



## Chinese Human Rights Defenders (CHRD)

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Promoting human rights and empowering grassroots activism in China

### China Human Rights Briefing

July 20-26, 2012

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#### **Arbitrary Detention**

##### **Hunan Activist Xiao Yong Given Two-Year RTL Punishment**

Hunan activist Xiao Yong (肖勇), detained for taking part in a demonstration in March and later put under soft detention after questioning the death in June of 1989 labor activist Li Wangyang (李旺阳), has been issued two years of R-education through Labor (RTL), though his precise offense is unknown. Hired to represent Xiao, Shenzhen lawyer Pang Kun (庞琨) was forcibly dragged to a police station on July 21 and roughed up before being released. Xiao's family has also been pressured by the local authorities to not hire an attorney for Xiao. Xiao was among several activists criminally detained in Guangzhou for "illegal assembly, procession, or demonstration" after marching and holding signs on March 31 calling for official transparency and political reforms. Xiao was in police custody for a month before being released on bail and sent back to Shaoyang City, and at one point was not allowed to sleep during five straight days of interrogation as his overall health declined.<sup>1</sup>

##### **Fujian Petitioners Punished in Beijing, One Sent to RTL After Trying to Visit Ai Weiwei**

About a dozen Fujian petitioners were recently detained in a Beijing black jail for over a week, some after trying to visit artist and activist Ai Weiwei (艾未未) and others for distributing

leaflets. Among those seized on July 11 after seeking out Ai at his compound, Wang Weizhu (王尾珠) was given a one-year Re-education through Labor (RTL) punishment and another, Lin Yingqiang (林应强), was issued a 10-day administrative detention (though it was temporarily suspended). For the petitioners who had leafleted on July 12, they were given five-day detentions, with all but one suspended due to petitioners' poor health or old age. While held together in a black jail in the capital, the petitioners faced various forms of harassment and mistreatment, and police admonished them for "illegal behavior," including going to see Ai and holding banners calling for political reforms, among other alleged actions.<sup>2</sup>

### **Freedom of Expression and Access to Information**

#### **Government Censors Message About Deadly Flooding Amid Public Skepticism**

Chinese censors have deleted an online message about the recent torrential rainfall as Beijing authorities keep triggering doubts from the public in the disaster's aftermath. On July 25, four days after the heavy rains hit, a professor from Renmin University, Wei Dedong (魏德东), called on citizens via weibo to gather in the streets on July 28 to mourn to those who had died. Other weibo users then passed along Wei's appeal, but the message was removed, presumably by government censors, after it was reposted more than 600 times. While the public has been skeptical about the government's estimate of the death toll, Xinhua at the time of writing had [reported](#) that nearly 80 are known to have perished, about twice as many as the government first indicated.<sup>3</sup>

### **Forced Eviction and Demolition/Land Expropriation**

#### **Henan Woman Suffers Miscarriage After Land Conflict, Family Goes Uncompensated**

A Henan woman suffered a miscarriage due to a violent land takeover in June, but authorities have refused to investigate the incident or fairly compensate the family for their lost land. On June 15, government personnel who were reclaiming corn fields attacked villagers trying to stop them. A woman beaten and pushed to the ground in the melee consequently lost her unborn child. Though a medical exam confirmed the cause of the miscarriage, police would not conduct an investigation, claiming that too much time had passed after the incident, and that the couple had violated family planning policies and had aborted the child "voluntarily." Meanwhile, authorities have refused to compensate the family according to national standards covering land reclamation.<sup>4</sup>

## Citizen Actions

### **Hopes Expressed for More Effective Human Rights Dialogue As Conditions in China Worsen**

On the eve of the US-China human rights dialogue, which took place in Washington D.C. on July 23 and 24, petitioners in Beijing publicly called on the US government to press the Chinese government to put into practice China's human rights obligations. The citizens who gathered on July 22 all reportedly have been persecuted in violation of their rights, and appealed for the talks to address corruption, black jail detentions, forced disappearances, and other abuses. Following the conclusion of the dialogue, a US official [acknowledged](#) that the state of human rights in China is deteriorating, and that it is time Chinese authorities open up more space for dissent inside the country (see [here](#) for the full transcript of the post-dialogue press briefing). As CHRD recently [stated](#), the value of the bilateral talks has been questioned for years, and progress can best be made in human rights if Chinese civil society actors are given opportunities to get involved in the dialogue and push for results on cases of detainees and in other crucial areas.<sup>v</sup>



Petitioners express hope that this week's bilateral human rights dialogue will yield real progress.

*Editors: Victor Clemens and Wang Songlian*

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>1</sup> "Shaoyang Authorities Threaten Xiao Yong's Family Members, Lawyer Unable to Take On Case" ([邵阳当局威胁肖勇家人，律师委托无法办理](#)), July 22, 2012, WQW; "Hunan Rights Defender Xiao Yong Sent to Two Years of RTL" ([特别关注：湖南维权人士肖勇被劳教两年](#)), July 20, 2012, WQW; "Rights Activist Xiao Yong Released on Bail, Sent Back to Hometown" ([维权人士肖勇“取保候审”遣送回家](#)), May 1, 2012, WQW

<sup>2</sup> "Fujian Petitioners Going to Visit Ai Weiwei Detained, Given RTL Punishment" ([探访艾未未的福建冤民被截访后遭拘留、劳教](#)), July 25, 2012, WQW

<sup>3</sup> "University Professor's Weibo Message on Memorializing Beijing Flooding Victims Removed" ([大学教授在微博发布悼念北京暴雨遇难者的信息被删除](#)), July 25, 2012, WQW

<sup>4</sup> "Henan Government Illegally, Forcibly Reclaim Land, Beaten Pregnant Woman Miscarries" ([河南政府非法强征土地，孕妇遭殴打流产](#)), July 25, 2012, WQW

<sup>v</sup> "Petitioners From Around China Hope for Results From US-China Dialogue" ([各地在京访民希望中美人权对话有成效](#)), July 23, 2012, WQW