

"If the world hates you, know that it has hated Me before it hated you.... But take heart; I have overcome the world."

~ John 15:18; 16:33b ESV

SYRIA: Turkish Offensive Raises Concerns for Christians

Sources: Middle East Concern, Voice of America

As the Turkish military, along with allied Syrian rebels, continue their operation against Kurdish forces in northern Syria, Christian communities are concerned about the repercussions that may follow. While the campaign is not religiously motivated, believers in the region face particular vulnerabilities.

Christian leaders are especially concerned about Islamist elements within the attacking troops who have hostility toward anyone not following Sunni Islam. With reports of detained ISIS terrorists being released, there are also remembrances of the horrific violence that took place when the militants were in control. There is also apprehension that as militant Islamist elements attempt to retake power in the region, ISIS will be able to rebuild in the region – posing the risk of Christians once again being targeted.



Since the United States withdrew all troops from the region, allowing the Turkish offensive, thousands of Kurds have been displaced. Relief organizations from around the world are seeking how to best assist them in the midst of this volatile situation. More information on the persecution facing Christians in Syria is [available here](#).

To view a short video clip produced by an organization that's appealing for prayer on behalf of the country's vulnerable Kurdish believers, [click here](#).

Please prayerfully uphold the thousands of Kurdish Syrians who've been torn from their homes through this invasion. Also lift up the many other Christ-followers in this country who are now facing fear of the unknown in the days to come. Pray that international pressure will be placed on Turkey to cease their actions, and that all humanitarian efforts to assist Syria's innocent citizens will be effective in providing both spiritual support and practical aid.

ALGERIA: Churches Shut Down After Protest

Sources: VOMC Sources, Morning Star News, Middle East Concern, Imola Oggi



Church members hang signs protesting the illegal closure of their church.

Pastor Salah Chalah, who serves as the national leader of the Protestant Church of Algeria, also pastors the largest church in the country. Each week about 800 Christians gather for worship at the Protestant Church of the Full Gospel of Tizi-Ouzou.

On October 15th, Pastor Salah and those of his leadership team received an order that the church building was to be sealed. Authorities state that the church has been practising worship without authorization. According to Pastor Saleh, no such authorization is legally required. Regardless, this church is the only Protestant church in the country officially recognized as a place of worship.

When police arrived to seal the building, members had gathered in worship and praise. "That is our way of opposing your actions," Pastor Saleh respectfully told them. To view video footage of the raid, recorded by church members, go to [this page](#).

The second largest church in the country, located in Makouda, was also closed on the same day, as well as a church consisting of about 100 members in Tafat. Other churches have been informed that they too will be closed soon.

On October 9th, a demonstration was held to draw attention to the numerous church closures in recent months. The order to close these three mentioned churches happened to be issued on the same day, raising suspicions that this action may have been in direct response to the sit-in.

Please remember Pastor Saleh, as well as the other church leaders and members of the sealed churches in prayer, asking the Lord to grant them wisdom and guidance while contemplating the appropriate action to take in light of the authorities' actions. Pray that the government's campaign against the churches of Algeria will cease and that Christians will be free to worship. May these believers demonstrate God's love and grace to the police and others in authority as they interact with them in hopes of resolving the situation.

INDIA: Pastor's Family Forced into Hiding

Sources: Release International, Morning Star News

A retired pastor and his family in northern India have been badly beaten and forced into hiding after police recently sided with their attackers. Patram Mangala helps with a Christian school in Sohna, Haryana state.

Patram and his wife were working in their front yard on September 22nd when a group of Hindu militants approached and began assaulting them. Patram was hit in the face with a spade. His wife sustained internal injuries, as well as a blow to her face. Their son Abhishek lost four front teeth and sustained injury to one eye, while their other son Raj received internal injuries.

When the family reported the assault to local police, the officers refused to register a complaint for nearly a week. The attackers filed counter charges, falsely claiming that Patram and his family damaged a Hindu temple and tried to take possession of temple land. One of those responsible for the attack, Anil Kumar, claims that the Christian family had attacked him.

According to Patram, problems began when some of the militants entered the school property in 2015 and erected a Hindu idol, laying claim to the land for the eventual building of a Hindu temple. The idol was removed and, despite threats and accusations, the court ultimately ruled in favour of the school.

Since this recent attack, family members have received death threats for reporting the assault to police, thus forcing them to go into hiding. For more incidents of persecution against Christians in India, go to our [country report](#).

Pray for God's protection, intervention and healing on behalf of this assaulted family, and that they will be able to safely return to their home and ministry. Also intercede for the attackers, asking for the Holy Spirit to mightily work in their lives so that they may come to faith in the one true God. May His protection and blessing be upon the school and the ongoing ministry in the community.

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](#).



Patram's wife, Sarla, after the attack.
Photo: Morning Star News

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