

# URGENT ACTION

## CHINESE JOURNALIST MISSING IN THAILAND

**A Chinese journalist has not been seen or heard from since 11 January, when he was travelling by train from Thailand to Laos. He was planning to apply for refugee status in Thailand, but there are fears he may have been forcibly returned to China where he would be at risk of detention, torture and other ill-treatment.**

Journalist **Li Xin**, a former opinion editor of the website of the Southern Metropolis Daily, a popular Chinese newspaper, sent an SMS message to his partner on 11 January saying that he was travelling to the border between Thailand and Laos. He has not been heard from since. According to her, he was planning to apply for refugee status in Thailand and seek settlement in another country, which required him to leave Thailand and re-enter with a new visa.

Li Xin fled from China in October 2015, firstly to India, where he was refused asylum, and then to Thailand. While in India, he revealed in media interviews that in June 2013, Chinese state security officials had put him under intense pressure to act as an informant against his colleagues and friends, and threatened to imprison him if he did not do so. After initially cooperating, Li Xin refused to continue, which he believed put him and his family at risk, so he decided to leave China. His partner, who remains in China, is taking care of their two-year-old son and is pregnant.

There is particular concern for Li Xin as a number of countries in South East Asia have recently forcibly returned dissidents and members of ethnic minorities fleeing China.

### **Please write immediately in Chinese, Thai, English or your own language:**

- Urge the Chinese and Thai authorities to take all possible steps to establish the whereabouts and legal status of Li Xin, and to immediately disclose this information to his family, lawyers, and the public;
- Demand that if he is detained, the authorities release him immediately and unconditionally unless he is formally charged with an internationally recognizable criminal offence;
- Call on them to ensure without delay that if he is detained he has regular, unrestricted access to his families and lawyers.

### **PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 10 MARCH 2016 TO:**

#### Chinese Minister of Foreign Affairs

Wang Yi Buzhang  
No. 2, Chaoyangmen Nandajie,  
Chaoyangqu, Beijingshi 100701  
People's Republic of China

**Salutation: Dear Minister**

#### Thai Minister for Foreign Affairs

Don Pramudwinai  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Sri Ayudhya Road  
Bangkok 10400, Thailand  
Fax: +66 2643 5320 / +66 2643 5314  
Email: [minister@mfa.go.th](mailto:minister@mfa.go.th)

**Salutation: Dear Minister**

#### **And copies to:**

Ambassador of the People's Republic of  
China to Thailand

Embassy of The People's Republic of  
China in Thailand

57 Ratchadaphisek Road,  
Bangkok 10400, Thailand

Fax: +66-2-2468247

Email: [chinaemb\\_th@mfa.gov.cn](mailto:chinaemb_th@mfa.gov.cn)

**Also send copies to diplomatic representatives accredited to your country. Please insert local diplomatic addresses below:**

Name Address 1 Address 2 Address 3 Fax Fax number Email Email address Salutation Salutation

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

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**



# URGENT ACTION

## CHINESE JOURNALIST MISSING IN THAILAND

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

South East Asian countries are increasingly violating the *non-refoulement* principle following pressure from the Chinese government. This principle prohibits the transfer of people to any country or jurisdiction where they would be at real risk of serious human rights violations or abuses. It is enshrined in numerous international instruments, and has achieved the status of customary international law, binding on all states regardless of whether they have ratified the relevant treaties, such as the UN Refugee Convention, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, or the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

A number of countries have forcibly returned dissidents and members of ethnic minorities who had fled China, in violation of their obligations of *non-refoulement*. In November 2015, Jiang Yefei and Dong Guangping, two Chinese activists recognized as refugees by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), were deported from Thailand to China, and are at grave risk of torture and other ill-treatment, as well as unfair trials (see UA 259/16: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa17/2880/2015/en/>). In July 2015, the Thai authorities forcibly returned to China some 100 individuals, mainly ethnic Uighurs of Chinese citizenship who were at risk of torture and other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment upon return. In December 2012, Malaysia forcibly returned six Uighurs, whose claims for asylum were pending with the UNHCR. In December 2009, the Cambodian authorities forcibly returned 20 ethnic Uighur asylum seekers. Of these 20, five are reported to have been sentenced to life imprisonment, while eight others are reported to have been sentenced to prison terms ranging from 16 to 20 year, after closed trials.

In addition, other persons known to be critical of the Chinese leadership, or who are linked to them, have vanished from South East Asian countries in recent months in unclear circumstances. For instance, Gui Minhai, a Swedish national of Chinese origin, went missing in Thailand in October 2015 and activists have voiced fears he was removed to China. On 17 January 2016, Gui Minhai appeared on Chinese state television CCTV making a “confession”, which may have been made under duress. Also in October 2015, 16-year-old Bao Zhuoxuan, the son of Chinese lawyer Wang Yu, and Chinese activists Tang Zhishun and Xing Qingxian, were taken away by uniformed officials and plain-clothed individuals from a town in Myanmar close to the Chinese border. After several days during which there was no information about their whereabouts, Bao Zhuoxuan was returned to his grandparents’ home in Ulanhot, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, in northern China. It is believed that the two men travelling with him are being held by Chinese authorities.

Name: Li Xin  
Gender m/f: Male

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