

Prisoners of faith

release
PRISONERS

EMAIL ALERT

JULY 2011

Pastor Shi Enhao China



Photo: ChinaAid

In recent months there has been an increase in the monitoring, harassment, arrest and detention of anyone in China who is perceived to be a threat to national security. For Christian human rights lawyers, pastors and leaders of certain house churches, it may be a question of when the authorities come for them, rather than if.

On March 1, agents from the DSPS (Domestic Security Protection Squad) of Xiayi County, Henan Province, came to a house church in Hanzhen town and took away three Christians, two of whom were women. The agents seized a number of Bibles, cash and copies of a book entitled, *A Stormy Life* by Pastor 'Bike' Zhang Mingxuan, president of the Chinese House Church Alliance.

Following an interrogation that lasted for more than three hours, all three were released and warned not to associate with Pastor Bike.

Three days later, Pastor Shi Enhao, who works together with Pastor Bike, in his role as vice-president of the Chinese House Church Alliance, was arrested while preaching in Nanyang city. He was then taken to Suqian city detention centre, Jiangsu province, where he was reportedly beaten before being released two days later.

According to a news report from Release partner China Aid, Pastor Shi was again detained on May 31. The following day his home was raided by police, who took away various books and papers. He was detained along with a number of other church leaders. Most of the leaders were released within 24 hours; however, Pastor Shi and female leader, Chang Meiling, were given 12-day administrative-detention sentences.

On the Sunday, after the 12 days' administrative detention, Pastor Shi was released but never reached home. He was immediately rearrested and, according to China Aid, taken to an unknown location. He has not been heard from since.

China Aid's President, Bob Fu, has expressed his concern about the deteriorating situation in China and called on the authorities to stop its persecution of the house churches. He also called for the immediate release of Pastor Shi and encouraged Christians around the world to continue praying for the nation of China at this time.

HELPING CHRISTIANS IMPRISONED FOR THEIR FAITH

'I am in chains for Christ' Philippians 1:13

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PLEASE PRAY

- ▶ That God will encourage, strengthen and protect Pastor Shi
- ▶ For the Chinese authorities to release Pastor Shi
- ▶ That the leaders of the Chinese House Church Alliance will continue to be bold and remain faithful

PLEASE WRITE

When writing please do not mention Release International, advance your political opinions or include anything which could be insulting to the authorities.

Sample letter :

His Excellency Mr Liu Xiaoming
Embassy of the People's Republic of China
49-51 Portland Place,
London W1B 1JL

Your Excellency,

I am writing to express my concern at the detention of Pastor Shi Enhao by Jiangsu police. Shi Enhao had just been freed on June 12, after 12 days' administrative detention, in Jiangsu province, when he was immediately rearrested and taken away to an unknown location. This is now the third time in three months that he has been detained. He was reportedly beaten during an earlier detention in March this year at Suqian City detention centre.

I am deeply concerned about the human rights and religious freedom situation in China. I am very concerned about Shi Enhao's welfare and the reason for his detention. This act of arbitrary detention itself is in violation of Chinese law and I formally request that he be released.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Yours respectfully,

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