

ChinaAid's Top 10 Persecution Cases in China 2017

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2017's Top 10 Cases of Persecution of Churches and Christians in China

Below are the top 10 persecution cases China Aid picked for 2017 and some cases are amalgamates of several cases. These cases are considered representative due to the severity, impact and significance of persecution involved, and they occurred across mainland China in both the rural and urban areas involving both house churches and "Three-Self" churches. Persecuted Christians in these cases include both individuals in China and individuals from overseas, who are clergy, lay believers, Christian rights defense lawyers, or Christian political dissidents.

I. The Yunnan Religious Case

On May 4, 2016, a special task force was set up in Yunnan to investigate the "Three Grades of Servants cult". Since the investigation was initiated in Lincang city on May 15, 2016, and submitted to the provincial public security bureau and then the Ministry of Public Security, this special task force was also named "Yunnan 3.15 special task force on the Three Grades of Servant cult" and was directed by Yunnan provincial Public Security Bureau. The task force brought its investigation to a close on October 21, 2016. According to incomplete statistics, more than 200 house church leaders and ordinary believers in Yunnan province were interrogated, taken into police custody, arrested or interviewed, and about 40 of them were prosecuted by the local courts of Kunming, Chuxiong, Dali, Lincang, Baoshan ,Xishuangbanna, Zhaotong and Yuxi for "sabotaging law enforcement by organizing and using cults". Most Christians taken into custody in this case were low-income and low-education women living in the rural area. They were all accused of participating in the Three Grades of Servants cult by Yunnan provincial Public Security Bureau. Books used by these believers such as the Bible, Streams in the Desert, Pilgrim's Progress, Song of a Wanderer, Power Through Prayer, Our Daily Prayer, and Shepherdship, as well as poems and songs composed by Christian writer and composer Xiaomin, were labeled as "cult materials of the Three Grades of Servants". Dozens of house church preachers, represented by Ju Dianhong, Liu Wei, Tu Yan, Zhong Yonggui, Su Min, Li Shudong, Zhang Congying, Liang Qin, Peng Huifen, Li Yunxiu, Li Wanhong, Li Chunping, Yao Jiaping, and Hu Yuxin were arrested. Below are the arrests and trials that happened in some areas.

Lincang. In late November, the cases of arrested Christians, including Xu Zhihui, Li Hua, Ma Changyin, Wang Liping, Awei Gege, Yao Yongbing, Li Jianhua and others arrested in Lincang's Fengqing, were transferred to the court. Except Xu Zhihui and Lihua, the other five had never had contact with their lawyers. On November 30, Ju Dianhong, Liang Qin, Zhang Hongyan, Zi Huimei, Yang Shunxiang and Zhang Shaocai were tried by Yunxian court. The prosecution papers accused the core members of the cult headed by Ju Dianhong and her assistant Liang Qin of secretly holding gatherings in many cities across Yunnan during 2015 and 2016, preaching and evangelizing, proclaiming about the Doomsday, cultivating leaders for the cult, establishing host families and gathering places at private homes in rural areas, setting up communication posts in cities and neighborhoods to enable and support secret evangelistic events and gatherings, rebuilding the organizational structure of the Three Grades of Servants, setting up a location in Chuxiong for printing cult materials, developing converts among minors, and organizing some college students to travel to other provinces from Kunming to attend cult trainings.

Dali. Five were arrested and three were released "on probation while awaiting for trial." Tu Yan and another believer Su Min were criminally detained. On October 22, 2016, Tu Yan was criminally detained by Dali's local police for "allegedly sabotaging law enforcement by organizing and using cults" and arrested a month later. On January 12, 2017, Tu Yan's case was transferred to the procuratorate for prosecution on the charge of "sabotaging law enforcement by organizing and using cults", but was returned to the public security bureau for additional investigation. In early April, Tu Yan's case was once again transferred to the procuratorate for review and prosecution, and sent to Dali Court on July 10 for prosecution. His prosecution papers amount to 12 stacks totaling 2400 pages, focusing on his involvement in the "Three Grades of Servants cult." Another Christian Su Min who was arrested with Tu Yan was also transferred to the procuratorate for persecution.

Chuxiong Autonomous Prefecture. On October 17, seven arrested Christians from Chuxiong Autonomous Prefecture who were accused of "sabotaging law enforcement by organizing and using cults", including Liu Wei, Li Yunxiu, Li Wanhong, Li Chunyu, Yao Jiaping, Hu Yuxin, and Zhong Yonggui, presented to the local court's pre-trial meeting. Except Liu Wei who authorized his own lawyer, the other six all had government-appointed lawyers. The judge set October 26 as the date for trial. On October 20, 2017, Chuxiong Municipal People's Procuratorate suggested a delayed trial citing the need for "additional investigation".

Zhaotong. On July 21, three Christians from Zhaotong, i.e. Li Shudong, Li Meihua and Peng Zhenghua, were sentenced to four years' imprisonment by Zhaotong Court. The prosecution papers accused them of being members of the "Three Grades of Servants" who spread cult ideas and fostered cult members.

