



## Chinese Human Rights Defenders (CHRD)

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Promoting human rights and empowering grassroots activism in China

### China Human Rights Briefing

April 3-10, 2012

#### *Top News*

- **Beijing Activists Ni Yulan, Dong Jiqin Sentenced:** On April 10, activists **Ni Yulan** and **Dong Jiqin**, who now have been detained for one year, were sentenced. Ni was given two years and eight months in prison for the crimes of “creating a disturbance” and “fraud” while Dong was sentenced to two years for “creating a disturbance.” A hearing on the couple’s case was first held in late December, but a verdict was not announced at that time.
- **Reactions to Central Officials’ Recent News Lead to Netizen Detentions:** Guangzhou netizen **Xiao Yong** was criminally detained last week for “illegal gathering” after an activity calling on top leaders to disclose their assets and in support of Premier Wen Jiabao’s recent call for political reforms. In addition, CHRD has learned that another Guangzhou netizen, **Wu Guancong**, was criminally detained in late March for sharing opinions online about the infighting among central Party leaders.
- **Watch Ai Xiaoming’s “Three Days in Wukan” From CHRD Website:** CHRD recently linked on its website “Three Day in Wukan,” the latest [documentary](#) (Chinese only) by filmmaker **Ai Xiaoming** which details the experiences of Wukan villagers in Guangdong Province during their protests last year against government seizure of their farmland.

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## **Arbitrary Detention**

### **Human Rights Activist Ni Yulan Sentenced to Two Years and Eight Months in Prison, Husband Gets Two Years**

On April 10, Beijing human rights activist and legal advocate Ni Yulan (倪玉兰) was convicted of the crimes of “creating a disturbance” and “fraud” and sentenced to two years and eight months in prison. Ni’s husband, Dong Jiqin (董继勤), also convicted of “creating a disturbance,” was sentenced to two years in prison.

The couple’s daughter, Dong Xuan (董璇), was allowed to attend the hearing at the Xicheng District People’s Court. However, more than 100 police officers reportedly surrounded the courthouse and cordoned off the area, preventing the couple’s supporters and other family members, such as Dong Jiqin’s brother, from entering the courthouse. Dozens of Beijing petitioners who wished to attend the hearing were seized by the police outside the court and taken to Jiuqingzhuang, a black jail. Some petitioners were held under soft detention at home to keep them from travelling to the court.

On April 7, 2011, police seized Ni Yulan and Dong Jiqin during the “Jasmine Crackdown” on suspicion of “creating a disturbance.” On July 13, Ni was

additionally charged with “fraud” for allegedly stating she was a lawyer in order to win sympathy for her case and to gain financially. The Xicheng District People’s Court originally heard the couple’s case on December 29, 2011, but it did not announce the verdict until over three months later. The couple has been held in the Xicheng District Detention Center. Ni’s family has been concerned about her health, which has deteriorated during her current detention, and Dong has reportedly also had health issues. Earlier in 2011, Ni’s lawyer applied unsuccessfully for her release on medical grounds. During periods of detention over the past decade, Ni was beaten and tortured by Beijing authorities and, as a result, Ni cannot walk unaided and suffers from several medical problems. (CHRD)<sup>i</sup>

### **Hubei Resident Criminally Detained for “Extorting Government” in Labor Dispute**

Tao Rongmei (陶荣梅), a rural worker from Hubei Province, has been criminally detained on charges of “extortion” over a labor dispute involving her state employer, and after being detained in black jails during the “Two Meetings” in Beijing. On March 8, interceptors took Tao and another Hubei petitioner, Lu Tianlan (卢天兰), into custody in the capital and placed them in a black jail at the Shiyan City Government Liaison Office. Within a few days, Lu escaped and then brought two journalists and other petitioners to free Tao. Local interceptors later tracked down Tao, took her back into custody on March 17, and returned her to Shiyan. After failing to learn about Tao’s fate from Shiyan authorities, her family went to a black jail and located her. The next day, however, the Shiyan City Public Security Bureau criminally detained Tao on the “extortion” charge, and they are now holding her in an unknown location. A longtime worker at the animal husbandry breeding farm bureau in Shiyan, Tao has pursued a dispute against her state employer over wages and insurance benefits, but a local court declared last year that the case was beyond its scope to resolve. (CHRD)<sup>ii</sup>

