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# **CHINA: Freedom of religion or belief: Special bimonthly FoRB newsletter**

## **General**

**26.04.21 – USCIRF, China aid release yearly reports on religious liberty**

China Aid focused on house church Christians persecuted in China, USCIRF singled out 14 countries, insisting for a tougher stand on Russia.

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**21.04.21 – China: national security education day focused on fighting illegal religion**

On April 15, Chinese were called to support repression of banned religions, including Falun Gong, The Church of Almighty God, and the Association of Disciples

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#### **20.04.21 – Rural settlements ordered to intensify crackdown on religion**

In order to qualify as “Beautiful Villages,” they should report that illegal (and preferably also legal) religious activity has been eradicated.

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#### **19.04.21 – Grid system used to target “illegal” religion**

The Orwellian system of dividing China into 100×100 meter grids for surveillance now includes grid officers in charge of hunting members of banned religious groups.

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#### **16.04.21 Association of disciples: Two making Red Cross flags arrested in Hunan**

Sewing the wrong flag will land you in jail for several years in China.

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### **Uyghur Muslims**

#### **27.04.21 – China’s attempt to spy on Uyghurs at home and abroad**

China today hosts a complex web of surveillance systems to keep track of its citizens and critics, both at home and abroad. Not only does the Chinese state operate multiple systems to maintain surveillance on its citizens, but it also tasks private companies working in China to further enhance

its network of human and technical spies

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### **The Church of Almighty God**

**27.04.21 – Church of Almighty God: 750 arrested in three months**

Between January and March 2021, in Jiangsu, Henan, Sichuan, and other provinces, devotees were arrested. Many were tortured.

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### **Falun Gong**

**29.04.21 – Falun Gong: Share an App with friends, go to jail for 3 and a half years**

In Guizhou, one Peng Biao went to prison just for sending to friends a QR code allowing to download the “Shenzhou Mingmei” application.

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**29.04.21 – 69-year-old man suddenly dies in prison while serving time for his faith**

A Daqing City, Heilongjiang Province resident passed away on April 4, 2021 while serving a seven-year term for his faith in Falun Gong, a spiritual discipline that has been persecuted by the Chinese communist regime since 1999.

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**29.04.21 – Jilin woman arrested in a police sweep secretly sentenced to prison**

Ms. Zhou Yongjie’s family had been kept in the dark of her

situation after she was arrested in a police sweep about two and a half years ago. It wasn't until the end of 2020 that the authorities informed her family that she had been sentenced to four years for practicing Falun Gong, a spiritual discipline that has been persecuted by the Chinese communist regime since 1999.

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## **Catholics**

### **27.04.21 – Fined for hosting underground bishop's mass. The Sino-Vatican Agreement betrayed**

A Catholic from Zhejiang is fined for hosting Msgr. Shao Zhumin in his private chapel. The prelate, recognized by the Holy See, but not by the Party, is branded as an emissary of a "foreign institution". All attempts by the Party to eliminate pastors and unofficial communities, tearing up the premises of the Agreement between China and the Holy See.

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### **19.04.21 – Chinese Church: 'knowing, thanking, listening, following the Party'**

Across China, multiple celebrations mark the anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China. Catholics and other believers can choose among a panoply of seminars, conferences, trips, visits, and exhibits. For Mgr Ma Yinglin, without the Communist Party there would be no New China, no socialism with Chinese characteristics, and no happy life for people today.

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