

# International PEN Writers in Prison Committee

## Rapid Actions 2006 - Countries

### China: Januar bis Oktober 2006

**10 January 2006 - RAN 01/06**

*CHINA: Journalist Jiang Weiping released.*

**18 January 2006 - Update #1 to RAN 40/05**

*CHINA: Sentence against poet, professor and freelance journalist Zheng Yichun upheld on appeal. Reporters Sans Frontiers give the following background about Zheng Yichun:*

**9 February 2006 - RAN 05/06**

*CHINA: Editor dies following police beating after reporting on corruption; two more writers arrested.*

**28 March 2005 - Update #1 to RAN 43/04**

*CHINA: Charges dropped against journalist Zhao Yan; renewed calls for his release.*

**9 May 2006 - RAN 18/06**

*CHINA: Journalist Yang Xiaoqing detained; health concerns.*

**24 May 2006 - RAN 20/06**

*CHINA: Internet writer Yang Tongyan (aka Yang Tianshui) sentenced to 12 years in prison.*

**24 July 2006 Update #1 to RAN 12/06**

*CHINA: Journalist Li Yuanlong sentenced to two years in prison on subversion charges for articles posted online; health concerns.*

**2 August 2006 RAN 29/06**

*CHINA/TIBET AUTONOMOUS REGION: Teacher and writer Dolma Kyab (pen-name Lobsang Kelsang Gyatso) serving a ten-year sentence for a manuscript; health concerns.*

**25 August 2006 Update #2 to RAN 43/04**

*CHINA: Journalist Zhao Yan acquitted of revealing state secrets but convicted of fraud*

**10 October 2006 RAN 35/06**

*CHINA: Crackdown on Dissident Writers.*

**18 October 2006 Update #1 to RAN 24/06**

*CHINA: Internet journalist Guo Qizhen sentenced to four years in prison.*

#### 10 January 2006 - RAN 01/06

*CHINA: Journalist Jiang Weiping released.*

The Writers in Prison Committee of International PEN welcomes the release of journalist Jiang Weiping, who was freed on 3 January 2006 after serving five years in prison for reporting on official corruption.

Jiang Weiping, former Dalian bureau chief for the Hong Kong-based newspaper Wen Hui Bao and reporter for the state news agency Xinhua, was arrested on 5 December 2000 after publishing a number of articles in the Hong Kong-based monthly magazine Qianshao (Frontline) alleging corruption scandals in north-eastern China. Jiang reportedly wrote the Frontline articles between June and September 1999 under various pen-names. His coverage exposed several major corruption scandals involving high-level officials, two of whom were prosecuted. Jiang was charged in May 2001 with "revealing state secrets", "instigating to overthrow state power" and "illegally holding confidential documents", and was tried in secret at the Dalian Intermediate Court, Liaoning Province, on 5 September 2001. Jiang was sentenced to eight years in prison, reduced to six years on appeal. No reason for his early release has been given, but international pressure is thought to have been paramount.

#### 18 January 2006 - Update #1 to RAN 40/05

*CHINA: Sentence against poet, professor and freelance journalist Zheng Yichun upheld on appeal.*

The Writers in Prison Committee of International PEN protests the detention of poet, professor and freelance journalist Zheng Yichun, whose seven-year prison

sentence was upheld on appeal on 22 December 2005. Zheng Yichun was convicted by the Yingkou Intermediate People's Court, Liaoning Province, northern China on 21 July 2005 and sentenced on 20 September 2005 to seven years in prison for 'incitement to subversion of state power' for his critical writings, many of which were posted on-line on overseas web-sites.

Zheng Yichun is a diabetic and has reportedly been refused any medical treatment for his condition. He has also been reportedly beaten in prison by other prisoners. There are serious concerns for his health and well-being.

According to PEN's information, Zheng Yichun, aged 48, was arrested on 3 December 2004 and charged in connection with sixty-three articles he had written for foreign-based publications and websites. His family were reportedly threatened with reprisals if they contacted international press or human rights organisations about his arrest.

