

***"I am His wheat, ground fine
by the lions' teeth to be made
purest bread for Christ."***

~ Ignatius of Antioch

NEPAL: Pastor Acquitted of Illegal Conversion Charges

Sources: UCA News, Barnabas Aid, VOMC Contacts

In December 2024, Pastor Janmajaya Bhattarai, joined by a team of fellow Christians, distributed gifts and clothing to underprivileged students. At the request of local schools, the believers faithfully carried out this outreach program for several years as a Christmas tradition.

However, when the pastor posted information about the event on his Facebook page, some Hindu militants reacted angrily, accusing the church leader of bribing the students in an attempt to convert them to Christianity. As a result, Pastor Janmajaya was arrested on December 24th of that year. Although he was released on bail three weeks later, the charges against him remained.



Photo: PxHere

After more than a year of uncertainty, all charges against Pastor Janmajaya were finally dropped on March 24th. The church leader has since expressed deep relief at being freed from the concern of imprisonment. Church leaders within Nepal are hopeful that this ruling may help set a precedent for similar cases in the future.

Around the same time that Pastor Janmajaya was released, three other believers were detained for sharing their faith. (To review details regarding these arrests, see our previously [posted report](#).) According to the latest information received from local sources, the three recently imprisoned believers remain in custody while their cases are under investigation. Although no formal charges have been laid, their detentions have been repeatedly extended. Other published reports concerning the persecution of Christians in Nepal are available at our [country profile](#).

- ***While we can praise God that Pastor Janmajaya has been fully cleared of all charges, please pray that the outreaches of this dedicated servant and his ministry team will continue to effectively meet the practical and spiritual needs of the underprivileged members in their community.***
- ***Also prayerfully uphold the three recently arrested believers who are presently being held in custody because of their desire to share the hope of Jesus Christ, asking Him to intervene judicially on their behalf so that all the allegations against them will be dropped.***
- ***As God's servants in this predominantly Hindu nation wisely and boldly share the "Good News" of Jesus' sacrificial love among the Nepali people, may many more lives experience eternal salvation and transformation.***

BELARUS: Another Church Leader Arrested

Source: Forum18

On March 16th, masked security officials arrested Anatol Parakhnevich, a 65-year-old Catholic priest, at his parish in Alkovichi, Minsk Region. During the arrest, officers searched his home as well as the church building. Following the raid, both premises were sealed, with the keys being returned one week later.

While it has been confirmed that Father Anatol was taken into custody, it remains unclear which agency conducted the arrest, where the church leader is currently being held, and whether any formal accusations have been made against him. When contacted, a spokesperson for the Belarusian religious affairs office claimed to have no information on the arrest, and police officials refused to provide any comment.



Father Anatol Parakhnevich
Photo: Katolik.life

This arrest comes four months after the regime freed two other Catholic priests who had been sentenced to lengthy prison terms. (See [this report](#) for details.) Following their releases, both priests were sent to Rome where they remain today. Latest reports confirm that Belarusian officials are not permitting them to return and resume their ministry.

Although strict constraints have been placed on foreign religious workers, Father Anatol was born in Belarus where he grew up in an orphanage. He has faithfully served the church in Alkovichi for almost 20 years. Further reports addressing the challenges facing Christians in Belarus may be reviewed at our [country profile](#).

- ***May the authorities provide clear and accurate information regarding the detention of this most recently arrested church leader.***
- ***In addition to interceding for Father Anatol's release, ask the Lord to sustain him with peace, strength and protection – physically, emotionally and spiritually – during this present time of incarceration.***
- ***Also remember the many other Christians in Belarus who continue to face severe limitations and regulations, praying that they too will experience spiritual endurance amid opposition; divine protection; and, ultimately, the freedom to worship the Lord both privately and corporately.***

REPORT UPDATE

MALAYSIA: Government Appeal Withdrawn in Missing Pastor's Case

Sources: Mission Network News, Open Doors, South China Morning Post, Aliran

In November 2025, the Malaysian High Court ruled that the government was complicit in the 2017 disappearance of Pastor Raymond Koh and ordered that his wife, Susanna, receive significant financial compensation. The court also directed the release of a government report containing information about the disappearance, despite authorities' insistence that the document was classified as "top secret." For more details on this ruling, see [this report](#).

Following the court decision, the government filed an appeal, and a stay was granted pending its outcome. Susanna expressed concern that the appeal process could take up to five years to conclude.

However, in an unexpected turnabout, the Malaysian government withdrew its appeal on April 1st. Pastor Raymond's family is now expected to gain access to the previously classified report, and the investigation into his disappearance is set to recommence.

In response to this decision, Amnesty International Malaysia has called for concrete and transparent action by the authorities: "If the government is truly committed to ensuring accountability and preventing future enforced disappearances, it must swiftly conduct independent, transparent and effective investigations followed by the prosecution of all those suspected of criminal responsibility." To learn more about Pastor Raymond's case, or to read about other situations of persecution involving our Malaysian brothers and sisters in Christ, go to our [country profile](#).



Pastor Raymond Koh

- ***In light of this latest development, pray that the full truth surrounding Pastor Raymond's mysterious disappearance would be revealed, and that justice will ultimately prevail.***
- ***Having lived with uncertainty and anguish for nearly 10 years since his abduction, may Susanna, along with her family and friends, experience God's sustaining presence, reassuring comfort and overflowing peace.***
- ***Prayerfully uphold all believers throughout this Southeast Asian country, asking the Lord to help them remain steadfast in their faith and further embolden their Christian witness so they can compassionately reach others with the Gospel in their Malaysian communities.***

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