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The Vatican-China agreement and Pope Francis: to renew or not to renew?

The Pope is widely criticized for his statement that "the Agreement is good and I hope it can be renewed." Not renewing it may be a problem, too.

By Massimo Introvigne

Bitter Winter (25.07.2022) - <https://bit.ly/3J9Ia8N> - Earlier this month, Pope Francis was interviewed by Reuters on the [Vatican-China deal of 2018](#), which is up for the second two-year renewal in October 2022. The Vatican's own news portal [reproduced the part of the interview about China](#), making it somewhat more official.

Francis said that "the Agreement is good, and I hope it can be renewed in October." He commented that "It is going slowly, but [some bishops] have been appointed. It is going slow, as I say, 'the Chinese way,' because the Chinese have that sense of time, that no one can rush them." He also believes that the Chinese authorities "also have problems because it is not the same situation in every region of the country," and how the agreement is implemented "depends on the local leaders, there are different ones."

Answering implicitly criticism by Hong Kong's retired Cardinal Joseph Zen and others that he is being misled by his Secretary of State, Cardinal Pietro Parolin, the Pope added that, "The one who is handling this agreement is Cardinal Parolin, who is the best diplomat in the Holy See, a man of high diplomatic standing. And he knows how to move, he is a man of dialogue, and he dialogues with the Chinese authorities. I believe that the commission that he chairs has done everything to move forward and look for a way out. And they have found it."

Francis' rationale for this defense is that Vatican diplomats have always been criticized for their dealings with totalitarian regimes, only to be rehabilitated after several decades. "Many people said so many things against John XXIII, against Paul VI, against [Cardinal Agostino] Casaroli," Francis said. "But diplomacy is like that. Faced with a closed situation, one must seek the possible, not the ideal, path. Diplomacy is the art of the possible and making what is possible become a reality. The Holy See has always had these great men. But this [diplomacy] with China is being carried out by Parolin, who is great in this area."

The Pope here referred to one historical interpretation, that the so-called Ostpolitik promoted by Cardinal Casaroli, which many Christians in Eastern Europe perceived as "soft on Communism," in fact by exchanging a certain amount of legitimization of the Soviet Union by the Holy See against spaces of freedom for the Catholic Church in the satellite countries, limited as they were, prepared the fall of the Communist regimes. It is a controversial interpretation of history, but it has its academic supporters.

Critics, however, argue that the situation with China is different. Cardinal Casaroli never allowed the Communist regimes in Eastern Europe to select the Catholic Bishops there, a power that the Vatican-China deal grants, in practice, to the [CCP](#). In theory, the Vatican can reject the [CCP](#) selection of new Catholic Bishops, disguised as choice by the "patriotic" Catholic devotees, but in practice Rome has accepted all the [CCP](#)-selected prelates.

Some see the words of the Pope as a sell-out to China, and these some include senior scholars of Chinese religion. For example, Yang Fenggang, arguably the leading Chinese sociologist of religions, wrote on Facebook of Pope Francis after the Reuter interview: "Compliant or complicit? That'll be the question historians have to answer about him."

This is an understandable reaction, as it is difficult to reconcile the Pope's statement that "the Agreement is good" and Cardinal Parolin "has found a way out" with the fact that dissident priests continue to be jailed and several Catholic Bishops who had "disappeared" have not reappeared. Yet, it is important to understand the issues on the table of the renewal negotiations.

In the People's Republic of China, religions that have their leaders abroad are forbidden. In 1957, [Chairman Mao](#) formed the [Patriotic Catholic Church](#) (an invention of [Xi Jinping's](#) father, Xi Zhongxun) whose Bishops were appointed by the [CCP](#) and broke their ties with Rome—which reacted by excommunicating them and declaring the Chinese Church schismatic. A sizable part of the Chinese Catholics remained loyal to the Vatican and became part of an "[underground Catholic Church](#)," which was severely persecuted.

When the 2018 agreement was signed, the Vatican and some scholars favorable to it argued that in China there had never been two churches, one "patriotic" and one "underground," and this was an invention of Western scholars. Theologically, one can argue that the devotees of the [Patriotic Catholic Church](#) had accepted to join it under duress and were still spiritually part of the Catholic Church. Sociologically, however, that the two communities, patriotic and underground, lived separately is difficult to deny. What is true is that, particularly since Benedict XVI succeeded John Paul II, the separation became less clear-cut. Some "patriotic" bishops (but not all), who from the point of view of the Vatican had been consecrated unlawfully, went to Hong Kong and got lawfully re-consecrated. In some dioceses (but not in all) the Vatican appointed as local bishop in communion with Rome the same person who had already been appointed as the bishop of the [Patriotic Catholic Church](#).

After the [Vatican-China deal of 2018](#), whose text remains secret, in practice the "underground" Catholics were asked by the Vatican to join the Patriotic Association, which was declared by the Holy See as no longer separated from Rome and a legitimate expression in China of the one and only Catholic Church. The Vatican explained that an "underground" church had lost its reason to exist, and there was now only one unified Catholic Church in China.

Some Chinese Catholics who had been part of the underground did join the Patriotic Church, and some didn't. Those who didn't included bishops, in addition to priests and laypersons, and a new category was created, the "conscientious objectors." These are the Chinese Catholics who recognize the authority of the Pope and the Vatican, yet do not accept Rome's suggestion to join the Patriotic Association, claiming that their conscience cannot accept the participation in an organization controlled by an atheistic Communist Party.

The Vatican is not happy about the existence of the conscientious objectors and do not encourage their position in any way. Yet, it maintains that they are Catholics in good standing, and in the [Vatican Guidelines of 2019](#)—that some in the Vatican now regard as unwise and damaging the relations with the [CCP](#)—it asked the Chinese government to treat them with "respect." The only respect the conscientious objectors got from the [CCP](#) was to be systematically harassed and put in jail.

Nobody knows whether the deal has clauses about Hong Kong too, where Cardinal Zen has been arrested, released, and committed to trial under pretexts, in fact for being the most vocal supporter of the conscientious objection position. One problem for both the [CCP](#) and the Vatican is that it is now clear that the conscientious objectors are not only old priests and believers who will solve the problem by dying one after the other. Some conscientious objectors are young, and some are seminarians who prepare for the priesthood clandestinely under dissident Bishops.

Critics of Pope Francis contend that before renewing the agreement in October 2022 the Vatican should at least ask that the arrested conscientious objectors be released. We agree, and Bitter Winter is aware of the fact that, unofficially, this is being asked in the

negotiations. Clearly, if those jailed are not released and the agreement is renewed, the renewal would be presented by the [CCP](#) as a warrant for its continued persecution of the dissidents.

However, a question seldom discussed is what would happen in the hypothetical case that, faced with the [CCP's](#) refusal of releasing the arrested conscientious objectors and treating them with "respect," the Vatican decides not to renew the agreement. Logically, this should imply that the Holy See would state that, contrary to its 2018 hopes, the Patriotic Association remains a mere tool of the [CCP](#), and good Catholics should not be part of it. Certainly this decision would be welcomed by the conscientious objectors, as their position would be vindicated. As for their relations with the authorities, the conscientious objectors will not be damaged by the non-renewal. They were persecuted before, and will continue to be persecuted after the hypothetical non-renewal. Presumably Cardinal Parolin, as the main responsible of a strategy that would be certified as having failed, should resign (as we have seen, Pope Francis is on the contrary defending him wholeheartedly).

This would be a minor problem, however, compared to what would happen to those former underground Catholics who in 2018 had "emerged" from the underground, had believed the promises of the Vatican, and had joined the Patriotic Association. The Vatican has implied that they are the majority of the former underground Catholics—we don't know who did the statistics, but certainly even if they do not represent the majority, they are a significant group. We are aware of stories of underground Catholics who managed to keep their affiliation with an illegal brand of religion secret for decades, and revealed themselves only in 2018, when they joined the Patriotic Association.

What should they do if the Vatican does not renew the Agreement? Logically, again, unless they have been converted in the meanwhile into staunch [CCP](#) supporters, they should resign from the Patriotic Association, no longer attend the Masses celebrated in the "patriotic" parishes, and go underground again. But those who were not known to the [CCP](#) before 2018 are now known. Resigning from the Patriotic Association would be perceived as an open challenge to the [CCP](#), and will surely be severely punished. And they will have good reasons to blame the Vatican for their predicament.

I am not arguing that for the sake of these Catholics the Vatican should now renew the Agreement, and renew it forever, no matter how badly the [CCP](#) behaves, or treats the conscientious objectors. This is not my position. I only want to show that the Vatican placed itself in an impossible situation, with both the renewal and the non-renewal carrying with them dramatic consequences.

An old Catholic motto is "Roma locuta, quaestio soluta," meaning that "when Rome [i.e., the Pope] has spoken, the question should be regarded as solved." In this case, the Pope has spoken but the question has not been solved at all.

Photo: The Pope and Chinese Catholics in Saint Peter's Square. From Weibo.

Special bimonthly FoRB newsletter (01-15.07.2022)

Buddhists

15.07.2022 - Chi Jie: Death of Tibetan activist in jail confirmed after six years

As reported to Bitter Winter, authorities in Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) have now admitted that Chi Jie, a well-known Tibetan activist from Mengqing village, in Biru county, under the administration of the prefecture-level city of Nagku, in the northern part of TAR, died in jail in 2016, allegedly "of old age." This confirms previous unofficial reports that he had been tortured to death in the same year 2016.

The story of Chi Jie is strictly connected with the 2013 demonstrations in Tibet against the forced "re-education" courses thousands of Tibetan Buddhists were ordered to submit to. Buddhists were also upset that prayer flags had been removed, and mandatory Chinese flags were placed on the roofs of each home.

[Continue reading...](#)

11.07.2022 - CCP "celebrates" Dalai Lama birthday with anti-religious exhibitions

July 6 was the 87th birthday of the XIV Dalai Lama. Buddhists celebrated all over the world—and even in Tibet, clandestinely, as any celebration was strictly forbidden, and public security was in a state of maximum alert.

For the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), the birthday was an opportunity for more anti-Dalai-Lama, anti-Buddhist, and anti-religious campaigns throughout Tibet.

[Continue reading...](#)

04.07.2022 - Monastery forced to relocate to make way for hydropower station

Chinese authorities in Amdo, eastern Tibet are planning to relocate a 19th-century Tibetan monastery against the wishes of its resident monks and local Tibetans. The monastery, located in Drakkar County (Ch: Xinghai) in Amdo, will make way for a hydropower station to be constructed on the nearby River Machu, also known as the Yellow River.

[Continue reading...](#)

04.07.2022 - Tibetan woman arrested for keeping Dalai Lama's photo at home

Chinese police arrested a Tibetan woman named Zumkar on 23 June 2022, after finding her in possession of a photo of the Dalai Lama, the exiled spiritual leader of Tibet. The arrest took place at her home where the police found a photo of the Dalai Lama on an altar, a sacred part of Tibetan households where religious objects like statues and scripture are kept, and prayers are offered. Four days later, on 28 June, the police transferred her nearly 500 kilometres away to Lhasa, a 12-hour drive south from her hometown of Tsarang Township, Amdo County in Nagchu. Other residences in the area are also known to have been investigated by the authorities for photos of the Dalai Lama.

[Continue reading...](#)

Protestants

14.07.2022 - "Remember their names": Early Rain survivor testifies to persecution in China

At the 2022 IRF Summit, ChinaAid invited Ren Ruiting, a former member of the Early Rain Covenant Church in Chengdu, Sichuan Province, to give a presentation. Ren gave a three-part testimony on her personal experience of the Chinese government's persecution of Christian faith communities and individuals.

Due to China's religious persecution, Ren Ruiting and her family fled to Taiwan in 2019. Due to restrictions imposed by Taiwan's refugee policy, under the coordination of ChinaAid, her family came to the United States in 2021. They currently reside in Florida.

[Continue reading...](#)

14.07.2022 - Church in East China inspires elderly believers to participate in ministries

Elderly believers in a church located in an East China city make up nearly 70% of the congregation. Despite the small number of believers, the church's various ministries are in full swing, with the elderly believers outnumbering younger believers in participation. How have they achieved it? Recently, a pastor of the church showed their practical experience to the Gospel Times, an online Chinese Christian newspaper.

[Continue reading...](#)

07.07.2022 - Christian banned from platform for "illegal religious content"

Since the implementation of the *Administrative Measures for Internet Religious Information Services* on March 1, China's online religious information has been severely censored, and Chinese cyberspace continues to shrink.

A Christian in China has been banned from using a smart platform for a year after authorities accused her of "publishing illegal religious content," according to a report from China Christian Daily.

