

URGENT ACTION

CHARGED WITH SUBVERSION, TORTURE DETAILS REVEALED

Former human rights lawyer Ding Jiayi, who has been detained since 26 December 2019, has for the first time been allowed to meet with his lawyer through two video calls. During these conversations, Ding revealed details about the torture that he was subject to when he was detained under “residential surveillance under designated location” and the harsh condition of the current detention centre. Originally detained for “inciting subversion of state power”, the People Procuratorate of Linyi Shi informed Ding’s lawyer on 20 January that he is now charged with “subversion of state power”. Given Ding’s treatment over the last year, there are grave concerns that he could be at risk of further torture and other ill-treatment.

TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

Chief Procurator Wang Qinjie
People Procuratorate of Linyi Shi
Jiefang East Road, Hedong Qu,
Linyi Shi, Shandong Sheng, 276034
People's Republic of China

Dear Chief Procurator Wang:

*I am writing to express my concern that former human rights lawyer **Ding Jiayi** (丁家喜), who has been detained since 26 December 2019, was charged with subversion of state power (颠覆国家政权) on 20 January 2021.*

It is encouraging to learn that, after more than a year of incommunicado detention, Ding Jiayi was finally able to meet his lawyer via video call on 21 January and 4 February. However, it was distressing to learn about the treatment that he has had to endure while detained in “residential surveillance in a designated location”.

I am alarmed to hear that, according to Ding, he had alarmingly been subject to long hours of interrogation, tied to a restraining device known as a “tiger chair” and not allowed to clean himself. Ding also revealed that his current conditions in the Linshu County Detention Centre are incredibly harsh. With no access to medical care, the health of his teeth has dramatically deteriorated.

Ding Jiayi has been detained for peacefully exercising his right to freedom of association. The fact that Ding was subjected to torture and ill-treatment while held in “residential surveillance” and is now currently enduring such harsh conditions in the current detention centre has significantly increased my concern for his current and future wellbeing.

I therefore call on you to immediately:

- ***Release Ding Jiayi immediately and unconditionally unless there is sufficient credible and admissible evidence that he has committed an internationally recognized offence and is granted a fair trial in line with international standards;***
- ***Pending his release, ensure that Ding Jiayi has regular, unrestricted access to family and lawyers of his choice and is not subjected to torture and other ill-treatment;***
- ***Allow him prompt, regular and unrestricted access to medical care on request, or as necessary.***

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Ding Jiayi was among dozens of lawyers and activists who attended an informal gathering held in Xiamen, a city on China's southeast coast, in December 2019. Many present at this private gathering had been active in the New Citizens Movement, a loose network of activists who aimed to promote government transparency and expose corruption in the early 2010s. At the meeting, they discussed the situation of civil society and current affairs in China. Since 26 December 2019, police across the country have been summoning or detaining participants of the Xiamen gathering.

Ding Jiayi was held incommunicado for more than a year after being taken away on 26 December 2020. In June 2020, Ding's family received an arrest notice from police in Linyi City, Shandong, confirming that Ding had been formally arrested for "inciting subversion of state power". In December, Ding's family was told that his case had been granted an extension of the investigation period (延长侦查期) to 19 January 2021.

On 20 January, Ding's lawyer was informed by the procuratorate office that the charge against Ding has been changed to "subversion on state power, which could carry a maximum life sentence if Ding is deemed to have been a "ringleader" of the alleged activities. No trial date has been set and Ding still has no access to his family members.

Ding Jiayi is a Beijing-based former human rights lawyer and a core member of the New Citizens Movement. His activism has included advocating for rights of migrant workers' children and demanding transparent governance. In 2014 Ding was sentenced to three-and-a-half years' imprisonment for "gathering a crowd to disrupt order in a public place". In 2018, he was barred from boarding a flight to the United States, where his wife and daughter live. In 2019, authorities stopped him from travelling to Hong Kong on the grounds that he "may endanger national security and interest".

In March 2020, United Nations human rights expert bodies [expressed their grave concerns](#) about the disappearance of Ding.

Since the massive crackdown on lawyers and activists in 2015, the Chinese authorities have been systematically using national security charges with extremely vague provisions, such as "subverting state power" and "inciting subversion of state power", to prosecute lawyers, scholars, journalists, activists and NGO workers.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: English or Chinese

You can also write in your own language

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 10 April 2021

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Ding Jiayi (He/Him)

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/asa17/3391/2020/en/>