

PUBLIC

AI Index: ASA 17/005/2006

06 February 2006

Further Information on UA 271/05 (ASA 17/037/2005, 14 October 2005) and follow-up (ASA 17/040/2005, 25 October 2005) Fear of further torture and ill treatment /arbitrary detention

CHINA Chen Guangcheng (m), aged 34

**New names: Chen Hua (m), aged 27
 Chen Guangchun (m), aged in his 40s**

Chen Hua, a neighbour and relative of the human rights defender Chen Guangcheng, has been beaten and is currently detained at Xishan Public Security Bureau Detention Centre in Yinan county, Linyi city, Shandong province. Amnesty International believes he is at risk of further torture and ill-treatment. Local resident Chen Guangchun is at risk of detention and torture and ill-treatment after leading a protest calling for Chen Hua's release.

Chen Guangcheng has been under house arrest since 7 September 2005. His house is surrounded by police and others allegedly hired by the authorities to prevent him from leaving his house, and his telephone line is often cut. On 2 February 2006, Chen Hua was walking past Chen Guangcheng's house and verbally protested against the latter's unlawful detention to the policemen standing guard in front of the house. In response, the police assaulted him, resulting in cuts to his head and bleeding from his nose and mouth.

On 4 February, the police went to Chen Hua's home and took him with them to the Xishan police station, allegedly for questioning. However, upon his arrival at the police station, he was immediately detained. According to Chen Guangcheng, Chen Hua has been beaten again in detention. His family has not been able to visit him and he has not been assigned a lawyer.

Chen Hua has previously been detained briefly for supporting Chen Guangcheng. During his previous period of detention he was tied to a chair, beaten and deprived of sleep and food for 90 hours. Chen Guangcheng claims that people who are detained for protesting against the local authorities are often tortured and ill-treated by police in such a way.

On 5 February, Chen Hua's detention sparked a demonstration in his home village in Linyi city, Shandong province. Almost 400 villagers reportedly gathered in front of the village government office calling for his release. According to reports, some villagers attacked two police cars that were on the scene, and police responded by throwing stones at the protesters, leaving several of them injured and at least one needing hospital treatment. More police have reportedly been sent to the village in order to search for those who took part in the protest. A villager named Chen Guangchun, believed to be one of the leaders of the protest, is thought to be at particular risk of arbitrary detention, torture or ill-treatment. He is currently in hiding.

Chen Guangcheng, who has been blind since birth, has been assisting villagers to take legal action against the Linyi city authorities, who they allege have been breaking the law in their pursuit of birth quotas. According to Linyi residents, in March 2005 the local government began requiring parents with two children to be sterilized and forcing women pregnant with a third child to have abortions. Officials have been detaining family members of people who fled to escape this, beating them and holding them hostage until their relatives returned and submitted to the operations.

Chen Guangcheng had travelled to the capital, Beijing, intending to meet with lawyers, overseas journalists and diplomats from the US embassy to discuss the lawsuit against the authorities. On 6 September he was

detained in Beijing by police from Shandong Province, who took him back to Linyi the following day and have kept him under unofficial house arrest for more than 160 days.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in English, Chinese or your own language:

- urging the authorities to immediately and unconditionally release Chen Hua;
- urging the authorities to guarantee Chen Hua's safety while he remains in custody and following his release;
- calling upon the authorities to conduct a full and impartial investigation into allegations that Chen Hua was beaten by police, with a view to bring those found responsible to justice;
- calling upon the authorities to conduct a full and impartial investigation into reports that police threw stones at villagers as they protested against the detention of Chen Hua on 5 February;
- urging the authorities to guarantee the safety and lawful treatment of Chen Guangchun;
- expressing concern that Chen Guangcheng has been under arbitrary house arrest since September 2005, and calling for the restrictions on his freedom of movement to be lifted;
- urging the authorities to guarantee that Chen Guangcheng can carry out his legitimate activities in defence of human rights without being subjected to arbitrary detention, torture or ill-treatment, or other human rights violations.

APPEALS TO:

Prime Minister

WEN Jiabao Guojia Zongli
The State Council
9 Xihuangcheng Genbeijie
Beijingshi 100032
People's Republic of China

Fax: +86 10 65292345 (c/o Ministry of Communication)

Salutation: Your Excellency

Governor of the Shandong Provincial People's Government

HAN Yuqun Shengzhang
Shandongsheng Renmin Zhengfu
1 Shengfuqianjie
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Fax: +86 531 86062047

Salutation: Dear Governor

COPIES TO:

Mayor of Linyi City

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and to diplomatic representatives of China accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 20 March 2006.