

Brixton prison's Christian chaplain is 'forced out of his role after an Imam at the jail accused him of extremism'

From the [Sunday Times](#)



Paul Song says he was removed from his job at Brixton prison in south London amid accusations that his teachings were 'too radical'.

The former police officer maintains the sacking was also on the basis of false accusations from a Muslim inmate, who said Mr Song referred to him a 'terrorist'.

Mr Song said his position at HMP Brixton, where he had served for 20 years, came under scrutiny after Mohammed Yusuf Ahmed (left) became managing chaplain in 2015

He also claims Ahmed told him he wanted to "change the

Christian domination within HMP Brixton”.

Song, a former police officer in his native South Korea who works as a pastor in Sutton, south London, was forced out of his role without explanation last August. He was told in early September by prison management that his exclusion was because of “allegations of misconduct”, including a claim by an inmate who accused him of referring to him as a “terrorist” and of making references to Isis. Song denies the claim and was not provided with evidence to support it.

The prison management also informed him that Ahmed complained Song had accused him of “being unfavourable to the Christians”.

One prisoner, who served time in Brixton in 2015, said in a signed statement that inmates converted to Islam for protection offered by the Muslim gang that dominated the prison.

Ian Acheson, who led an independent review of Islamist extremism in the prison service, published in 2016, said: “There seems to be a very troubling lack of transparency and due process around the decision to expel this chaplaincy volunteer. That sort of arbitrary action is only defensible in the case of very serious allegations. So it is baffling why he has been told that he is free to operate in any other prison, just not Brixton.”

He said his review found serious concerns about “the operation of some prison chaplaincies in the London area and the risks of radicalisation”.

Acheson added: “I made a number of recommendations after repeated concerns were raised about bullying and favouritism from imams in the field. In the light of these revelations, I would urge the new ministerial team to assure itself that the dismissal of this chaplain was fair and proportionate.”