For details, go to China Aid's websites:
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/12/yn315.html
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/11/7.html
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/10/71026.html
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/10/46.html
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/07/blog-post_10.html

II. Xinjiang charged Christians gathered to worship with "the crime of gathering a crowd to disrupt social order"

On April 18, Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region's Changji Municipal Court sentenced five Christians to imprisonment on the charge of "gathering a crowd to disturb social order", including 5 years for Yang Zhaocun, 5 years for Wang Lulu, 4 years for Cheng Yajie, 3 years for Zheng Lan, and 3 years for Liu Yan. The accused had religious activities at private residence, but were accused of disturbing social order and condemned to lengthy prison sentences. Before the judge made the verdict, the defendants' lawyers had not even been notified about the court date. According to the prosecution papers, more than 50 people participated in activities China termed "illegal," including studying the Bible, at defendant Zheng Lan's home on March 5, 2016. The court held that defendants Yang Zhaocun, Wang Lulu, Cheng Yajie, Zheng Lan and Liu Yan gathered 60 plus people to engage in the preaching and interpreting of religious texts, which was a serious violation and constituted the crime of "gathering a crowd to disturb social order." Yang Zhaocun, Wang Lulu and Cheng Yajie were identified as main perpetrators while Zheng Lan and Liu Yan were considered accomplices. According to the prosecution papers, Zheng Lan had been providing accommodation to personnel from some Christian organizations since 2011, allowing them to teach, preach, and interpret religious texts in large-scale gatherings. After the trial, all five defendants made an appeal. On June 27, Changji Prefecture Court claimed the appeals' arguments for acquittal did not match the case's facts and denied the appeals, condemning the five Christians to lengthy prison sentences.

For details, go to China Aid's websites:
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/07/5.html
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/05/5.html
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/04/553.html

III. Pastor Cao Sanqiang, Chen Shixin and Wei Xiaomei were seized by police on fabricated charges

Pastor Cao Sanqiang was accused of "organizing the illegal crossing of a national border."



China Ministries International's missionary Pastor Cao Sanqiang is originally from Hunan province and once established house churches in Hunan. Married to a U.S. citizen, Cao has always served in house churches and helped train preachers for house churches. After the Wenchuan earthquake in 2008, Pastor Cao took over Christians' disaster relief work in that area to help students and earthquake-stricken locals. Engaged in missionary work on China-Myanmar border, Cao repeatedly traveled between China's Yunnan province and Myanmar's Wa state, helping with poverty relief work and setting up schools to provide education to poor children. On March 5, Cao was criminally detained by the local police at Yunnan's southwestern Pu'er city's Menglian county for the alleged illegal crossing of border. On March 25, Cao was arrested by Menglian county procuratorate for "allegedly organizing the illegal crossing of a national border." On May 17, Cao's mother received the "Notice about Transfer for Review and prosecution" from the police and Cao's case was transferred to Menglian County Procuratorate for prosecution, with the charge against him

becoming "illegal crossing of a national border" of which he was initially accused. Another believer Jing Ruxia was also charged with the same crime. On July 13, 2017, Cao was prosecuted again on "illegal crossing of a national border." (Photo: China Ministries International's missionary Pastor Cao Sanqiang)

For details, go to China Aid's websites:

http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/07/blog-post_77.html
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/05/blog-post_55.html
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/04/40.html
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/04/blog-post.html
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/03/blog-post_23.html

Pastor Wei Xiaomei, her husband Li Bingxin and her coworker Zhang Tao were accused of "fraud"

Zhuhai-based Wangjiahunli (King's Wedding) Church in Guangdong province was attended by 1,500 believers and directly affiliated with Hong Kong-based 611 Bread of Life Church. In 2009, the church's pastor Wei Xiaomei and church staff Zhang Tao (a citizen of Macau) purchased a 700-square-foot property on Zhuhai's Jiuzhou Avenue as the church's gathering place with 13 million yuan donated by Zhang Tao to the church. In March and July of 2014, the church bought two more units (1023 and 1025) on Jiuzhou Avenue with 5 million yuan, 80% of which was donated by Zhang Tao and the rest came from the offerings of church members. On September 27, 2016, Xiangzhou District's Ethnic and Religious Affairs Bureau outlawed this church citing "unregistered" as the reason and confiscated the church's 50 computers. On April 12, 2017, the authorities dispatched a dozen of public security agents to take a dozen of church members into custody and following nonstop interrogation and intimidation, these church members were forced to write down confessions against their church leaders. The police then criminally detained the church's pastor Wei Xiaomei, her husband Li Bingxin, and church staff Zhang Tao on the charge of fraud. A few months later, Zhuhai's Xiangzhou District Procuratorate prosecuted Wei Xiaomei, Li Bingxin and Zhang Tao on fraud charge, accusing them of allegedly conning church members of their offerings and using the money to buy properties. In October, the case was transferred to the court by Xiangzhou District Procuratorate. In late November, the pre-trial meeting was held. According to certain insiders, the authorities made up the case to frame the church's pastor, her husband and church staff. "In December, 2016, the authorities planted a decoy at this church who has never made any offerings to this church, but he said his wife donated about 10 thousand yuan. He reported the church to the police for fraud, and then the police started investigating the church's attendees and their offerings to the church. They asked church members whether they knew the church's pastor Wei Xiaomei was not certified by the government, the church was unregistered, and church property (gathering place) was not registered under the pastor's name, etc." The police cited "the church's gathering place is not registered under the pastor's name" as evidence of fraud to accuse Pastor Wei Xiaomei, her husband Li Bingxin and church staff Zhang Tao. This case was initiated and orchestrated by Zhuhai Municipal Politics and Law Bureau and handled by Civil Affairs Bureau. Initially, the church was investigated for cult-related crimes by the National Security Bureau who got nowhere due to the lack of evidence, so they outlawed the church on the charge of "being unregistered", intending to finalize the case on the criminal charge of fraud.

For details, go to China Aid's websites:
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/12/blog-post_88.html

Pastor Chen Shixin was accused of "destroying forestry".