***Reporters Sans Frontiers give the following background about Zheng Yichun:***

'A member of the Korean minority, he has published eight collections of poetry and nearly 200 essays and political articles. Dozens of his articles have been published recently in certain newspapers, including Da Ji Yuan (Epoch Times) and websites such as Boxun and Min Zhu Lun Tan (Democracy Forum), all of them based abroad. Before his arrest, Zheng was also an English professor at the University of Liaoning.'

Zheng Yichun is currently held at No 1 jail in his home-town of Panjin, in Liaoning Province, but is expected to be moved to another detention centre soon, making family visits difficult. He suffers from diabetes and according to his family he is not receiving any treatment in jail. He has also been reportedly beaten by other prisoners during his detention. There are serious concerns for his health, which is believed to be deteriorating.

International PEN protests the detention of poet, professor and dissident writer Zheng Yichun, and calls for his immediate and unconditional release in accordance with Article 19 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. PEN is seriously concerned about reports that he is denied medical treatment for diabetes in prison, and demands that he be given immediate medical attention. PEN seeks assurances that he is being treated humanely in detention.

**9 February 2006 - RAN 05/06**

***CHINA: Editor dies following police beating after reporting on corruption; two more writers arrested.***

The Writers in Prison Committee of International PEN is alarmed about the widespread pattern of abuses against writers and journalists in the People's Republic of China, most recently the death of editor Wu Xianghu after being beaten by police. International PEN is deeply concerned that journalists and writers in China appear to be at increasing risk of attack and arrest in retaliation for their work, and calls upon the Chinese authorities to vigorously investigate and punish all such attacks and release unconditionally all writers and journalists currently imprisoned for their writings.

Wu Xianghu, deputy editor of the newspaper Taizhou Wanbao, died on 2 February 2006 at the age of 41 after sustaining serious injuries in October 2005 when traffic police in the eastern coastal city of Taizhou, Zhejiang province, attacked him for a report accusing them of corruption. He had been hospitalised since the attack. The BBC News website gives the following details:

'Wu was reportedly attacked by some 50 policemen after his paper accused them of charging illegal bicycle fees. China's media have reported a string of torture and coercion cases by police. Wu died of liver and kidney failure on Thursday, according to Lu Weibo, a reporter with the Taizhou Evening News, who wrote the article believed to have provoked the beating.

The article accused the local police of charging illegal fees for registering electric bicycles. Local media reported widely on the beating, but have been silent on Wu's death, possibly reflecting its sensitivity.

Senior traffic police officer Li Xiaoguo was sacked for his role in the incident, Xinhua state news agency reported at the time.'

The full report can be found on the following link:

<http://newsvote.bbc.co.uk/mpapps/pagetools/print/news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/4688276.stm>

**PEN is campaigning for the release of 32 writers held in China for their writings. Most recently are the following:**

Dissident internet writer **Yang Tongyan (aka YangTianshui)** was arrested in Nanjing on 23 December 2005, and his family were not notified of his arrest until 20 January 2006. He is being held incommunicado at an undisclosed location without access to his family. He is believed to be facing charges of endangering national security which are thought to relate to articles posted on-line, although the reason for his detention has not been made known. Yang is known for his critical writings published on dissident news websites such as Boxun.com and Epoch Times. He spent ten years in prison on "counter-revolution" charges for his involvement in the 1989 pro-democracy protests.

**Journalist Li Changqing**, of the Fuzhou Daily, was sentenced to three years in prison on 24 January 2006 by the Gulou district court in southern China's Fuzhou city for "spreading false and alarmist information". The charge is reportedly linked to an article published on the banned Chinese-language Web site Boxun News exposing an outbreak of dengue fever in Fujian province before the authorities officially announced it.

