (扰乱公共秩序). At 6 p.m. that evening, the Jinan Municipal RTL Management Committee issued its decision, referencing incidents on January 16 and February 6 when Li allegedly spoke out publicly in Hero Mountain Square against the Chinese government, Communist Party leaders, and the socialist system. The

decision accused her of “endangering state security” and “inciting subversion of state power” (煽动颠覆国家政权) (without expressly claiming that she had committed the crime of incitement). It is believed Li has been sent to RTL in retaliation for the lawsuit she filed last fall against the Lixia District government challenging the legality of her past detention in a black jail. Li’s lawsuit was one of the first black jail-related suits to be accepted and heard by a Chinese court, though the court eventually rejected the lawsuit after several hearings. (CHRD)^[iii]

Enforced Disappearance

Brother of Gao Zhisheng: Authorities Offer No Information During 15-Month Disappearance

It has been 15 months since rights defense lawyer **Gao Zhisheng** (高智晟) was last heard from. Gao’s elder brother, **Gao Zhiyi** (高智义), told CHRD that he has not been able to obtain any information about Gao from the authorities since Gao went missing in April 2010, despite repeated efforts to find out what has happened to him. Gao Zhiyi said that he has called the section chief responsible for handling the guarding and surveillance of Gao Zhisheng several times to ask for information about his brother. The chief always responds that he doesn’t know where Gao is, and on occasion he has even suggested that Gao may have disappeared on his own. When Gao Zhiyi told the chief that he was thinking about coming to Beijing during the annual “Two Meetings” this past March, the chief said that he would tell him Gao Zhisheng’s whereabouts once the sessions were over. But when Gao Zhiyi called after their conclusion, the chief once again said that he didn’t know where his brother was. Gao Zhiyi said that it is unacceptable for the government not to inform the family of Gao Zhisheng’s whereabouts for 15 months, and that if his brother is not released on August 14, the date when Gao’s probation related to his 2006 conviction for “inciting subversion of state power” is set to expire, he will do whatever it takes to obtain an explanation.

Gao Zhisheng was taken into custody on August 15, 2006, after working on many sensitive rights cases as well as exposing abuses suffered by Falun Gong practitioners. On December 22 of that year, the Beijing No. 1 Intermediate Court convicted Gao of “inciting subversion” and sentenced him to a three-year prison term, which was immediately commuted to five years’ probation. After his release, Gao and his family were subjected to constant monitoring and harassment. In 2007, Gao was disappeared for over 50 days and tortured. In February 2009, he disappeared again for over a year. When Gao re-appeared briefly in late March 2010, he spoke of the cruel treatment he had been subjected to while in secret detention, and then he went missing again in April 2010. (CHRD)^[iiii]

Harassment of Human Rights Lawyers

Liu Xiaoyuan’s Law Firm Facing Difficulties in Annual “Assessment and Registration” Process

The Qijian Law Firm (旗鉴律师事务所), where Beijing-based human rights lawyer **Liu Xiaoyuan** (刘晓原) works, is facing several obstacles in getting its license renewed even though Qijian went through the required annual assessment and paid the necessary fees in mid-June, and

the online system run by the relevant authorities showed that the firm has met all the requirements. However, officials from the Chaoyang District and the Beijing Municipal Justice Bureaus have not provided the official stamp on the documents necessary for signing off on the assessment procedures for the firm, which effectively puts on hold the licenses of all the firm's lawyers.

Liu has indicated that he believes his license to practice law will likely be revoked after two tense visits this week with officials at the Beijing Justice Bureau's Lawyers' Management Department, whom he sought out to express concerns about the delay of approval of Qijian's license. During the July 5 meeting, one official brought up that Liu had "hyped up" the **Yang Jia** (杨佳) case three years ago—Yang was executed for killing six police officers in Shanghai—and that he had acted similarly with the case of **He Shengkai** (何胜凯), who was executed on July 8 for killing a bailiff. This official also expressed irritation that Liu's blog had won a "foreign award." Furthermore, a department chief surnamed Zhu advised Liu that he should just "quietly amass a fortune." On July 7, when Liu returned to the Lawyers' Management Department, he said that the deputy director, **Lei Chai** (柴磊), was very rude to him, and the two exchanged heated words. Another staff member, **Chen Yinghui** (陈滢辉), even tried to hit Liu, and had to be restrained by other employees.

