



## Persecution & Prayer Alert

The Voice of the Martyrs Canada  
www.vomcanada.com

Thursday, October 28, 2021

*"Truly, I say to you, as you did  
it to one of the least of these  
My brothers, you did it to Me."  
~ Matthew 25:40 ESV*

---

### **INDIA: Pastor Arrested After Large Protest**

Sources: NDTV, India Today, The Indian Express, New Indian Express, Church in Chains

A protest led by Hindu militants against alleged religious conversions resulted in a standoff with police and charges against a Christian pastor. On Sunday, October 17th, activists belonging to two Hindu nationalist organizations, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad and the Bajrang Dal, forced their way into a small church in Hubballi, a city located in the southern Indian state of Karnataka. A video of the incident shows dozens of protesters sitting inside the Bairidevarkoppa Church singing Hindu devotional songs.

As the protest grew, eventually a local BJP politician coordinated a demonstration blocking a highway, demanding the arrest of Pastor Somu Avaradhi. Local media reported major traffic disruptions as a result. Ultimately, charges were laid against Pastor Somu for "deliberate and malicious acts intended to outrage religious feelings." Three other Christians were also questioned and released.

Allegedly, a man known as Vishvanath claimed that he was taken to the church and coerced to convert to Christianity. He further claimed that, over the next three months, he was "abused" by the pastor for wearing vermilion, a scarlet powder commonly used in Hindu ceremonies. Pastor Somu insists that Vishvanath had converted of his own free will.

Hindu nationalist groups have consistently gained power and influence throughout India, often in association with the nationalist BJP political party. Under BJP control, the state of Karnataka recently ordered that an investigation be conducted on all churches, ministers and missionaries. This study comes in preparation for proposals to enact anti-conversion laws in the state, similar to those found in several other Indian states. Some members of a legislative committee have even recommended withdrawing all government benefits to those who convert from Hinduism to

Christianity. Go to [www.vomcanada.com/in-videos/video/in-eliminate-christianity.html](http://www.vomcanada.com/in-videos/video/in-eliminate-christianity.html) for a video interview with Nitin Sardar of Dindandhu Ministries, who discusses the ways in which anti-conversion laws are being used to exploit Christians in India.

*Pray for wisdom on behalf of the members of this church, as well as other believers who are encountering similar incidents throughout Karnataka, as they determine the best way to carry out their ministry activities in the face of growing hostility. Pray that the truth will prevail in the case against Pastor Somu, and that the charges against him will be dropped. May God radically change the hearts of those who oppose the Gospel in India, leading them to turn in faith to Christ through the ministry of the Holy Spirit by revealing the wonderful love and eternal hope that can only be found in Him.*

### **CHINA: Escalating Attacks on Christian Education**

Sources: AsiaNews, Release International, International Christian Concern, China Christian Daily

For years, Christian parents in China have encountered challenges due to the indoctrination imposed on their families by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), as well as difficulties when trying to provide Biblical training to their children. Churches frequently face punishment for allowing children to attend worship services, and several youth Bible camps have been raided by authorities.

On September 4th, a Christian music high school was raided and charges of "enticing minors to religion" were laid against the school (see [www.vomcanada.com/cn-2021-09-16.htm](http://www.vomcanada.com/cn-2021-09-16.htm)). During the incident, all staff and students were arrested. Although the students and most of the faculty were later released, the principal of the school remained detained.

The government's efforts to eliminate Christian education continued when the Chinese branch of the Abeka Academy in Suzhou was raided on October 12th. Affiliated with the Pensacola Christian College in the United States, the Abeka Academy provides home schooling courses around the world. The program had been gaining popularity in China, causing the authorities to claim it was in violation of the Chinese constitution. Five staff members were arrested in the raid, including the Chinese director, Wang Jian.

The next day, a Christian school in Zhenjiang was also raided. Officers took ten children into custody, along with three teachers and three parents. The pupils were quickly released; however, at last report, the others were still detained.

New restrictions for religious institutions in the country were issued on September 1st, outlining new principles and responsibilities for organizations offering religious education. It is possible that this new crackdown is a response to those measures. To learn more about the persecution facing Christians in China, go to [www.vomcanada.com/china.htm](http://www.vomcanada.com/china.htm).

*Please prayerfully uphold the members of these churches in China, especially those who are parents seeking to raise their children in the ways of the Lord (Deuteronomy 6:7). Also remember the mentioned believers who have been detained, praying that they will be freed and*

*not subjected to any fines nor prison sentences. Pray that the educators of the Christian schools still operating in the country will be given wisdom and encouragement as they endeavour to honour God by encouraging children in the surrounding communities, and their families, to develop a deep love for Jesus amid a hostile environment.*

### **INDIA: Violent Attack During Worship Service**

Sources: Indian Express, Hindustan Times

A frenzied mob of more than 200 people burst into a worship service on Sunday, October 3rd, and began beating Christians, vandalizing the building, and looting items belonging to the church. The violent incident happened in Roorkee, a city located in the northern Indian state of Uttarakhand.

Two women sustained injuries in the attack, one of whom was taken to hospital in critical condition. The attackers alleged that the Christians were involved in religious conversion activities. According to Pastor Priyo Sadhna Porter, many of those involved in the violence were known members of Bajrang Dal, a militant Hindu nationalist youth organization. Some of the militants had previously demanded that the church be shut down. When approached about the attack, a local spokesperson of the BJP political party condemned the incident but then later justified the mob's actions by saying that "residents of the locality have been cautioning against religious conversions."

Based on a complaint from the pastor, a police report has been filed against some of the leaders of the militant organizations, as well as 200 individuals whose names were not publicized. To learn more about the persecution of Christians in India, go to [www.vomcanada.com/india.htm](http://www.vomcanada.com/india.htm).

*Lift up to the Lord in prayer those who were wounded in this additional recent attack, asking Him to fully heal them of their injuries. Also prayerfully intercede for the ongoing ministry of this church as it continues to serve God and others in the midst of strong opposition. May He fill these believers with strength and courage as they remain beacons of the light and love of Christ among their opposing community. Pray that those responsible for this attack will be brought to justice and, of even greater importance, that they will realize the error of their ways, repent and accept Jesus as their personal Saviour and Lord.*

---

The "Persecution & Prayer Alert" is a ministry of:  
The Voice of the Martyrs Canada, P.O. Box 608, Streetsville, Ontario, L5M 2C1  
Tel. (905) 670-9721 Website: [www.vomcanada.com](http://www.vomcanada.com)