



"Commit your way to the Lord; trust in Him, and He will act. He will bring forth your righteousness as the light, and your justice as the noonday. Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for Him...."

~ Psalm 37:5-7 ESV

PAKISTAN: Sisters Accused of Blasphemy

Sources: UCA News, ANI News, Pakistan Christian Post, Morning Star News

On August 6th, Mohammad Haider claimed that he saw a Christian woman named Sonia Masih putting trash into a bag and then disposing of it. The Muslim man said that when he looked inside the trash bag, it contained ruined pages of the Quran. The next day, Mohammad went to Sonia's home to further investigate the situation, taking two other community members with him. He alleged that Sonia's sister, Saima, had made some inappropriate religious comments to them during the visit, leading the Muslim men to contend that the two Christian sisters committed blasphemy.

Word of the accusations quickly spread throughout the village of Gojra. As a result, an angry mob attacked the Christians that same day, attempting to kill Saima. Other believers in the village were also forced to flee for their safety. The family's lawyer states that Saima would have been lynched if the police had not arrived in time.

Saima denies the accusations and states that, rather than her sister disposing of garbage, Mohammad had asked her for an empty bag which she gave to him. It was this bag, the accuser later claimed, that had contained pages of the Quran. The allegations are believed to derive from a personal vendetta against the women.

Accusations of blasphemy are frequently used in Pakistan to settle personal and business disagreements. Unfortunately, these types of allegations often lead to crimes such as mob violence – and the resulting mass destruction of people's lives, properties and communities. To review previously published reports concerning the persecution of Christians in Pakistan, including those recorded on camera, go to our [country profile](#).

Pray that the truth of these women's innocence will be revealed, and that God would bring about a desire for peace, understanding and tolerance within the hearts of all who oppose them. In the meanwhile, may the Lord grant provision and protection to Sonia and Saima, their family members, as well as the other targeted believers of their community. In the midst of the tensions caused by the false allegations, pray that these followers of Jesus will respond by lovingly extending His compassion, mercy and saving grace to all those around them.

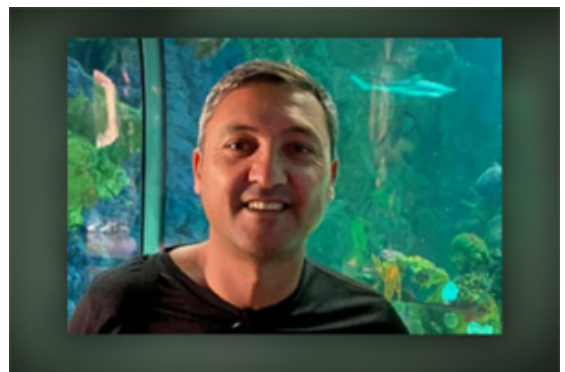


TURKMENISTAN: Pastor Faces Threats of Arrest

Sources: Forum18, Christian Daily, Turkmen.news

According to recent reports, pressure appears to be mounting against Rahymjan Borjakov, a 44-year-old pastor who leads an unregistered church in Turkmenistan. While nothing definite has been announced, sources indicate that the Christian leader's arrest may be imminent amid repeated threats from the authorities.

In early July, an official at a local mosque in the village of Dogryyol told worshippers that Pastor Rahymjan would be locked up sooner or later, and that the authorities were plotting the Christian man's arrest. Lending credence to that rumour, officials visited the pastor's home in mid-July and asked for information about his relatives, including their places of work. Shortly after, Pastor Rahymjan's relatives, who are not Christians, began receiving "threatening and insulting" calls from the phone number of a police officer whose department controls religious activities within the region.



Pastor Rahymjan
Photo: Rahymjan Borjakov

Earlier this year, Pastor Rahymjan attempted to board a plane but was refused for unspecified reasons. This is not unusual treatment for political activists and others with whom the government have concerns. Close monitoring by officials is commonplace for Christians in Turkmenistan, particularly for those belonging to unregistered religious communities, like Pastor Rahymjan. For further reports revealing the various challenges encountered by Christians in this Central Asian nation, go to our [country profile](#).

Pray that the pressures inflicted on Pastor Rahymjan and his family will subside, and that no formal charges would be brought against this Christian leader. May he receive greatly needed wisdom in his endeavours to continue ministering among the members of his community, as well as those of his own family. Also prayerfully remember our other Christian brothers and sisters residing in this country as they too navigate the tight restrictions and close surveillance imposed on them by governing authorities, asking our Heavenly Father to sustain each one with spiritual strength, refreshment and courage in the face of hostility.

SRI LANKA: Arrests During House Church Construction

Source: NCEASL

On June 13th, the pastor of God's Kingdom Gospel Church in Kandapola, Sri Lanka, was constructing a house church building, together with the support of other pastors and church leaders, when he was approached by a junior manager. The pastor was questioned by the manager as to whether or not the Christians had permission to build a church.

Shortly after leaving the construction site, the manager returned with several police officers, local Buddhist leaders, and some individuals from another village. Police hurled abusive language at the Christians who were present and physically assaulted the pastor's 14-year-old son. In addition, others who had come to oppose the church building project assaulted some of the pastors who were helping with the construction build. Despite the attack having been perpetrated by members of the opposing group, five pastors and two church workers were arrested instead.



While all the arrested Christians had been released on bail that day, they were then ordered to appear in court the following day. Upon arriving at the courthouse, these same believers had once again been taken into custody; this time, their detainment lasted until June 18th. Although they have since been released, a subsequent court date was scheduled for October 4th. To learn more about the persecution of Christians in Sri Lanka, visit our [country report](#).

Pray that the case involving the accused Christian workers will be quickly resolved and that opportunities would arise to peaceably settle this disagreement between them and those in opposition to the church building project. May the believers involved be able to proceed with the construction of the worship facility without any further interference. As they continue to await the outcome of the court hearing in October, pray that the Lord would guide, equip and empower them so they will wisely discern how to best deal with the situation.

The "Persecution & Prayer Alert" is a ministry of:
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