

## Persecution & Prayer Alert

Voice of the Martyrs Canada  
www.vomcanada.com

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*"The greatest service, whatever  
your vocation, is to be your priestly  
intercession. God has ordained to work  
through the prayers of His people."*

~ Wesley Duewel

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### **CHINA: Coordinated Raids on Beijing Church Meetings**

Sources: ChinaAid, Church in Chains

On the morning of October 20th, multiple branches of the Beijing Zion Church had gathered for their usual worship services when police and religious affairs officials simultaneously forced their way into the meetings. The identities of everyone present were recorded and 12 people, including pastors and church members, were taken into custody.

By eight o'clock that evening, most of the detained Christians had been released. However, Elder Qin Guoliang from the church's Guomao branch was kept in custody and given a 14-day administrative detention for "organizing illegal gatherings."

These raids are a continuation of the authorities' harassment towards the Beijing Zion Church and other unregistered places of worship in China. To learn more about the challenges encountered by our Chinese brothers and sisters in Christ, see our previously published reports at [www.vomcanada.com/china.htm](http://www.vomcanada.com/china.htm).

*Pray for the ongoing ministry of members belonging to the Beijing Zion Church and other believers who are encountering severe governmental opposition, asking the Lord to provide them encouragement, guidance and courage as they faithfully reach out to the people of their nation with the truth of God's Word. May He also greatly strengthen these oppressed Christians in China so they can victoriously overcome all the challenges they are experiencing; and, throughout the process, receive the wisdom they need to respond to their persecutors in a Christ-like manner. Continue to prayerfully remember the many believers who are presently serving time in Chinese prisons because of their faith.*

## **PAKISTAN: Bail Granted for Christians Facing Blasphemy Charges**

Sources: Morning Star News, Release International

The previous week's *Persecution & Prayer Alert* reported on an unusual case in which bail was granted to Saima Masih, a Christian woman who was accused of blasphemy in Pakistan. (Read the previously published report at [www.vomcanada.com/pk-2024-10-31b.htm](http://www.vomcanada.com/pk-2024-10-31b.htm).) While Saima has been freed from prison, she remains in danger from the avenging violence of militant vigilantes who are seeking to achieve what they falsely perceive as "justice." Remarkably, this past October, two similar blasphemy cases came before the Pakistani courts in which other accused Christians were also released on bail.

An ambulance driver and father of two named Chand Shamaun was arrested in June and charged with insulting Islam under the nation's anti-terrorism laws. However, a two-judge bench of the Lahore High Court ruled on October 10th that there were notable loopholes in the police case against the Christian man. First of all, no evidence had been gathered, and then the only "witness" was a known police informer who has frequently been involved in false cases. As a result, Chand was released from prison on October 23rd.

In a separate case, Zimran Asim was arrested in August 2023 and charged with three counts of blasphemy. However, Zimran's only "crime" had been his association with someone who was also accused of insulting the Islamic faith. This April and July, the Lahore High Court granted him bail for two of the three blasphemy convictions. Later, on October 30th, bail was given for the third and final conviction, resulting in his release. Once again, the judges ruled in this case that there was no evidence supporting the accusations against the Christian man.

While both Chand and Zimran are now able to be with their families, they have gone into hiding for their safety. According to Zimran's lawyer, Aneeqa Maria, his family had already fled the area after their home and all their possessions were taken by other villagers following the accused Christian's arrest. "Zimran Asim's case is a fitting example of how innocent people are implicated in false cases by individuals as well as the police," states Aneeqa. "This poor man was forced to suffer in prison, away from his family for over one year. They also lost their home and can't even think of going back to their village."

Under Pakistan's blasphemy laws, those found guilty are automatically sentenced to death, though the authorities have not yet carried out the death penalty for this crime. Unfortunately, these laws are frequently used to settle interpersonal disagreements, business disputes, or simply because of the accusers' hatred towards Christians and other religious minorities. For more details, see our country report at [www.vomcanada.com/pakistan.htm](http://www.vomcanada.com/pakistan.htm).

*Praise God for the recent court decisions which have allowed these believers to be released from prison and reunited with their loved ones! Pray that the Lord will now divinely shelter Saima, Chand, Zimran – along with their families – from any further harm and harassment. May He also transform the legal system of Pakistan so that people will not be able to abuse the country's laws for personal reasons. Pray that lawmakers will reconsider the role of the blasphemy laws in Pakistani society and work towards ensuring better treatment for our Christian family in this South Asian nation.*

## REPORT UPDATE

### **MALAYSIA: Classified Report on Pastor Raymond Koh**

Sources: Mission Network News, Malay Mail, International Christian Concern

Since the disappearance of her husband in 2017, Susanna Koh has continued to search for answers. In 2020, the Christian woman filed a lawsuit against the Malaysian government in an attempt to force them to reveal what they know about the abduction of her husband, Pastor Raymond Koh. As a result of the lawsuit, the government was ordered to release the classified findings of a task force that had been created to look into Pastor Raymond's disappearance, as well as that of a social activist named Amri Che Mat.

Recently, as was reported in a previously published *Persecution & Prayer Alert* report, Susanna was finally given a copy of this investigative document (see [www.vomcanada.com/my-2024-10-17.htm](http://www.vomcanada.com/my-2024-10-17.htm)). Since then, court officials have been hearing testimonies based on information released in the report. During a recent court session, the head of the task force, Datuk Abdul Rahim Uda, stated that Pastor Raymond's kidnapping was not an "enforced disappearance" and that the evidence does not point to government involvement. Instead, blame is being directed towards a former contract worker with the police, Saiful Bahari Abd Aziz, and other rogue officers who acted independently. It was noted that Saiful's gold-coloured vehicle was spotted at the scene of both disappearances, as shown in security videos.

The report is critical of the inaction demonstrated by the police and governing officials during their initial investigations into the abductions. For Susanna and her lawyers, many questions remain, and the case is far from over. Todd Nettleton from the Voice of the Martyrs USA questions whether blame can really be diverted from the government and police, particularly since Saiful had been employed by the special forces for more than a decade.

In a recently made statement, Todd echoes the call of Susanna and others who are seeking answers: "There's a fair amount of smoke and mirrors going on. 'Let's argue about what we call it (forced disappearance or something else),' instead of talking about 'Where is Pastor Raymond Koh? What happened to him?'" For more information on Pastor Raymond's case, watch the latest episode of the *Closer to the Fire* podcast, in which host Greg Musselman conducts an informative interview with Todd Nettleton: [www.vomcanada.com/video/my-wheres-koh.htm](http://www.vomcanada.com/video/my-wheres-koh.htm).

*Pray that the judge hearing this case will have wisdom and discernment in determining the truth about Pastor Raymond's disappearance, along with the courage to announce the revealed truth despite governmental opposition. Pray for continued strength on behalf of Susanna as she endures this long and painful journey in an attempt to discover what truly happened to her husband. Finally, if Pastor Raymond is still alive, may he sense the prayers of his Christian brothers and sisters around the world – reminders that he has not been forgotten by his global family in Christ – and thus receive greatly needed encouragement, guidance and help through the comforting presence of God's Holy Spirit.*