



Chinese Human Rights Defenders (CHRD)

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Promoting human rights and empowering grassroots activism in China

“Soft Detention” of Yuan Weijing Continues: Journalist Beaten

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“Soft Detention” of Yuan Weijing Continues: Journalist Beaten, Barred from Meeting

(Chinese Human Rights Defenders, March 10, 2009) – Yuan Weijing (袁伟静), the wife of imprisoned rights activist Chen Guangcheng (陈光诚), remains confined to her home and surrounded by guards. On March 8, a prominent investigative journalist and his student were threatened and attacked as they tried to visit her.

“While China marked International Women’s Day with official ceremonies, Ms. Yuan and her family enjoyed no respite from the relentless restriction of movement and the ban on contacting the outside world to which they have been subjected. Why is a government which enjoys ‘world power’ status so afraid of a woman taking care of her small children and an elderly mother, while her husband, who is blind, languishes in jail?” asked Renee Xia, CHRD’s international director.

On the afternoon of March 8, Wang Keqin (王克勤), journalist for *Economy Daily* (经济时报), his student Zhou Fuzhi (周福志), along with a driver and a local friend, travelled to Yuan’s home in Dongshigu Village, Yinan County, Shandong Province, to speak with her

and bring her, Chen's mother, and Yuan's two children some food and gifts. When they reached the entrance to the village, they were met by an unidentified man who questioned them aggressively about the purpose of their visit and then followed them as they made their way through the village. Once Wang's car reached the gate of Yuan's house, he and Zhou were accosted by a group of guards which later grew to more than 10 men, who forbade them from seeing Yuan, ordered them to leave the village, and threatened violence if they would not comply. The men would not say who they were or why Wang and Zhou could not visit Yuan. As Wang, refusing to be bullied, insisted on delivering the food and gifts, the men grew violent and pushed Wang and Zhou back towards their car, kicking and striking them as they got into their vehicle. As Wang and his group fled the village, they were pursued by two men on motorcycles, and only when they left Shandong province later that evening were they sure that their pursuers were out of sight.

Wang was able to reach Yuan by phone shortly after they had left the village to let her know of the situation. Yuan said that the men guarding her kept her and her family under 24-hour surveillance, rotating in shifts of 11 guards. Yuan expressed relief that Wang and Zhou were not injured, stating that friends who had come to visit her last year were seriously beaten by the same group of guards. She added that she has now lived under continuous surveillance by these men for more than one year, and that the guards monitor her family's conversations as well as restricting their freedom to work, shop, or even leave their own house. She has only been allowed one visit with her imprisoned husband in the past 12 months.

“The attack on journalists attempting to visit Ms. Yuan and the year-long illegal detention of the family make a mockery of China’s ‘rule of law’ reforms highlighted in Premier Wen Jiabao’s speech this week during the annual session of the National People’s Congress in Beijing,” said Renee Xia.

Background

Yuan, an English teacher and wife of imprisoned human rights defender Chen Guangcheng, became the victim of retaliation by local authorities after helping her husband reveal the use of violence in a local birth control campaign and publicly opposing the illegal imprisonment of her husband. Since September 2005, she has been under intermittent residential surveillance.

Chen, a human rights activist, self-taught legal advisor, and "barefoot lawyer" from Linyi City, Shandong Province, was convicted of “intentionally damaging property and gathering crowds to disturb transport order” and sentenced to four years and three months imprisonment on March 11, 2006. It is believed that Chen was imprisoned for exposing extensive violence in the implementation of the government's population policy in Linyi City. Chen also worked for years to protect the rights of farmers and the disabled.

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“Investigative Journalist Wang Keqin Beaten for Visiting Chen Guangcheng’s Family”

(调查记者王克勤探望陈光诚家人被打) (March 10, 2009)

[/Article/Class18/Class51/200903/20090310140814_14196.html](http://www.crd-net.org/Article/Class18/Class51/200903/20090310140814_14196.html)

Imprisoned Human Rights Defender Chen Guangcheng Denied Medical Care (January 14, 2009)

http://www.crd-net.org/Article/Class9/Class10/200901/20090115134520_13092.html

Shandong Officials Continue Harassing Wife of Jailed Human Rights Defender (November 24, 2007)

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Wife of Jailed Human Rights Defender Barred from Seeking Medical Treatment (October 31, 2007)

http://www.crd-net.org/Article/Class9/Class10/200710/20071031120202_6177.html

Yuan Weijing, activist, under residential surveillance, house arrest (May 31, 2007)

http://www.crd-net.org/Article/Class9/Class48/Class62/200705/20070531232542_4508.html

China vs. a Blind Human Rights Defender: A Report on the Case of Imprisoned Chen

Guangcheng (February 20, 2007)

<http://www.crd-net.org/Article/ShowArticle.asp?ArticleID=3485> (Part 1)

http://www.crd-net.org/Article/Class9/Class48/Class62/200702/20070222210628_7953.html

(Part 2)