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Activist returns in secret

By STAFF REPORTERS

A HONGKONG resident, released by Beijing last week after spending two years in prison for helping to smuggle dissidents out of the country, has secretly returned to the territory.

Mr Lai Pui-shing, released from a Guangdong prison on May 25, came back to Hongkong over the weekend, according to a source.

Contrary to the red carpet welcomes other local activists have received on returning home after being released, Mr Lai kept news of his homecoming confidential.

Like the two mainland dissidents, Ms Dai Qing and Ms Gong Xiaoxia, who were stranded in Hongkong after they were refused entry by Beijing, Mr Lai has chosen not to take part in June 4 memorial activities.

According to the source, Mr Lai appeared to be in "good shape".

Another Hongkong resident, Mr Lee Lung-hing, is believed to still be in China although he was released at the same time as Mr Lai. The two parted ways in Guangzhou; Mr Lee was planning to visit his family in Guangdong.

Mr Lai and Mr Lee were sentenced in 1989 to five and four-year prison terms respectively for allegedly helping to smuggle dissident editor Wang Juntao and Chen Ziming out of China.

Chinese officials said they were "given bail to seek medical treatment".