

***"In spite of sorrow, loss, and pain,
our course be onward still;
we sow on Burma's barren plain,
we reap on Zion's hill."***

~ Adoniram Judson (1788 - 1850),
former missionary in Burma/Myanmar

MYANMAR: Alleged War Crimes Against Christians

Sources: International Christian Concern, Voice of America, ABC News

Five Christians, who have been victims of persecution as a result of Myanmar's military dictatorship, recently filed a war crimes complaint in a Philippines court. Although these believers were originally from Chin state, they have emigrated to Australia, Britain, Canada and India. The alleged victims argue that a 2009 Philippine law obligates the country to prosecute war crimes committed elsewhere under the principle of universal jurisdiction.

The perpetrators named in this complaint include the head of Myanmar's ruling military council, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, eight of his military commanders and a state minister. The complainants filed the request for prosecution on October 25th, and the government prosecutors have 90 days to either approve or dismiss the complaint.

The complaint states that members of Myanmar's military killed a pastor and two church elders in the town of Thantlang during September 2021. It also accuses the military of directing attacks against churches, and burning hundreds of houses that were located within the same town, between August 2021 and June 2022. In a press release, one of the plaintiffs, Salai Ling, stated: "We are a Christian people whose pastors are being murdered and whose churches and faith-based schools are being destroyed in a systematic campaign by junta forces. With this persecution of Myanmar's Christians continuing, we pray that our brothers and sisters in the Philippines will hear our cry and grant us justice."

Though the action taken by these Christians is unique, it demonstrates the desperation of the numerous survivors who were affected by the atrocities. Since the military coup seized control of the country in February 2021, at least 4,155 people have been killed, and more than 19,600 remain in detention. Many of the attacks specifically targeted Christians under the guise of uprooting rebel forces. For more reports on the persecution of believers in Myanmar, along with ways you can help, go to our [country report](#).

Prayerfully uphold all those who are involved in this court action, including the prosecutors of this case, as well as the governmental leaders of the Philippines, asking the Lord to provide them wisdom and guidance. May He also work mightily in the hearts of those presently ruling over Myanmar, in hopes they will understand the serious ramifications of their destructive actions and turn to Him in sincere repentance. Also pray for the ongoing ministry of church congregations throughout Myanmar, that these persecuted followers of Christ will receive encouragement, strength and provision so they can faithfully meet the spiritual and practical needs of others in this war-torn country.



Min Aung Hlaing
Photo: Wikipedia / Mil.ru (cc)

CHINA: Church Leaders Detained in Raid

Source: Early Rain Covenant Church

On the morning of November 9th, Elder Li Yingqiang – along with a few other church leaders from the Early Rain Covenant Church in Chengdu, Sichuan Province – were visiting a new church that had been established in Dazhou, which is about 400 kilometres away. There, the believers of the two churches worshipped together, held a baptismal service and shared communion. However, this special service was abruptly interrupted when police from multiple departments forcefully entered the building.

While a total of 13 Christians had been taken to a police station that day, 11 of them were released in the evening. However, the police held Elder Li and Hou Duoshu, the leader of the Good Soil church plant, in custody overnight. The next day, Li was sentenced to ten days of detention, along with a fine. Even though Hou was sentenced to five days' detention, it was not enforced because of his poor physical condition.

In a recent episode of the *Closer to the Fire* podcast, host Greg Musselman was joined by guest Dr. Eric Foley from The Voice of the Martyrs Korea to discuss the Chinese Communist Party's push towards integrated faith and political ideologies – another



Early Rain Covenant Church members.
Photo: ChinaAid

attempt of the socialist government to enforce its demands for total loyalty from the people of China. We encourage you to listen to this informative discussion at [VOMCanada.com/video/china-foley](https://vomcanada.com/video/china-foley). Further details on the persecution of Christians in China, along with additional reports, are available at [our website](#).

Please continue to prayerfully remember Elder Li, as well as the many other believers who are facing relentless persecution from Communist officials for remaining committed in their allegiance to Christ. Pray that China's church leaders will stand firm by upholding the truth of God's Word, regardless of the demands imposed upon them from governing authorities. In doing so, may the hearts of the opposing officials be radically transformed, allowing the ministry of the Early Rain and Good Soil churches to proclaim the Gospel among the many spiritually searching members of their communities before our Lord's imminent return.

REPORT UPDATE

NIGERIA: Blasphemy Case Hearing Scheduled for November 27th

Sources: International Christian Concern, Christian Solidarity International, Church in Chains, Truth Nigeria

In May 2022, Rhoda Ya'u Jatau was arrested by security agents on accusations of causing a disturbance, cyberstalking and showing "contempt of religious creed" for sharing her dismay on social media over the mob killing of a Christian woman. For more details about Rhoda's case, go to our [country report](#).

Human rights advocates have repeatedly expressed their concerns for this mother of five, who remains incarcerated while her case slowly works through the courts. In addition, a United Nations Special Rapporteur has expressed "deep concern," while calling for the accused woman's immediate release. Meanwhile, Rhoda's family has gone into hiding, and her husband has sold their belongings to finance his wife's legal defence. The judge overseeing this case has refused to grant bail on the grounds that it could trigger rioting by militant Islamic groups.

Although the prosecution has closed its arguments, there have been repeated delays as the defence attempts to begin. In the most recent hearing, which took place on October 16th, it was determined that the defence would present its case on November 27th. At that time, the judge will also consider a "no-case submission" by the defence, calling for the case to be thrown out.

Rhoda and her family live in Bauchi State, one of 12 northern Nigerian states that have introduced Sharia (Islamic law) into their criminal code. If convicted, the 45-year-old mother could face capital punishment. For other reports on the persecution of Christians in Nigeria, go to our [country report](#).

As this upcoming hearing soon approaches, please pray that the Holy Spirit – whose many roles include that of "Advocate" – would empower Rhoda's lawyers while they prepare to defend her innocence in court (John 14:26). May the judge wisely heed the Spirit's promptings, and thus rule equitably in her case – leading to a favourable outcome. In the meanwhile, also prayerfully lift up Rhoda, her husband Ya'u Adamu, and the couple's five children, who are all in need of God's peace, comfort and encouragement during this waiting time apart. Pray that the Lord will not only minister to each of them spiritually but also provide for the costs of Rhoda's legal defence and the family's day-to-day needs.



Christian women in Nigeria.
Photo: VOMC

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