



***"For the eyes of the Lord run to  
and fro throughout the whole earth,  
to give strong support to those whose  
heart is blameless toward Him...."***

~ 2 Chronicles 16:9 ESV

## **NIGERIA: Three Slain During Prayer Vigil Attack**

Sources: Morning Star News, Punch, Leadership, Mission Network News, BBC

Three Christians were killed and 15 others kidnapped when gunmen raided a night prayer vigil on May 23rd. At least 10 attackers invaded the gathering in the community of Ori-Oke Ajaiye, located on the outskirts of Ikiran in Nigeria's western state of Kwara. The violent assault sparked widespread terror throughout the region, causing villagers to flee for safety.

State police officers have since been dispatched to the area and are now conducting a coordinated rescue mission. The commissioner of police described the attack as "barbaric, callous and unacceptable," assuring affected families that the authorities are fully committed to rescuing the captives and bringing those responsible to justice.



Photo: Unsplash / Gracious Adebayo

At last report, the identities of the perpetrators remain unknown. However, similar attacks throughout Nigeria have generally been attributed to militant Islamic members of the nomadic Fulani herdsman tribe, as well as ISIS-affiliated terrorist groups such as ISWAP and Boko Haram.

Recently, the United States has joined Nigeria's government in conducting raids on known ISIS groups. During the weekend of May 16th to 17th, a joint strike in Borno State resulted in the death of prominent ISIS leader Abu-Bilal al-Minuki, along with several other leading militants. It is hoped that these efforts will help curb the ongoing violence in this troubled West African nation. To review other reports concerning the suffering of our Christian brothers and sisters in Nigeria, go to our [country profile](#).

- ***Pray for the safe and timely rescue of the 15 believers who were taken captive during this most recent attack.***
- ***Ask the Lord to restrain the violence, protecting Nigeria's believers from militants who seek to harm them in an attempt to establish an Islamic state.***
- ***In addition to experiencing God's perfect peace – which surpasses all understanding – may all who are suffering in the aftermath of this incident receive His healing, comfort and renewed strength. (This includes those whose loved ones were either abducted or slain, as well as the***

*assaulted victims in need of recovery from physical injury and/or emotional trauma.)*

- *Prayerfully remember all of our Christian brothers and sisters in Nigeria, asking the Lord to provide them ongoing practical help, spiritual encouragement and enduring hope, so they can continue brightly shining His light in a world that desperately needs His salvation.*

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## INDIA: Increased Harassment Since New Anti-Conversion Laws

Sources: Christian Daily, UCA News

On the morning of May 10th, members of a Hindu nationalist organization travelled to disrupt several worship services in the city of Dhamtari, Chhattisgarh, where they verbally confronted the churches' pastors and demanded to see their identification papers. In some cases, police were also present to monitor the situation.

The aggressors, who are members of the Hindu Jagran Manch organization, accused the congregations of holding "healing meetings" as a cover-up for conversion activities. They called on authorities to strictly enforce the state's new law against forcible conversions, which came into effect in early April. ([See here](#) for more details.)



Photo: VOMC

Anti-conversion legislation in India has commonly been used to intimidate and harass Christians across the country. In a separate incident within the same state, a Christian family in the village of Madgaon was violently attacked on May 9th by two men who confronted the believers while they were harvesting mangoes. As a result of the confrontation, the five family members sustained serious injuries and required medical treatment at a local hospital.

The targeted believers were told by their attackers that they had no right to live in the village due to their conversions to Christianity. Prior to this, the Christians regularly encountered various forms of intimidation and threat over recent months, including demands that they renounce their faith or face expulsion.

Pastor Simon Digbal Tandi from the Progressive Christian Alliance has noted a significant increase in attacks against fellow followers of Christ in Chhattisgarh since the new law was enacted. "Almost every other day, we hear [of] such incidents in the state, raising concern for our people living in the villages," he reported. These escalating attacks are occurring in a state that already ranks second in the country for violence against Christians. To access additional reports addressing religious persecution in India, visit our [country profile](#).

- *Prayerfully lift up the injured family in Madgaon, asking the Lord to minister needed healing, comfort and wisdom as they now consider their next steps.*
- *In fact, may God's loving guidance, protection and peace preside over all Christians throughout Chhattisgarh whose lives are being affected by the increased opposition.*
- *Pray that India's governing leaders would acquire a better understanding of the many challenges faced by religious minorities and, therefore, be moved to establish policies that will support the freedoms and rights of all citizens.*

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**REPORT UPDATE**

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## IRAN: Nine-Year Sentence for Christian Convert

Sources: Article18, HRANA

In January 2025, Ghazal Marzban was arrested and sentenced to six months' imprisonment and 74 lashes on charges of "propaganda against the regime" and for appearing in public without a hijab. Thankfully, the Christian woman was released after serving two months of her previously ordered sentence.

A year later, Ghazal was unexpectedly arrested again. ([Read more.](#)) During this most recent detention, her Bible and other Christian literature were confiscated. Although she insists that these materials were meant for her own personal use, the Ministry of Intelligence claimed that they had been intended for evangelistic purposes. It was recently reported that Ghazal has now been sentenced to nine years and eight months in prison on charges that include "propaganda against the state."



Ghazal Marzban

Photo: Article18

Following her conversion to Christianity, the law graduate was prevented from taking the bar examination. In addition, her husband, who is also a Christian convert, has been unable to access needed medication for Parkinson's disease. The withholding of his medical treatment appears to be linked to the couple's Christian faith. In light of his health concern, Ghazal's imprisonment has been referred to as "a sentence for both of them."

- ***Pray that Ghazal will remain deeply aware of God's abiding presence, divine protection and sustaining grace as she awaits with renewed hope for His mighty intervention to take place once again in her legal case.***
- ***In the interim, please also intercede on behalf of her husband, asking the Lord to provide him urgently needed medical help, improved physical health and well-being, along with further encouragement – enabling him to not only survive these challenging circumstances but also thrive in the midst of them.***
- ***Continue to prayerfully remember the dozens of other believers who, like Ghazal, are presently imprisoned in Iran because of their faith in Christ, asking Him to also greatly encourage their hearts, strengthen their faith, and surround them with His peace.***

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