The Chinese Christian who has been banned from posting religious content was recently told that her posts involved "illegal religious" information and violated one of the platform's regulations. This was after she received a complaint from the DingTalk platform, where

she learned that the religious messages she posted were classified as illegal religious information.

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06.07.2022 - Wife of imprisoned Christian updated for the first time in seven months

On June 30, Li Xin received an update regarding her husband Brother Zhao Weikai, a co-worker of Taiyuan Zion Reformed Church. Zhao was arrested almost one year ago. The last update she received was more than seven months ago. Imprisoned in Fangshan County Detention Center, brother Zhao is very peaceful and in good health.

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Falun Gong

13.07.2022 - Mother and daughter sentenced to prison for their shared faith

A 45-year-old woman and her 71-year-old mother were recently sentenced to eight and four years, respectively, for their faith in Falun Gong.

More than ten plainclothes officers broke into Ms. Zhu Enhua's home in Qujing City, Yunnan Province, on October 3, 2021, after deceiving her into opening the door by pretending to be interested in her rental property. One officer held Ms. Zhu's arms behind her back and the others began to ransack her five-story apartment building. They searched every room for Falun Gong materials, including inside the pillows and comforters.

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09.07.2022 - Reported in the first half of 2022: 366 Falun Gong practitioners sentenced for their faith

A total of 366 Falun Gong practitioners sentenced for their faith were confirmed in the first half of 2022.

Falun Gong, also known as Falun Dafa, is a spiritual discipline that has been persecuted by the Chinese communist regime since 1999. Since then, countless practitioners have been arrested, detained, sentenced, and tortured for upholding their faith. But due to strict information censorship in China, the incidents can't always be reported in a timely manner, nor is all the information readily available.

The newly confirmed cases include one that took place in 2013, two in 2014, one in 2016, one in 2017, one in 2018, one in 2019, 12 in 2020, 145 in 2021, and 202 in 2022. For the 202 prison terms that have been handed down in 2022 so far, 45 were in January, 36 in February, 44 in March, 37 in April, 22 in May, and 17 in June.

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09.07.2022 - Sichuan man dies after enduring three years of brutal torture in prison and constant harassment after his release

Since the Chinese communist regime began to persecute Falun Gong, an ancient spiritual discipline also known as Falun Dafa, in July 1999, Mr. Sun, a former credit union director, was repeatedly arrested, had his home ransacked and held in brainwashing centers. He was given 1.5 years at Xinhua Forced Labor Camp in 2003 for distributing Falun Gong materials.

His second to last arrest was on December 13, 2016 for talking to people about Falun Gong. Two people refused to listen and reported him to the police. When the police came half an hour later, they attempted to take pictures of Mr. Sun with two copies of Falun Gong materials. He didn't comply.

[Continue reading...](#)

06.07.2022 - Retired judge sentenced to six years for talking to people about Falun Gong in her neighborhood

A Guiyang City, Guizhou Province resident was sentenced to six years in prison in late 2021 for spreading information about Falun Gong. Her appeal has been rejected by a higher court.

Falun Gong, also known as Falun Dafa, is a spiritual discipline that has been persecuted by the Chinese communist regime since 1999.

Ms. Zhou Lin, 63, is a retired judge of the Weining County Court in Guizhou Province. She was arrested on July 30, 2020, after being reported by the property management security in her own neighborhood, for talking to the residents about Falun Gong. The police ransacked her home and held her at the Sanjiang Detention Center in Guiyang City.

[Continue reading...](#)

Special bimonthly FoRB newsletter (16-30.06.2022)

General

20.06.2022 - Talent agents new regulations: No agents for those active in illegal religion

The new rules come into force on June 30 and deprive of agents' services performers who criticize the CCP, are suspected of 'separatism,' or follow non-authorized religions.

[Continue reading...](#)

Protestants

30.06.2022 - Early Rain service raided, elder summoned for questioning

Police raided Early Rain Covenant Church's in person worship over the weekend. Multiple police vehicles parked near the meeting place, so congregants split up to avoid conflict with authorities.

Around 8:50 AM, Deyang police found Elder Li Yingqiang's family near the worship venue in Chengdu and took them back to Deyang. Around 11:30 AM, Elder Li Yingqiang returned

home safely after an interrogation at Longquanshan Police Station near his home. Early Rain Covenant Church's Sunday service went smoothly.

[Continue reading...](#)

29.06.2022 - Christian detained after trying to join Early Rain

Early Rain Covenant Church disclosed that Long Kehai, a Christian, moved from Gansu province to Chengdu to become a member of Early Rain Covenant Church. National security officers transported him back home before he could finish moving. Nobody could contact Long for three days, until a Christian of Early Rain called a national security officer. They confirmed that Long Kehai has been administratively detained.

[Continue reading...](#)

27.06.2022 - Pastor Geng Zejun committed to trial

The preacher of the Church of the Rock in Shizuishan, Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, remains in jail and may be sentenced in July.

Readers of Bitter Winter may remember [the story of Pastor Geng Zejun](#), from the remote Ningxia Hui [Autonomous Region](#), whose name comes from the [Hui Muslims](#), which represent roughly 33% of the region's population.

[Continue reading...](#)

17.06.2022 - Leader of Chinese bible church detained and fined for hosting gathering

On June 2, Yueyang public security officers gave Huang Lei, the leader of "Yueyang Lou District Rock Bible House Church," a 10-day detention and a fine of 500 yuan (~\$74) because Huang hosted a gathering of over 180 Christians.

ChinaAid sources received a copy of his penalty notice. The "Public Security Administrative Penalty Decision" is as follows:

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Catholics

17.06.2022 - Jacob Pius: Chinese "Traditionalist Catholic" Remains in Jail

A young Catholic with a sense of humor proposed to establish a traditional Catholic monarchy in a part of China. The CCP was not amused. He was arrested in January 2021 and is still in prison.

[Continue reading...](#)

Uyghurs

21.06.2022 - Hawagul's Tears: What they tell a Uyghur

The iconic image of a crying female detainee in a Xinjiang camp has moved the world. For the Uyghurs, her tears have a deeper meaning.

[Continue reading...](#)

Falun Gong

30.06.2022 - Doctor Strange Movie Banned in China for "Promoting Falun Gong"

Officially, a few-second-long scene where a kiosk selling "The Epoch Times" is visible is the reason for the ban. Unofficially, there is more.

For the series "it may happen only in China," fans who hoped that the new movie "Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness," featuring the Marvel Comics hero Dr. Stephen Strange, would be available to Chinese audiences have been sorely disappointed. The film will not be released in China.

[Continue reading...](#)

28.06.2022 - Two women serving time for practicing Falun Gong denied family visits

Eighteen months after two Leshan City, Sichuan Province residents were transferred to a local prison to serve time for practicing Falun Gong, their families still haven't been allowed to visit or call them even once. The two families are now very worried about their loved ones' situation.

[Continue reading...](#)

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25.06.2022 - 68-year-old woman beaten daily and force-fed unknown drug in prison

A 68-year-old woman serving an eight-year term for practicing Falun Gong is being subjected to daily beatings by the inmates. The prison guards have also knocked out her teeth while forcibly administering unknown drugs she refused to take.

Ms. Wang Ruiling, of Zunhua City, Hebei Province, was taken to the Shijiazhuang Women's Prison on April 16, 2021. She was held at the 13th ward. According to an insider, she is subjected to daily beatings, including in the morning, noon, and evening. Blood stains are often seen in her cell. As she refused to take the unknown drugs the guards gave her, they knocked out her teeth and force-fed her the drug.

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21.06.2022 - Falun Gong practitioners systematically tortured in Kangjiashan Prison in China's Shenyang City

The Kangjiashan Prison in Shenyang City, Liaoning Province, formed by merging the former Kangjiashan and Yinjia Forced Labor Camps, is a municipal prison under the jurisdiction of Shenyang Municipal Bureau of Justice. It served as a provincial pilot prison in 2012 for the persecution of Falun Gong practitioners, and its crimes were reported many times on Minghui.org.

From 2014 to 2018, Kangjiashan Prison ranked first in three aspects among prisons in Liaoning Province, namely: no mobile phones for inmates; no accidents in 20 years; and highest transformation rate of Falun Gong practitioners.

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19.06.2022 - Shandong teacher repeatedly harassed for upholding her faith

A vocational school teacher in Jinan City, Shandong Province has been repeatedly harassed since 2019 for her faith in Falun Gong, a spiritual discipline that has been targeted by the Chinese Communist Party since 1999. When Ms. Chang Xinhong, 56, refused to renounce her faith, the police constantly came to her home or called her. They threatened to harass her every year and said that her child would also be barred from working for the government (government jobs are considered very stable jobs, which people compete for).

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Special bimonthly FoRB newsletter (01-16.06.2022)

General

13.06.2022 - Dragon Boat festival used for anti-religious propaganda

In Guangzhou, the elderly were “helped” to celebrate the festival and told they should not waste their pension money in illegal religion, xie jiao, or superstition.

[Continue reading...](#)

Protestants

13.06.2022 - Religious Cyberspace continues to shrink in China

A Christian in China has been blocked from using an intelligent working platform for a year for “posting illegal religious content” there. As the Administrative Measures for Internet Religious Information Services came into force on March 1, Christianity-related websites, WeChat accounts, and group chats have seen severe censorship.

[Continue reading...](#)

08.06.2022 - Ningxia pastor's first trial planned for June

Mrs. Hao Ying, wife of preacher Geng Zejun, published on social media that a trial will be held against her imprisoned husband at the end of June. Panshi church is a house church

in Huinong District, Shizuishan. The church was raided during its Sunday service on December 5, 2021. The preacher Geng Zejun was administratively detained first and then criminally detained under the charge of "organizing illegal gatherings". He has been detained in the Shizuishan Detention Center for more than half a year. On May 18, his lawyer traveled to Shizuishan and met with Mr. Geng and the judge. The judge told him the trial is planned for the end of June.

[Continue reading...](#)

08.06 2022 - Virtual seminar commemorates Pastor Wang Yi spending his fourth birthday in prison

Wang Yi, the pastor of Early Rain Covenant Church, turned 49 on June 1. It was also his fourth birthday in prison. An overseas group of Chinese Christians called *Wang Yi Resource Library* held an online seminar for Pastor Wang Yi's pastoral letters via Zoom. Nearly one thousand pastors, elders, and Christians across the world attended the online meeting to commemorate the imprisoned pastor.

[Continue reading...](#)

07.06.2022 - CCP fails to produce formal accusation for imprisoned elder

Mrs Yang Aiging, the wife of Ren'ai Reformed Church's Elder Zhang Chunlie, posted an update on her husband's case in social media. Zhang's lawyer met with him in Guiyang City detention center on June 6. According to the lawyer, Zhang lost some weight but was in good health. He asked fellow Christians to pray for him, but not to worry about him. He is waiting for God's time and he is praying for other Christians every day.

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Buddhists

13.06.2022 - Further information surfaces about Rinchem Tsultrim

Further details have emerged about the political prisoner and Tibetan monk Rinchen Tsultrim, who is serving a prison sentence of four years and six months. Rinchen Tsultrim was arrested in Ngaba County in August 2019 and later imprisoned after being found guilty of "inciting secession".

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10.06.2022 - Tibetan pilgrim arrested at Potala Palace

Tibet Watch has learned that, yesterday, 40-year-old Tsewang Norbu was arrested by police while on a pilgrimage to the Tibetan capital of Lhasa. According to external sources contacted by Tibet Watch, the man was taken away for demanding that pilgrims like himself be given priority to visit the sacred Potala Palace –

the home of the Dalai Lama. He had been waiting for over one week for an opportunity to visit the Palace, during the holiest month of the lunar calendar.

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Falun Gong

13.06.2022 - Man dies at 53 after years of incarceration and constant harassment for his faith

A Shaodong County, Hunan Province resident passed away on June 7, 2022, after enduring two decades of persecution for his faith in Falun Gong. He was 53. Mr. Ning Tiejiao was born into a poor family. He lost his mother at a young age. In his teens, he left his hometown and began to work to support himself. In 1997, at the age of 28, he took up Falun Gong while working as a motorcycle taxi driver in Shenyang City, Liaoning Province. Many of his ailments, including stomach problem, soon disappeared.

[Continue reading...](#)

09.06.2022 - Father of two sentenced to two years for distributing materials about Falun Gong

A native of Nanyang City, Henan Province working in Beijing was sentenced to two year in December 2021 for his faith in Falun Gong, a spiritual and meditation discipline that has been persecuted by the Chinese communist regime since 1999.

