



Voice of the
Martyrs

PERSECUTION
& PRAYER
ALERT

Persecution & Prayer Alert

Voice of the Martyrs Canada
www.vomcanada.com

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"When Christ calls a man, He bids him come and die." "But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

~ Dietrich Bonhoeffer; 1 Corinthians 15:57 ESV

VIETNAM: New Believer Slain by Unknown Assailants

Source: VOM Australia

In August of this year, a widower and father of two referred to as "Brother Man" came to faith in Christ. When news of the believer's conversion became known, he began to encounter intense pressure from local authorities.

In the first incident, Brother Man was ordered to leave his home. When he refused to do so, the local authorities then confiscated his land and forbade him from contacting any other Christians. Despite the opposition, the follower of Jesus remained firm in his newfound faith.

On September 24th, Brother Man had been home alone while the rest of his household was out working. When his family members returned home later that day, they found the slain believer's body on the floor. It was also discovered that the deceased Christian man had a bruise on the back of his neck.

An in-country ministry partner who works closely with Voice of the Martyrs Australia has asked for prayer on behalf of Brother Man's grieving family members during this difficult time. One of the representatives from the Australian office reported that needed financial assistance has been provided to the family. For further reports addressing the suffering of Christians in this Southeast Asian nation, including videotaped segments, go to www.vomcanada.com/vietnam.htm.

Prayerfully remember Brother Man's loved ones as they grieve their sudden loss. May God's loving presence, peace and comfort be tangibly experienced by this mourning family, as well as by fellow Christians in their community and other areas of Vietnam. Ask the Lord to provide these persecuted believers with divine wisdom and guidance as they deal with the

oppressive restrictions being imposed on them from all levels of government. Pray that the assailants responsible for this attack would be revealed and thus duly held accountable; and that, despite the opposition towards Christianity, the message of God's saving grace will continue to spread powerfully throughout the nation.

INDIA: Pastor Sentenced for Alleged Forced Conversions

Sources: International Christian Concern, ECSPE

A church leader in the Indian state of Madhya Pradesh has been convicted on false charges of forcing Hindus to convert to Christianity. On September 25th, a court in Jhabua sentenced Pastor Vikas Nimach to five years in prison and ordered him to pay a fine of over \$1,600 CAD. His legal team intends to appeal the recent verdict, claiming that the trial lawyer mishandled the proceedings.

The convicted pastor was arrested in December 2021, along with five other believers. The complainants claimed that these Christians had allegedly bribed Hindus to come to their church with promises to provide each of these congregants approximately \$16 CAD per month, a motorbike, plus free medical treatment and education for their families. While the other five Christians were granted bail, Pastor Vikas spent nine months in jail before obtaining bail in September 2022.

Madhya Pradesh is one of the 12 Indian states that have implemented anti-conversion legislation. These laws are frequently misused by individuals with personal vendettas, as well as by those seeking to stoke religious divisions. For more details on the persecution facing Christians in India, go to www.vomcanada.com/india.htm.

Please uphold Pastor Vikas in your prayers as he begins to serve his prison sentence, asking our Heavenly Father to keep this church leader strong in his faith and provide for all of his physical, spiritual and emotional needs. In addition, pray that Pastor Vikas' appeal hearing will be successful, enabling him to soon be set free. Continue to remember the numerous other followers of Jesus throughout this nation who are facing similar situations, praying that they too will receive ongoing encouragement, strength and protection. Despite the many challenges being encountered by these believers, may they faithfully proclaim the message of God's free gift of salvation throughout India so that multitudes more will receive opportunities to come to faith in Christ.

REPORT UPDATE

PAKISTAN: Zafar Bhatti's Ongoing Struggle for Justice

Sources: British Asian Christian Association, Pakistan Christian Post, Church in Chains

Zafar Bhatti is listed as Pakistan's longest-serving blasphemy prisoner. Since the day of his arrest on July 12th, 2012, the Christian man has remained in prison. During harsh police interrogation,

Zafar was forced to confess to blasphemy. He has since recanted the previously made statement, asserting that it was spoken while under duress. During his time in prison, the believer has also encountered various health concerns. (For previously published reports on Zafar's case, see www.vomcanada.com/tagged-items/zafar-bhatti.htm.)

Over the years, numerous appeals and petitions have been filed in attempts to challenge Zafar's conviction. Due to the dedicated efforts of those advocating on his behalf, the courts have scheduled ten hearings since May of this year. However, the original complainant, Ibrar Ahmad Khan, has continued to follow the case, filing applications to submit additional alleged evidence against the accused Christian man. Thankfully, the judge has rejected Ibrar's requests, emphasizing that all evidence should have been recorded earlier. Although the most recent hearing was scheduled for September 23rd, it has since been postponed.

Amid concerns for the imprisoned believer's physical condition, health issues have also been mounting for his wife, Nawab Bibi. The 76-year-old Christian woman has become very weak and suffers with failing eyesight. Despite these health challenges, Nawab continues to visit her husband in prison every month. The British Asian Christian Association, which has been supplying support and daily provisions for the elderly couple, is presently seeking to provide the financial means for Nawab to undergo cataract surgery.

In hopes of this long-suffering Christian brother's soon release from prison, pray that any further delays to the hearings of his case will be rejected. Throughout the process, ask the Lord to work within the hearts of the court officials, guiding them to rule in Zafar's favour. With thankfulness for God's faithful provision throughout this lengthy ordeal, please pray that He will continue to meet the ongoing needs of this imprisoned believer and his wife – ultimately providing this couple divine healing and restoration.

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