#### **28 March 2005 - Update #1 to RAN 43/04**

##### ***CHINA: Charges dropped against journalist Zhao Yan; renewed calls for his release.***

The Writers in Prison Committee of International PEN welcomes the announcement on 17 March 2006 that the charge of revealing state secrets has been dropped against journalist Zhao Yan, but is seriously concerned that he has not been released. International PEN demands his immediate and unconditional release in accordance with Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which China is a signatory.

Zhao Yan, news assistant at the Beijing bureau of the New York Times and former reporter for China Reform magazine, was arrested on 17 September 2004 and charged with "providing state secrets to foreigners". He was charged for an article published in the New York Times on 7 September 2004 revealing Jiang Zemin's retirement from the position of Chairman of the Central Military Commission and the transfer of leadership to President Hu Jintao. The article preceded the official announcement about Jiang's retirement, which was made on 19 September 2004. The New York Times said that Zhao had no involvement whatsoever in the article. Zhao was also indicted on the lesser charge of fraud, which is still under investigation.

#### **9 May 2006 - RAN 18/06**

##### ***CHINA: Journalist Yang Xiaoqing detained; health concerns.***

The Writers in Prison Committee of International PEN is seriously concerned about the continuing detention of journalist Yang Xiaoqing, who has been held since 22 January 2006. Yang faces charges of extortion and blackmail, but it is widely believed that his arrest is connected to his reporting on official corruption. Yang is being held without access to family visits, and there are serious concerns for his health.

Yang Xiaoqing, a reporter with the Zhongguo Chanjing Xinwenbao (China Industrial Economy News), was arrested by the Public Security Bureau of Longhui County, Hunan Province, on 22 January 2006 after investigating and reporting the alleged corruption of Longhui County officials. He is accused of posting defamatory articles on the Internet after failing to extort up to 800,000 Yuan (US\$100,000) from Longhui County officials. The People's Procuratorate of Longhui County turned the case back to the police for further investigation in March 2006 due to lack of evidence.

The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) gives the following account of the circumstances surrounding Yang's arrest and detention:

'Yang's wife, Gong Jie, told CPJ that he was under threat for months before his arrest in January, and had gone into hiding after his reporting angered a local Communist Party secretary... Yang, 36, a reporter for China Industrial Economy News, has been formally arrested on suspicion of extortion and blackmail. But Gong believes her husband's arrest is connected to two articles he wrote in May 2005 alleging corruption in the sale of a state-owned company by local Longhui county officials to private individuals. In September, his wife said, Yang began to feel that his life was in danger and went into hiding. In late December, according to online writer Li Xinde, police issued a notice offering a reward for information on Yang's whereabouts. Police accused him of posting defamatory articles on an "illegal Web site" after he failed to extort up to 800,000 Yuan (US\$100,000) from Longhui county officials.

Yang was seized at a friend's house in Hunan Province on January 22, said his wife, who has not been permitted to see him since his arrest. Yang's colleagues have spoken publicly in his support, and fear that criminal charges have been used to punish him for his work.'

Yang's wife Gong Jie, who is also a journalist, has launched an appeal for her husband's release at [www.gongjie520.sohu.blog.com](http://www.gongjie520.sohu.blog.com)

Yang Xiaoqing is held at the Longhui County Detention Centre, Hunan Province. He is said to have been diagnosed with Hepatitis B since his detention. His trial is scheduled to start on 10 May 2006.

#### **24 May 2006 - RAN 20/06**

##### ***CHINA: Internet writer Yang Tongyan (aka Yang Tianshui) sentenced to 12 years in prison.***

The Writers in Prison Committee of International PEN protests the twelve-year prison sentence handed down to dissident writer Yang Tongyan (aka Yang Tianshui) on 16 May 2006 for his critical writings. International PEN calls for his immediate and unconditional release in accordance with Article 19 of the United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which China is a signatory.