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04.06.2022 - Seven Zhejiang residents arrested for reading Falun Gong Books together

Seven Ninghai County, Zhejiang Province residents were arrested on April 21, 2022, while studying the teaching of Falun Gong together at a private residence. Dozens of police officers and Lou Rongjun, the head of Ninghai County 610 Office, broke into Ms. Li Yujun's home at 10 a.m. on April 21. The officers confiscated Ms. Li and her six guests' Falun Gong books, as well as Ms. Su Caihua's (one of the guests) 115 yuan in paper currency printed with information about Falun Gong. (Due to strict censorship in China, the practitioners use creative ways to raise awareness about the persecution, including printing information on paper currency.)

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Special bimonthly FoRB newsletter (16-31.05.2022)

General

27.05.2022 - Investigation of students' religious beliefs in Chinese colleges and universities with new survey

Survey forms recently circulated about the religious beliefs of Chinese college and graduate students and their involvement or resort to violence, threats, and other similar methods. This form requires the applicant to indicate his ethnicity, name of religion, and the name of crime organizations they're involved in.

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Protestants

27.05.2022 - Early Rain couple overcame harassment from authorities and got married

Zhang Qiang and Xiao Yue, congregants of Early Rain Covenant Church, finally got married even after several sabotage attempts from local authorities.

The couple had to pick another venue for their wedding after Chengdu Municipal police canceled their wedding twice. They moved their wedding to May 24, 7:30 PM, but the owner of the wedding venue had to cancel their reservation because of pressure from the police.

[Continue reading...](#)

25.05.2022 - Christian couple homeless after seven-year sentence

Mr. Chang Yuchun and Mrs. Li Chenhui are a Christian couple from Xi'an, Shaanxi Province. On November 16, 2021, Shaanxi Province Xi'an Municipal Intermediate Court gave each of them a seven-year sentence and a fine of ¥250,000 (~\$37,239) for printing Christian books. Reportedly, the court forcibly auctioned their car and house to pay for the fine. Their four children now live with Mrs. Li's parents. Their family remains in financial peril.

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23.05 2022 - Case study: small group leaders' requirements under Church lockdown

During the epidemic, grassroots churches across the country have turned to small group meetings in accordance with the government's prevention and control measures, allowing many believers to get close to God on online platforms. However, when Christians can't worship and communicate with other believers in face-to-face services, smaller group gatherings have become normalized as part of the Christian lifestyle.

[Continue reading...](#)

18.05.2022 - Christian arrested for criticizing Shanghai's zero-COVID policy

On April 25, 2022, Yan Zhihong, a young Christian from Shenzhen, was arrested by the local police for “picking quarrels and provoking trouble,” a crime punished by article 293 of the Chinese Criminal Code with a jail penalty up to five years. In fact, article 293 is a catch-all statute used to arrest and sentence dissidents of all kinds.

[Continue reading...](#)

18.05.2022 - Censorship surged for online religious forums as CCP shuts down 21-year-old Christian website

The Chinese Communist Party continues to crack down on Christian websites. An online website that served Chinese Christians for 21 years has now completely disappeared. Its domain name servers in mainland Ch have been blocked, the website has officially announced its closure, and users no longer have access to the site.

[Continue reading...](#)

16.05.2022 - Christian summoned to police station on suspicion of organizing an evil cult

May 12 was the 14th anniversary of the Wenchuan earthquake. When several Christian families’ teenage children were studying in a Christian’s house at around 10 am, suddenly police officers visited them and asked the teenagers to go home. Christian Xiao Luobiao was taken to the local police station.

[Continue reading...](#)

Buddhists

27.05.2022 - Drago County: Monks forced to take responsibility for demolitions

A Tibetan source in exile has told Tibet Watch that last month, Chinese authorities forced Tibetan monks to sign a letter of confession claiming that it was them who destroyed the giant Buddha statue in December last year in Drago County, eastern Tibet.

[Continue reading...](#)

24.05.2022 - Tenzin Delek Rinpoche: A Strange Relation with Zhou Yongkang

In January this year, [Bitter Winter reported](#) about the persecution of the relatives of Tenzin Delek Rinpoche, the charismatic Tibetan monk from Sichuan who was accused of “terrorism” and sentenced to death in 2002. After an international mobilization, his death protest was commuted into life imprisonment. He died on July 12, 2015, in Chengdu Chuandong Prison. Protests erupted among Tibetans, who did not believe the official explanation of “heart failure,” and claimed the monk had been killed.

[Continue reading...](#)

19.05.2022 - Tibet: No religion allowed in social media short videos and webcasts

President Xi Jinping is obsessed with social media spiraling out of control, as censors are not quick enough when they cancel “dangerous” posts. Everywhere within the borders of the People’s Republic of China new forms of control are created and implemented.

[Continue reading...](#)

18.05.2022 - Having spent 15 years in prison, Sichuan Woman secretly sentenced to another 8 years

A Leshan City, Sichuan Province resident was secretly sentenced to eight years for practicing Falun Gong, a spiritual discipline that has been persecuted by the Chinese communist regime since 1999.

Ms. Zhu Mingrong, 48, was arrested on October 24, 2021 after being reported by a student’s parents for talking to the student about Falun Gong.

[Continue reading...](#)

17.05.2022 - 27th Anniversary Of Enforced Disappearance Of Tibetan Spiritual Leader 11th Panchen Lama

One of the most highly revered Tibetan spiritual leaders, the 11th Panchen Lama Gedhun Choekyi Nyima, remains missing since his abduction by the Chinese authorities at the age of six on 17 May 1995.

Gedhun Choekyi Nyima was recognised on 14 May 1995 by His Holiness the Dalai Lama during a ceremony in Dharamsala, India. His Holiness had said: “Today is the auspicious day when the Buddha first gave the Kalachakra teaching. The Kalachakra teachings have a special connection with the Panchen Lamas.

[Continue reading...](#)

Falun Gong

27.05.2022 - Mother and daughter secretly sentenced to prison for practicing Falun Gong

Ten months after a mother and daughter in Shenyang City, Liaoning Province went missing, their family finally confirmed that the two women are held at the Shenyang City No.1 Detention Center and that both of them have been sentenced to three years and two months for practicing Falun Gong.

[Continue reading...](#)

26.05.2022 - Yu Baiqing, Falun Gong practitioner, sentenced to 8 years in Qingdao

You may know Qingdao, in Shandong [province](#), for its world-famous beer, but it has also been an epicenter of the 2021 repression against [Falun Gong](#). On June 2, 2021, the police of Jiaozhou, a [county-level city](#) within Qingdao, dispatched hundreds of agents to simultaneously crack down on [Falun Gong](#) practitioners and arrest them in their homes.

[Continue reading...](#)

Other religions

25.05.2022 - Guangxi: Religious repression increases among Zhuang Minority

In November 2021, [Bitter Winter reported](#) on a crackdown targeting religious infiltration from Vietnam in Ningming [county](#), Guangxi Zhuang [Autonomous Region](#).

Ningming [county](#) is placed under the jurisdiction of the [prefecture-level city](#) of Chongzuo. To the north of Ningming [county](#) lies Napo [County](#), which has the longest land border with Vietnam. To the south is the coastal [prefecture-level city](#) of Fangchenggang.

[Continue reading...](#)

The tragic arrest of Cardinal Zen (90)

"BE NOT AFRAID!" FOREF Appeals For Strong Roman Catholic Church Response To Arrest Of Cardinal Zen

By FOREFEUROPE

FOREFEurope (17.05.2022) - <https://bit.ly/39DXoWf> -**The Vatican should more forcefully oppose the arrest of Cardinal Joseph Zen Ze-Kiun, a retired Hong Kong archbishop who has courageously opposed human rights violations, and Western governments should sanction responsible Hong Kong officials, urged a Vienna-based, independent human rights organisation.**

"Cardinal Zen courageously risked his own freedom and security for the principle of human rights, but the Vatican's response has been cautious, appearing almost indifferent," according to Dr. Aaron Rhodes, president of the Vienna-based *Forum for Religious Freedom-Europe* and Senior Fellow in the [Common Sense Society](#).

"The Bible urges us to 'Be not afraid.' The Church should not be afraid of Communist China, and should use its moral authority to denounce the arrest, and China's other massive degradations of human dignity," he said.

Zen was detained by Chinese authorities on 11 May 2022, and charged with "collusion with foreign forces" under Hong Kong's National Security Law, imposed by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in 2020. Zen was a Trustee of the *612 Humanitarian Relief*

Foundation, which assisted protesters to pay their legal fees. Arrested along with three colleagues who also supported the Foundation, Zen was later released on bail, but faces harsh penalties if convicted.

On 11 May, a Vatican statement said the Holy See had “learned with concern” of the arrest. Further [comment](#) from Vatican officials said the Church was “very displeased” and expressed the hope that the incident would not “complicate the already complex and not simple path of dialogue between the Holy See and the Church in China.”

Other Catholic leaders have shown more moral clarity: The president of the Federation of Asian Bishops’ conferences, Cardinal Charles Maung Bo of Yangon, said that Hong Kong has been “transformed into a police state,” and that China’s “blatant” abrogation of the Sino-British Joint Declaration, was “appalling.”

Dr. Ján Figel, former European Union Special Envoy for the promotion of freedom of religion or belief, told FOREF, **“Human dignity is a foundational principle of our universal brotherhood and fundamental human rights. Regrettably, dignity of any dissenting person is brutally abused by Chinese and Hong Kong’s power holders today.”**

Antonio Stango, President of the *Italian Federation for Human Rights*, said, **“The extension to Hong Kong of the suppressive system of mainland China is just a further step in the regime’s program of annihilation of any remaining freedom of conscience, in blatant contrast with international human rights law.”**

The arrest of Cardinal Zen was also denounced by *Stand With Hong Kong Vienna*. The group told FOREF that the arrest **“shows how the arbitrary regime weaponizes the vagueness of Hong Kong’s national security law to induce terror in anyone who wants a democratic Hong Kong.”**

“It is time that Magnitsky-type sanctions be applied to Hong Kong officials responsible for these arrests, and for destruction of the general Rule of Law in the city,” according to FOREF’s Executive Director Peter Zoehrer.

Zoehrer also expressed the hope that the Vatican will critically review its 2018 arrangement with the CCP, which gives the CCP veto power on the appointment of Chinese bishops, and arrangements which, under new CCP rules, [“stipulate that CPCC-aligned clergy actively support the ruling Communist Party. Article 3 requires them to ‘support the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party’ and ‘the socialist system,’ as well as to ‘practice the core values of socialism.”](#)

“No one should underestimate the challenges faced by the Church in China, but religious freedom means nothing if it is compromised to maintain the presence of institutions,” he said.

Willy Fautré, director of Human Rights Without Frontiers, told FOREF: **“Cardinal Zen is being persecuted for being a long-standing critic of the government in Beijing, for speaking out for Catholics in mainland China and for more democracy in Hong Kong. This is a shocking repression measure to which the Vatican’s timid reaction is inadequate.”**

For more information:

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Peter Zoehrer: office@foref-europe.org, @FOREF_EU

Special bimonthly FoRB newsletter (01-15.05.2022)

Catholics

14.05.2022 - WSJ: calls on Vatican to renounce the Faustian pact with Beijing and says "A regime that fears a 90-year-old priest must have profound doubts about its legitimacy."

The Wall Street Journal-Editorial Board: "China has already crushed political dissent, a free press and an independent judiciary in Hong Kong, and its latest target is religious liberty... There's no doubt the main political target is Cardinal Zen, an outspoken critic of China's religious persecution. He has criticized the Vatican for its 2018 agreement with Beijing that requires that bishops be acceptable to the atheist Communist leadership, among other concessions.

[Continue reading...](#)

13.05.2022 - Hong Kong police release 90-year-old cardinal Joseph Zen on bail after arrest under China's security law

One of the most senior Catholic clerics in Asia, Cardinal Joseph Zen and three others who helped run a now-disbanded Hong Kong fund for protesters who were arrested on charges of "collusion with foreign forces," were later released on bail.

[Continue reading...](#)

12.05.2022 - Hong Kong cardinal Joseph Zen arrested under China's security law

One of the Catholic Church's most senior members has been arrested in Hong Kong for breaking China's national security law, police have confirmed. Cardinal Joseph Zen, 90, is one of four people detained for being associated with a now-defunct organisation that helped protesters in financial need. The others are a Cantopop singer and actor Denise Ho, ex-legislator Margaret Ng, and academic Dr Hui Po Keung.

