

RELEASE IN PART
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From: Sullivan, Jacob J <SullivanJJ@state.gov>
Sent: Thursday, April 26, 2012 11:00 PM
To: H
Subject: Fw: Activists: Blind Chinese Activist Under House Arrest for 18 months, slips away, in hiding

So this is moving.

From: McDonough, Denis R. [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, April 26, 2012 10:36 PM
To: NSC Deputy Press Secretary; Russel, Daniel R. [REDACTED]; Medeiros, Evan S. [REDACTED]; McDonough, Denis R. [REDACTED]; Canegallo, Kristie A. [REDACTED]; Power, Samantha J. [REDACTED]; McKeon, Brian P. [REDACTED]; Haines, Avril [REDACTED]
Cc: Sullivan, Jacob J; Mills, Cheryl D; Campbell, Kurt M; Burns, William J; Kennedy, Patrick F
Subject: FW: Activists: Blind Chinese Activist Under House Arrest for 18 months, slips away, in hiding

B6

Team –

Please see below.

Thanks,
 Denis.

From: Nutting, Stephen P.
Sent: Thursday, April 26, 2012 10:32 PM
To: Vietor, Tommy; Russel, Daniel R.; Medeiros, Evan S.; McDonough, Denis R.; Canegallo, Kristie A.; Vinograd, Samantha; Power, Samantha J.; McKeon, Brian P.
Cc: #WHSR-SDO
Subject: Activists: Blind Chinese Activist Under House Arrest for 18 months, slips away, in hiding

Apr 26, 10:23 PM EDT

Activists: Blind Chinese lawyer flees house arrest

By CHARLES HUTZLER
 Associated Press

BEIJING (AP) -- A blind legal activist who is a key figure in China's rights movement escaped the house arrest he has lived under for a year and a half, fleeing to an unknown location and angering his captors, fellow rights campaigners said Friday.

Chen Guangcheng slipped out of his usually well-guarded house in Dongshigu town on Sunday, said the campaigners, who are based in China and overseas. He Peirong, a leading campaigner for Chen's freedom, said she picked him up and drove him to "a relatively safe place" she would not further describe.

"His mental state is pretty good. He's alive, but whether he's safe I don't know," He said from her home city of Nanjing. She said she left Chen a few days ago but declined to discuss further details, other than to say he is no longer in his home province of Shandong, southeast of Beijing.

An online report by Singapore's Lianhe Zaobao newspaper said Chen entered the U.S. Embassy in Beijing on Thursday night. The embassy would not comment. The newspaper did not give a named source.

If confirmed, Chen's freedom would be a boost for a persecuted dissident community that has seen heavier repression over the past two years. His plight under house arrest has been closely monitored by Western governments and by local activists, who have seen Chen - a self-taught lawyer who was blinded by a fever in infancy - as an inspiring, determined fighter for justice.

Rumors that Chen had died circulated on microblogs overnight. Local officials could not be reached for comment, the phone lines in Dongshigu having seemingly been disconnected.

Word of his escape apparently angered local officials, who began searching homes in Dongshigu looking for him Thursday, said He and Bob Fu, an activist based in Texas.

They said the town chief, Zhang Jian, led others to Chen's brother's home, climbing over a wall, and that Chen's nephew, Chen Kegui, stabbed Zhang and others, injuring them. He and Fu said they learned those details from family members, but He said the whereabouts of Chen Kegui and other members of the Chen family were not known.

Chen Guangcheng's treatment by local authorities had seemed especially bitter and personal. He served four years in prison for exposing forced abortions and sterilizations in his rural community. Since his release in September 2010, local officials kept him confined to his home, despite the lack of legal grounds for doing so. They prevented outsiders from visiting him and occasionally beat him up.