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A Taiwanese Christian pastor was detained for singing the worship song "Jesus Love You" in Zhengzhou, Henan, in China, which officials there have branded as an "illegal religious activity."

ChinaAid, which reports on persecution and human rights abuses in the world's most populous nation, said Pastor Xu Rongzhang from Taiwan was detained on Saturday, the day before Easter, because he led a group of Christians in Zhengzhou to sing the song.

Xu was released later on the same day, though his identification documents and permit to travel to mainland China were not returned until Monday.

Local officials never explained why singing "Jesus Loves You" is now deemed to be an illegal activity, though several Christians across China in recent months have been arrested and even sentenced to prison for participating in religious activities.

Five Christians, including a pastor, were sentenced back in February by a court in the northeastern Liaoning province to between three to seven years in prison for purchasing and selling what authorities called "forbidden Christian devotional books."

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