On April 12, house church pastor Chen Shixin from Caili village, Lieshan township, Huaibei, Anhui province, was lured to the police station by public security agents and criminally detained for "allegedly destroying forestry". On May 12, Huaibei city's Forestry Public Security Bureau transferred Chen's case to Lieshan District Procuratorate. On May 18, Pastor Chen Shixin was arrested by Huaibei city's Forestry Public Security Bureau for allegedly "intentionally damaging properties", and the authorities accused him of destroying tress on the hills planted by other people. On June 14, a dozen of the local public security agents raided Chen's home again with a search warrant and confiscated documents regarding Chen's contracted land and his computer console. On July 17, Chen's case was transferred to the procuratorate and then to the court three days later. On November 29, Huaibei's Duji District Court held the trial. About 300 believers attended Caili Church pastored by Chen Shixin. The local Religious Affairs Bureau and Public Security Bureau repeatedly asked the church to join the state-sponsored "Three-Self" church system, but had no success. The authorities also repeatedly asked the church to remove the cross hanging on the outer wall of the church sitting on a hill and threatened to tear down the church's building. (Photo: Pastor Chen Shixin)

For details, go to China Aid's websites:
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/11/blog-post_29.html

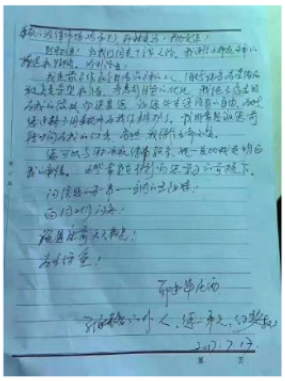
IV. DaLi Church and many other churches in Henan province were demolished by force



At about 11p.m. on Jan. 26, Dali Christian Church located in Zhengzhou's Gaoxin District was raided by seventy to eighty men in black who drove out a family of believers guarding the church, and the church was nearly bulldozed to the ground overnight. On Jan. 27, Zhengzhou-based Zhanghuqiao Church was forcibly demolished by the county government. On May 5, a church under construction in Shuangmiao village, Ninling county, Shangqiu city, Henan province, was demolished by more than 300 local public security agents and city management staff. During the forcible demolition, items in the church were destroyed, cash was looted, and some believers were beat up and injured. Forty church members were taken into police custody and eight believers were detained, including evangelist Zhang Di who helped the church construct its new building, small group leaders, deputy leaders, and the church's accountant. Founded four years ago, Shuangmiao Christian Church was attended by over 100 people. (Photo: the forcibly demolished Dali Christian Church in Zhengzhou's Gaoxin District)

For details, go to China Aid's websites:
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/05/blog-post_80.html
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/01/blog-post_30.html

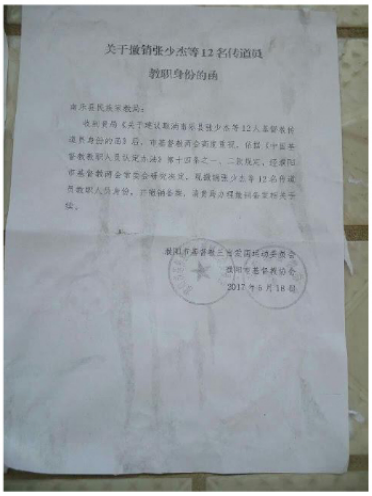
V. The Chinese authorities suppressed Gu Yuese, Pastor Zhang Shaojie and Huoshi Church with a vengeance



Pastor Gu Yuese used to be a member of the state-sponsored China Christian Council's Standing Committee and chairman of the Zhejiang Provincial China Christian Council. He was placed under house arrest for nine months on a bail term in 2016, but on Jan. 7, 2017, the authorities approved his arrest on embezzlement charge and detained him in Hangzhou. On May 5, his attorney Zhang Peihong received a notice from the authorities saying that Gu was rejected bail because the amount of money he had embezzled exceeded the amount prescribed by the criminal law. On July 13, Zhang received a notice from Jianggan District Court telling him to promptly arrive at the court at 9:15 a.m. on July 20 for a pre-trial meeting. Three days after the notification, he received a letter from Gu, in which he said something to the effect that "Considering the current conditions, the last thing I want is to get you involved because of me. I do not want you to lose your freedom for me. Therefore, you do not need to defend me in Hangzhou. I am very grateful for what you have done for me." It was believed that Gu was pressured by the authorities into dismissing his attorney before his trial. (Photo: Due to pressure from the authorities, Pastor Gu Yuese sent his attorney Zhang Peihong a letter to dismiss him before his trial on July 17.)

For details, go to China Aid's websites:
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/01/17.html
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/01/blog-post_11.html
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/05/blog-post_17.html
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/07/blog-post_20.html

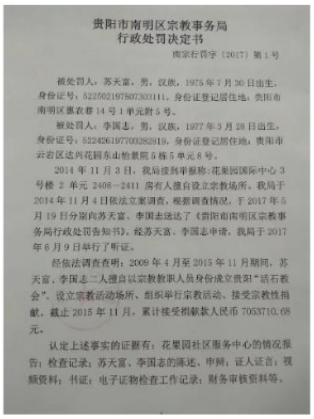
Pastor Zhang Shaojie heavily sentenced in "Nanle Religious Case" was revoked ordination and deposed as a bible teacher


