

Why is China's Government Doing This to Crosses at Night?

At 3:30 a.m., October 17, 2014, 300 people in uniforms blocked all the entrances of the Kaiyang village, climbed over the church wall, broke into the church building and forcibly removed the church cross of Kaiyang Church, Pingyang County, Wenzhou City.

Local believers reported that there was a member of the church staff sleeping in the church, but she was awakened and forcibly removed from the church building. ChinaAid also reports that two other church crosses in Zhejiang Province were removed on the same day.

The church cross demolition campaign, under the guise of "removing illegal construction," has been carried out by China's Zhejiang Provincial government for over six months. Within Pingyang County of Wenzhou City, "only Zengshan Church's cross has not been taken down," a worshipper said to ChinaAid.

"Believers from seven or eight pastoral regions in Pingyang are taking turns guarding the cross of Zengshan Church. Now, the only cross listed to be taken down in Pingyang County is Zengshan Church. As many as a hundred people are guarding the place."

The Zhejiang Provincial government has been showing determination in removing all "illegal" church crosses, and they claim the campaign has nothing to do with religious persecution. However, all the local believers we have interviewed are strong in their stance that "the church crosses are not against any building code." A local believer even quoted a report by China Central Television (CCTV), the

official state-run media in China, that the Chinese government forbids forcible removal of any kind of construction at night.

“Look at what Zhejiang Provincial government is doing! They still tear down church crosses at night! What are they afraid of? Even if church crosses are illegal, why can’t they just come during the daytime?” the local believer asked during the interview.

Sooyoung Kim, ICC’s regional manager for Southeast Asia, said, “Zhejiang Provincial government must follow China’s law and stop tearing down church crosses illegally at night. Your own people’s hearts are hurt by the government’s actions, and it is not wise to continue this campaign. ICC strongly urges Zhejiang Provincial government to stop tearing down church crosses and to listen to its own people’s cry.”