According to PEN's information, dissident writer and member of Independent Chinese PEN Centre Yang Tongyan (pen-name Yang Tianshui) was convicted of subversion for posting anti-government articles on the Internet, organizing branches of the (outlawed) China Democracy Party and accepting illegal funds from overseas. He was sentenced by the Zhenjiang intermediate court in eastern China's Jiangsu province at a three-hour trial on 16 May 2006.

He had been detained without a warrant on 23 December 2005 in Nanjing, and his family were not formally notified of his arrest or whereabouts until 27 January 2006, when they received formal notification of his arrest dated 20 January. Yang was held incommunicado at Dantu Detention Centre in Zhenjiang, Jiangsu Province, without access to his family.

Yang Tongyan, aged 45, is known for his critical writings published on dissident news websites such as Boxun.com and Epoch Times. He spent a decade in prison from 1990 to 2000 on "counter-revolution" charges for his involvement in the 1989 pro-democracy protests. He was also previously held incommunicado from 24 December 2004 - 25 January 2005.

#### **24 July 2006 Update #1 to RAN 12/06**

##### ***CHINA: Journalist Li Yuanlong sentenced to two years in prison on subversion charges for articles posted online; health concerns.***

The Writers in Prison Committee of International PEN protests the two-year prison sentence handed down to journalist Li Yuanlong on 13 July 2006 for 'inciting subversion of state authority'. Li has been detained since 9 September 2005 for articles he posted online. International PEN demands the

immediate and unconditional release of Li Yuanlong and all other writers currently detained in the People's Republic of China solely for expressing their views, in accordance with Article 19 of the United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which China is a signatory.

According to PEN's information, Li Yuanlong, a reporter for the daily Bijie Ribao, was arrested on 9 September 2005 by members of the security bureau in Guizhou province in south-west China, after posting articles online critical of local living standards and calling for democracy. The prosecution cited recent articles he had written under the pen-name Ye Lang (Night Wolf) for U.S.-based Chinese language Web sites banned in China, including Boxun News, Epoch Times, ChinaEWeekly and New Century Net. Two articles entitled "In my mind, I am an American" and "Common birth, tragic death" were said to be viewed by the Chinese authorities as particularly "serious". Li was formally charged with 'incitement to subversion' on 9 February 2006, and was convicted and sentenced by Bijie Intermediate People's Court on 13 July 2006. He is appealing the sentence. Li Yuanlong is known for his reporting on rural poverty in his native Guizhou Province.

Li is held in Bijie Detention Centre without access to family visits, and is said to be in very poor health.

## **2 August 2006 RAN 29/06**

### ***CHINA/TIBET AUTONOMOUS REGION: Teacher and writer Dolma Kyab (pen-name Lobsang Kelsang Gyatso) serving a ten-year sentence for a manuscript; health concerns.***

The Writers in Prison Committee of International PEN protests the detention of teacher and writer Dolma Kyab (aka Lobsang Kelsang Gyatso), who has been detained since 9 March 2005 and is serving a ten-year prison sentence for his critical writings. International PEN calls for his immediate and unconditional release in accordance with Article 19 of the United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which China is a signatory. PEN seeks information about his health and assurances that he is receiving all necessary medical care following reports that he contracted tuberculosis whilst in pre-trial detention.

According to information received in July 2006, Dolma Kyab (pen-name Lobsang Kelsang Gyatso) is serving a ten-year prison sentence for writing a comprehensive study about Tibet. The manuscript, written in Chinese, is entitled Sao dong de Ximalayashan and is reportedly a compilation of 57 chapters covering various topics including democracy, the sovereignty of Tibet, Tibet under communism, colonialism, and religion. Dolma Kyab is also said to have started another manuscript on the geographical aspects of Tibet, which was comparatively short yet touched on sensitive topics about the location and number of Chinese military camps in the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR).