关于撤销张少杰等12名传道员
教职身份的函

Pastor Zhang Shaojie angered the local officials when his church became involved in a land dispute with the government causing him to lead a group of Christians to Beijing to file a petition. In mid-Nov, 2013, he was criminally detained by Nanle Public Security Bureau for "assembling a crowd to disturb public order" and finally was sentenced to 12 years in prison. His appeal to overturn the sentence was rejected. In 2017, Nanle Religious Affairs Bureau proposed to depose 12 church clergymen, including Zhang Shaojie, Guo Zhongqiang, Yan Jingxue, Yan Lixiang and Zhang Cuixia, and to revoke their ordination. On May 18, the Three-Self Patriotic Movement Committee of Puyang approved the proposal stating that the Three-Self Patriotic Movement Committee and the China Christian Council had decided to depose the 12 clergmen. (Photo: official document from the Three-Self Patriotic Movement Committee of Puyang deposing the 12 clergymen)

For details, go to China Aid's websites:
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/07/12.html

Donations from believers since the founding of Huoshi Church were confiscated in entirety



贵阳市南明区宗教事务局
行政处罚决定书

南宗行罚字〔2017〕第1号

被处罚人：苏天富，男，汉族，1975年7月30日出生，身份证号：522502197507303111，身份证登记居住地：贵阳市南明区雅关巷14号1单元附5号。

被处罚人：李国志，男，汉族，1977年3月28日出生，身份证号：522426197700282819，身份证登记居住地：贵阳市云岩区达兴花园东山怡景院6栋5单元8号。

2014年11月3日，我局接到举报称：花果园国际中心3号楼2单元2408—2411房有人擅自设立宗教场所。我局于2014年11月4日依法立案调查，根据调查情况，于2017年5月19日分别向苏天富、李国志送达了《贵阳市南明区宗教事务局行政处罚告知书》，经苏天富、李国志申请，我局于2017年6月9日举行了听证。

经依法调查查明：2009年4月至2015年11月期间，苏天富、李国志二人擅自以宗教教职人员身份成立贵阳"活石教会"，设立宗教活动场所、组织举行宗教活动、接受宗教性捐献，截止2015年11月，累计接受捐款款人民币7053710.68元。

认定上述事实的证据有：花果园社区服务中心的情况报告；检查记录；苏天富、李国志的陈述、申辩；证人证言；视频资料；书证；电子证物检查工作记录；财务审核资料等。

At the beginning of 2017, Pastor Yanghua of Huoshi Church was sentenced to 2.5 years in prison for "divulging state secrets" and he is currently serving his prison time. In mid-May, Guizhou's Nanming District Ethnic and Religious Affairs Bureau issued a notice of administrative penalty, accusing Su Tianfu and Li Guozhi (Pastor Yanghua) of illegally founding Huoshi Church, setting up a venue for religious activities, organizing religious activities, and receiving believers' offerings totaling 7,053,710.68 yuan ($1,087,313 USD) between April 2009 and November 2015. According to the notice, the above activities constituted violations of the State Council's Regulations on Religious Affairs and Guizhou province's Regulations on Religious Affairs, and the illegal income of 7 million yuan should be confiscated. Su Tianfu and Pastor Yanghua (alias Li Guozhi) requested a public hearing on the penalty. On June 9, the day of the public hearing, most Christian attendees were blocked from the venue by public security agents and some were even forcibly held in police vehicles. Defense lawyer's request to exclude the officials of the Religious Affairs Bureau who handled the case from the hearing was rejected. On June 27, 2017, Nanming District Religious Affairs Bureau issued a formal notice of administrative penalty to Huoshi Church (Decision No. 1 of 2017), ruling that Huoshi Church as an illegal church received illegal donations while demanding Su Tianfu and Li Guozhi to stop their activities right away and submit the church's illegal income of 7,053,710.68 yuan ($1,087,313 USD). In mid-September, Su Tianfu and Pastor Yanghua "submitted a petition for a hearing" to Guiyang Municipal Religious Affairs Bureau and Nanming District Religious Affairs Bureau respectively regarding the decision about administrative penalty, but both of their applications were denied. On October 23, Su Tianfu sued the municipal and district religious affairs bureau to Baiyun District Court. On November 8, Baiyun District Court issued a notice and summons to Su Tianfu and his defense lawyer notifying them about the court date of Nov. 21. (Photo: The Administrative Penalty Decision issued to Guiyang-based house church Huoshi Church by Guiyang Municipal Nanming District Religious Affairs Bureau)

For details, go to China Aid's websites:
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/06/700.html
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/06/700_27.html
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/10/blog-post_24.html
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/11/11.html

VI. Famous Christian political dissident Yang Tianshui imprisoned for 22 years died from illness before release and his body is nowhere to be found



Yang Tianshui, alias Yang Tongyan (1961-2017), was a Christian, dissident, famous political prisoner, pro-democracy activist, and a leader of the Democratic Party in Jiangsu and Anhui province. Graduated in June 1982 from Beijing Normal University's History Department, Yang once worked as a teacher, a researcher in literature and history, and a civil servant. In 1989, he joined students' pro-democracy movement in Nanjing and in 1990, he cofounded China Democracy with others and served as its executive chairman, which led to his imprisonment of 10 years. Upon release, Yang continued to engage in pro-democracy activities through writing and publishing. On May 28, 2004, Yang was accused of "posting articles on the internet to tarnish China's image and disrupt social stability" and administratively detained for 15 days. In May 2006, Yang was sentenced to 12 years in prison and deprivation of political rights for four years on the charge of "subverting state power", and his expected date of release was December 23, 2017. Yang devoted his entire life to China's freedom of democracy and served 22 years in prison. In 2006, Independent Chinese

PEN Center awarded him the first "Award of Prison Writer". Besides honorary awards from PEN Canada, PEN Italy and PEN America, Yang also received the 2008 PEN/Barbara Goldsmith Freedom to Write Award.