[Continue reading...](#)

11.05.2022 - Catholic Bishop Joseph Zhang Weizhu: Still detained despite reported Vatican intervention

Readers of Bitter Winter may remember that [in 2021 we reported](#) about a raid conducted by more than 100 public security officers on May 21. The police stormed a disaffected factory in Henan province, where Bishop Joseph Zhang Weizhu of the Xinxiang diocese had organized an independent seminary for fellow conscientious objectors.

[Continue reading...](#)

Buddhists

13.05.2022 - USCIRF calls for Panchen Lama's release

The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom ([USCIRF](#)) is once again calling for the release of [Gedhun Choekyi Nyima](#), whom the Chinese government forcibly disappeared 27 years ago. On May 14, 1995, His Holiness the Dalai Lama chose the then six-year-old Gedhun to be the 11th Panchen Lama, the second highest position in Tibetan Buddhism. Three days later, the Chinese government abducted him, only to announce its own selection of the Panchen Lama months later.

[Continue reading...](#)

Falun Gong

11.05.2022 - Wuhan City: At least ten arrested in one month and eight still detained in brainwashing centers

At least ten Falun Gong practitioners in Wuhan City, Hubei Province have been arrested for their faith since late March 2022 and eight of them are still detained in two brainwashing centers at the time of writing.

Mr. Liu Shenjian was arrested at his residence in the Qingshan District on March 23, 2022. The police took him back to his hometown in the Huangpi District, also under the jurisdiction of Wuhan, and held him at the Panlongcheng Brainwashing Center.

[Continue reading...](#)

09.05.2022 - Sentenced to prison while still in a coma, math tutor passes away

Mr. Ding Guochen was still in a coma when he was sentenced to prison for practicing Falun Gong. The math tutor from Dalian City, Liaoning Province passed away two months later, on April 30, 2022. He was 51 years old.

Mr. Ding and his wife Ms. Yan Qinghua were arrested during a police sweep across the province on July 11, 2019. The group arrest came as part of the Chinese Communist Party's effort to "maintain stability" ahead of its 70th anniversary of taking power in China.

[Continue reading...](#)

13.05.2022 - After 11.5 years in prison, 78-year-old man sentenced to another 3 years

Arrested on December 10, 2021, for distributing informational materials about Falun Gong, a 78-year-old Yingtan City, Jiangxi Province resident was recently sentenced to three years. More details about Mr. Hu Deyuan's most recent arrest and sentencing aren't clear.

Since the Chinese communist regime began to persecute Falun Gong, a spiritual discipline also known as Falun Dafa, in 1999, Mr. Hu, a former security guard of Yingtan Railroad Bureau, has been sentenced twice for upholding his faith.

[Continue reading...](#)

06.05.2022 - Sichuan woman sentenced to prison for talking to people about Falun Gong

A Chengdu City, Sichuan Province resident was recently sentenced to two years for raising awareness about the persecution of Falun Gong, which has been targeted by the Chinese communist regime since 1999.

Ms. Shui Qionghua was arrested on May 13, 2021, after being reported for talking to people about Falun Gong at a farmers' market. She was taken to the Shuangliu District Detention Center the next day and has been held there since.

[Continue reading...](#)

Catholic Bishop Joseph Zhang Weizhu: still detained despite reported Vatican intervention

The bishop of Xinxiang, in Henan province, refuses to join the Patriotic Catholic Church and was arrested in a spectacular raid in 2021.

By Wu Xiuying

Bitter Winter (11.05.2022) - <https://bit.ly/3Leq5Go> - Readers of Bitter Winter may remember that [in 2021 we reported](#) about a raid conducted by more than 100 public security officers on May 21. The police stormed a disaffected factory in Henan province, where Bishop Joseph Zhang Weizhu of the Xinxiang diocese had organized an independent seminary for fellow conscientious objectors.

Conscientious objectors are Catholics who reject the suggestion by the Holy See, following the Vatican-China deal of 2018, that they join the Patriotic Catholic Church, believing that for reasons of conscience they cannot be part of a church controlled by the CCP. The Vatican has clarified that it does not encourage such conscientious objection, yet regards the objectors as Catholics in good standing who should be treated "with respect."

The May 21, 2021, raid was reminiscent of actions taken against group labeled as "xie jiao" or "cults," only it targeted a Roman Catholic seminary. Bishop Joseph Zhang Weizhu, ten (or more) priests, and ten seminarians were arrested. Three seminarians managed to escape, but they were also arrested later.

The seminarians were sent back home and kept under surveillance. The ten priests were taken to Legal Education Centers, and have reportedly all been released.

At the time of our article in 2021, the whereabouts of Bishop Joseph Zhang Weizhu were unknown.

Bitter Winter has now learned from a reliable source that the Vatican asked the Chinese government to release Bishop Zhang, but has been told that the prelate committed serious crimes and should remain in detention.

Catholic devotees in Xinxiang told Bitter Winter that they are concerned about the situation and the health of the bishop. He suffers from cancer, and when he was arrested he had just gone through a surgery.

Photo: Bishop Joseph Zhang Weizhu. From Weibo.

Special bimonthly FoRB newsletter (16-30.04.2022)

General

29.04.2022 - Censorship on online religious contents continues to tighten up

As the Administrative Measures for Internet Religious Information Services came into force on March 1, Christianity-related websites, WeChat accounts, and group chats have seen severe censorship.

[Continue reading...](#)

22.04.2022 - Sympathy for the Devil: The anti-cult federation FECRIS, China, and Russia. 2. The Chinese and Russian anti-cult models

China and Russia have different definitions of “cults,” based on different historical traditions—both hostile to religious liberty.

by Luigi Berzano (University of Torino, Italy), Boris Falikov (Moscow State University for the Humanities, Moscow, Russia), Willy Fautré (Human Rights Without Frontiers, Brussels, Belgium), Liudmyla Filipovich (Department of Religious Studies, Institute of Philosophy of the National Academy of Sciences, Kiev, Ukraine), Massimo Introvigne (Center for Studies on New Religions, Torino, Italy), and Bernadette Rigal-Cellard (University Bordeaux-Montaigne, Bordeaux, France).

[Continue reading...](#)

19.04.2022 - Chinese government seeks to manage religious organizations' finances in new measures

Recently, China State Administration for Religious Affairs released the Measures for the Administration of Financial Affairs of Religious Premises (hereafter referred to as “measures”). These measures were jointly drafted by the State Administration for Religious Affairs and Ministry of Finance, effective starting June 1, 2022.

[Continue reading...](#)

Catholics

26.04.2022 - Catholic bishops and priests have forcibly disappeared across China

Ahead of this year's Easter, the Chinese regime has launched a new crackdown on the "unofficial" (underground) church recognized by the Vatican but not by Beijing.

According to Asia News, on April 7, the Chinese authorities in Zhejiang forced Bishop Shao Zhumin of the Diocese of Wenzhou (Zhejiang) to board a plane. Local believers were concerned because they did not know where Bishop Shao was taken. The police also seized his mobile phone, and it was suspected that the government wanted to prevent him from participating in Holy Week activities, especially the Holy Chrism Mass.

[Continue reading...](#)

Protestants

29.04.2022 - Xiamen pastor summoned for hearing

On April 26, Xiamen City Jimei District People's Court issued a summons to Yang Xibo, the minister of Xiamen Xunsiding Church. The notice required that Minister Yang Xibo should attend his hearing for his penalty and administrative reconsideration on May 10.

On July 29, 2021, Xiamen City Siming District Bureau of Ethnic and Religious Affairs issued a fine to Yang Xibo and his wife—Wang Xiaofei—of 200,000 yuan (~31,200 USD) on a charge of organizing illegal gatherings.

[Continue reading...](#)

26.04.2022 - Pilgrim's Progress: My two years of exile

The 60 Christians of the Shenzhen Holy Reformed, also known as the Mayflower Church, continue to wait for updates regarding their legal status in Jeju. Until then, they regularly send updates to ChinaAid, recounting stories of their transition to South Korean life and the new freedom they have found.

This latest update from Sheng Ti He recounts the culture shock and adjustments many of the members faced for two years.

[Continue reading...](#)

20.04.2022 - Police use COVID to harass Christians after baptism

The day before Easter, Christians of Shenzhen Trinity Harvest Gospel Church drove for two hours to another city to baptize six believers on the beach. Local police harassed them afterward, however. The six believers completed several months of baptism classes, and nineteen co-workers of Shenzhen Trinity Harvest Gospel Church took turns to fast and pray for ten days for the baptism. Police harassment against Trinity Harvest has become commonplace after the incident regarding the church's five-year anniversary last September.

[Continue reading...](#)

Buddhists

25.04.2022 - Tibet's new College admission rules: no university for Dalai Lama supporters

CCP propaganda continuously tells the world that, thanks to China, Tibet now has a regular university systems, which did not exist under the "backward" Dalai Lama administration. Of course, the university system evolved in the last decades, but the same happened in many Asian countries that were not invaded by their neighbors and are not oppressed by the totalitarian rule of a Communist Party.

[Continue reading...](#)

Falun Gong

26.04.2022 - Families of Falun Gong practitioners forced to help persecute their own family

Both Falun Gong practitioners and their families became victims in China's Zero-out Campaign. Authorities have gone after every local practitioner and ordered them to renounce their faith since 2020.

Not only did the officials arrest and torture the practitioners, they deceived and threatened their

[Continue reading...](#)

20.04.2022 - Tan Qiucheng: Falun Gong practitioner tortured after spending a life in jail

Bitter Winter has received reports that Tan Qiucheng, a 44-year-old Falun Gong practitioner who is detained in the Jail no. 2 of Jilin Province in Jilin City, Jilin, is being tortured in prison. Relatives are concerned about his health conditions. Reportedly, Tan has been forced to sit on a "tiger bench," and guards first poured water on him, then shocked him with electric batons.

[Continue reading...](#)

20.04.2022 - Married Couple Given Heavy Prison Terms for Their Faith

A married couple in Xi'an City, Shaanxi Province were sentenced to heavy terms in late December 2021 for their faith in Falun Gong, a mind-body practice that has been persecuted by the Chinese communist regime since 1999.

Mr. Wang Pingchuan, 47, and Ms. Zhao Shujuan, 42, were reported on May 25, 2020 for putting up stickers about Falun Gong at a bus station. Over 50 police officers arrested them on June 5 and confiscated their Falun Gong books, Falun Gong informational materials, DVDs, DVD burner, computer, printer, copy paper, flash-drive, laminator, motorcycle, bike, 10,000 yuan in cash and unknown amount of cash printed with short messages about Falun Gong, as a way to raise awareness about the persecution given strict censorship in China.

[Continue reading...](#)

Special bimonthly FoRB newsletter (01-15.04.2022)

General

13.04.2022 - Anti-Pornography rules: In China, religion can be pornography too

Last month, the Office of the National Working Group for Cracking Down on Pornography and Illegal Activities released a memorandum on its planned activities for 2022. The Office has an interesting story. In 1989, the Office of the National Leading Group for Cleaning and Rectifying Books, Newspapers, and Periodicals, i.e., the office for Chinese censorship, was established. Already at that time, it was explained that there was a problem with clandestine pornography, and fighting it was a main task of the office.

[Continue reading...](#)

05.04.2022 - Xie Jiao and unauthorized religion in China: Two reports note growing persecution

Bitter Winter was founded in 2018 to inform about violations of religious liberty in China, and when we are quoted in official or authoritative reports we have a feeling that our mission is accomplished. We are also grateful to those who read and quote us. The annual report of the bipartisan and bicameral U.S. Congressional-Executive Commission on China, released on March 31, is a well-crafted and comprehensive summary of what it calls “the horrors the Chinese government and Communist Party perpetrate against the Chinese people.”

[Continue reading...](#)

Protestants

13.04.2022 - ChinaAid greets concentration camp survivor to USA

Over the weekend, China Aid Association welcomed Obulbek Turdaqun and his family, Christians originally from Kyrgyzstan to the United States where they have been granted humanitarian parole status.

Turdaqun is a former detainee in the Chinese Communist Party’s concentration camp system in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. He was detained in 2018 and held for 10 months in a labor camp. Alongside 22 other prisoners, he experienced both psychological and physical torture including forced medical procedures.

[Continue reading...](#)

06.04.2022 - Taiyuan Zion Reformed Church raided— seven Christians questioned

During Sunday service on April 3, local authorities raided Zion Reformed Church. Police took away seven Christians, including Yao Congya—Minister An Yankui’s wife, Guo Juan—Zhang Chenghao’s wife, Wang Yingjie, Wang Ying, and others in the name of the COVID-19 prevention.