Dolma Kyab (a.k.a Lobsang Kelsang Gyatso) was reportedly arrested on 9 March 2005 in Lhasa, where he was teaching History at a Middle School. He was held pending trial at the TAR Public Security Bureau Detention Centre, popularly known as 'Seitru', on charges of 'endangering state security', and sentenced on 16 September 2005 by Lhasa Intermediate People's Court to ten years in prison. The sentence was upheld on appeal on 30 November 2005. In March 2006 he was transferred to Chushul Prison. Dolma Kyab reportedly contracted tuberculosis whilst in 'Seitru' prison, for which he received medical treatment before being transferred to Chushul Prison.

The following background is provided by The Tibetan Centre for Human Rights and Democracy (TCHRD), <http://www.tchrd.org/> :

'Dolma Kyab was born in 1976 in Ari Village, Qilian County, Tsochang Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Qinghai Province. He attended the local Primary

School in 1984 and later joined the County Middle School. After completing his schooling in 1995, he joined a Teachers Training Centre and served as a teacher in a Middle School in Qilian County. He later went to a University in Beijing to continue his studies. In 2003, he came to India to learn English and Hindi languages and returned to Tibet in May 2004. Upon return, he served as a History teacher in a Middle School in Lhasa until arrest.'

Please send appeals to the Chinese authorities:

- Protesting the ten-year prison sentence handed down to teacher and writer Dolma Kyab, and calling for his immediate and unconditional
- release in accordance with Article 19 of the United Nations International
- Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which China is a signatory
- Expressing concern for his health following reports that he
- contracted tuberculosis in pre-trial detention, and seeking assurances that he is receiving all necessary medical care.

## **25 August 2006 Update #2 to RAN 43/04**

### ***CHINA: Journalist Zhao Yan acquitted of revealing state secrets but convicted of fraud***

The Writers in Prison Committee of International PEN welcomes the announcement on 25 August 2006 that the charge of revealing state secrets has been dropped against journalist Zhao Yan, but is seriously concerned at his sentencing to three years in jail for fraud. International PEN demands his immediate and unconditional release pending his likely appeal.

Zhao Yan, news assistant at the Beijing bureau of the New York Times and former reporter for China Reform magazine, was arrested on 17 September 2004 and charged with "providing state secrets to foreigners". He was charged for an article published in the New York Times on 7 September 2004 revealing Jiang Zemin's retirement from the position of Chairman of the Central Military Commission and the transfer of leadership to President Hu Jintao. The article preceded the official announcement about Jiang's retirement, which was made on 19 September 2004. The New York Times said that Zhao had no involvement whatsoever in the article. Although the charges against Zhao were dropped in March 2006, weeks ahead of President Hu Jintao's visit to the United States, they were reinstated in May 2006. No information has been given about his alleged fraud, but Zhao's lawyers believe he is likely to appeal the conviction.

Please send appeals:

- Welcoming the dropping of the charge of revealing state secrets against journalist Zhao Yan, but expressing serious concerns that he remains detained;
- calling for his immediate and unconditional release pending his likely appeal.

## **10 October 2006 RAN 35/06**

### ***CHINA: Crackdown on Dissident Writers.***

The Writers in Prison Committee of International PEN is alarmed about an apparent crackdown on dissident writers in China. Three writers, all members of Independent Chinese PEN centre (ICPC), have been detained in recent weeks: they are Zhang Jianhong (aka Li Hong), Yang Maodong (aka Guo Feixiong) and Chen Shuqing. All three appear to be held for their critical writings and dissident activities. There are serious concerns that they are at risk of ill-treatment in prison. International PEN calls for their immediate and unconditional release in accordance with Article 19 of the United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which China is a signatory, and seeks immediate assurances that whilst detained they are treated humanely.