During his detention at Jiangsu province's Nanjing Prison, Yang was tortured and abused for not admitting guilty. Suffering from tuberculous intestinal inflammation, tuberculous peritonitis, diabetes, Nephritis, hypertension and arthritis, Yang requested "medical parole" multiple times and even went on hunger strikes to protest being denied "medical parole" in vain. In August 2017, only four months before his due release, Yang was diagnosed with "malignant brain tumor" and was granted "medical parole" at doctor's recommendation. Accompanied by his family, Yang finally managed to go to Shanghai Huashan Hospital to get treatment, but it was too late. He passed away at age 56 on November 7. After his passing, his family was under tremendous pressure from the authorities and as a result, his body was cremated hastily and his family was not allowed to keep his ashes, which ended up being spread in the East China Sea. "Yang Tongyan's death, so soon after that of Liu Xiaobo, is another black mark on the Chinese authorities' human rights record," said Karin Karlekar, PEN America's Director of Free Expression at Risk Programs. Yang is the third Chinese political prisoner who died while serving prison time in less than a year. In July 2017, Nobel Peace Laureate Liu Xiaobo died in custody from liver cancer. In late November 2016, political prisoner Peng Ming died in prison unexpectedly. (Photo: Yang Tianshui)

For details, go to China Aid's websites:
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/11/blog-post_51.html

VII. Multiple Christian rights defense lawyers were sentenced, abducted, threatened with death or put under surveillance

Lawyer Jiang Tianyong was sentenced to two years' imprisonment and three years' deprivation of political rights



To human rights lawyers arrested during the unprecedented nationwide crackdown on human rights lawyers that occurred in July 2015, lawyer Jiang Tianyong has been an outspoken defender of their rights. On November 21, 2016, Jiang "disappeared" involuntarily into secret detention. On May 31, 2017, Jiang was arrested on the suspicion of "subverting the state power" and detained at Changsha Municipal Public Security Bureau's No. 1 Detention Center. On August 22, 2017, Jiang was openly tried on the charge of "subverting the state power" by Changsha Municipal Intermediate People's Court and no verdict was delivered. On the day of trial, surrounding areas of the court building were strictly controlled by the authorities, causing citizens unable to enter the courtroom, and many pro-democracy and human rights activists were kept from attending. International media perceived at least five violations to the principle of fair trial in the court's trial of Jiang on August 22, 2017, including 1) the trial was orchestrated by the Chinese government which intentionally kept the public from attending the trial; 2) Jiang's lawyers at the court are all "government-appointed" lawyers who failed to present an effective defense; 3) the prosecutor presented insufficient evidence and even fabricated evidence to justify the charge; 4) Jiang admitted guilt at the court after extended secret detention; 5) Jiang became the sacrificial lamb to free the government from the guilt of torturing another human rights lawyer Xie Yang. On November 21, 2017, Jiang Tianyong received a two-year jail term and three-year deprivation of political rights sentence on subversion charges. (Photo: lawyer Jiang Tianyong being tried at Changsha Intermediate People's Court)

For details, go to China Aid's websites:
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/06/blog-post_47.html
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/11/blog-post_77.html
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/11/blog-post_23.html

Lawyer Li Heping suffered brutal torture and trial



Lawyer Li Heping detained on the charge of "subverting the state power" during China's massive arrest of human rights lawyers on July 9th and denied visitations from his attorney was secretly tried on April 25, 2017 by Tianjin No. 2 Intermediate People's Court and sentenced to 3-year imprisonment with 2-year reprieve on April 28. Until after the court had delivered the ruling was his family notified about his trial. According to reliable information from the Watchdog of China's Human Rights Lawyers, rights defense lawyers arrested on July 9th were all detained at secret locations and during the 6-month designated residence under surveillance imposed on them, lawyers such as Li Heping and Wang Quanzhang were subjected to brutal tortures, including strong electric shocks causing victims to lose consciousness. (Photos: lawyer Li Heping before and after his arrest)

For details, go to China Aid's websites:
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/04/blog-post_69.html
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/05/blog-post_58.html

Lawyer Gao Zhisheng under close surveillance "disappeared" and his whereabouts remains a mystery.



In 2007, lawyer Gao Zhisheng was sentenced to 3 years' imprisonment with 5-years' reprieve on the charge of "instigating the subversion of the state power". During the reprieve, he was sent to Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region's Shaya Prison and imprisoned there for three years. On August 7, 2014, he was released and placed under house arrest at his hometown in Jialu town, Jialu county, Yulin, Shaanxi province, forbidden to go out. On August 13, 2017, Gao suddenly disappeared from his house arrest in his cave dwelling in Xiaoshibanqiao village, for which the outside world demanded an explanation from the authorities. In early September, Shaanxi police allegedly dispatched several hundred policemen to conduct a thorough village-by-village search for Gao. On September 6, Yulin's public security agents told Gao's oldest brother that Gao was being detained in Beijing, but didn't provide details though they promised to release Gao after CPC's 19th National Conference. On October 12, Yan Xin and Zhang Lei, defense attorneys hired by Gao's family to represent him, published online "A factual account of the search for Gao Zhisheng", in which they mentioned that as Gao's lawyers, no one would receive their legal paperwork and the case got into a deadlock. On November 8, when the two attorneys wen to Shaanxi's Yulin Municipal Public Security Bureau and Jiaxian Public Security Bureau to inquire about Gao's personal and legal status, the office director and a deputy head of the bureau surnamed Li said they were not legally authorized to handle Gao's case. An employee of Jiaxian's Public Security Department also denied knowledge of the case, saying that whether Gao's disappearance was a legal case or not was uncertain. On November 11, director of the Stability Maintenance Office at Gao's hometown said to Radio Free Asia, "Gao is doing well and not in trouble; he's still in the village, not in Beijing, and he went to hang out at his friend's place", but they didn't say which friend Gao was hanging out with, stating that Gao was in the jurisdiction of Jiaxian Public Security Bureau. It was reported that the three rights defense activists who had helped God escape from his cave dwelling in northern Shaanxi were also persecuted. Shao Zhongguo was detained by the authorities for 77 days, Li Fawang attempted suicide during his detention and was released on parole on October 26 due to severe diabetes and its complications, and Shi Dacheng (a monk) was detained for a total of 139 days. (Photo: lawyer Gao Zhisheng)

