



Persecution & Prayer Alert

The Voice of the Martyrs Canada
www.vomcanada.com

Thursday, April 1, 2021

"If anyone would come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it."

~ Matthew 16:24-25 ESV

INDONESIA: Palm Sunday Suicide Bombing

Sources: Release International, Jakarta Post, CTV

The Sacred Heart of Jesus Cathedral in Makassar, Sulawesi, had just finished its Palm Sunday Mass on March 29th, and were in the midst of preparations for a second service, when the air was suddenly filled with the sound of an explosion. A newly married couple belonging to the ISIS-affiliated group, Jamaah Ansharut Daulah, had detonated explosives, killing themselves and wounding at least 20 other people.

The pair had approached the church on a motorcycle when they were stopped at the gates by security guards. When it became evident that they would not be able to get closer to the church, they detonated a pressure-cooker bomb, killing themselves and injuring the guards and worshippers who were leaving or entering the building. If they had been able to get into the cathedral, the effects of the blast would have been far greater.

As of Monday, it was reported that about 15 people had been hospitalized, two of whom were admitted to an intensive care unit for their burns. The male bomber had allegedly left a note saying that he was prepared to die as a martyr. He and his wife belonged to a militant Islamic study group attended by nine others, who have since been arrested for their role in the attack.

Times of Christian celebration, such as Easter and Christmas, have been frequently chosen by terrorists for attacks against Christians around the globe. In 2019, the attention of the world turned to Sri Lanka after another militant Islamist group targeted three churches, resulting in the loss of more than 250 lives (see www.vomcanada.com/lk-2019-04-25.htm). Three years prior to that, an attack during an outdoor Easter gathering in Lahore, Pakistan, left almost 70 people dead (www.vomcanada.com/pk-2016-03-31.htm).

Pray for God's peace and protection to reign throughout this Easter season as Christians celebrate the hope and new spiritual birth that has been made available through the death and resurrection of Christ, especially in areas of the world where there is hostility towards the Gospel. May those facing hardships as they follow Him continue to do so courageously and faithfully, knowing that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. More specifically, please pray for the believers in Indonesia who have been wounded and traumatized by this recent attack, asking the Lord to minister needed healing and comfort as they recover.

INDIA: Pastor's Wife Rescued from Forced Prostitution

Source: PAOC Contacts

Pastor Ramdrash and his wife Sunita have been ministering in a small church since 2001. Over the years, they've endured frequent threats from members of the surrounding community. On February 21st, Sunita was approached by someone in the village who asked if she would come pray for someone who had allegedly been ill. She innocently went with the villager, and then all of a sudden disappeared.

When his wife did not return, Pastor Ramdrash went searching for her but was unsuccessful. He approached the police but did not receive any help initially. Later on, in-country ministry partners were able to assist him in filing a police report.

Eventually, investigating officials discovered that Sunita's abductors made arrangements for human traffickers to purchase her; the traffickers then sold her to a brothel in the state of Rajasthan, which is located over 1,400 kilometres away. Thankfully, through the continued prayers of concerned believers, police were finally able to rescue Sunita about a month after she was initially abducted.

The captors have since been arrested, and Sunita is now staying with her husband and children in a safehouse. While grateful to be rescued and reunited with her family, this pastor's wife is presently in need of healing after the trauma she experienced.

Greg Musselman interviewed Emma Dipper, the founding Director of Gender and Religious Freedom and a credible ministry partner with The Voice of the Martyrs Canada, to discuss Sunita's situation. Go to www.vomcanada.com/sunita to view this timely report.

Praise God that this Christian woman has been safely rescued and reunited with her family. Please pray for Sunita's complete recovery as she now heals from the aftermath and trauma of the horrific ordeal. Also remember to prayerfully uphold her husband, Pastor Ramdrash, and their children, as they come to grips with what has happened. May this ministering family find the comfort and assistance that they themselves now need from the Lord and His people, providing them the hope, courage and protection necessary to continue demonstrating the love of our Lord Jesus to others -- including their persecutors.

EGYPT: Physically Disabled Christian Convert Beaten

Source: Middle East Concern

On March 17th, Brother "P" was lured from his house by neighbours and beaten because he had converted to Christianity. Due to a physical disability, he was unable to escape from his attackers, so fellow Christians came to his aid. As a result of their intervention, they too were assaulted by the perpetrators.

During the attack, the convert's house and belongings were damaged. Although the assaulted victim reported the incident to police, rather than pursuing those who were responsible, the authorities detained him. Thankfully, lawyers were able to determine the location of his detainment and secure his release. For additional information on the challenges facing Christians in Egypt, go to www.vomcanada.com/egypt.htm.

Pray for the physical and emotional recovery of Brother "P," as well as those who kindly assisted him during the attack. May God's provision be extended to this disabled Christian convert, so he will have the finances required to restore all that was damaged by the opposing neighbours. Ask the Lord to also give him and his lawyers wisdom as they deliberate this case, and direction as to whether they should continue with legal proceedings. Either way, may those responsible for the attack ultimately experience God's conviction for their wrongdoings and turn to Him in faith by acknowledging His Son, Jesus Christ, as their personal Saviour.

UPCOMING VIRTUAL EVENT Imprisoned for Christ: April 24, 2021

Don't miss this opportunity to meet two Christian workers who were previously imprisoned for their faith! The Voice of the Martyrs Canada will be hosting a free virtual event on April 24th featuring Pastor Andrew Brunson and mission evangelist Dan Baumann.

While sharing God's love in two different persecuted nations, each of these workers were arrested, interrogated and imprisoned. Struggling to find God's purpose in their suffering, they ultimately recognized His faithfulness and love amid desperate circumstances. Many of our readers remember praying for Pastor Brunson after his arrest in 2016 until his release in 2018.

In addition to hearing their testimonies, you will be able to enjoy uplifting worship music from Dove Award-winning artist Natalie Grant. To learn more about this virtual event, go to:

www.vomcanada.com/ifcevent.htm.

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