### **Chengdu Residents Administratively Detained for Petitioning During “Two Meetings”**

Three petitioners from Chengdu have been given administrative detentions on charges of “disrupting the work order of state organs” for petitioning in Beijing while the “Two Meetings” convened in March. The punishments, which were for either seven or eight days, were issued to Xin Guohui (辛国惠), Xin Wenrong (辛文荣), and Hu Jinqiong (胡金琼) after they had been summoned by police on April 6. The three detainees were among several Chengdu petitioners summoned by police last week. The petitioners have all sought justice over issues related to requisitioned land or home demolitions, and most also ran as independent candidates in People’s Congress elections in Chengdu in late February. (CHRD)<sup>iii</sup>

## **Young Mother Criminally Detained after Petitioning about Eviction, Son's Schizophrenia**

Liang Yan (梁艳), a victim of forced eviction, was criminally detained for “disturbing social order,” CHR D learned on April 10. Liang has been held by Qitaihe City Detention Center in Heilongjiang Province since March 9, after she was intercepted in Beijing by security guards hired by the city government. Liang’s family has received no official notification of Liang’s fate, and it was not until Liang’s lawyer visited the detention center that the authorities acknowledged her detention. Liang, 33, lost her home and restaurant one morning when the local government forcibly demolished her properties to make way for an economic development zone. Liang alleges that the authorities did not offer her adequate compensation, and that her three-year-old son developed schizophrenia after he witnessed the violent eviction. (CHR D)<sup>iv</sup>

## **Guangzhou Activist Xiao Yong Criminally Detained for “Illegal Gathering,” Denied Visits**

On April 2, Guangzhou police seized and criminally detained activist and netizen Xiao Yong (肖勇) for “illegal gathering,” likely in connection with a public activity held calling on state leaders to disclose their income and assets and in support of Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao’s (温家宝) recent call for political reforms. The day Xiao was taken into custody, his home was searched and his computer taken away. The next day, two individuals who claimed to be state security officers provided Xiao’s wife with a detention notice issued by the Guangzhou Public Security Bureau. Xiao, who has been warned and summoned by police on many occasions for his human rights defense activism, is being held at the Guangzhou City No. 1 Detention Center. On April 5, detention center authorities refused to allow lawyer Wang Yajun (王雅军), who has been hired by Xiao’s wife, to see Xiao; Xiao’s wife also reported not being able to see her husband, though she can drop off clothes and money for him. Authorities insisted to Wang that, during the investigative stage, only those handling Xiao’s case can approve visits, since the case is considered “confidential.”

On the afternoon of March 31, more than 10 netizens, including Xiao, carried posters in a street in Guangzhou expressing support for the idea of reforms that Premier Wen had vaguely spoken to at a news conference on March 14, at the end of the National People’s Congress. After the group dispersed, netizen Huang Wenxun (黄文勋), who also took part in the event, was questioned by police and reportedly is still in custody; Huang is perhaps being held at the Haizhu Detention Center, according to local human rights lawyer Tang Jingling (唐荆陵). (CHR D)<sup>v</sup>

## **More Than 2,000 Petitioners Detained in Black Jail on Tomb Sweeping Day**

Beijing police took into custody more than 2,000 petitioners who were on their way to the Babaoshan Revolutionary Cemetery to observe Tomb Sweeping Day, the Chinese festival

that fell on April 4. Among the crowd were more than 500 petitioners from Shanghai. Beijing police and interceptors from various parts of China blocked the petitioners at a subway exit near the cemetery and forcibly drove them to the black jail at Jiujingzhuang. The petitioners reportedly intended to pay respects at Babaoshan, the national cemetery, by sweeping gravesites and laying flowers, and then head to Tiananmen Square to present bouquets. (Many figures in modern Chinese history who served the government, military, or greater society in a significant capacity are interred in Babaoshan.) The day after so many petitioners were placed in the black jail, many of them had to stand in a courtyard since there was simply not enough space to sit inside the facility.

On the festival day, Beijing police also seized Shanghai activist and petitioner Mao Hengfeng (毛恒凤) and more than 10 others after they had gone to the gravesite of Yang Jia (杨佳), the former Beijing resident who was executed in 2008 for killing six police officers in Shanghai; to some, Yang has become a symbol of resistance against the government. (CHRD)<sup>vi</sup>

### **Harassment of Activists**

#### **Beijing Activist Gu Chuan, Family Prevented From Boarding Flight to United States**

On April 4, two Beijing activists—the couple Gu Chuan (古川) and Li Xin'ai (李昕艾)—and their two children were prevented from boarding a flight to the United States at the Beijing Capital International Airport. Gu and his family were going to fly to the United States since he had accepted an invitation from Columbia University to serve as a visiting scholar. The day before the planned flight, national security officers had warned Gu not to go abroad and stationed guards downstairs from the family's home.