For details, go to China Aid's websites:
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/11/blog-post_12.html
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/10/blog-post_46.html

Lawyer Wang Ning released on bail and family are placed under close supervision.



Wang Yu, a prominent leader of China's rights defense activities, was arrested during the "July 9th Crackdown" for defending the rights of China's feminists and marginalized population. Charged with inciting subversion of state power, she was detained for a year until August, 2016, when she was released on bail and forced to make a confession on multiple state-run media, which is the authorities' favorite way to ruin the reputation of their critics. In the same month, the American Bar Association awarded its inaugural International Human Rights Award to Wang Yu, in absentia. After that, Wang had been placed under house arrest in Inner Mongolia until August, 2017 when she moved back to Beijing with her husband and son. She and her husband Bao Longjun completed their one-year bail on July 22, 2017 and August 5, 2017 respectively.

On June 30, Wang Yu with her husband Bao Longjun and her son Bao mengmeng went to Ulan Hot, Inner Mongolia, to visit family. The local National Security Protection agents received them. They found their bags left on the agents' vehicle searched and some items missing after they went out for a meal with them.

In November, a book titled "The People's Republic of the Disappeared：Stories From Inside China's System for Enforced Disappearances" revealed the brutal torture and mistreatment Wang suffered during her enforced disappearance.

On November 13, Wang's son Bao Zhuoxuan (also known as Mengmeng) was barred from leaving the country at Tianjin's Binhai International Airport for a holiday in Tokyo, Japan, because he "could potentially endanger national security", and his passport was pronounced as invalid.

Currently Wang and her family's house arrest is being implemented by the Emergency Response Team of Inner Mongolia's Xing'an Banner Public Security Bureau. There are also guards on duty outside their building, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. At least ten security agents take shifts to monitor them in their neighborhood. Whenever they leave home, at least two agents follow them.

(Photo: Wang Yu with her husband Bao Longjun and her son Bao Zhuoxuan)

For details, go to China Aid's websites:
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/11/709_13.html
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/07/709_5.html
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/11/blog-post_55.html

Lawyer Li Baiguang faced death threat.



Christian rights defense lawyer Li Baiguang has devoted himself to providing legal services to persecuted Christian house churches and individuals for many years. On May 11, 2006, he was received by President Bush Jr. at the White House, along with Wang Yi and Yu Jie. On June 17, 2008, Li and other Chinese rights defense activists, such as Li Heping, Teng Biao, Chen Guangcheng and Hu Shigen, received rewards from the American National Freedom Foundation for their contribution to promoting human rights and the freedom of religion in China. While defending a group of farms who sued the Wenling government for not fulfilling a contract, Li Baiguang represented the farmers at the trial held by Zhejiang province's Taizhou

Intermediate Court on October 17. At 7:30 P.M., when he returned to his hotel in Wenling city, he was kidnapped by five to six men and dragged into a remoted moods where they beat him up and threatened to dismember him, cutting off his head, hands and feet, should he not leave Wenling before 10 A.M. next day. Beaten up and abandoned in the wilderness, Li suffered broken lips and bruises and soft tissue contusions all over his body. He reported the incident to the police on the spot. After receiving his call, Wenling Police Station checked the surveillance video of Li's hotel and identified the owner of the car used for kidnapping Li a female police officer of Luqiao District's Public Security Bureau. On October 31, the police claimed to start investigating the case. On November 4, Li received another call from a stranger in Wenling who threatened to kill him or make him disappear. The case Li represented is a lawsuit against the government involving 180 million yuan ($27,072,554.00 USD) and Li's clients have financial disputes with Wenling's government officials. It's believed that the beatings and death threats from people backed by the local authorities was a result of Li's insistence on handling the case despite the government's oppositions. Although frustrated and disappointed with what had happened, Li refused to back off due to threats and expressed determination to continue to provide legal services to his clients in this case.

(Photo: Dr. Li Baiguang and Congressman Wolf)

For details, go to China Aid's websites:
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/10/blog-post_17.html
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/10/blog-post_18.html
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/10/blog-post_21.html
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/11/blog-post_7.html

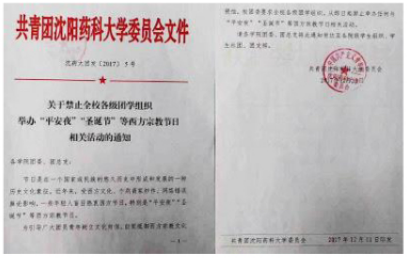
Lawyer Chen Jiangang and family on vacation were taken into police custody.



