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English

Women Forced to Abort

2011-02-03

China's One-Child policy leads to widespread suffering and abuse.



Women's Rights Without Frontiers

Friends grieve at the funeral of a 21-year-old Chinese woman who died following a forced abortion in Liuyang City, Hunan Province, in February 2009.

Chinese authorities routinely force women to terminate “unauthorized” pregnancies despite President Hu Jintao's denial that the practice exists, experts say.

Hu's denial came at a meeting with Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, the chairwoman of the U.S. House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee, when the Chinese leader made a state visit to the United States last month.

In a statement released following the meeting, Ros-Lehtinen said she had challenged Hu on a range of Chinese human rights abuses.

“Out of all the issues I raised, the only one which received a response from Mr. Hu was my statement urging the end of China's forced abortion policy. I was astonished when he insisted that such a policy does not exist,” Ros-Lehtinen said.

Speaking in an interview, women's rights advocate Reggie Littlejohn slammed Hu's statement as “an absolutely appalling misrepresentation.”

“It is an undeniable fact that forced abortion occurs in China, and we have lots of evidence of this,” said Littlejohn, president of the California-based Women's Rights Without Frontiers.

“At the provincial and at the local level, regulations say that ‘out-of-plan’ pregnancies shall be terminated,” Littlejohn said, referring to measures taken to enforce China's strict One-Child policy limiting the number of allowable births.

“Women who have pregnancies out of plan are required to take ‘remedial measures,’ which is a euphemism for forced abortion,” she added.

“So I just believe that [Hu's] statement was false and misleading.”

‘An execution’

In a case reported in October by RFA, a woman in the southern Chinese city of Amoy in Fujian province was detained in her 32nd week of pregnancy by local family planning officials, beaten, and forced to undergo an abortion.

Chinese netizens exposed the case on the microblogging site Twitter, calling for public attention to the fate of the pregnant woman, Xiao Aiyong, and condemning the late-term abortion as “an execution.”

Xiao's husband Luo Yanquan said in an interview that Xiao had been taken from their home late one night by local family planning cadres.

“She refused to go and insisted on waiting for me to be home, but they forced her to leave,” Luo said.

“They took her to the Street Committee Office and locked her up there, taking her cell phone away and barring anyone from visiting her. Several men beat her up, bruising her legs and feet. She was kept there for about 40 hours,” Luo added.

Luo said that Xiao was then taken to Amoy's Siming Hospital, checked into a room in the obstetrics ward, and injected with drugs to induce an abortion.

“Neither my wife nor I signed an agreement,” Luos said. “But the cadres ‘approved’ and signed the paperwork and presented it to the hospital.”

"This was a forced abortion," Luo said.

'Routinely punished'

In a 2010 report, the U.S. Congressional-Executive Commission on China noted that local officials in China had continued during the year "to coerce women with unauthorized pregnancies to undergo abortions in both urban and rural areas across China's major regions."

Violators of China's One-Child policy "are routinely punished with fines, and in some cases, subjected to forced sterilization, forced abortion, arbitrary detention, and torture," the Commission added.

"China's population planning policies in both their nature and implementation violate international human rights standards," the Commission said.

Reported by Qiao Long for RFA's Mandarin service. Translated by Chen Ping. Written in English with additional reporting by Richard Finney.

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Comments

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Anna karahalios from Thessaloniki :

Awful people, awful practices. Who gives them the right to decide on others' (such murderous practices) to be legalized like this! Let's hope we will never have to depend on such people. That's why their people are leaving this country and moving to other countries to survive!

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