



Voice^{of the}
Martyrs

PERSECUTION
& PRAYER
A ALERT

Persecution & Prayer Alert

Voice of the Martyrs Canada
www.vomcanada.com

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*"Arise, O Lord; O God,
lift up Your hand;
forget not the afflicted."
~ Psalm 10:12 ESV*

NIGERIA: More Than 100 Christians Killed in Recent Attacks

Sources: Morning Star News, International Christian Concern, Vanguard, ECSPE, Channels TV

In central Nigeria, Plateau State has been a hotspot for significant violence from militant groups during recent years. Over the past month, as many as 130 Christians have died in various attacks within the state. In each case, the violence has been attributed to groups of Fulani militants.

On the night of March 23rd, three Christian men were ambushed and killed while travelling home from Kwall in Bassa County. Less than a day later, another Christian man, Dumba Yohanna, was targeted and brutally killed in the community of Nzharuvo, while an additional targeted believer from the same area narrowly escaped the attack. Then, on April 2nd, yet another Christian from Nzharuvo, Dewi Terry Nah, was tragically stabbed to death by militants.

In a separate series of attacks described by the state governor as "genocide," more than 60 Christians were killed in seven communities of Bokkos County on April 2nd and 3rd. In the village of Hurti, assailants killed over 40 people and destroyed almost 400 homes. More than 1,000 surviving villagers were displaced after fleeing from the terror and destruction. In the village of Ruwi, 11 Christians were killed while attending the wake of a deceased community member. By the following morning, another ten believers were found dead in the village.

In Bassa County, a repeat of multiple attacks led to more casualties. Three Christians from Hwrra village were attacked by militant Fulani herdsmen on April 7th. On the evening of Palm Sunday, April 13th, attackers raided the hamlet of Zike. Witnesses reported hearing sounds of sporadic gunfire from multiple locations and noted that, by morning, the bodies of at least 49 believers were found.

Attacks by gangs of Fulani herdsmen have continued to escalate in Nigeria, and Christians are frequently targeted due to the militant Islamic beliefs held by many of the aggressors. While some blame the intensifying violence on the ongoing struggle for resources between local farmers and migrant herders, the state governor, Caleb Muftwang, believes that there is more behind the attacks. Speaking to the media, the governor stated: "I can tell you in all honesty that I cannot find any explanation other than genocide sponsored by terrorists. The question is, who are the persons behind the organizers of this terrorism?" To access more information about the violent persecution of Nigerian followers of Jesus, including informative video interviews, go to www.vomcanada.com/nigeria.htm.

- *Prayerfully remember the families, friends and community members of all those who were slaughtered during this recent series of senseless attacks.*
- *Please pray on behalf of the many surviving Nigerians in Plateau State who are now trying to cope with the traumatic loss of their homes, possessions and loved ones, asking the Lord to ensure they receive adequate provisions and protection – as well as physical, emotional and spiritual healing.*
- *Pray that Nigeria's governing forces will be provided with the necessary wisdom, guidance and resources to bring an end to these devastating attacks.*

PAKISTAN: Christian Couple Attacked at Gunpoint

Sources: British Asian Christian Association, Morning Star News

On the night of March 25th, Adnan Masih and his wife Shumaila were heading home from work on their motorcycle when they were suddenly intercepted by two armed gunmen. After seizing the married couple's cell phone and the small amount of cash they were carrying, the thieves physically beat the Christians and demanded more money. Adnan told the gunmen that he and his wife were poor Christians who had nothing more to give. It was then that the attack became more violent.

Whispering between themselves, the assailants phoned a third man who later arrived on a motorcycle. Pulling the drawstring from Adnan's trousers, they tied him up with it. The men then dragged Shumaila to a nearby sugarcane field where they each violently assaulted her. As they left, the men threatened to kill them both if they ever spoke of the attack.

With their motorcycle left damaged by the attack, Adnan and Shumaila walked the rest of the way home, saying nothing to family members who had been worried about them. By the next morning, after praying and talking together, the couple gained the courage to report the incident to the authorities. As a result of the police investigation, the perpetrators – Rana Sher Ali, Muhammad Faisal and Hadayat Ali – were arrested, and all three men presently remain in custody while awaiting trial. Financial and legal support has been provided to the assaulted victims.

Regarded within Pakistani society as lesser citizens, Christians frequently face discrimination and violence. As a result of this systemic bias, followers of Jesus – and other non-Muslim citizens – are often treated unfairly by the country's court system, though some recent rulings

suggest that such bias may be waning. For previously published reports that further address the many challenges facing Pakistan's Christians, see www.vomcanada.com/pakistan.htm.

- *Pray that our merciful Heavenly Father will provide greatly needed physical and emotional healing to this Christian couple – filling them with His abounding hope, comfort and love.*
- *Also pray that the three men responsible for this brutal attack will be held accountable for their horrific actions so that justice will be upheld.*
- *Pray for God's protecting hand upon His people in Pakistan, asking Him to draw near to each one of our Christian brothers and sisters and remind them of the fact that they are very precious in His sight.*

MAURITANIA: Safety Concerns After Demonstration Against Christians

Sources: Middle East Concern, Open Doors, Christian Daily International, EU Today

On April 7th, Muslim imams organized a demonstration in the southern city of Sélibaby, Mauritania, to protest against Christians within their community. The protest, which had been approved by the authorities, was instigated after a Christian convert died in a motorcycle accident a few days earlier. Some Muslim leaders were angered over the burial of the Christian's body within their community, since they regarded him as an "apostate."

During the protest, threats were made against followers of Jesus both in person and on social media. Demonstrators demanded that action be taken against the community's "infidels," including calls to burn the homes of Christian residents. At one point, the body of the buried Christian was dug up and dragged through the streets before being reburied in a village 20 kilometres away.

Although tensions had eased by that evening, hate speech and threats persisted on social media, where militant Muslim community members continued to call for the complete social ostracism of Christians. Due to the volatility of the situation, some Christian leaders have been warned by relatives to refrain from contacting them.

Unfortunately, this recent incident is not an isolated occurrence. According to the country's penal code, leaving Islam is a crime punishable by death. Although this penalty is seldom enforced, the law emboldens Muslim militants and creates an atmosphere of fear for those who are at risk of potential harm. Additional details about Christian persecution in this extremely restrictive nation, including previously published reports, are available at www.vomcanada.com/mauritania.htm.

- *May the peace of God guard the hearts of believers in Mauritania, empowering them with the strength, courage and wisdom to continue ministering within a society that is strongly opposed to their existence.*
- *Pray that God would radically intervene in the lives of community members who have demonstrated hostility towards His Gospel message, stirring the hearts of each one so that they may be transformed by His love.*

- *Ask the Lord to protect our persecuted brothers and sisters in Christ as they seek to practise their faith, enabling them to spread His goodness, mercy and grace throughout this northwest African nation.*

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