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China rejects medical parole for jailed activist — Wife

BEIJING: Chinese authorities have turned down a request for medical parole for jailed activist Hu Jia, who is suffering from a serious liver disease that could lead to cancer, his wife said yesterday.

Zeng Jinyan told AFP that her application for the early release of her husband on medical grounds had been turned down and that her husband had been taken back to prison after a stint in hospital.

"The head of the medical institute of the Beijing prison told Hu Jia's mother by phone that Hu Jia's... cirrhosis does not conform to regulations on medical parole," Zeng explained on her blog.

Hu was taken to hospital on March 30 because of suspected liver cancer, she

said. Prison officials have refused to give the family Hu's written medical report despite her request, Zeng said. Hu, 36, was jailed in April 2008 for three and a half years on a charge of inciting subversion, a vague charge critics say is used to silence dissenters.

A campaigner for human rights and AIDS victims in China, Hu was a key source of information for foreign media on human rights and environmental violations, government abuses, judicial injustices and mistreatment of dissidents.

He was taken into custody in December 2007, not long after he spoke via video conference to the European Parliament, criticising human rights violations in China. — AFP