Beijing-based lawyer Chen Jiangang on a tour with wife, two young children, and two friends (Zhang Baocheng and his wife), were forcibly taken into police custody in Jinghong, Yunnan around 1:00 p.m. on May 3, 2017, with no legal documents revealed to them and their personal items confiscated. Chen was the defense lawyer of lawyer Xie Yang who was charged with "subverting the state power" and "disrupting court order" in January, 2016. In March, 2017, Chen disclosed to the public that his client Xie and other detained lawyers, including Wang Quanzhang, Jiang Tianyong and Li Heping, had suffered inhumane mistreatment and brutal tortures during their detention. It's believed that Chen's custody this time is the authorities' retaliation against him. (Photo: lawyer Chen Jiangang with his wife and children)

For details, go to China Aid's websites:
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/05/blog-post_6.html
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/05/6.html

VIII. Massive suppression of Christian college students was launched in Fujian, Tianjin, Henan, Liaoning, and other regions


共青团沈阳药科大学委员会文件

关于禁止全校各级团学组织
举办"平安夜""圣诞节"等西方宗教节日
相关活动的通知

On November 27, Chen Ziao, a PhD candidate of Fujian-based Xiamen University received a warning for severe misconduct from school for distributing gospel tracts on school campus.

For details, go to China Aid's websites:
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/12/blog-post_12.html

In early December, the United Front Department of Tianjin University of Finance and Economics' Communist Party Commission issued a notice titled "Regarding the Designated Research on Christianity in Tianjin University of Finance and Economics", demanding all grassroots Communist Party Commission and directly affiliated Party Secretary to fully carry out the guidelines given at the Communist Party of China's (CPC)19th National

Conference, diligently implement the guidelines given by Xi Jinping in his speech at the National Conference on Religious Work, and conduct an investigation and data-collection about Christianity on school campus according to "CPC State Council's Opinion Regarding Reinforcing and Improving the Work in Religion in the New Circumstances", "The Opinion of the Central Government's United Front Department and the State Administration of Religious Affairs about Reinforcing the Work in Religion in the New Circumstances", and the requirements of Tianjin government and Tianjin Education Commission. The scope of the required investigation includes whether students from Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan, foreign students and foreign teachers are believers of Christianity or not, the number of believers, their names, whether evangelism occurs on school campus, in what way it is conducted, whether there are Christian gathering places, their locations and number of attendees. This notice also required grassroots Communist Party Commission to submit their investigation results to the Party Commission's United Front Department before December 13.

For details, go to China Aid's websites:
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/12/blog-post_4.html

On December 8, in Henan province's Shangqiu city, two church gathering places where nearly 200 college students congregated, respectively located at Shangqiu's Polytechnic College on Changjiang East Road and Shangqiu College in Pingtai town, were outlawed. About 20 people, including employees of the local government, the two colleges' department chairpersons and agents from the Education Bureau, Public Security Bureau, community, and Ethnic and Religious Affairs Bureau busted the two gathering places. Two college students responsible for the two gathering places were taken into police custody, and Christian books and computers were confiscated from the two locations. The schools also summoned the parents of students and required students to sign a contract promising not to attend such gatherings before they were allowed to go back to school. Students were threatened with expulsion from school upon future attendance of such gatherings.

For details, go to China Aid's websites:
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/12/blog-post_73.html

On December 11, the Youth League Committee of Liaoning province's Shenyang University of Pharmaceutical Medicine issued a "red-headed" (signaling the greatest importance) document forbidding student organizations across campus from hosting "Christmas Eve" or "Christmas" celebrations and activities. (Photo: "Notice about Forbidding Student Organizations across Campus from Hosting Activities related to Christmas Eve, Christmas, and Other Western Religious Holidays" issued by Liaoning province's Shenyang University of Pharmaceutical Medicine)

For details, go to China Aid's websites:
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/12/blog-post_12.html

IX. Churches in Zhejiang province were forced to install security cameras



In early 2017, Zhejiang's provincial government's religious affairs department issued a notice to subordinate religious affairs departments in cities and counties across the province, demanding Catholic churches, Christian churches and religious activity sites to install surveillance cameras for "security purposes" or, according to some government officials, for "anti-terrorism purposes", but their real purpose is to monitor pastors' teachings, the number of believers and their activities. After March 1, "Three-Self" Christian churches in Hangzhou, Ningbo, Wenzhou, etc. all received a notice from their superiors about this. A document circulating on the internet showed that Zhejiang Ningbo's Christian Commission and Three-Self Patriotic Movement required subordinate churches to install security cameras in their building for "safety purposes" in March.

Since March, the governments of Zhejiang province's Hangzhou and Suzhou have sent personnel to "Three-Self" churches to install surveillance cameras and even dispatched public security agents to assist them. Before installing cameras, the authorities first conducted an investigation to find out whether the church had resisted the government's forcible demotion of cross two years ago. If the church

ever put up a protest, the government would increase manpower to forcibly install surveillance cameras. If the church refused it, the government would impose it by setting up security guards while installing cameras.

On March 23, Wenzhou's Yongjia Qianpai Church was forced to install surveillance cameras. To protest this illegal action by the government, the church chose not to have its Sunday service in the church building on April 2, but instead had it in a makeshift space set up outside the church's kitchen.

From March 21 to 24, Wenzhou's Yueqing Changlin Church was raided by more than 100 public security agenst and security guards after it refused to let the government install surveillance cameras in the church building. On another occasion, the authorities dispatched 300 SWAT members and para-military policemen to beat up church members and bar them from entering the church until part of the church's janitorial room was torn down and security cameras were installed.