A writer and activist, Gu Chuan went missing on February 19, 2011, when about 20 Beijing policemen searched his home, confiscated property, and took him away. Officers said the search was related to Gu using Twitter to repost messages about the “Jasmine Revolution.” Gu eventually returned home in late April of 2011. (CHRD)<sup>vii</sup>

#### **Guangdong Rights Defenders Detained One Month in Black Jail After Being Seized During “Two Meetings”**

Two Guangdong petitioners and rights defenders, He Shaoyan (何韶炎) and Yang Yamei (杨亚美), have reportedly been detained in a black jail for the past month after being seized in Beijing as the “Two Meetings” convened. Along with others, He and Yang had gone to the capital to petition and were intercepted and forcibly returned to Shaoguan City on March 6. The others who were seized and held in the same black jail were released after 10 days. For years, He Shaoyan has been a representative of fellow villagers seeking justice after the local government, which they feel is corrupt, has not given compensation for land it requisitioned. In retaliation for his activities, He has served administrative detentions and his identification card was confiscated by the local

government nearly two years ago. Yang Yamei has petitioned over similar issues and has also endured blatant harassment, including a months-long detention in a black jail last year. (CHRD)<sup>viii</sup>

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

### **Family Suspects Foul Play after Schizophrenic Man Dies of Brain Hemorrhage in Prison**

After a schizophrenic man who was given a suspended death sentence died suddenly in prison, the prison authorities have pressured his family to cremate him, CHRD learned on April 10. The man, Xu Guoxin (徐国新), from Wuxi City in Jiangsu Province, was given a suspended death sentence in 2008 for causing an explosion during an eviction. His family has maintained that Xu was wrongly convicted, and argued that the Jiangsu man was healthy before his imprisonment. They also said that medical check-ups in prison indicated that he was in good health. Xu's family insisted that the prison showed them Xu's medical and death records, but the prison said they must first sign the papers authorizing the cremation before they could obtain copies of these records. (CHRD)<sup>ix</sup>

## **Freedom of Expression**

### **Guangdong Netizen Criminally Detained for Spreading Views on Party Power Struggles**

CHRD has learned that Guangzhou netizen Wu Guancong (巫冠聪) was criminally detained on March 25 on suspicion of “creating a disturbance” for allegedly sharing views online about rumored power struggles among top Chinese leaders, and after the comments attracted the attention of foreign media. Wu's alleged crime involves posts sent over his weibo account on March 19. One referred to the disagreement between Premier Wen Jiabao (温家宝) and Zhou Yongkang (周永康), head of the Central Political and Legislative Committee, over the treatment of Bo Xilai (薄熙来), who was recently sacked as Communist Party Secretary in Chongqing. Another post stated that officials supported by the “Shanghai faction” of former President Jiang Zemin (江泽民), such as Bo and Zhou, might lose their positions. Beijing officers from the Tongzhou District Public Security Bureau took Wu into custody in Guangzhou on March 25, and his family received the bureau's detention notice the same day. Wu was initially held at the Tianhe Detention House, but his current whereabouts cannot be confirmed. (CHRD)<sup>x</sup>

*More recent news:*

“Guizhou Human Rights Activist Yang Zhengwei Given Administrative Detention for Expressing Opinions Online” ([贵州维权人士杨正伟在网上发表言论被行政拘留](#)), April 6, 2012, CHRD

## **Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and Association**

### **Citing Security Concerns, Tianjin Police Deny Residents' Right to Protest Government**

On April 5, police in Tianjin Municipality rejected an application for nearly 200 residents to conduct a rally against the local government, claiming the activity would “endanger public security” or “severely undermine the social order.” The local residents intended to express their displeasure over detentions from around the “Two Meetings” and other rights violations and restrictions of movement that petitioners have faced. They also sought to have the mayor of Tianjin take responsibility for the illegal harassment. The application for the protest was submitted to the Tianjin Municipal Public Security Bureau on March 26. On April 6, Tianjin police kept rights activist Zhang Jianzhong (张建中) from leaving his residence, where police vehicles also were stationed, in a move believed to be tied to the anti-government rally. (CHRD)<sup>xi</sup>

