

# Singapore Megachurch Ordered Not to Pay Pastor Kong Hee's Legal Fees

Just two months after Singapore megachurch pastor **Kong Hee** was arrested for misappropriating church building funds, the Commissioner of Charities (COC) has warned the 23,000-member City Harvest Church congregants against raising money to support the pastor's legal fees.

At the center of the issue was a letter sent to members on Aug. 6 seeking donations to be deposited in to two City Harvest pastors bank accounts. Church officials say the correspondence, which had been sent as recently as last week, was no longer being circulated. *The Straits Times* reports that the COC had previously ordered the church's board to stop fundraising on the pastors' behalf.

Hee and four other senior church officials were arrested in late June for funneling at least S\$23 million (\$18 million) to help finance Hee's wife, Ho Yeow Sun's, music career.

The pastor denies the allegations on the church's website.

"I do maintain my integrity, and will rigorously defend that integrity against these charges," Hee said in a press statement. "I have and will continue to place my faith and trust in our judicial system. I will explain the facts and circumstances to the court, and am confident that I will be vindicated."