



Persecution & Prayer Alert

The Voice of the Martyrs Canada
www.vomcanada.com

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"Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on My account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

~ Matthew 5:11-12 ESV

INDIA: Pastor Killed for Sharing Faith

Sources: Morning Star News, AsiaNews, UCA News, International Christian Concern

In the village of Sangoi, which is located in northern India, Pastor Vinod Kumar had been sharing his faith for over two months with a man who was recently released from prison on bail. The Hindu man, Sonu Kashyap, had even been to the pastor's home for prayer. However, Sonu had rejected any call to faith in Christ.

On the evening of June 30th, Pastor Vinod had just finished leading an online prayer meeting when he received a phone call from Sonu's brother, saying that a villager was sick and in need of prayer. As Pastor Vinod was leaving the village on his motorbike, Sonu was waiting to ambush him. The former prisoner then struck the pastor from behind with a wooden beam, knocking him to the ground. Sonu then repeatedly struck Pastor Vinod to the point of death.

Immediately after the attack, a group of villagers captured Sonu, who was still holding the beam in his hand. Without intervention from the police, the perpetrator could have been killed by the mob of villagers. Police have listed the motive for the murder as "trivial animosity," but the pastor's wife, Sunita, is convinced that the attack was religious in nature. "I do not know what came upon [Sonu] that he took such a drastic step of killing Vinod so brutally," she says. However, Sunita and several others believe that Pastor Vinod was killed for sharing his faith with the man. Police have also charged Sonu's father and brother for their part in the murder.

Pastor Vinod is survived by his wife and 11-year-old daughter. Well respected by the community, the representing village chief spoke fondly of the dedicated pastor. "He has a good

testimony and name here," the chief states. As a registered medical practitioner, Pastor Vinod was referred to as "Doctor," for he faithfully served members of the village by also ministering to their physical needs.

Sunita is determined to continue the ministry work of her husband, "I have resolved to carry on the work my husband was doing, and I want to live his dream out," she adds. "Vinod became a martyr for his faith, and I too will die for my faith." Further information on the persecution of Christians in India is available at www.vomcanada.com/india.htm.

Please lift up Sunita and her daughter before our Almighty God, praying that they will receive greatly needed comfort, encouragement and strength. Praise Him for Pastor Vinod's dedicated life and ministry which have clearly provided a wonderful testimony to the villagers. May his ministry work, which Sunita plans to faithfully continue, yield much good fruit for the furtherance of God's Kingdom. Also intercede for the salvation of the perpetrator, Sonu, and his accomplices, that they too will heed the words of the Gospel, repent of their sins, and fully surrender their lives to Christ.

ALGERIA: Christian Sentenced for Allegedly Accepting Donations

Source: Morning Star News

"Ahmed" (not his real name due to security concerns) knows well the cost of following Christ. When the Algerian man became a Christian in April 2013, his wife began seeing positive changes in his life. As a result, three months later, she also professed her faith in Christ.

As is common, after the couple were baptized in 2015, the persecution they experienced escalated. Family members not only seized property from them, including Ahmed's poultry business, but they also taunted him with insults and death threats.

Two years later, when his wife's family found out about the conversion, they too confronted the couple. In fear, Ahmed's wife denied becoming a Christian. Together with her parents, she accused Ahmed of attacking Islam and desecrating verses of the Quran. Eventually, while under pressure from her family, she divorced Ahmed and took their two daughters with her, preventing him from seeing them again.

Of all the ordeals Ahmed has experienced, his wife's rejection hit him the hardest. Yet, despite the pain, he refused to turn away from his Christian faith. In subsequent years, the Christian convert has encountered opposition from many directions. On April 17th, 2021, he was detained by Algerian police for questioning and told that there were multiple allegations against him relating to his Christian faith. Ahmed was further accused of threatening his ex-wife and daughters. Additionally, he was charged for allegedly accepting donations to spread Christianity, as well as printing and distributing Christian literature and Bibles. He denies all charges against him.

On July 8th, a judge sentenced him to six months in prison, along with a fine of 100,000 dinars (\$926 CAD). The charges are based on a law in Algeria which criminalizes any activity that aims

to "undermine the faith of a Muslim." Ahmed intends to appeal the court's decision. For more information on the challenges facing Christians in Algeria, or to review previously posted reports, go to www.vomcanada.com/algeria.htm.

Remember Ahmed in your prayers as he faces these new challenges, along with the possibility of imprisonment. May God abundantly bless this long-suffering believer for his unshakeable faith, providing him all that he needs to overcome the multiple onslaughts of the enemy. Pray that his life will serve as a brightly shining light to all who have been opposing him, so they will see their own need for the Lord's miraculous rescue spiritually and eternally. Ask the Lord to work mightily in their hearts, making it possible for Christ-honouring relationships to be established with his estranged family members and granting him rightful access to his daughters.

PRAISE REPORT

PAKISTAN: Acquitted Couple Finally Released!

Source: Church in Chains

In Pakistan, many Christians have been falsely accused of blasphemy, resulting in years of imprisonment. If released, their lives are frequently in greater danger outside of prison due to the threat of mob violence -- posing them to conditions that are far more serious than those faced while in prison. To learn more about what life is like for Christians in Pakistan, and to read about the situations they have encountered, go to www.vomcanada.com/pakistan.htm.

The case of Asia Bibi made international headlines when years of prayers were answered with her acquittal in October 2018. However, threats of violence kept her locked away for her own safety until plans were made to have her secretly flown to Canada six months later. Asia was not alone in facing the real possibility of death after being released from prison. Such cases usually require the discrete relocation of released believers and their families to a safe undisclosed location for their protection.

In June, we were thankful to report that Shafqat Emmanuel and his wife Shagufta Kausar were finally acquitted on June 3rd, after waiting seven years on death row. We praise the Lord that, according to the latest report, they have since been released from prison and are now residing in a safe location with their children.

This Christian couple had been arrested in 2013, after a Muslim cleric claimed to have received a blasphemous text message from Shagufta's phone. Despite multiple irregularities proving their innocence, the two were sentenced to death for blasphemy. After years of legal appeals and delays, the verdict was finally overturned.

Praise God that Shafqat and Shagufta have been joyfully reunited with their children, and that they are now all residing together in a safe location. Pray that this Christian family will continue to be protected from vigilante violence. Considering the lengthy ordeal and

separation they have all endured throughout the imprisonment, ask God to administer greatly needed healing and restoration in every area of their lives. Also prayerfully remember the many other Christians who remain incarcerated in Pakistan because of the false accusations of blasphemy against them. May they too experience the grace and strength of the Lord as they anticipate His promised deliverance and restoration in their own lives.

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