They all were handcuffed and transported to the detention room. All seven Christians refused to sign the pledge, "No Longer Attend Zion Church". Originally, police intended to give them 15-day administrative detentions and a fine of 500 yuan, but the administrative detention cannot be enforced due to the pandemic.

[Continue reading...](#)

Buddhists

06.04.2022 - Tibetan self-immolations: An old man, a singer—and a woman is in jail for talking about the incidents

One of the saddest facets of the tragedy of Tibet is the self-immolation of monks and lay Buddhists who set themselves on fire to call the attention of the world to the persecution of Tibetans by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Self-immolations gather **increasing attention in the West**, but nobody has precise statistics about them. One of the reasons is the CCP's strategy of censoring news. The CCP now claims information about self-immolations is part of "state secrets." Divulging state secrets is a serious crime.

[Continue reading...](#)

Falun Gong

15.04.2022 - After 19 years in prison, Hubei Man given three more years for his faith

Mr. Li Guangqing, a native of Yingcheng City, Hubei Province, was sentenced to 18 years for robbery in 1979 when he was 24 years old. He escaped three times and saw his term extended by 11 years. Though his fourth escape, which took place in 1989, was successful, he lived every day in fear and couldn't go home to reunite with his family.

[Continue reading...](#)

13.03.2022 - 69-year-old woman taken to brainwashing center for practicing Falun Gong

A 69-year-old Chongqing woman was doing Falun Gong exercises at home on the morning of March 9, 2022, when the police broke in and arrested her. After being held at the local police station for three days, she was taken to a local brainwashing center on March 15 and detained incommunicado.

[Continue reading...](#)

08.04.2022 - Hunan Woman endured horrific torture during four-year term for practicing Falun Gong

While serving a four-year prison sentence for practicing Falun Gong, Ms. Xiao Yongkang was deprived of sleep, starved and subjected to constant beatings. Several inmates once poured urine over her head and wiped a used sanitary napkin across her mouth.

[Continue reading...](#)

Others

15.04.2022 - Bigu: The CCP against Taoist grain-free diets and fasting

Some campaigns catch Chinese by surprise. In this month of April, we have seen CCP media, including the official Central Committee organ *People's Daily*, publishing all of a sudden strong-worded attacks on bigu fasting. Some of these media have described bigu as "as dangerous as Falun Gong," and this language normally announces police action.

[Continue reading...](#)

Special bimonthly FoRB newsletter (16-31.03.2022)

Protestants

30.03.2022 - All Christians five from Taiyuan Zion Reformed Church released

On March 27, Zhang Ligong and Wang Runyun of Taiyuan Zion Reformed Church were released from prison. Now, all five Christians initially charged with "illegally crossing the national border" have been released.

Family members and Christians from Zion Reformed picked them up at the detention center. They were full of peace and joy. Wang Runyun held his son in one hand and his daughter in the other. He posted on social media, "Dear family, we are back home safely. Thank you for your prayers. I am very grateful!"

[Continue reading...](#)

28.03.2022 - Chen Wensheng released from 15 day detention

Two days ago, street evangelist Chen Wensheng was released after serving seven-day administrative detention and eight days in a drug rehab center. Neither Chen Wensheng nor his family received any legal notice about his detention.

Chen Wensheng was enormously grateful that he was detained due to preaching the gospel, believing that it is a rare opportunity God had for Chen to spread the gospel in detention and the rehab center.

[Continue reading...](#)

24.03.2022- New directives on sinicization of religion: "Love the Party, love socialism"

Pastors of the *Three-Self Church* have been requested to study new directives on the *Sinicization* of religion, signed by Wang Zuo'an, who is deputy minister of the *United Front Work Department* of the Central Committee of the CCP and the director of the *State*

[Administration of Religious Affairs](#) (which should be replaced by “something else,” according to a 2018 announcement, but for the time being is still in place).

[Continue reading...](#)

22.03.2022 - Chen Wensheng arrested again: From drug addict to preacher—to jail

On March 5, 2022, Chen Wensheng was arrested by the Hengyang police while preaching on the streets of Wenshan Zhuang and Miao Autonomous Prefecture in Hunan. It is not the first time Chen, a popular character among Chinese house church Christians, is arrested.

[Continue reading...](#)

Buddhists

28.03.2022 - News of a revered Tibetan Lama’s demise emerged amid China’s rigorous information lockdown

News of the passing of a venerated Tibetan lama, who has spent years in a Chinese prison, emerged recently amid Chinese authorities’ heightened information lockdown campaign. The authorities reportedly restricted a number of devotees from attending the funeral and paying respects to the deceased by posting images and videos on social networking sites, a reliable source reported.

[Continue reading...](#)

Falun Gong

28.03.2022 - Nurse fired from her job while serving seven years for her faith

Shortly after a nurse was taken to prison to serve a seven-year term for her faith in Falun Gong, she was fired by the hospital where she worked.

Ms. Liu Xiaohong, 53, of Dalian City, Liaoning Province, was arrested on November 24, 2020, in a police sweep. The Political and Legal Affairs Committee gave the orders for the police to arrest the practitioners on their list.

[Continue reading...](#)

22.03.2022 - After twelve years of incarceration, Liaoning Woman, nearly 70, imprisoned again for upholding her faith

A Chaoyang City, Liaoning Province resident was recently taken to the Shenyang Women’s Prison to serve a two-year term for practicing Falun Gong, a mind-body discipline that has been persecuted by the Chinese communist regime since 1999.

Ms. Liu Xiufen was arrested around July 2021, shortly after she was released from serving five years for suing former head of the communist regime for ordering the persecution. Details about her recent sentencing remain to be investigated.

[Continue reading...](#)

19.03.2022 - Wife and husband die one year apart in the persecution of their shared faith

Less than one year after Ms. Guan Fengxia passed away due to years of harassment for practicing Falun Gong, her husband, Mr. Dai Zhidong, also died, one month following his last arrest for his shared faith.

Ms. Guan, of Daqing City, Heilongjiang Province, took up Falun Gong in 1995. After witnessing how she changed into a much better person, Mr. Dai also began to practice Falun Gong a year later and was delighted to see many of his ailments disappear without medical treatment.

[Continue reading...](#)

18.03.2022 - Denied family visitation for nearly two years, woman transferred to prison to serve time for her faith

A Tangshan City, Hebei Province resident who has been denied family visitation since her arrest nearly two years ago was transferred to a local prison on February 18, 2022 to serve a three-year term for practicing Falun Gong.

Ms. Xiao Huijun was arrested together with her husband in a police sweep on June 18, 2020. While her husband, who doesn't practice Falun Gong, was released on the same day, Ms. Xiao was kept in custody and taken to the Tangshan No.1 Detention Center a few days later.

[Continue reading...](#)

Special bimonthly FoRB newsletter (01-15.03.2022)

General

02.03.2022 - Atheism in China: How the Communist Party "proves" that God does not exist.

Notwithstanding almost uniformly negative and often humorous reactions on social media, Professor Li Shen and his book "The Principles of Scientific Atheism" continue to be heavily promoted in China through a major campaign to divulge Marxist atheistic principles. As Bitter Winter mentioned in a previous article, this campaign will continue because it does not come from the private initiative of some propagandists of atheism but follows instructions coming directly from Xi Jinping and the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party.

[Continue reading...](#)

Protestants

14.03.2022 - Wife of activist under house arrest for trying to visit husband

Xu Jincui, the wife of human rights activist Xing Wangli from Xinyang, Henan province, was forcibly placed under house arrest by local government officials. Authorities warned Xu Jincui not to contact human rights lawyer Jiang Tianyong, also a native of Xinyang.

[Continue reading...](#)

11.03.2022 - Follow up: Christian activist taken away by police for voicing concerns over chained woman case

ChinaAid sources report that Li Yu, a Christian human rights activist in Zaozhuang, Shandong province, was threatened by Zaozhuang national security officers and held under designated residential surveillance for over 10 days. Li Yu followed the Xuzhou chained woman case and called on the Chinese government to investigate the incident. While under surveillance, she could access her cell phone and contact friends. However, her friends could not get hold of her three days ago. It is possible that she has been illegally detained, and her cell phone was confiscated.

[Continue reading...](#)

10.03.2022 - Pilgrims Progress: "Longing for my brother"

Two young members of the Mayflower Church sent letters to a fellow believer in mainland China, Joshua Wang.

Yesterday was Joshua Wang's 15th birthday. Joshua is the son of Pastor Wang Yi of Early Rain Covenant Church who currently serves a nine-year sentence. Wang Yi's family has been subject to 24-hour surveillance. Joshua previously attended a Christian school, but now authorities escort him to public school every day.

[Continue reading...](#)

08.03.2022 - Christian activist disappeared after raising concerns over "chained woman" case

Li Yu, a Christian human rights activist, was taken away by Zaozhuang police for investigating the Xuzhou chained woman case. Li called on the government to hold a formal investigation, but she forcibly disappeared over 10 days ago.

Li Yu left a voice message to a friend of her before being disappeared, saying, "Police came by yesterday, asking Zhao Zhongxiang who is responsible for monitoring me to contact me."

[Continue reading...](#)

Church of Almighty God

09.03.2022 - Church of Almighty God persecution continues to increase

The Church of Almighty God (CAG), a Chinese Christian new religious movement, is the most persecuted religious organization in China. From 2019, when a report covered the year 2018, the CAG has published yearly reports offering statistical details of the persecution. They show how, year after year, the implacable machine of the CCP repression made the persecution worse.

[Continue reading...](#)

Buddhists

13.03.2022 - Go Sherab Gyatso: Prominent Tibetan monk tortured in jail

Human rights activists are denouncing on social media that a well-known Tibetan monk's health is seriously deteriorating as a result of torture he is subjected to in Lhasa's Qushui Prison. Go Sherab Gyatso is a monk born on September 9, 1976, in Khashi village, Ngawa Tibetan and Qiang Autonomous Prefecture, an autonomous prefecture in Sichuan province that has a majority of Tibetan inhabitants. It is also known as the world capital of self-immolation by Tibetans who set themselves on fire to protest CCP oppression.

[Continue reading...](#)

04.03.2022 - China bans New Year religious gatherings in Tibetan capital Lhasa

Chinese authorities have banned major religious activities in monasteries in and near Tibet's regional capital Lhasa during the Lunar New Year, citing COVID-19 concerns. But critics call the move a further encroachment by China on Tibetan religion and national culture.

[Continue reading...](#)

Falun Gong

13.03.2022 - 78-year-old woman forced to live away from home, pension suspended

Since September 2021, officials of Political and Legal Affairs Committee in Guangshun Town, Chongqing, began to harass Ms. Gao Xingfang almost daily and ordered the 78-year-old woman to renounce her faith in Falun Gong, a spiritual discipline that has been persecuted by the Chinese communist regime since 1999.

[Continue reading...](#)

10.03.2022 - Previously incarcerated for 9 years, former teacher sentenced again to 5.5 years

A Beijing resident was sentenced to 5.5 years and fined 11,000 yuan on February 21, 2022, for her faith in Falun Gong, a spiritual discipline that has been persecuted by the Chinese communist regime since 1999.

[Continue reading...](#)

07.03.2022 - 27-year-old man jailed for his faith, beaten and denied family visitation

A 27-year-old man in Shenyang City, Liaoning Province was ordered to serve 5.5 years for telling people how Falun Gong cured his depression. Mr. Song Yucen has been subjected to strict management and denied family visitation after he was taken to the Dalian City Prison on August 15, 2021.

[Continue reading...](#)

Other religions

14.03.2022 - Huangtian Jiao: Taoist popular sect under persecution

From November 2021, Zhejiang authorities are cracking down on temples of a Taoist syncretic sect that dates back to the 16th century, and goes as it is common in China under various names, including Huangtian Jiao and Huang Jijiao. Temples have been raided and closed, and devotees detained. The campaign of repression is still in progress. Media call the devotees simply "Taoist," although theirs is an old syncretic order with Taoist, Buddhist, and Confucian elements.

[Continue reading...](#)

Church of Almighty God persecution continues to increase

The "2021 Annual Report on the Chinese Communist Government's Persecution of The Church of Almighty God" is rich in statistics— and every number hides a tragedy.

By Massimo Introvigne

Bitter Winter (09.03.2022) - <https://bit.ly/3wb6brZ> - [The Church of Almighty God](#) (CAG), a Chinese Christian [new religious movement](#), is [the most persecuted religious organization in China](#). From 2019, when [a report covered the year 2018](#), the CAG has published yearly reports offering statistical details of the persecution. They show how, year after year, the implacable machine of the [CCP](#) repression made the persecution worse.