## **Special Notice**

### **Ai Xiaoming Documentary “Three Days in Wukan” Posted on CHRD Website**

CHRD recently linked from its website “Three Day in Wukan,” the latest [documentary](#) (Chinese only) by well-known filmmaker Ai Xiaoming (艾晓明) which details the disappointments and hopes of Wukan villagers in Guangdong Province at the height of their protests last year against government seizure of their farmland. Ai and a group of volunteers secretly entered the village on December 19, 2011, the day that Shanwei City Party Secretary Zheng Yanxiong’s (郑雁雄) speech on the protests was delivered to the village. Over the next two days, provincial Party officials entered Wukan and the provincial Party deputy secretary met with the villagers’ representative, thus recognizing his and other representatives’ legitimacy. Ai’s documentary, with interviews of villagers, thus records Wukan’s protests as a new page was turned. (CHRD)<sup>xii</sup>

### **Chinese Authorities Launch “Strike Hard” Campaign in Tibetan Areas of Gansu Province**

In order to promote a “strike hard” (严打) campaign, Chinese government authorities in Gannan (Tibetan: Kanlho) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Gansu Province issued a notice in early March encouraging the public to secretly report to police any “illegal” activities that “endanger social stability,” “public security,” and “national unity.” According to the notice, such activities include engaging in forms of expression that “incite” or “advocate” “the public to split the nation,” participating in and donating to certain organizations, or using social media to “fabricate and disseminate rumors.” As with past “strike hard” campaigns, those who report allegedly criminal activities will supposedly be

provided police protection and payment for their efforts. The widely posted public notice was issued during a politically sensitive month for Chinese authorities in Tibetan areas, among which Gannan has been particularly restive since 2008, and as incidents of self-immolation in protest to the Chinese government's rule have skyrocketed over the past year.

“Strike hard” campaigns, used in the Han areas to ostensibly crack down on various crimes, are often staged in Tibetan areas to warn ethnic Tibetans not to take part in protests and demonstrations during certain politically-sensitive times. Police activities cloaked within a “strike hard” campaign have led to widespread human rights violations and other serious consequences, including arbitrary detention and arrest, police interrogation, torture, dismissal from jobs, and expulsion from religious institutions. (Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy)<sup>xiii</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 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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<sup>i</sup> “Verdict to be Announced April 10 for Detained Activist Ni Yulan, Husband Dong Jiqin” ([被羁押一年的倪玉兰夫妇将于4月10日开庭宣判](#)), April 7, 2012, CHRD; “Dozens of Petitioners Detained for Trying to Attend Hearing of Ni Yulan and Dong Jiqin” ([数十位访民欲旁听倪玉兰夫妇宣判遭关押](#)), April 10, 2012; “Petitioners who Tried to Attend Ni Yulan's Verdict Hearing Were Detained for Nearly Eight Hours” ([倪玉兰开庭各地在京访民欲旁听被警方关押近8小时](#)), April 10, 2012; “Witnesses Harassed Before Lawyer



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Ni Yulan's Trial for Creating Disturbance" ([倪玉兰律师被控寻衅滋事案开庭前证人被控制](#)), December 28, 2011, CHR; "Ni Yulan, Husband Go To Trial, Many At Scene Taken and Held at Police Station" ([倪玉兰夫妇庭审, 现场多人被抓往派出所](#)), December 28, 2011, CHR; "'Creating Disturbance' Case Against Ni Yulan, Dong Jiqin Going to Trial on December 29, Daughter to Testify" ([北京倪玉兰夫妇“寻衅滋事案”29日开庭, 女儿将出庭作证](#)), December 27, 2011, CHR; "On Eve of Trial, Case Against Ni Yulan, Husband Sent Back to Procuratorate" ([开庭前夕, 北京维权律师倪玉兰夫妇案件退回检察院](#)), November 23, 2011, CHR; "Trial to Open for Beijing Rights Defender Ni Yulan, Husband for 'Creating a Disturbance'" ([北京维权人士倪玉兰夫妇“寻衅滋事案”即将开庭](#)), November 21, 2011, CHR; "Ni Yulan and Husband's Case Sent Back to Public Security Branch Bureau for Further Investigation" ([倪玉兰夫妇案件被退回公安分局补充侦查](#)), August 28, 2011, CHR; "Ni Yulan and Husband's Case Transferred to Procuratorate, 'Fraud' Charge Added," ([倪玉兰夫妇案移送检察院, 再增“诈骗罪”](#)), July 21, 2011, CHR; "Arrests of Rights Defense Lawyer Ni Yulan and Husband Both Confirmed, Family Has Not Received Formal Notice" ([倪玉兰夫妇双双被捕, 亲属未收到法律文书](#)), June 9, 2011, CHR; "News Flash: Arrest of Human Rights Lawyer Ni Yulan Approved" ([快讯: 维权律师倪玉兰被批准逮捕](#)), May 17, 2011, CHR

