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Asia - China

CHINA - DDoS attacks

Repeated cyber-attacks on leading human rights website

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Cyber-dissident Huang Qi's site has been repeatedly blocked by DDoS attacks since 16 September

Reporters Without Borders condemns the cyber-attacks on China's leading human rights information website [64 Tianwang](#) that have repeatedly rendered it inaccessible since 16 September. The creation of human rights activist and cyber-dissident **Huang Qi**, the site posts information supplied by citizen-journalists.

A Distributed Denial of Service attack launched at around 10 a.m. on 16 September paralyzed activity on the site (www.64tianwang.com) until around 11 p.m. on 17 September. During the attack, the site redirected its visitors to its blog (64tianwang.blogspot.com/) or Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/twhuangqi>).

After resuming activity for 10 hours, the site was again rendered inaccessible on 18 September. Another attack occurred on 19 September, accompanied by the [closure of 64 Tianwang's Tencent QQ](#) and Weixin messaging and chat accounts.

Huang said: *"Reports recently posted on 64 Tianwang, including reports about [dissident writer] Tie Liu's arrest, land conflicts and the beatings of citizens trying to complain to local authorities, very probably triggered these latest attacks."*

"We condemn these targeted cyber-attacks, which testify to the sensitivity of the information revealed by 64 Tianwang," said Benjamin Ismail, the head of the Reporters Without Borders Asia desk.

"Their intensity and the fact that they coincided with Internet company Tencent's closure of 64 Tianwang's messaging accounts indicate that they were acts of censorship instigated by the government. We urge the authorities to apply the constitution, which guarantees freedom of information, by bringing these untimely attacks to an end. We also call on Tencent to stop cooperating with the censors."

Created by Huang in 1998, 64 Tianwang is regarded as subversive by the authorities. The police watch both Huang and his reporters, who were recently again the target of government-orchestrated reprisals after they covered protests in Tiananmen Square and various human rights violations.

The winner of the Reporters Without Borders [Cyber-Freedom Prize in 2004](#), Huang has had two long spells in prison, the second of which began in 2008, after the Sichuan earthquake, when he was jailed on a charge of ["illegal possession of state secrets."](#) He was briefly detained in March in connection with the [coverage of the Tiananmen Square protests](#).
