



Voice of the
Martyrs

PERSECUTION
& PRAYER
ALERT

Persecution & Prayer Alert

Voice of the Martyrs Canada
www.vomcanada.com

Thursday, July 11, 2024

*"Once we serve God, surely we
must go the way of the cross.
So I will not quarrel against the
Lord for what has happened."*

~ Pastor Quang
A church leader in Vietnam

LAOS: Six Christians Arrested by Village Chief

Sources: Human Rights Watcher for Lao Religious Freedom, International Christian Concern

On June 22nd, believers from the village of Tahae gathered at the home of Pastor Mum for a time of prayer in preparation for their Sunday worship service the next day. While the followers of Jesus were praying, the village chief – along with four other community officials – suddenly entered the home before arresting the pastor and five believers because of their Christian faith.

Those arrested along with Pastor Mum have been identified as two men named Liang and Pa, and three women named Laen, Lan and Khoon. At last report, these Christians were imprisoned in the Xaibouathong district prison.

Pastor Mum came to faith in Christ during 2019 and, since then, Christians have gathered freely in his home for prayer and worship. Until recent months, they were able to meet without interference from village officials, and the number of believers gathering on a regular basis had grown to more than 40. However, since the election of the new village chief (whose name is Lang) took place this past May, a crackdown on Christian belief and practices was instituted in the area.

As a Communist country with close ties to Vietnam and China, the Laotian government endeavours to exercise control over all churches within the nation. Further opposition against Christianity arises because of disapproving Buddhist influences throughout society. To learn more about Christian persecution in Laos, go to www.vomcanada.com/laos.htm.

Pray for the recently arrested church members, as well as the other Christians in this village who are now experiencing opposition from local leaders because of their faith in Jesus. May each one of these Christian brothers and sisters look to Christ as their ultimate source of unwavering hope, strength and perseverance. In addition, pray that Pastor Mum and the five other detained believers will soon be released from custody without any further repercussions from the authorities.

PAKISTAN: Blasphemy Conviction for Online Posts

Sources: Morning Star News, International Christian Concern, The Christian Post, ABC News

In August 2023, the Christian colony of Jaranwala was filled with violence after allegations of blasphemy were made against two brothers. During the rampage, as many as 400 homes and 26 church buildings were damaged or destroyed. For more details, and to view video footage of the attacks, see www.vomcanada.com/pk-2023-08-24.htm.

In the aftermath of the violence, a 28-year-old Christian man, named Ehsaan "Shan" Masih, allegedly shared content on his TikTok account in support of the accused Christian brothers. Additionally, claims were made that his posts included defaced pages of the Quran. As a result, Shan was arrested and charged with blasphemy.

On June 29th of this year, an anti-terrorism court in Pakistan convicted the young man of blasphemy. Even though Pakistani authorities have never yet carried out a death sentence for blasphemy, by default, this crime is punishable by death. Shan categorically denies creating or posting any blasphemous content on social media, and therefore intends to appeal the verdict. On July 2nd, a rally was held in Karachi by supporters of the convicted Christian in protest of the sentence against him.

Remember to uphold Shan in your prayers as he faces the possibility of spending numerous years in prison – along with the risk of the death penalty – asking that this young man will receive greatly needed peace, comfort and assurance through the presence of God's Holy Spirit. May justice and mercy prevail in this believer's case, allowing him to be freed of all charges. Also, please continue to pray for the Lord's sustaining grace and provision on behalf of the many other followers of Jesus in Pakistan who are presently imprisoned or facing blasphemy charges, often for no valid reason.

VIETNAM: Location of 11 Christian Prisoners Unknown

Sources: International Christian Concern, The Christian Post

Human rights organizations around the world are raising concerns about the fate of 11 Christian prisoners in Vietnam. The Christian men were all sentenced to prison at different times between 2011 and 2016. It has recently come to light that their whereabouts remain a mystery, and that the believers who should have completed their sentences by now were not yet released to return home.

Among the 11 missing prisoners, six are members of the Degar Protestant Church – a religious movement that does not have government approval. The Degar people (also known as the Montagnards, an indigenous tribal group) are subjected to both ethnic and religious discrimination.

The six Christians were sentenced for a variety of charges, which ranged from "undermining national unity policy" to cutting down trees without permission. The remaining five men are members of the Ha Mon Catholic Church – another religious group that operates without official approval from the government. These church members were also accused of "undermining national unity policy."

In addition to raising awareness of the missing men, the US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) has published reports describing the alleged torture and mistreatment of four other imprisoned Christians. In the most recent report, USCIRF warns of persistent religious freedom violations being committed by the authorities in Vietnam, particularly against ethno-religious minorities. For more information concerning our persecuted Christian family in this Southeast Asian country, go to www.vomcanada.com/vietnam.htm.

As the families of the missing prisoners anxiously await news about their loved ones, please join with them in prayer for the safe return of these 11 men. May information regarding the whereabouts and well-being of each one soon come to light. Also intercede for the many other Christians throughout Vietnam who are encountering opposition for their faith in Christ, asking our Heavenly Father to sustain them daily with His protection, strength and courage.

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