A [report on the year 2021](#) has now been published. Not even the CAG can keep track of all the cases in China, and statistics are necessarily incomplete. As far as the CAG knows, in 2021, there were at least 68,456 of its members who were directly persecuted by the Chinese authorities, an increase of 25,649 from 2020. A minimum of 11,156 suffered arrest, with a 58% increase from 2020. Of those arrested, 6,125 were subjected to torture or heavy psychological pressures, and 1,452 were given prison sentences. Of those sentenced, 632 received sentences of three years or more, 72 received sentences of seven years or more, and seven were given sentences of 10 years or more (Jia Panpan, for example was sentenced to 13 years).

At least 9 CAG members were persecuted to death. Additionally, at least 57,300 were subjected to various forms of harassment, including according to the report "being forced to write guarantees to relinquish their faith; being photographed, recorded, and surveilled without their consent; collection of their biological data such as fingerprints, blood samples, and hair; being cut off from basic social security; they and their family members being stripped of their right to employment." At least RMB 250 million (approximately USD \$39 million) in assets were appropriated from [The Church of Almighty God](#) and its members by the Chinese authorities in 2021.

Overall, and again the statistics are not complete, in in the period between 2011 and the end of 2021, more than 420,000 CAG devotees were arrested by the Chinese authorities, and "the documented number of believers who have died as a result of persecution since the Church's establishment has reached 216." Information on 3,636 CAG members detained in 2021 has been published by the Association for the Defense of [Human Rights](#) and Religious Freedom (ADHRRF) [in its database of prisoners of conscience](#).

A skeptic may object that these figures come from [The Church of Almighty God](#) itself: how can we be sure that they are accurate? We at Bitter Winter regularly receive information from China about members of the CAG (and of many other religions, of course) who are detained, formally arrested, and sentenced. Until June 2021, the Chinese government's [China Judgements Online](#), which is the largest legal data base in the world although it does not include all decisions rendered in China, had published hundreds of decisions sentencing CAG members to jail terms. With my colleagues James T. Richardson

and Rosita Šorytė, I was able to publish in 2019 [a study of hundreds of cases](#) of sentenced CAG members. We did not use for that study any information coming from the CAG or other independent sources, and only relied on China Judgements Online, an official Chinese website.

Unfortunately, in June 2021 the Chinese authorities realized that [human rights](#) activists and scholars abroad, including us at Bitter Winter, were using China Judgements Online to [document human rights](#) violations in China. All of a sudden [thousands of decisions disappeared](#), and a new restrictive policy about what is uploaded was adopted. However, before what netizens in China nicknamed “the great purge” of China Judgements Online, the decisions against CAG members published there clearly showed a trend consistent with CAG’s own yearly reports.

We also read carefully Chinese governmental media, particularly those who specialize in covering the fight against the “[xie jiao](#)” (religious movements banned as “heterodox teachings”) and find, if not every day, certainly every week news about dozens and sometimes hundreds of CAG members who have been arrested. Indeed, the Chinese media periodically announce that the CAG has been eradicated through massive police operations, only to report later that for some mysterious reasons it has reappeared again. Although the CAG itself acknowledges that precise statistics are difficult to compile, we believe that these reports, which do not come from the CAG but from [CCP](#)-related sources, confirm that their numbers are generally believable.

Both the CAG report and what the [CCP](#) itself publishes are in agreement on the fact that in September 2020 the Chinese authorities launched [a three-year “all-out war” against the CAG](#), a “final solution” aimed at wiping it out from China. This led, as the table we reproduce shows, to large operations in several provinces where thousands were arrested. For the largest waves of arrests, the CAG report offers references to external sources that covered them. They happened in 30 provinces, [municipalities](#) and autonomous regions. Note that due to the situation prevailing in [Xinjiang](#), data about this [autonomous region](#) are missing, but we know the CAG has been active there too.

The saddest part of the report details how in 2021 nine CAG members, and possibly more, died as a result of the persecution. On March 4, 2021, a female CAG member from Chongqing died in jail, where she had been since 2014. The conditions of her body indicated that she had likely died during torture. In March, a female CAG member from Henan died in jail as a consequence of not having received medical treatment for her health problems. On April 5, 2021, another female CAG member, from Tianjin, died after having been kept in jail since 2018 despite a deteriorating heart condition that would have suggested proper care elsewhere.

On August 15, and November 7 and 18, 2021, two other male members, one from Hubei and another from Sichuan, and a female one from Sichuan also died while detained as a result of torture and abuse. Qin Dafu (1963–2021) died in jail on June 23, 2021. He never received the medical treatment he needed after having been abused.

Liu Zhilin (1951–2021) hanged himself on September 11, 2021, after having been arrested for his CAG faith. He was told that, unless he would cooperate with the authorities and denounce other CAG members, the [CCP](#) would make impossible for him to earn a living and provide for his family, and his children would be excluded from the possibility of enrolling in a university. Torn between the pressure from the [CCP](#) and his own family, Liu decided to commit suicide.

The report is full at each page of stories about CAG members who were hunted, mistreated by the police, arrested, abused, tortured, and makes for sober reading. While the attention of the world is focused on horrible [human rights](#) abuses in Ukraine, we should not forget that in China arbitrary arrests, tortures, and even homicides of those the [CCP](#) dehumanizes as followers of "[xie jiao](#)," first and foremost the CAG devotees, are a daily routine.

There is a risk, as many observers of China have noted, that media and politicians in the democratic world succumb to what has been called "persecution fatigue." When persecution becomes routine, week after week and year after year, it disappears from the news because "every new case sounds just like the previous one," and media are afraid that their readers will lose interest.

Yet, we should not forget that behind every case and every number in a statistic are real persons, who suffer in their bodies and their souls and are victims of what can only be defined as crimes against humanity. They are victims, but at the same time they are more than victims. The story of the CAG in China is one of extraordinary resilience. It seems that, the more the CAG is persecuted, the more it is able not only to resist but to find new believers prepared to risk their life to affirm their faith. The [CCP](#) can torture their bodies, but cannot enslave their souls.

Photos: *Numbers of CAG Christians Arrested, 2019-2021 - Bitter Winter*

Special bimonthly FoRB newsletter (16-28.02.2022)

Protestants

23.02.2022 - Early Rain Church member recounts 'evil' persecution in China, dramatic escape to US

Ren Ruiting will forever remember Dec. 9, 2018, as one of the most terrifying and life-altering days in her life.

She had just attended a rehearsal for the upcoming Christmas event at Early Rain Covenant Church in Chengdu, China, and decided to go to dinner. Suddenly, her phone began buzzing — and the messages were unnerving.

[Continue reading...](#)

23.02.2022 - Pastor arrested in Ningxia Hui autonomous region

Ningxia Hui [Autonomous Region](#) (NHAR) is a remote area in Northwest China. It takes its name from the Hui, Chinese-speaking citizens of China who are traditionally Muslims by religion and are considered as members of an "ethnic" minority. Today [Hui Muslims](#) are roughly one third of the NHAR population. There is a small Christian minority, which includes less than 2% of the population.

[Continue reading...](#)

23.02.2022 - Early Rain member's online message blocked

On February 18, a Christian of Early Rain Covenant Church responded to a public call for input on the webpage of *People's Daily Online*, titled "Listen to the People's Suggestions: My Message to the National People's Congress in 2022" leaving a message to Zhao Kezhi, the minister of Ministry of Public Security. She earnestly wrote the message to Minister Zhao, but *People's Daily* immediately rejected her message. Their programmed response said, "Your submission did not go through, and the message you input includes forbidden words." Later she posted her message on WeChat Discovery, but it was deleted shortly afterward.

[Continue reading...](#)

22.02.2022 - Panshi church raided and preacher arrested

On February 19, Mrs. Hao Ying published a prayer request letter and asked fellow Christians to pray for Panshi church, her imprisoned husband Geng Zejun, and other 5 Christians released on bail including herself.

Panshi church is a house church in Huinong District, Shizuishan. The church was raided during its Sunday service on December 5, 2021. The preacher Geng Zejun was administratively detained for 15 days. Later he was released and summoned again. His arrest has been formally approved. The other five Christians were administratively detained for 10 days beforehand and released on bail. They are Hao Ying, Luo Shiping, Ye Ningfang, Zhu Junying, and Wang Sufang.

[Continue reading...](#)

21.02.2022 - China: Court jails christian pastor for eight years

A district court in central China has sentenced a female Christian pastor to eight years in prison for refusing to join Three-Self Church, a state-controlled body regulating Protestant churches. Echeng District Court in Ezhou in Hubei province sentenced Hao Zhiwei, 51, pastor of a house church in Ezhou, on charges of fraud on Feb. 11, China Aid reported on Feb. 15.

[Continue reading...](#)

Church of Almighty God

18.02.2022 - Christian arrested for his belief, deprived of sleep for 11 days

Wang Xinhui (pseudonym), male, born in 1991, is a Christian of The Church of Almighty God (CAG) in the central province of Henan. On November 20, 2021, he was arrested by the CCP police for his belief in Almighty God. In order to extort the information on the CAG from him, the police subjected him to the tortures of "exhausting an eagle," freezing, and other methods. During the interrogation, to force Wang to give up the information, the police ordered him to stay in a squatting position, and they would give kicks to his legs if he could not keep the position well.

[Continue reading...](#)

16.02.2022 - Christian imprisoned, tortured for her belief

Li Xiaoyang (pseudonym), female, born in 1976, is a Christian of The Church of Almighty God (CAG) in the southeastern province of Jiangxi. In September 2021, Li was released from prison after completing her service. She recounted her miserable story in which she was arrested and tortured in prison for her belief in Almighty God.

[Continue reading...](#)

Buddhists

18.02.2022 - China warns Tibetan monks ahead of March anniversaries

A top Chinese official in Tibet visited monasteries in and near the Tibetan capital Lhasa this week to warn monks against behavior considered disloyal to the ruling Chinese Communist Party, state media sources said.

[Continue reading...](#)

17.02.2022 - Monks in Drago severely ill after six years of torture

Arrested after the 2012 Drago protests, three monks were subjected to forced labour and denied adequate food

Tibet Watch has learned that three senior monks from Drago Monastery are still severely ill after their release from prison four years ago. The three monks, Tsewang Namgyal, Tengya, and another monk whose identity is kept confidential for security reasons, served six-year prison sentences from 2012 until their release in January 2018.

[Continue reading...](#)

16.02.2022 - Chinese surveillance unit operating inside Tibetan Buddhist monastery

A Chinese police surveillance unit is operating, apparently for the first time, inside a Buddhist monastery as part of a renewed crackdown on Tibetan Buddhist religious institutions, a Tibetan with knowledge of the situation said.

[Continue reading...](#)

Falun Gong

27.02.2022 - 179 practitioners wrongly sentenced during Wu Zhe's tenure as Dalian City's chief prosecutor

From September 2016 to October 2021, when Wu Zhe served as the Deputy Prosecutor General of Dalian City Procuratorate in Liaoning Province, 179 local Falun Gong practitioners were unlawfully prosecuted and sentenced to prison. Of the 179 practitioners, 70 were sentenced to prison to four years or more. Three practitioners, Mr. Liu Xiyong, Ms. Zhong Shujuan and Mr. Zheng Dezai, died as a result of the persecution.

[Continue reading...](#)

21.02.2022 "Canaries in a cold war": A film on torture, rape, organ harvesting, and more

About James H. White's compelling documentary "Canaries in a Cold War" which features the persecution of Falun Gong practitioners as a wake up call to the world.

[Continue reading...](#)

18.02.2022 - 66-year-old woman in critical condition after holding hunger strike to protest arbitrary detention for her faith

A 66-year-old Chifeng City, Inner Mongolia resident is in a coma after weeks of being on a hunger strike to protest her latest arrest on February 1, 2022 for practicing Falun Gong. The police refused to release her despite her critical condition.

[Continue reading...](#)

Special bimonthly FoRB newsletter (01-15.02.2022)

General

01.02.2022 - China's online religious restrictions to take effect after Beijing Olympics

As the Winter Olympics in Beijing approach, China is set to impose new restrictions on online religious content that will essentially outlaw evangelistic Scripture just days after the games conclude, according to Christian persecution watchdog China Aid.

"If you promote Gospel spreading, John 3:16, or the Great Commission of Matthew 28," said China Aid Founder and President Bob Fu, "these are all regarded as conversion of state power, because you are essentially spreading messages for other persons to believe and to encourage others to share the Gospel."

[Continue reading...](#)

Catholics

12.02.2022 - Sounding the alarm on China, but is Rome listening?