ii "Hubei Petitioner Tao Rongmei Criminally Detained for Allegedly Extorting Government" ([湖北访民陶荣梅被以敲诈政府罪刑事拘留](#)), April 9, 2012, CHR

iii "Chengdu Petitioners Xin Guohui, Xin Wenrong, and Hu Jinqiong Administratively Detained for Actions Around Two Meetings" ([成都访民辛国惠、辛文荣、胡金琼因两会上访被拘留](#)), April 8, 2012, CHR; "Several Shuangliu, Chengdu Petitioners Summoned by Police" ([成都双流多位访民遭派出所电话传唤](#)), April 6, 2012, CHR

iv "Qitaihe Petitioner Liang Yan Criminally Detained for 'Disturbing social Order'" ([七台河访民梁艳被以“扰乱社会秩序罪”刑事拘留\(图\)](#)), April 10, 2012; "Heilongjiang Qitaihe Petitioner Liang Yan Detained in Detention Center Without Explanation" ([黑龙江七台河访民梁艳被关看守所无任何说法](#)), April 9, 2012.

v "Guangzhou Police Cite 'Case Confidentiality' in Refusing Lawyer Visit to Xiao Yong" ([广州警方以“案件涉密”为由拒绝律师会见肖勇](#)), April 5, 2012, CHR; "Guangzhou Activist Xiao Yong Criminally Detained for 'Illegal Gathering'" ([特别关注: 广州维权人士肖勇被以“非法集会”刑事拘留](#)), April 3, 2012, CHR; "Guangzhou Activist Xiao Yong Goes Missing, Home Computer Also Missing" ([特别关注: 广州维权人士肖勇失踪、家中电脑不见](#)), April 3, 2012, CHR; "Guangzhou Citizen Huang Wenxun Questioned Over Support for Premier Wen Jiabao's Call for Political Reforms" ([广州公民黄文勋因支持温家宝政改被传讯](#)), April 1, 2012, CHR

vi "More Than 2,000 Petitioners From Around China Held in Black Jail at Jiuqinghuang During Tomb Sweeping Festival" ([2千余名各地访民清明节扫墓被关久敬庄黑监狱](#)), April 4, 2012, CHR; "More Than 500 Shanghai Petitioners Seized After Going to Beijing for Tomb Sweeping Festival" ([上海五百多访民清明节北京扫墓被抓](#)), April 4, 2012, CRLW

vii "Human Rights Activists Gu Chuan, Li Xin'ai Intercepted at Beijing Capital International Airport" ([快讯: 维权人士古川、李昕艾在北京国际机场被拦截](#)), April 4, 2012, CHR; "Gu Chuan Missing for 45

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Days, Wife Goes to Police Station to Stage Hunger Strike as Protest” ([古川失踪 45 天，妻子到派出所绝食抗议](#)), April 4, 2011, CHRD; [“Individuals Affected by Crackdown Following Call for ‘Jasmine Revolution’.”](#) March 27, 2012 (updated), CHRD

viii “Guangdong Rights Activist He Shaoyan Held in Black Jail Since Petitioning During Two Meetings” ([广东维权代表何韶炎两会上访被关黑监狱仍未获释](#)), April 5, 2012, CHRD; “Petitioner Yang Yamei Held Over 100 Days in Black Jail” ([访民杨亚美被关黑监狱一百余天未获释](#)), July 14, 2011, CHRD

ix “Mentally Ill Man Dies in Prison, Family’s Right to Know Refused” ([精神病犯人狱中死亡，家属要求知情权遭拒](#)), April 10, 2012.

x “Guangzhou Resident Wu Guancong Detained by Beijing Police for Weibo Comments” ([广州公民巫冠聪因转发微博被北京警方跨省刑拘](#)), April 8, 2012, CHRD

xi “Application Rejected for Nearly 200 Tianjin Petitioners to Hold Rally” ([天津近 200 名访民申请游行示威被拒](#)), April 6, 2012, CHRD; “200 Tianjin Petitioners Fail to Get Permission to Hold Rally, Well-Known Rights Activist Zhang Jianzhong Put Under Soft Detention” ([天津 200 民众示威游行申请失败，知名维权人士张建中被软禁](#)), April 6, 2012, HRCC

xii [“Three Days in Wukan” by Ai Xiaoming \(available only in Chinese, 100 minutes\)](#), CHRD

xiii [“China Launches ‘Strike Hard’ Campaign in Tibetan Areas.”](#) April 4, 2012, Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy