

THE EXECUTION OF STREET VENDOR XIA JUNFENG

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XIA JUNFENG WAS a laid-off factory worker who sold grilled meat kebabs with his wife, Zhang Jing 张晶, in the city of Shenyang. On 16 May 2009, around ten *chengguan*, urban law enforcement officers, confronted the couple.

Chengguan, who have a reputation for brutality, have the thankless task of clearing city streets of stalls operating without a business licence, and are deeply unpopular with the public. Xia claimed it was in self-defence that he killed two and injured one with a fruit knife. But, on 11 November 2009, the Shenyang Intermediate People's Court sentenced Xia to death for manslaughter.

A two-year-long appeal by his wife and a volunteer legal team earned

the family nationwide sympathy, but the final verdict by the Liaoning Provincial People's High Court, on 9 May 2011, upheld the death sentence. The authorities informed his family only hours before giving Xia a lethal injection, on 25 September 2013, and only



Anonymous cartoon posted on Weibo criticising Xia Junfeng's execution. The background drawing was done by Xia's son

Source: executedtoday.com/tag/shenyang/



A cartoon by activist cartoonist Kuang Biao, circulated on Weibo, condemning Xia's execution

Source: executedtoday.com/tag/shenyang/

allowing them to see him for half an hour first. They refused Xia's last request to take a photograph for his then thirteen-year-old son. His execution, and the fact that the authorities apparently told the press about it before informing his family, sparked widespread outrage; for a day after the news broke, Xia's name was the most-searched-for term on Weibo.

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