When I was [received into the Catholic Church](#) on Palm Sunday of 2013 in St Mary's Cathedral in Yangon, by my friend who went on to become Myanmar's first-ever Cardinal and subsequently President of the Federation of Asian Bishops Conferences, Cardinal Charles Bo, literally 11 days after the election of Pope Francis, [I did not come into the Church](#) in order to pick a fight with the Vatican.

[Continue reading...](#)

07.02.2022 - Human rights activist: Diplomatic relations between Vatican and China would be 'totally unacceptable'

A British human rights activist said on Sunday that it would be "totally unacceptable" for the Vatican to establish formal diplomatic relations with China. Benedict Rogers suggested on Feb. 6 that the Vatican could be preparing to take the step after moving officials from posts in Taiwan and Hong Kong.

[Continue reading...](#)

Protestants

15.02.2022 - House church pastor sentenced to eight years

Authorities arrested Mrs. Hao Zhiwei, the pastor of a house church in Ezhou because she refused to join the government-sanctioned Three-Self Church. On February 11, after more than two and half years' imprisonment, Echeng District Court sentenced her to 8 years under the charge of "fraud." Her lawyer Mr. Si Weijiang visited her in the prison, and she decided to appeal.

[Continue reading...](#)

14.02.2022 - Secret trial for Christian concluded, awaiting verdict

On February 11, Gao Heng, a Christian attending Guangzhou Bible Reformed Church and a suspect of "provoking trouble and picking quarrels", was tried secretly. No verdict was announced after the trial ended.

Gao Heng became a suspect of "provoking trouble and picking quarrels" for holding a sign reading "Pray for the country" at a subway station on June 4th. *ChinaAid* sources reported that only authorized attorneys, national security officers, the judge, and personnel attended the trial. Gao Heng's family, friends, and Christians of the church were not permitted to attend the trial.

[Continue reading...](#)

Buddhists

15.02.2022 - Massive arrests of Tibetan Buddhists in Sichuan after statue protests

In December 2021, a megastatue of Buddha was destroyed in Luhuo (Drakgo). As protests continued, hundreds are being taken to re-education camps.

[Continue reading...](#)

11.02.2022 - China destroying Buddhism, identity of Tibetans: Ling Rinpoche

Tibetan Buddhist, Ling Rinpoché, identified as the reincarnation of the teacher of Dalai Lama, at a press conference in Sri Lanka, criticized China for destroying buddhism in order to destroy the identity of the Tibetans.

[Continue reading...](#)

04.02.2022 - Tibetan monks sent to labor camps for spreading news of Buddhist statue's destruction

Eleven Tibetans beaten and arrested by Chinese authorities in January for spreading news of the destruction of a 99-foot-tall Buddha statue and dozens of prayer wheels in southwestern China's Sichuan province have been sent to labor camps in the region, Tibetans with knowledge of the situation said Friday.

[Continue reading...](#)

Falun Gong

13.02.2022 - Jiamusi City, Heilongjiang Province: 24 Falun Gong practitioners still detained for their faith

Twenty-four (24) Falun Gong practitioners in Jiamusi City, Heilongjiang Province, continued to be held in detention for their faith as of December 2021, as confirmed by Minghui.org. Falun Gong, also known as Falun Dafa, is a mind-body practice that has been persecuted by the Chinese communist regime since 1999.

[Continue reading...](#)

11.02.2022 - Shandong Women's Prison Instigates Inmates to Torture Falun Gong Practitioners

Guards at Shandong Province Women's Prison have instigated inmates to torture Falun Gong practitioners ever since the Chinese communist regime began to persecute this ancient spiritual and meditation discipline in 1999.

Xu Yumei, head of the prison's Division 11, Li Chunling, Wang Jianfang, and Dai Dabing are some of the guards who order inmates to brutally target practitioners.

[Continue reading...](#)

09.02.2022 - Zheng Xiangxing: From biker to Falun Gong prisoner of conscience

In 2013, Falun Gong practitioners all over the world protested and collected signatures on behalf of Zheng Xiangxing, a co-religionist who had been disabled by the severe tortures he had to suffer in jail and subjected to two craniotomies. Their petitions were never answered, and since then Zheng's friends have wondered whether he is alive or dead.

[Continue reading...](#)

Special bimonthly FoRB newsletter (16-30.01.2022)

General

21.01.2022 - State Administration for religious affairs in China explains new internet regulations

To better answer the public's questions with regards to the latest measures promulgated to curb religious activities online, the State Administration for Religious Affairs (SARA) in China recently published written responses on its website. ICC selected a few responses to indicate the scope of such measures.

[Continue reading...](#)

Uyghurs

21.01.2022 - \$65 million to finance Uyghur genocide denial.

The Newlines magazine investigation just refuses to go away. Shooting the messenger would not solve China's problem.

On January 18, [a shocking expose by Newlines magazine](#) revealed that an enormous amount of money is being channeled to those [CCP](#) sympathizers in the West who deny the Uyghur genocide and claim that [Uyghurs](#) and other Muslims in [Xinjiang](#) enjoy [religious liberty](#) and live a happy life.

[Continue reading...](#)

21.01.2022 - French Parliament recognizes the Uyghur genocide

The United States, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Canada... And now, France. On January 20, 2022, the French National [Assembly](#) voted, with 169 "yes" and only one "no," a resolution stating that the [Assembly](#) "officially recognizes the violence perpetrated by the People's Republic of China against the [Uyghurs](#) as constituting crimes against humanity and genocide."

[Continue reading...](#)

21.01.2022 - Five women from Uyghur family sentenced to long prison terms in China's Xinjiang.

A court in Xinjiang sentenced five Muslim Uyghur women from one family to lengthy jail terms for "illegal" religious activities, according to a copy of the 2019 verdict recently obtained by RFA.

[Continue reading...](#)

Protestants

27.01.2022 - Early Rain member constantly harassed—forcibly removed from home

On the afternoon of January 24, Brother Jia Xuewei of Early Rain Covenant Church in Chengdu went to his apartment with his landlord, a female Christian of his church, to pick up his personal possessions. He hasn't lived here for eight months. The door was vandalized, and the keyhole was sealed with glue. When he tried to open the door, the apartment management office staff called the police. Several police officers came from Jinjiang District. The landlord explained the situation to the officers, but they still summoned Brother Jia Xuewei to the police station under the guise of "suspicion of picking quarrels and provoking trouble."

[Continue reading...](#)

26.01.2022 - RFA: Chinese Christian group anxiously awaits asylum decision on South Korean island.

The Jeju “Mayflower” Church fled China in 2019 to escape religious persecution. Pastor Pan Yongguang and his congregation applied for refugee status at multiple levels of the Korean government without success. *Radio Free Asia* published an article summarizing their story and provided some new details.

[Continue reading...](#)

17.01.2022 - Chinese Christian sued CCP official for various illegal practices

Yesterday, Mrs. Guo Juan, wife of Taiyuan Xuncheng Reformed Church’s Zhang Chenghao, wrote in a public prayer request letter:

One week ago, I sued Mr. Hu, deputy team leader of Lüliang city national security agency. He is in charge of the case of my husband and Pastor An Yankui. Due to the stressful situation, I feel weak and scared. I pray for God’s help. But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream! (Amos 5:24).

[Continue reading...](#)

Church of Almighty God

20.01.2022 - Christian dies during 4-Year detention for his Faith in God

Chu Qingming (pseudonym), male, born in 1971, a resident of the eastern province of Shandong, was a Christian of The Church of Almighty God (CAG). He was arrested by the CCP police in December 2020 for his belief in Almighty God, and later was sentenced to 4 years in prison. He died during detention at the age of 50.

[Continue reading...](#)

20.01.2022 - Christian dies of illness from Mistreatment in Custody After Arrested for His Faith

Hu Zhibin (pseudonym), male, born in 1953, was a Christian of The Church of Almighty God (CAG) in the central province of Hubei. In October 2018, Hu was arrested by the CCP police for his faith in Almighty God and was subjected to torture during interrogation. When he was held in the detention house, he was mistreated, and suffered illness without treatment, which caused his condition to be worsening. He died of illness on November 7, 2021 in prison.

[Continue reading...](#)

Buddhists

18.01.2022 - Tenzin Delek Rinpoche: Statue removed, relatives arrested

Fifteen years after the suspicious death in jail of the charismatic Buddhist monk from Kham, the CCP is still afraid of him.

How many in the West remember today the name of Tenzin Delek Rinpoche? Once, many in the world mobilized to save this famous Tibetan monk from execution. But this was 2002, twenty years ago. The **human rights** activists believed they had succeeded at least in persuading the **CCP** to convert the monk's death sentence into life imprisonment.

[Continue reading...](#)

24.01.2022 - Tibetan online religious groups banned in Qinghai

Authorities in northwestern China's Qinghai province are banning Tibetan social media groups tied to religion, warning group members they will be investigated and jailed if they continue to use them, sources say.

[Continue reading...](#)

Falun Gong

26.01.2022 - Liu Xiyong: A veteran Falun Gong prisoner's suspicious death in jail

The 80-year-old man from Liaoning province had spent years in prison and was repeatedly tortured.

Liu Xiyong, an 80-year-old **Falun Gong** prisoner of conscience, died suspiciously in Dalian's No. 3 Prison, in Liaoning **province**, on December 29, 2021. His family and co-religionists believe he was persecuted to death.

[Continue reading...](#)

26.01.2022 - Guangdong woman sentenced to 4.5 years for talking to people about Falun Gong.

A Jieyang City, Guangdong Province resident was sentenced to 4.5 years for her faith in Falun Gong in late 2020 and transferred to the Guangdong Province Women's Prison in November 2021.

Falun Gong, also known as Falun Dafa, is a spiritual discipline that has been persecuted by the Chinese communist regime since 1999.

[Continue reading...](#)

25.01.2022 - Eleven Falun Gong practitioners in Beijing sentenced to prison ahead of Winter Olympics

Eleven Falun Gong practitioners were sentenced by the Dongcheng District Court in Beijing on January 14, 2022, after being arrested for sending photos of the empty city during the pandemic to overseas media. The sentencing came weeks before the 2022 Winter Olympics, set to be held in China from February 4 to 20.

[Continue reading...](#)

Five women from Uyghur family sentenced to long prison terms in China's Xinjiang

A record of the verdict says the women were imprisoned for 'illegal' religious activities.

By Shohret Hoshur

Radio Free Asia (21.01.2022) - <https://bit.ly/3nUQiAK> - A court in Xinjiang sentenced five Muslim Uyghur women from one family to lengthy jail terms for "illegal" religious activities, according to a copy of the 2019 verdict recently obtained by RFA.

The women — an elderly mother, her three daughters, and her daughter-in-law — received jail terms of between seven and 20 years, according to the document from the Korla (in Chinese, Kuerle) Municipal People's Court. Korla is the second-largest city in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region.

Halcham Pazil, Melikizat Memet, Patigul Memet, Zemire Memet and Bostan Ibrahim, were convicted of "disturbing public order and inciting ethnic hatred" for "hearing and providing a venue for illegal religious preaching," according to the document.

The eldest of the five Uyghur women, Halcham Pazil, is 78 years old, and the youngest, Bostan Ibrahim, is 33. Four of the women are housewives and one is a civil servant.

The verdict issued on April 2, 2019, indicates that the charges against them were brought by the Korla Municipal Procuratorate.

The verdict also mentions an imprisoned woman named Kadirye Memet, adding that her case would be dealt with separately.

Halchigul Memet, whom the document says led the women in religious discussions and is now living in exile, said Kadirye is a relative of the other five.

Chief Judge Shirali Memet, Judge Ahmetjan Kurban, Judge Ibadet Yasin and registrar Dilmurat Parhat signed the sentencing document. An official from the Korla Municipal Court declined to answer questions about the case.

"Why do you want to know about our judge? What government department are you calling from?" he asked.

The official told the RFA reporter that an officer from the local police department would contact him, but no one did. Another official confirmed that chief judge and other two judges who had signed the verdict were still working at the same court.

Halchigul Memet, mentioned in the verdict as having led the five women during the religious gatherings, told RFA she was related to the five imprisoned women.

"We were all relatives. I mean they were all direct relatives, and I was like a relative to them and them to me," she told RFA from Turkey.

The women followed traditional Uyghur customs and frequently visited each other to talk about their children and to practice their religion, Halchigul said.

"We used to go to each household regularly on weekly or biweekly basis," she said. "We would talk about how to improve our quality of life and help sharpen our religious knowledge.

"We never had any political or anti-government talks," she said. "We only talked about how to improve our well-being and our family's well-being and how to be traditionally good Muslims."

The prosecution and jailing of the five women for holding traditional religious gatherings is proof of the Chinese government's genocidal policies against Uyghurs, Halchigul said.

