



"Heartache forces us to embrace God out of desperate, urgent need. God is never closer than when your heart is aching."

~ Joni Eareckson Tada

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER FOR THE PERSECUTED CHURCH

November 3rd, 2024

Today, millions of Christians around the world continue to suffer because of their faith in Jesus. This year, the International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church (IDOP) will focus specifically on the ways in which persecution impacts women and girls, who often silently endure great hardships for the sake of Christ.

For more information about this upcoming event, along with free resources to help you pray for your suffering family in Christ, go to www.idop.ca.

SUDAN: Military Officers Arrest Christian Refugees

Source: Christian Solidarity Worldwide

Amid the ongoing civil war in Sudan, a group of over 100 Sudanese men, women and children travelled to the city of Shendi on the banks of the Nile River in search of refuge from the fighting between the Sudanese Armed Forces and the paramilitary group, RSF. There, the refugees – most of whom are members of the Sudanese Church of Christ – sought shelter in an affiliated church building.

Unfortunately, transferring to this location did not protect the displaced individuals from harassment, as military intelligence officers soon entered the church building to interrogate the refugees. Between October 6th and 11th, all the men over 18 years of age were detained for questioning and accused of being associated with the RSF. Of the 26 men who were taken into custody, 14 were released a few days later. At last report, 12 of the refugees presently remain in detention. To date, these men have not been allowed any visits from their families, nor have they been formally charged with any crimes. They are presently being held by the Almodada Unit of Military Intelligence – a group of officers who are notorious for their use of violence and torture against detainees.

With deteriorating conditions in Sudan, the situation for those displaced by the violence is deeply concerning. Christians in the country have encountered opposition from both the government and rebel groups. Recently, believers in the village of Al Thora Mobe in Gezira State were forced to convert to Islam by the RSF paramilitary group presently controlling the area. For more reports outlining the difficulties facing Christians in Sudan, go to our [country profile](#).



Photo: VOMC

Pray that the refugees remaining in the custody of the Sudanese military will soon be safely released and allowed to return to their families. Ask God to meet the practical and spiritual needs of these displaced families, provide them a safe place to live, and pour out His love, hope and strength upon each one. Continue to prayerfully remember the people of Sudan who are enduring the ongoing suffering of civil war, praying for an end to the devastating conflict.

INDIA: Christians Accused of Forcibly Converting Children

Sources: International Christian Concern, The Voice of the Martyrs Australia

Recently, 11 female evangelists from the southern states of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh travelled from Hyderabad (the capital of Telangana state) to Bhagwanpur (a town located within the northeastern state of Bihar) in order to spread the "Good News" of the Gospel in villages surrounding the area.

In one of the villages, the Christian women entered a school and, with permission from the principal, distributed books and New Testament Bibles to the children. However, as the believers left, they were stopped by some local Hindus who were opposed to the women's message and questioned their motives.



Photo: VOMC

The Hindu villagers called the police, who then detained the evangelists, along with seven local

Christians. After questioning the believers, the police concluded that the women had done nothing wrong and therefore were prepared to release them. However, a local member of the state legislature intervened and threatened to organize major protests if the women were released. The politician also contacted local media outlets and spread false reports about the Christians, which were published in newspapers and social media posts. After facing personal threats, the principal was forced to lodge a complaint against the women for unlawfully converting the school children.

False accusations of coercive conversions continue to take place throughout many areas of India, often spurred on by anti-conversion legislation in many states. Additional information on the persecution of Christians in India is available at our [country report](#).

Pray that the truth will prevail in the case against these Christian witnesses, enabling them to be released from police custody and freely resume their ministry activities. May these faithful servants of Jesus not grow despondent as a result of the hostility they're facing, but rather may they depend more fervently on His strength and help during this time of trial. Ask the Lord to provide each of them ongoing peace, comfort and encouragement through the abiding presence of His Holy Spirit. In spite of the spiritual oppression, pray that churches throughout India will continue to spread the "Good News" of the Gospel to children and their families.

PAKISTAN: Youth Forcibly Converted by Employer and Held Against His Will

Sources: Morning Star News, Zenit

The Muslim owner of a liquified petroleum gas outlet has been accused of forcibly converting a 17-year-old Christian employee and then holding him against his will, according to the youth's parents. Samssoon Javed was hired in July to work at a business owned by Umar Manzoor in the Sheikhpura District of Punjab. Soon after, Samssoon's family began noticing changes in the Christian teen's behaviour.

In September, when Samssoon did not return home from work one day, his mother Samina went to the gas station to inquire about her son. She was told that Samssoon had become a Muslim and no longer wanted to live with his family. Samina and her husband were not allowed to see their son at the time.

A few days later, when Samina managed to meet with the young man, she reported that he looked "terrorized," avoided eye contact, and stated that Umar would fire him or worse if it was discovered that he had met with his

mother. "I'm certain that Samssoon is being held...against his will," adds Samina. "I have seen fear in his eyes.... I know that he'll expose the truth once he's out of [his employer's] custody." The family has approached Christian leaders for support and assistance. A major concern is that Samssoon could disappear or be harmed if the owner feels pressured.

Attempts to forcibly convert Christian men or boys to Islam are relatively rare in Pakistan. Instead, young women and girls are frequently targeted by Muslim militants, who force their victims to convert and then marry their kidnappers. For reports addressing other incidents of forced conversions in Pakistan, go to our [country profile](#).



Samssoon Javed
Photo: Morning Star News

As Samssoon and his family deal with this terrible situation, pray that they will experience God's peace, strength and divine intervention. All the while, may this young man not only experience the Lord's divine protection during captivity, but also His comforting presence, love and guidance – making it possible for him to return home unharmed and without the risk of any potential repercussions. Despite encountering pressure and the threat of violence from those around them, pray that our vulnerable Christian brothers and sisters in Pakistan will remain steadfast in their faith and continue to sense the Lord's unfailing love for them.

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