Since mid-March, Wenzhou's Pingyang government started to install surveillance cameras in churches, which met resistance from some churches. On March 23, the Board of Deacons of Gaosha Church's Holy Love Building, which is located at Jiangjing village, Mabu town, Pingyang county, Wenzhou city, issued a "Declaration Against the Installation of Surveillance Cameras in Churches by a Certain Agency". The Declaration points out that the forcible installation of surveillance cameras in church buildings, by the pulpit, offering boxes, and at church entrance is an outright violation of privacy and illegal interference with churches' internal affairs; the forcible installation of surveillance cameras has no legal grounds and even if it is backed by government's edicts, it ought to be approved by church congregation; the alleged purpose of improving public security by installing cameras will cause power abuse and blatant violation of privacy and the freedom of religion.

Between March 27 and March 30, multiple Christian churches in Wenzhou's Pingyang and Yueqing experienced the forcible demolition of some church facilities by government employees and forcible installation of surveillance cameras. In the meanwhile, many churches' metal gates and the wooden doors on the inside were damaged along with some other church devices. On March 30, members of Xia'anshan Church and Zhuxia Church in Tengqiao town, Lucheng district, Wenzhou city, put up a fierce resistance to the government's forcible installation of surveillance cameras, some of which were removed by church members.

On April 20 and April 21, Banling Church in Yayang town, Taishun county, Wenzhou city, had surveillance cameras forcibly installed by the government. Members of the church put up a fierce resistance and some members were injured.

On May 24, the Fire Department of Rui'an city's Nanbing Neighborhood Office delivered a notice to Gesancun Church, claiming that the church will be cut off electricity supply due to "potential fire and safety hazards". Three days later, the church yielded to pressure and was forced to allow the government to install surveillance cameras.

In late May, Shangyuan Village Church in Zhejiang province's Rui'an city suffered the stoppage of power and water supply due to their resistance to the government's installation of surveillance cameras. A few days later, employees from the Neighborhood Office threatened to demolish the "illegal structures" behind multiple church leaders' homes should they not cooperate with the government on installing surveillance cameras. As a result of such coercion, church leaders consented to the installation of security cameras.

In early June, pressured by the stoppage of power and water supply by the government on the church building and the residence of several church leaders, the Christian Meeting Place in Tuanqian village in Zhejiang province's Rui'an city gave up resistance and allowed the authorities to install surveillance cameras.

In 2017, nearly all the government-sponsored churches had surveillance cameras installed.

(Photo: Yueqing-based Changlin Church with surveillance cameras forcibly installed after the church's walls and janitorial room was forcibly torn down)

For details, go to China Aid's websites:
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/06/blog-post_5.html
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/05/blog-post_37.html
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/04/blog-post_46.html
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/03/blog-post_29.html

X. Foreign teachers were persecuted in Henan, Guangdong and Fujian for their religious and academic activities and their involvement in churches



On April 15, while Taiwanese pastor Xu Rongzhang from Tainan Jesus God and Spirit Church and 10 other people were singing Wang Zhilei's song "Jesus loves you" at a karaoke location (KTV888) in Zhengzhou, Henan, public security agents suddenly showed up and took them to the police station for interrogation citing charges of "engaging in religious activities" and "illegal gathering". The interrogation lasted 3 to 4 hours and Pastor Xu Rongzhang's travel permit issued by People's Republic of China, Certificate of Taiwan Citizenship, and passport were all confiscated. Xu was also asked to write a confession, endorse it, and promise never to host large-scale gatherings again. After leaving the police station, he was also summoned to the National Security Bureau for interrogation. (Photo: Pastor Xu Rongzhang from Tainan Jesus God and Spirit Church)

For details, go to China Aid's websites:
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/04/blog-post_17.html



On April 25, at Guangzhou Lijiang Garden Church, while 140 Christian were attending the "Reformation and Change of Life" seminar held by Pastor Wang Zhiyong from Virginia Chinese Church in the U.S., a large number of public security agents and agents from Religious Affairs Bureau and National Security Bureau broke into the venue, accusing the seminar of being "unapproved and illegal" and demanding it to stop. Citing "illegal gathering", the authorities forced every attendant to reveal their ID, documented their information and phone number, and confiscated several hundred copies of handouts without producing any list of confiscated items. Pastor Wang Zhiyong and several church staff members were interrogated for hours by public security agents and Pastor Wang was demanded to leave China immediately. (Photo: Pastor Wang Zhiyong preaching)

For details, go to China Aid's websites:

http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/05/blog-post.html

In late April, the Huili District Ethnic and Religious Affairs Bureau in Fujian province's Xiamen city issued a notice to Lin Ruiying, leader of the River of Life Berean Church, accusing Lin of setting up illegal religious meeting places with Korean connections, i.e. the River of Life Berean Church and the Bereans Research Institute of Theology, in Room 801 and 901 at No. 302, Yuanshan South Road, Huli District, since November, 2008. Since "this violated Part one of Article 43 of the Regulations on Religious Affairs", the Huili District Ethnic and Religious Affairs Bureau banned the River of Life Berean Church and the Bereans Research Institute of Theology, and confiscated 1,346 Yuan (approx. U.S. $200) of donated money, claiming it was "illegal income." The church had a weekly attendance of a dozen members.

For details, go to China Aid's websites:
http://www.chinaaid.net/2017/05/blog-post_29.html

(End)

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