She said the other women arrested — Kadirye Memet — was also a member of the family of five women named in the verdict, she said.

Halchigul said that three other members of the same family — Mahmut and Musajan Memet, and Zohragul Hudaberdi, who married into the family — also had been sentenced to prison, bringing the total number of imprisoned relatives to nine.

"The Chinese government cracked down on this kind of simple gathering as a 'crime' against the country," Halchigul said. "They were seven siblings from this family, and all were detained and imprisoned, even the family's in-laws were imprisoned. It was devastating to the entire family."

Translated by RFA's Uyghur Service. Written in English by Roseanne Gerin.

Photo : A Uyghur woman holds a placard as she demonstrates to ask for news of her relatives in northwestern China's Xinjiang region and to express concern about an extradition treaty between China and Turkey, near the Chinese consulate in Istanbul, Turkey, March 8, 2021 – AFP

Special bimonthly FoRB newsletter (01-15.01.2022)

General

12.01.2022 - China's Public Security: To protect economy, crackdown on illegal religion

Top police bureaucrat explains why to implement the program of the Central Economic Work Conference controlling religion is essential.

[Continue reading...](#)

06.01.2022 - Government sets new restrictions on sharing religious information online amid ongoing violations

Further strict regulations concerning the sharing of religious content online, due to take effect on 1 March 2022, were published by the Chinese government in December 2021, amid ongoing violations against religious communities over the Christmas and New Year period in China.

[Continue reading...](#)

03.01.2022 - Online religious services and activities led by foreigners to be banned in China

The Chinese State Administration of Religious Affairs (SARA), along with the Ministries of Industry and Information Technology, of Public Security, and of State Security, recently announced new restrictive measures for Christian online activities.

The measures, which will affect churches, organisations and individuals, will come into force on 1 March 2022.

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Protestants

11.01.2022 - Chen Yu: 7 year sentence for selling Christian books confirmed on appeal

Western media and NGO had protested against the first-degree sentence in September 2020. The appellate judge confirmed Chen should remain in jail.

[Continue reading...](#)

07.01.2022 - New Year's resolutions for Chinese christians: Praise Xi and watch "Red" Movies

The Three-Self Church 2022 flag-raising ceremony told believers they should do their part in supporting CCP propaganda.

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06.01.2022 - An Yankui and Zhang Chenghao of Taiyuan Xuncheng reformed church officially arrested

The wife of An Yankui received a notice of arrest for Preacher An Yankui, sent out on December 28th by the Fenyang Public Security Bureau. The notice stated: Arrested approved by Fenyang City People's Procuratorate, Department 2 [2021] No. Z14, at 10:00 on December 28, 2021, our bureau executed the arrest of An Yankui on suspicion of illegally crossing the national border; he is currently detained at the Xiaoyi City Detention Center.

[Continue reading...](#)

03.01.2022 - China: Christians arrested for attending conference in Malaysia

The detained pastors and laymen legally went to Kuala Lumpur to attend an event organized by well-known evangelist Tang Chongrong. Tang Chongrong is a well-known Chinese overseas evangelist and missionary, and the founder of the Tang Chongrong International Mission. Tens of thousands have attended his rallies and seminars, and more have read his books.

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Buddhists

14.01.2022 - Brothers detained in Eastern Tibet

The arrests of Tenzin Norbu and Wangchen Nyima last August have only recently come to light

The detention of two monks in Garze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture last August has recently been revealed.

Tenzin Norbu and Wangchen Nyima, a pair of brothers from Neneng Monastery in Drago County, were arrested on 15 August 2021. They continue to be held in a detention centre in Tawu County.

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05.01.2022 - Restrictions on religious activities continue in Tibet

Recently, as Bitter Winter reported, the Chinese authorities in Kham (a part of historical Tibet, now in Sichuan province) destroyed a 99-foot-tall Buddha statue and forty-five prayer wheels around it.

According to the sources cited by Dharamshala-based Tibet Watch, the demolition began on December 12, 2021. In China too, in the past few years, the Chinese authorities destroyed several Buddhist statues in Zhejiang, including a 92-foot statue of the Bodhisattva Guanyin in Taizhou.

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Falun Gong

15.01.2022 - Falun Gong practitioners tortured at Yushu City Detention Center, at least two die

Since the Chinese Communist Party began to persecute Falun Gong, a spiritual practice also known as Falun Dafa in 1999, at least two Falun Gong practitioners were tortured to death at Yushu City Detention Center in Jilin Province. Other practitioners were force-fed and restrained with a straitjacket as punishment when they went on hunger strike to protest the persecution. The following are a few examples of the persecution that Falun Gong practitioners suffered at Yushu City Detention Center.

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11.01.2022 - Elderly Couple arrested by Police who pretended to be healthcare workers to vaccinate them

A woman in Linli County, Hunan Province won her lawsuit against the local social security bureau for arbitrarily suspending her pension, but the bureau has refused to reinstate her pension and even threatened to file a counter lawsuit to uphold their decision.

[Continue reading...](#)

09.01.2022 - Dalian woman dies in prison three years after being denied medical parole

A 66-year-old woman in Dalian City, Liaoning Province suffered long-term torture and developed breast cancer while serving time for practicing Falun Gong. Ms. Zhong Shujuan died in Liaoning Women's Prison on December 24, 2021, three years after her request for medical parole was denied. Her body was cremated in the presence of the police, prosecutor and judge who were involved in her sentencing.

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Chen Yu: 7-year sentence for selling Christian books confirmed on appeal

Western media and NGO had protested against the first-degree sentence in September 2020. The appellate judge confirmed Chen should remain in jail.

By Zhong Jingguo

Bitter Winter (13.01.2022) - <https://bit.ly/3K8fbT1> - Several Western media and [NGOs reported](#) in 2020 that on September 27 Chen Yu, the head of the "Wheat Bookstore" in Taizhou, Zhejiang [province](#), had been charged with "illegal business operation" for selling Christian books, and sentenced to 7 years in prison and fined 200,000 yuan by Linhai City Court.

Family and co-religionists have now learned that the decision has been confirmed on appeal.

Chen Yu, who sometimes used the pseudonym Zhang Mai on social networks, was popular with Christians in Zhejiang and beyond. He had clients in Henan, Shandong, and other provinces. He had been left comparatively undisturbed until September 2019, when he was arrested.

At trial, the prosecutor claimed that he had sold more than 20,000 Bibles and Christian books, and that 12,684 books had been found at his premises and destroyed.

Reportedly, what enraged the police was that he sold thousand of books by Pastor Wang Yi, of Early Rain Covenant Church in Chengdu, who was [sentenced to nine years in jail](#) in 2019. Not coincidentally, it was when the trial against Pastor Wang Yi was being prepared that bookseller Chen Yu was arrested.

The prosecutor characterized Chen's bookselling operation as an "anti-Chinese conspiracy," because some of the Bibles and books he sold were printed in Taiwan and the United States, and claimed that Chen had more than 10,000 customers.

Chen remains an inmate in Linhai City [Detention Center](#), Zhejiang [Province](#).

Photo : A Chinese-language Bible. From Wechat.

Xi Jinping's sinicization, the new Cultural Revolution dear to Mao Zedong

Contribution of Willy Fautré, director of *Human Rights Without Frontiers*, to the debate at the conference "Diplomatic Boycott of the Winter Olympics in China" held at the Press Club in Brussels on 4 January

HRWF (05.01.2022) - On the eve of the Winter Olympic Games to be held in China, this conference and the protest demonstrations simultaneously held in Geneva, Berlin, Brussels and Antwerp are welcome to raise awareness about the egregious human rights violations for which China has been responsible for years and decades, especially under the rule of Xi Jinping.

Under the guise of **Sinicization**, Xi Jinping has reinforced the full control of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) over all sectors of society. This is what we would call **totalitarianism**.

What is sinicization?

Sinicization is a word used at least since the 17th century that indicated the **assimilation of minorities in the Chinese empire** into Chinese culture and language.

The same term was adopted by Nationalist China to signify the effort **to replace the foreigners** who managed business, religions and civil society organizations by Chinese citizens.

The CCP, however, gives a different meaning to the word "sinicization". **It is not sufficient that organizations operating in China, including religions and churches, have Chinese leaders.** In order to be accepted as "sinicized," they **should have leaders selected by the CCP** and operate within a framework of strategies and objectives indicated by the CCP.

In Tibet and Xinjiang, however, the CCP pursues a policy of "sinicization" in the traditional sense of the word, **trying to assimilate Uyghurs Muslims and Tibetan Buddhists into the Chinese Communist culture.**

On 3-4 December last, Xi Jinping personally presided on the first National Conference on Work Related to Religious Affairs that the CCP had held since 2016. He spoke at the Conference and asked for a more in-depth study of Karl Marx's texts on religion by all those involved in the management of religious activities in China. He also reiterated that **"Sinicization" of religion means its alignment with the CCP's principles, goals, and directions**, and lamented that the process he started with the 2016 conference is not advancing quickly enough.

In the name of "sinicization", millions of Uyghur Muslims are deprived of their freedom to be politically educated or reeducated in camps against their will, women are massively sterilized, hundreds of thousands of Han people are introduced in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region to make the Uyghur community a minority on its own historical lands and young Uyghur students are schooled in other regions far away from their cultural, linguistic and religious roots.

In the name of "sinicization", Tibetan Buddhists are also deprived of their culture, their traditions, their language, their religion and any access to their spiritual leader, the Dalai

Lama. Their monasteries and numerous statues of Buddha have been and continue to be destroyed. The objective is to make Buddhism and any religion invisible in the public space.

“Sinicization” is a form of resurgence of the Cultural Revolution carried out by Mao Zedong from 1966 until his death in 1976 which devastated the then Chinese society. The common objective of Mao Zedong and Xi Jinping is **the reinforcement of Communism by eradicating the historical cultural and religious roots of their ethno-religious minorities and by purging the country of Western elements**. And Christianity is one of those “foreign agents” perceived by the CCP as a threat to its leadership.

The sinicization of Christians

As long as Christianity cannot disappear from China, its **churches are to be “sinicized,” which means to “adapt to the socialist society” and to be placed under the authority of state organs controlled by the CCP, such as the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association and the Protestant Three-Self Patriotic Movement.**

Concretely, it is the CCP who **appoints the leaders and pastors of Protestant Churches**. Concerning the **Catholic Church**, it is the **Chinese government who proposes candidates to be appointed as bishops who are then to be confirmed by the Vatican**.

Those who try to evade the Communist sinicization and to operate outside this framework, in so-called house churches for example, are arrested and sentenced to heavy prison terms, as we regularly report in our newsletters. Examples:

- From October 14 to November 23 last year, the [CCP](#) authorities carried out a wanton crackdown against meetings of [Church of Almighty God](#) members in several cities and arrested **over two hundred** of them in 40 days.
- On 25 October last, a **Chinese Catholic bishop, Peter Shao Zhumin**, who had been arrested five times since 2016 for refusing to cut ties with the Vatican was taken away by authorities.

The official reason for his arrest and his whereabouts remain unknown but the real reason is his allegiance to the Vatican.

- In November last, **a Christian couple have each been sentenced to seven years in prison and a heavy fine** of RMB 250,000 (approximately £29,240) for allegedly “illegal business operations.” In reality, the couple’s registered printing company had produced **a large number of Christian books** before being seized by the local authorities.
- In a Protestant Three-Self Patriotic Church in northeast China’s Liaoning Province, there is **a library to promote the education of believers**. Its shelves have been filled with all kinds of secular books, including biographies of [Mao Zedong](#), Zhou Enlai, and other Chinese communist leaders, a series of books on the battles of World War II and the “red revolution.”
- In several parts of China, limitations and prohibitions are introduced for the celebration of **Christmas**, including in places of worship of the government-controlled Catholic and Protestant churches, in the framework of the implementation of directives on “[Sinicization](#)” of Christianity, which forbid “Western” celebrations. Hotels are also penalized for hosting Christmas events.

A previous panelist, Ben Rogers from Hong Kong Watch, has shown us how Beijing is currently putting an end to the "**One country, two systems**" status enjoyed by Hong Kong and replacing it by "One country one system". The absorption of Christianity, Buddhism and Islam under the pretext of "sinicization" follows the same logic: to engulf religions into **Communism with so-called Chinese characteristics**, to neutralize them, to catch and to revel in their souls. The next target on the agenda of Xi Jinping is certainly Taiwan.

The diplomatic boycott of the Winter Olympic Games in China will show which countries, which heads of states, which political parties and which politicians are on the side of democracy and human rights or on the side of totalitarianism and join the Axis of Shame.