According to PEN's information, prominent writer Zhang Jianhong (aka Li Hong) was arrested on 6 September 2006 when more than 20 police officers searched his home in Ningbo City, Zhejiang Province, Eastern China. His computers were seized and his wife interrogated. He is reportedly charged with 'incitement to subversion of state power' for critical articles published online on overseas websites. Zhang Jianhong, aged 48, is a leading writer in the region and is known for his dissident activities and prolific writings. He was imprisoned from 1989-1991 for his pro-democracy activities. In August 2005 he founded the literary website Aiqinhai.org (<http://www.aiqinhai.org/>), of which he was editor-in-chief, which was banned by the authorities in March 2006. He is also a regular contributor to the overseas Chinese sites Boxun (<http://www.boxun.com>) and The Epoch Times (<http://www.dajiyuan.com>).

Yang Maodong ((aka Guo Feixiong)), a well-known dissident writer, independent publisher and civil rights activist, has been detained since 14 September 2006. According to his wife, police officers searched their home in Guangzhou City, Guangdong Province, Southern China, and took away Yang's computers, cell phone, books, manuscripts and other documents. The following day Yang was reportedly charged with illegal business practices for allegedly publishing and selling 20,000 books using false ISBNs (international standard book number). His wife claims that the charges are totally unfounded. There are reports that he is being ill-treated in detention.

Yang Maodong, aged 40, has been known to the authorities for some time for his critical writings and civil rights activism. He was previously detained on 12 September 2005 and held without charge until December 2005 for his involvement in and reporting of an anti-corruption campaign by villagers in Taishi Village, Guangdong Province. PEN campaigned for his release.

<http://www.internationalpen.org.uk/index.php?pid=33&aid=393&return=33>

Yang has since been subject to repeated harassment by the authorities, most recently on 9 August 2006 when he was reportedly beaten by railway police and briefly detained for carrying an allegedly false ticket.

Yang Maodong is a writer and independent publisher, and his writings include two novels and one collection of short stories. He has also published many essays, poems and articles.

Chen Shuqing, a dissident writer and leading member of Zhejiang Branch of the banned Chinese Democratic Party (CDP), has been detained since 14 September 2006. He went voluntarily to the Daguan Police Station, Hangzhou City, Zhejiang Province, after being summoned the previous day. He was arrested on subversion charges, after which police raided his home and took away his computer and some documents. The reason for the charge is not known, although he is known for his critical articles published on various overseas Chinese Websites such as Boxun, Minzhu Luntan, Dajiyuan, Yi Bao, GuanCha, and Xin Shiji.

Chen, aged 42, was previously detained in 1999 for 4 months for his role in the setting up the banned Chinese Democratic Party. After his release, he trained to become a lawyer, but in 2005, after passing his exams, he was refused a lawyer's licence by the Justice Bureau of Zhejiang Province, who alleged his articles published online had violated China's Constitution. Chen challenged this ruling in court, but lost the case in both the lower and the appeal courts. He has since been subject to police harassment.

## **18 October 2006 Update #1 to RAN 24/06**

### ***CHINA: Internet journalist Guo Qizhen sentenced to four years in prison.***

The Writers in Prison Committee of International PEN protests the four-year prison sentence handed down on 16 October 2006 to Internet writer Guo Qizhen on subversion charges. Guo has reportedly been held since 12 May 2006 for his critical writings and pro-democracy activities. Guo is said to be in poor health and held without access to adequate care. International PEN considers journalist Guo Qizhen to be detained in violation of Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which China became a signatory in 1998, and calls for his immediate and unconditional release.

According to PEN's information, cyber-dissident Guo Qizhen was arrested at his home on 12 May 2006 and charged with 'inciting subversion of state power' on 8 June 2006. His arrest appears to be linked to his participation in a rotating hunger strike which has been taking place by pro-democracy activists since 4 February 2006 to protest against human rights violations in China. The charges are believed to be based on his anti-government articles published online on overseas websites.

Guo is currently held at Cangzhou detention centre No.2 in Hebei Province, central China. He was reported to be in a fragile psychological state and suffering from a broken leg, for reasons that remain unclear to PEN. The detention centre where he is held is said to lack the medical facilities required to give him adequate treatment.