Voice of the Martyrs CANADA

PERSECUTION & PRAYER ALERT

"I have said these things to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."

~ John 16:33 (ESV)

NIGERIA: Charges Laid Against Christians by Islamic Police

Sources: ADF International, International Christian Concern

A woman in Nigeria
Photo: VOMC

In 2025, a 22-year-old woman was arrested in Kano State, Nigeria. "Sarah" (whose name has been changed for security reasons) fled from home after her siblings attempted to force her into an arranged marriage. She eventually found refuge with a Christian family who shared the Gospel message with her. Through the witness and support of the Abaras family, Sarah made a decision to follow Christ.

As the majority of people living in Kano State are Muslim, the state has instituted the "Hisbah Corps," a police unit responsible for enforcing Sharia law among Muslim citizens. With the assistance of the Hisbah Corps, the new believer's family arranged for her arrest, accusing Sarah of converting to Christianity. She was detained for four days, during which time she endured beatings and intense pressure to return to her family. Following her release, the Abaras family helped Sarah relocate to a less stringent region.

On May 26th, the courts ruled that the woman's arrest had been unlawful and declared the actions of the Hisbah Corps a "flagrant violation" of her fundamental human rights. Sarah was then awarded financial compensation for the mistreatment she experienced. The court also determined that, because Sarah was no longer a Muslim, the Hisbah Corps had no legal authority to lay charges against her.

Although the charges were dismissed, the woman's relatives have accused the Abaras family of kidnapping her. While members of this accused Christian family have been released on bail, the case against them has not yet been resolved.

In several northern states, including Kano, religious police units operate to enforce Sharia law; however, they have increasingly been used to target Christian converts and those supporting them. To read more about the persecution of believers in Nigeria, and/or view informative video reports, go to our country profile.

- ***Pray that God's loving protection, peace and guidance will surround Sarah as she adjusts to life in a new location, with hopes that she will be further strengthened and encouraged there through supportive Christian fellowship.***
- ***Also lift the Abaras family before the Lord, asking Him to sustain them with courage, provide for their needs, and bring a just resolution to the legal case they are now facing.***
- ***Regardless of their own religious affiliations, may governing authorities in Kano, as well as those representing Nigeria's other states, work fairly to protect the rights and beliefs of all citizens.***

NEPAL: Efforts to Reinstate Hindu Nation Spark Concerns

Sources: Nepal News, The Kathmandu Post, International Christian Concern

In 2008, the country of Nepal underwent a historic transition to become a secular republic. The monarchy had been abolished, and a constitutional republic was established instead. As part of the process, the constitution guaranteed religious freedom for all citizens, and Hinduism lost its status as the official religion of the nation.

A Hindu temple in Nepal.
Photo: Wikimedia / Harry Paudyal (CC)

While many citizens welcomed these changes, some opposing groups have continued to advocate for the restoration of Nepal's former status as a Hindu nation. These tensions came into sharper focus after an incident took place on July 26th of this year, when members of the Muslim community in Dewanganj, Sunsari, raised objections to loud music and religious flags associated with a Hindu pilgrimage. The confrontation led to violence, resulting in three deaths and several injuries.

In the aftermath of the violence, several Hindu religious leaders formed a group known as the "Hindu Samrat Sena." The group met with a government-assigned negotiation team and announced a 13-point agreement in late August. According to its leaders, the agreement outlined efforts to restore social peace, religious tolerance and regional stability. The group further claims that governing officials have committed to holding an all-party discussion within three months regarding the proposal to declare Nepal a Hindu nation. Government representatives involved in the talks emphasized at the time of compiling this report that no formal agreement has yet been made. According to one official, Prem Prasad Luitel, "The state has simply accepted their memorandum; there has been no agreement."

Rumours of a potential agreement have raised concerns among religious minorities, including leaders of the country's growing Christian community. The July 26th riots appear to have emboldened some Hindu militants, leading to increased pressure on Christians in several areas. Churches have reported receiving threats and disruptions to their ministry activities, including attempts to prevent the preaching of the Gospel. One pastor stated that a church in the Sunsari district was forced to shut down due to threats. For additional reports addressing the challenges encountered by followers of Jesus in Nepal, see our country profile.

- ***Please intercede on behalf of Nepal's governing leaders as they seek to address the tensions between the country's various religious communities, asking the Lord to grant them wisdom, integrity and a commitment to respect the rights and freedoms of all citizens.***
- ***Pray that believers encountering hostility from militant groups will experience God's peace, safety and encouragement.***
- ***Ask the Lord to continue ministering within the hearts of people across Nepal so they will be receptive to the message of the Gospel, ultimately leading many more to faith in Him.***
- ***In the wake of the devastating flash floods that took place this August, pray for the needed healing, provision and restoration of all those who are recovering from tragic loss, displacement and/or trauma.***
- ***As recovery efforts continue, may Christians serve as effective witnesses of Christ's compassion through their practical care and assistance.***

RUSSIA: Prosecutions for Cooperating with "Undesirable Organizations”

Sources: Forum18, Voice of the Martyrs Korea

Ms. Park Tae-yeon
Photo: VOM Korea

Russian authorities have classified a growing number of organizations with foreign associations as "undesirable." Whenever this designation is determined, any individuals and institutions allegedly having connections to these listed organizations are at risk of prosecution.

Olga Sibiryova is a researcher for one of Russia's leading 'freedom of religion and belief' monitors. Recently, Olga was charged with "participation in the activities" of the International Freedom of Religion or Belief Alliance, even though she denies having had any interactions with the organization. The only evidence presented against the accused woman is that her research was referenced in reports published by this so-called "undesirable organization." If convicted, Olga could face up to four years in prison.

In May, Mission Eurasia was also declared to be "undesirable." Headquartered in the United States and Canada, this particular ministry provides training and assistance to Christian leaders in various countries. Since the designation, a Baptist church and two higher education Christian institutions have been accused of cooperating with Mission Eurasia for distributing Bibles and other materials published by the ministry.

As a result, authorities fined the pastor of the Baptist church, Aleksey Kruchinin, and ordered the destruction of various Scripture materials found on the premises. Additionally, the St. Petersburg Christian University and the rector of the Moscow Theological Seminary were fined for possessing Mission Eurasia publications in their libraries.

In a previously published *Persecution & Prayer Alert,* VOMC reported on the case of Ms. Park Tae-yeon, a South Korean missionary who faces up to 17 years in prison for alleged immigration violations. (Review other reports concerning her situation.) Ms. Park served for many years in eastern Russia with Child Evangelism Fellowship (CEF) before retiring from the ministry. While the charges are not officially connected to her work with CEF, Russian authorities are investigating the children's camps that she had assisted.

This July, Child Evangelism Fellowship was added to Russia's list of "undesirable" organizations, raising further concerns about Ms. Park's case. Since the retired missionary's detainment, her trial has experienced several delays. Although a verdict

was originally expected on August 10th, a decision is now anticipated to take place no earlier than September 24th.

- ***Prayerfully uphold these recently accused followers of Jesus who are presently facing criminal prosecution in Russia because of their ministry activities, asking Him to provide for their every need as they deal with fines and the possibility of imprisonment.***
- ***Also, please continue to remember Ms. Park amid her ongoing trial, praying for a favourable outcome that would allow this faithful servant to be released soon and joyfully reunited with her loved ones in South Korea.***
- ***In general, pray that God will continue to build His church throughout Russia, encouraging believers, raising up faithful church leaders, and opening doors for the Gospel to reach those who have not yet received His saving grace through Christ.***

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