



**"Wait for the Lord; be strong,  
and let your heart take courage;  
wait for the Lord!"**

~ Psalm 27:14 ESV

## CHINA: Persistent Harassment Against Church Deacons

Source: ChinaAid

In 2018, the Early Rain Covenant Church was violently raided by Chinese Communist Party (CCP) authorities, resulting in multiple arrests. Since then, members of the church have continued to face harassment, including a church deacon named Jia Xuewei. [Click here](#) for previous reports on Jia's situation.

The Christian leader has been detained, beaten and expelled from his home several times. In the most recent incident, police began to harass Jia and his landlord almost immediately after the believer began renting a residence in Chengdu. Less than ten days after moving into the home, Jia was evicted because of pressure from the police.

Another deacon of the church, Zeng Qingtao, has also been subjected to constant monitoring by CCP officials. He is not allowed to leave his apartment; and when his wife Deng goes grocery shopping, she is escorted by a police car. On May 24th, Deng posted a video of four young men sitting on stools outside the door of their home, blocking the hallway. When she asked the men to move aside in order to avoid obstructing the passageway, the men haughtily responded that they are simply performing their duty.

The persecution against Jia and Zeng began immediately after both believers were elected as deacons of the Early Rain Covenant Church in 2022. In a letter calling for prayer, their church members are asking that the Lord will give these men calm and peaceful hearts in the midst of their difficulties. For other reports addressing the persecution of followers of Jesus in China, go to our [country report](#).

***Please join us in praying with the members of the Early Rain Covenant Church, asking God to sustain, strengthen and comfort these two Christian men and their families through the ministry of His Holy Spirit. As a result, may they exhibit the fruit of the Spirit through their daily lives (Galatians 5:22-23), and thus continue to honour the Lord by serving as vibrant testimonies of His love, gentleness and peace to all who oppose and/or have been ordered to monitor them. Pray that the demonstration of these believers' faithful witness will be a catalyst of the hope, salvation and transformation that's readily available through faith in Jesus Christ. Additionally, continue to pray for the safe release of Christians throughout China who are presently imprisoned, including Pastor Wang Yi.***



Jia Xuewei (right) with his friend, Ding Shuqi  
Photo: ChinaAid

## IRAN: Esmail Narimanpour Sentenced to Prison

Sources: Article18, Mohabat News

On Christmas Eve of 2023, Esmail Narimanpour was apprehended by security forces. The Iranian follower of Jesus was charged with "acting against national security by communicating with Christian 'Zionist' organizations." As of April 30th, he was released on bail after spending more than four months in detention. For more details relating to his case, see these previously [posted reports](#).

In the most recent update, Esmail's trial took place on May 28th, resulting in him being sentenced to five years' imprisonment. The Christian believer has 20 days to appeal the verdict or face the previously determined prison term. He is presently awaiting a summons that will officiate the beginning of the sentence.

***Pray that God's peace will encompass Esmail and his family as they deal with this recent court decision. May the Lord also provide greatly needed wisdom and guidance to Esmail and his lawyer as they determine their next steps through the judicial system, in hopes that it will lead to justice so the sentence will be successfully appealed. As this believer prayerfully awaits a favourable outcome, may his time be filled with opportunities to minister the hope of the Gospel to all those around him.***



Esmail Narimanpour  
Photo: Article18

## MALAYSIA: Raymond Koh's Wife Demands Answers

Sources: Open Doors, Mission Network News

Pastor Raymond Koh was no stranger to persecution when he was abducted off the streets of Malaysia on February 13th, 2017. The incident was caught on security cameras and, although no information about Pastor Raymond's captors has ever been released by the authorities, it is believed that government security forces were responsible for the incident. Video footage of the abduction is [available here](#). For previously published reports about the missing pastor, see [this list](#).

In the latest effort by Raymond's wife Susanna to search for answers about her husband's mysterious disappearance, a lawsuit has been filed against the Malaysian government for negligence. When Susanna first proposed the idea to her lawyer, he warned her that such a lawsuit could pose several risks to her safety. Despite the dangers, the Christian woman replied: "I want answers. I understand that it's risky."



Raymond Koh and his family.  
Photo: VOM USA

Susanna faced cross examination on May 27th. Following the gruelling day, she thanked her supporters for their prayers. The next witness was the wife of a practising Shia Muslim who was abducted under very similar circumstances in November 2016. As the majority of Malaysia's population adheres to Sunni Islam, any other alternative – including Shia Islam – is banned throughout the country.

The Koh family, along with the Malaysian Human Rights Commission and several NGOs, are seeking access to a special task force report about Pastor Raymond's abduction. However, this report has been classified as a secret document by government officials. The trial has been ongoing for several months, with long intervals taking place between court appearances.

***Prayerfully remember Susanna Koh and her family as they continue to seek answers regarding their missing loved one, asking God to provide them the spiritual, emotional and physical strength needed to endure this very distressing process. May the truth be revealed through this trial, bringing about a greatly needed resolution for Pastor Raymond's family, friends and others of their Christian community. Further, pray that God's justice will prevail and that those responsible for the pastor's disappearance will be held accountable.***

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The "Persecution & Prayer Alert" is a ministry of:  
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