

# URGENT ACTION

## CHINESE HIV/AIDS ACTIVIST RISKS TORTURE

**HIV/AIDS activist Tian Xi has been detained since 17 August, in the central Chinese province of Henan, to stop him lobbying the authorities on behalf of people infected with HIV/AIDS through official malpractice. He is at risk of torture and other ill-treatment.**

Tian Xi contracted HIV, hepatitis B and hepatitis C through a blood transfusion in 1996, when he was nine years old. He went to the hospital where he had received that transfusion on 2 August 2010, to speak with the Principal of the hospital about compensation for himself and for others infected through transfusions there. The Principal refused to address his concerns and physically rebuffed him, and in some irritation Tian Xi pushed items off his desk.

Nearly 20 police officers and people in white coats came to Tian Xi's home on the night of 17 August, and took him to the Xincai County Number 2 People's Hospital, put him in a hospital room designated for people in police custody, with several police officers in the room. The next day he was transferred to Xincai police station for detention. He was formally arrested on 23 August and charged with "intentionally damaging property," in the form of hospital cups and other things that had been on the Principal's desk. His case was moved to the procurator on 25 August. According to his lawyer, who met him on 26 August, Tian Xi did not have adequate access to the medical treatment he needs.

According to internal government documents found by local activists, the police had decided to arrest Tian Xi early in March 2010, to prevent him from protesting and lobbying for government-run hospital compensation for HIV/AIDS victims infected via blood transfusion.

### **PLEASE WRITE IMMEDIATELY in English, Chinese or your own language:**

- calling on the authorities to release Tian Xi immediately and unconditionally, expressing doubts that the incident was sufficiently serious to attract criminal punishment and detention, and appears part of a concerted effort by the authorities to stop his human rights activities ;
- calling on them to guarantee that he will not be tortured or otherwise ill-treated;
- calling on them to ensure that Tian Xi has access to lawyers of his choice, his family and any medical attention he may require;
- urging the authorities to order an impartial investigations into allegations by Tian Xi and other HIV/AIDS victims that they contracted HIV, hepatitis B and hepatitis C through blood transfusions conducted in state hospitals using blood from government-sanctioned blood collecting stations, and to review the compensation given to some of those infected as a result of poor practice in blood collection.

### **PLEASE SEND APPEALS BEFORE 13 OCTOBER 2010 TO:**

#### Head of Xincai County Government

Wang Jingfeng Xianzhang  
Xincaixian Renmin Zhengfu  
1 Zhengfujie, Xincaixian  
463500  
Henansheng

**Salutation: Dear Head of Xincai  
Government**

#### Director of the Xincai County

Department of Public Security  
Bian Fenglu Juzhang  
Xincaixian Gong'anju  
Shenglijie, Guluzhen  
463500 Henansheng

**Salutation: Dear Director**

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

Premier  
WEN Jiabao Guojia Zongli  
The State Council General Office  
2 Fuyoujie  
Xichengqu  
Beijingshi 100017  
People's Republic of China  
**Fax: +86 10 65961109 (c/o Ministry of  
Foreign Affairs)**  
**Salutation: Your Excellency**

**Also send copies to diplomatic representatives of China accredited to your country.** Please check with your section office if sending appeals after the above date.

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**



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### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For years Tian Xi and his father have fought in vain for compensation from the local hospital and local government.

On 9 July, Tian Xi was in Beijing preparing to show a documentary he had made at a meeting organized by a Beijing-based health NGO, the Aizhixing Institute, where he had been an employee. The Beijing police forced the Aizhixing to cancel Tian Xi's presentation and to cancel the entire meeting. The police held Tian Xi for six hours.

On 23 July, Tian Xi received two phone calls from the Xincai County Communist Party secretary asking him to return to Henan and promising that if he did so, the local authorities would discuss compensation with him. However when Tian Xi returned from Beijing the Communist Party secretary refused to meet him.

Tian Xi's parents went to hospital and police station to find Tian Xi on 19 August, the police told them that they did not know where he was; on 21 August they received a criminal detention notice for Tian Xi dated 18 August. Police refused to let Tian Xi's parents visit him and give him the daily medication he needs. One police officer told Tian Xi's father that another HIV/AIDS activist who had previously been detained at the Xincai County police station had died within a week of being released, and said the same might happen to Tian Xi. When Tian Xi's lawyer met his client, he said police had eventually given him some medication, but not regularly. He needs to take medicine three times a day, but police had skipped several doses.

In the 1990s many people contracted HIV through selling their blood to government-sanctioned blood-collecting stations, especially in Henan province. The blood-collection schemes became a useful source of income for villagers, but were often poorly managed and unsafe. More recently much of the spread of HIV in China has been through intravenous drug use and commercial sex, though there have been reports that people still are being infected as a result of the contaminated blood used for transfusions a decade ago (See [http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2010-01/22/content\\_9365182.htm](http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2010-01/22/content_9365182.htm)). According to the health ministry, the estimated number of people living with HIV in China had reached 740,000 by October 2009, with deaths caused by AIDS totalling 49,845 since the first case was reported in 1985. (See UNAIDS data at: <http://www.unaids.org/en/CountryResponses/Countries/China.asp>)

NGOs and activists working on the issue face harassment and detention. Li Xige, a woman infected with HIV via blood transfusion in 1995 when she gave birth, who only realised she had been infected when her first daughter died of HIV/AIDS, has been under house arrest since 2006 to prevent her going to Beijing to protest.

In May 2010, the director of the Aizhixing Institute, Wan Yanhai, felt forced to flee China because of the overwhelming pressure from the police in Beijing and other municipal government departments.

Dr Gao Yaojie, China's most high-profile HIV/AIDS whistle-blower, left China for the USA in 2009. HIV/AIDS activist Hu Jia was sentenced to three-and-a-half years in prison for "inciting subversion" in 2008.

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