Liu wrote on his Twitter account that when his rights were seriously violated, the Justice Bureau never complied with provisions in the Lawyers' Law to protect him, but instead used the tool of the "annual assessment" to get rid of him, "a disobedient lawyer." Liu also wrote that "after lawyers **Tang Jitian** (唐吉田) and **Liu Wei** (刘巍) were disbarred last year, this year is perhaps my turn."

Liu was one of many lawyers targeted during the Jasmine Revolution crackdown. He went missing between April 14 and 19 after indicating he was willing to defend his friend Ai Weiwei, the artist and activist who had gone missing on April 3. After Liu reappeared, he told *The Guardian* that he did not want to provide details about what had happened to him during his disappearance. (CHRD)^[iv]

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

Shanxi Petitioner Tortured During 15-Day Detention

On July 11, CHRD learned that **Cheng Shumin** (程淑敏), a petitioner from Datong City, Shanxi Province, who has been petitioning for the past eight years over the violent demolition of her house, was recently arbitrarily detained for 15 days, beaten and tortured. On May 26, Cheng traveled to Beijing to petition, but she was forcibly returned to Datong by three interceptors who had been dispatched by the secretary of Xinjian North Road Subdistrict Office. After reaching Datong, Cheng was placed under the control of more than 20 plainclothes officers from the Xinjian North Road Police Station, who took her to the Kuang District Detention House. Unconscious upon arrival, Cheng awoke to find herself on a "tiger bench," an instrument of torture.* When Cheng regained consciousness, other detainees in the same room told Cheng that she had already been there for three days.

Cheng informed CHRD of injuries she had suffered, including a large bump on her forehead, a blot clot around her right eye, and bruises to her arms and legs. Though Cheng could not remember how she received these injuries, she sustained them during the time she was in the custody of officers from the Criminal Police Unit of the Cheng District branch under the Datong Public Security Bureau while they held her in the detention house for 15 days. (CHRD)^[v]

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^[i] “Wang Lihong Case Transferred to Procuratorate, Attorneys Discuss Possible Outcomes,” (王荔蕪案移交检察院，律师谈可能出现的结果), July 11, 2011, http://wqw2010.blogspot.com/2011/07/blog-post_2107.html?spref=tw; “Wang Lihong’s Lawyer Applies for Her Release on Bail to Await Trial, is Rejected” (王荔蕪的律师为其申请取保候审被拒), May 20, 2011, http://wqw2010.blogspot.com/2011/05/blog-post_7307.html; Individuals Affected by the Crackdown Following Call for “Jasmine Revolution,” July 12, 2011 (updated), http://chrdnet.org/2011/04/15/jasmine_crackdown/

^[ii] “Li Hongwei Sent to RTL, Had Sued Over Detention in Jinan Black Jail,” (曾经起诉济南黑监狱的李红卫被劳教), July 11, 2011, http://wqw2010.blogspot.com/2011/07/blog-post_3395.html; “Petitioner Li Hongwei Given 1 Year, 9 Months in RTL,” (孙文广：访民李红卫被劳教1年9个月), July 11, 2011, <http://wqw2010.blogspot.com/2011/07/19.html>; “Third Hearing in Case Brought by Li Hongwei, of Jinan, Against Black Jail” (济南李红卫诉黑监狱一案第三次开庭), November 1, 2010, <http://news.boxun.com/news/gb/china/2010/11/201011012153.shtml>

^[iii] “Gao Zhisheng Missing for 15 Months, Elder Brother’s Multiple Inquiries Yield No Results,” (高智晟失踪15个月，其兄多方找询无果), June 9, 2011, http://wqw2010.blogspot.com/2011/07/15_09.html

^[iv] Liu Shaoyuan’s Law Firm Faces Difficulties Following ‘Annual Assessment,’” (刘晓原所在律师所“年检”遭刁难), July 7, 2011, http://wqw2010.blogspot.com/2011/07/blog-post_4584.html

^[v] “Datong, Shanxi Petitioner Cheng Shumin Tortured, Detained,” (山西大同上访公民程淑敏受酷刑被拘留), July 11, 2011, http://wqw2010.blogspot.com/2011/07/blog-post_5.html [*Tiger bench: A torture victim is forced to sit upright on a long bench with hands tied behind their back. Their thighs are fastened to the bench while feet are raised off the floor by bricks, putting extreme strain on the knees. Torture using a “tiger bench” is extremely painful, especially when conducted for a long period of time.]

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.

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