

URGENT ACTION

SIX DETAINED FOR REPORTING G20 PROTESTS

Six citizen journalists from the Sichuan-based website “64 Tianwang” (www.64tianwang.com), were detained for covering protests in relation to the G20 Summit. Three have since been released but one is still missing and two remain in detention without any access to lawyers and are at risk of torture or other ill-treatment.

Qin Chao, from Wugang city in Henan province, had planned to cover the G20 summit, held on 4 and 5 September 2016 in Hangzhou, Zhejiang province, as a non-professional citizen journalist. He was intercepted on 30 August. Qin Chao was administratively detained for 10 days before being criminally detained on 8 September on suspicion of “picking quarrels and provoking trouble” at the Baofeng County Detention Centre in Pingdingshan City, Henan. Her family was only informed about her whereabouts on 9 September by the local public security bureau.

Yuan Ying was placed in administrative detention for 15 days on 6 September at the Wenjiang District Branch of the Chengdu City Public Security Bureau for reporting about a demonstration of about 2000 petitioners that had taken place ahead of the G20 on 2 September, in front of the Communist Party’s Central Commission for Disciplinary Inspection in Beijing.

Lin Xiurong, who reported that Hangzhou’s stadium had been turned into a detention centre for petitioners, has been missing since 3 September.

Three other citizen journalists from “64 Tianwang” were briefly detained: Jiang Chengfen and Yang Xiuqiong, taken away on 1 and 2 September respectively, were released 4 days later on 6 September, and He Yazhen, detained on 4 September, was released 11 days later on 15 September.

Please write immediately in Chinese, English or your own language, urging the authorities to:

- Immediately and unconditionally release Qin Chao and Yuan Ying who have been detained for exercising their right to freedom of expression.
- Ensure that while in detention Qin Chao and Yuan Ying have regular, unrestricted access to family and lawyers of their choice, and are not subjected to torture or other ill-treatment.
- Immediately investigate and disclose Lin Xiurong’s whereabouts and her legal status.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 27 OCTOBER 2016 TO:

Director

Ye Hanbing
Hangzhou City Public Security Bureau
35 Huaguanglu
Hangzhoushi, Zhejiang Sheng 310002
People’s Republic of China
Tel: +86 571 87280114 (Chinese only)
Email: gaj@hz.gov.cn
Salutation: Dear Director

Director

Li Guofeng
Baofeng County Detention Centre
Youhaocun, Chengguanzhen,
Baofeng Xian, Pingdingshan Shi,
Henan Sheng 467460
People’s Republic of China
Tel: +86 375 6576166 (Chinese only)
Salutation: Dear Director

And copies to:

Minister of Public Security
Guo Shengkun
14 Dong Chang’an Jie
Dongcheng Qu, Beijing Shi 100741
People’s Republic of China
Tel: +86 10 66262114 (Chinese only)
Email: gabzfwz@mps.gov.cn
Salutation: Dear Minister

Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country.

HIS EXCELLENCY MR LIU XIAOMING, Embassy of the People’s Republic of China, 49-51 Portland Place W1B 1JL
020 7299 4049, press_uk@mfa.gov.cn

Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Citizen journalists play a significant role in China in documenting human rights abuses, and covering protests of petitioners and grassroots activists who, due to censorship, are often unable to be mentioned in domestic media.

“64 Tianwang”, founded by Sichuan activist Huang Qi and his wife Zeng Li in 1998, is one of the few major mainland-based websites that reports and documents petitioners’ protests in China. Most of the website’s contributors were first petitioners before becoming citizen journalists to report on other petitioners’ protests and arrests.

Over the years, Huang Qi and other “64 Tianwang” contributors have been frequently detained or harassed by the Chinese authorities. Huang Qi has been imprisoned twice. He was first detained in June 2000 – the 11th anniversary of the Tiananmen crackdown – before being convicted of “inciting subversion of state power” and sentenced to five years in May 2003. He was again detained and later imprisoned for three years after exposing the substandard building scandal following the 2008 Wenchuan earthquake in Sichuan.

According to “64 Tianwang”, their journalists have been questioned or placed under brief detention more than 100 times since President Xi Jinping took power in 2012, and at least 30 have been imprisoned or criminally detained. Eight of “64 Tianwang”’s journalists are currently in prison, including Wang Jing, Zhang Jixin, Li Min, Sun Enwei, Li Chunhua, Wei Wenyuan, Xiao Jianfang and Yang Dongying.

China tightened security and environment measures in preparation for the G20 Summit, affecting cities as far as 300km away from Hangzhou. All Hangzhou residents were given a one-week vacation and discounts to tourist attractions outside Hangzhou, encouraging them to leave the city. Some residential areas were cordoned off to those without the necessary ID cards during the Summit period.

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