



Persecution & Prayer Alert

The Voice of the Martyrs Canada
www.vomcanada.com

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*"The world is full of suffering,
it is also full of overcoming it."*
~ Helen Keller

BURMA (MAYANMAR): Christians Facing Genocide

Sources: Release International, Sky News

As the world's attention is centred on the estimated 700,000 Rohingya Muslim refugees fleeing slaughter from the military in Burma, another group who are predominantly Christian are facing a similar fate. The Kachin people live in an area of northern Burma, near the borders of India and China.

For decades, there has been a conflict between the government and Kachin rebels fighting for independence. Recently, however, response from the Burmese military has greatly intensified. Attacks by air and artillery have been indiscriminate, and landmines have caused villages to be uninhabitable. Additionally, women have been ruthlessly raped and camps of displaced persons have been cruelly targeted. Soldiers have occupied churches and interrogated entire congregations. Access by journalists, aid organizations and others has been denied.

Many Kachins believe that the attacks have been increasing because the military's persecution of Rohingya Muslims has gone unpunished. Other ethnic and religious minorities are also worried they may be next. Paul Robinson of Release International says, "The military controls Burma with an iron grip, and there are some who won't rest until all of Burma is Buddhist -- at any price. They've targeted the Muslims, now they're going for the Christians."

Please pray for the protection of those suffering these merciless attacks. Also remember Burma's church leaders as they tirelessly work to comfort and encourage their people. May pressure from leaders within Burma and countries around the world, who are standing against such human rights abuses, prove to be beneficial in putting a stop to these indiscriminate attacks.

CANADA: Decision for Trinity Western University

Source: Evangelical Fellowship of Canada

The Supreme Court of Canada has announced that they will be releasing their decision regarding Trinity Western University's School of Law on Friday, June 15th. The ruling could have wide-ranging implications on the protection of religious freedoms in Canada.

The court will decide whether provincial law societies are permitted to refuse the admittance of graduates from TWU's law school into membership. Objections centre around a community covenant all of its students sign, consisting of a voluntary agreement to abstain from certain practices -- one of which is sexual intimacy outside of heterosexual marriage.

For a summary of the situation and implications, go to www.theefc.ca/twulaw. This page also contains informative video footage, commentaries and legal briefings.

Please pray that the Supreme Court of Canada will respect the religious freedom of this long-standing, reputable university and its students in the upcoming ruling. May the court's decision respect the rights of all citizens, resulting in a favourable outcome -- one that will have no further implications nor negative reactions from those representing the judicial system in a nation originally founded on Biblical principles.

PRAISE REPORTS

Two reports received this week have brought echoes of praise as the following long-imprisoned believers have finally been released from prison.

ERITREA: Pastor Released After 11 Years!

Source: The Voice of the Martyrs Australia

Pastor Oqbamichel Haimanot was first arrested in 2003, resulting initially in a few weeks of detainment. In 2005, he was arrested again when a wedding was raided and over 60 Christians were taken to the Sawa military centre -- a place renowned for its brutal treatment. He was released a few months later after suffering a mental breakdown (see www.vomcanada.com/er-2005-05-18.htm).

Pastor Oqbamichel was arrested again in October 2007 and held until his recent release. VOM contacts say he is in need of medical care. No further details are available at this point. Please pray for Pastor Oqbamichel's healing and protection.

VIETNAM: Christian Attorney Released and Exiled

Sources: Christian Solidarity Worldwide, BBC

Christian attorney and human rights activist Nguyen Van Dai has faced persecution several times over the years because of his defence of human rights. Arrested in March 2007 for

"propagandizing against the Socialist Republic of Vietnam," he received a sentence of five years in prison, followed by four years of house arrest. Although he had been released from prison in March 2011 after serving four years, he was still required to serve the following four years of house arrest. For more details, go to www.vomcanada.com/vn-2011-03-31.htm.

Unfortunately, Nguyen got arrested again in December 2015; this time, he was charged with attempting to overthrow the state. On April 5th, 2018, the sentence required 15 years of imprisonment, which was to be followed by five years of house arrest. However, he was unexpectedly released this June 7th, along with colleague Le Thu Hua, on the condition that they immediately leave the country. The two released prisoners, joined by Nguyen's wife Vu Minh Khanh, have been flown to Germany.

Nguyen Van Dai and Le Thu Hua were members of The Brotherhood for Democracy -- along with Pastor Nguyen Trung Ton, whom we reported on last week (www.vomcanada.com/vn-2018-06-07.htm).

Pray for the recently exiled believers as they adjust to a new culture and language in Germany. Continue to pray for other prisoners of faith who are still enduring imprisonment in Vietnam.

If you would like to post a prayer of praise or petition on behalf of our persecuted family around the globe, visit VOMC's prayer wall at www.vomcanada.com/prayerwall.htm.

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If you would like to encourage someone to read or receive this weekly prayer alert, please use our online form at www.vomcanada.com/pnpforward.htm and help spread the message of the persecuted church around the world.

For information on additional ways to support members of the persecuted church overseas, review the list of options at www.vomcanada.com/take-action.htm.