



Voice^{of the}
Martyrs

PERSECUTION
& PRAYER
ALERT

Persecution & Prayer Alert

Voice of the Martyrs Canada
www.vomcanada.com

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*"In times of affliction, we
commonly meet with the sweetest
experiences of the love of God."*

~ John Bunyan

INDIA: Villagers Forced from Their Homes

Sources: Christian Solidarity Worldwide, International Christian Concern, AsiaNews, Morning Star News

Six Christian families from Karingundam, a village located in the Sukma district of Chhattisgarh state, were evicted from their homes on April 12th for refusing to renounce their faith in Christ. Opposing villagers loaded their belongings onto a truck – only to be hauled out of the village and dumped. The desolate families were forced to spend the night in the forest without any shelter. At least 25 individuals were affected by this dire situation.

The next day, members of the Central Reserve Police Force attempted to help the believers return to their homes, but other villagers prevented them from entering. Consequently, the Christians had to seek refuge in a local church. On April 14th, police officers again addressed the situation with the opposing villagers, reminding them of the constitutional rights of all citizens and threatening legal action against them if they failed to comply. As a result, the Christian families were finally allowed to return to their homes.

Several similar situations have taken place within the Sukma district over recent months. In another incident, ten Christian families, consisting of about 45 people, were reportedly assaulted and forced from their homes in Durandarbha village on April 24th. The hostile community members who forced the believers' exile from the village then warned of life-threatening consequences if they attempted to return.

These evicted families are presently receiving refuge in a church building located approximately 17 kilometres away from Durandarbha village. After reporting the incident to police, they were advised to stay away from the village for now, in hopes that the matter would eventually settle. Police have also told those who threatened the Christians of potential legal action; however, at last report, no

charges have been laid. In the meantime, the displaced villagers are at least receiving a very basic means of shelter in the makeshift church, despite the building's leaky roof.

While no specific cause for this rise in violence is known, there has been increasing political pressure placed on those who allegedly participate in what some militant Hindus refer to as "illegal conversions." For more details on the various forms of persecution being perpetrated against Christians in India, go to www.vomcanada.com/india.htm.

- *Remember these ostracized believers in your prayers, asking God to continue mediating on their behalf as they attempt to live peaceably among opposing fellow villagers.*
- *For those who are still displaced, please pray that the Lord will give them wisdom and guidance as they seek a permanent place in which they can safely and harmoniously reside, hopefully within the homes of their former communities.*
- *May villagers who are opposed to Christianity come to understand the unfathomable love of God and the wonderful plan of eternal salvation that He has made available for them through His Son, Jesus Christ.*

REPORT UPDATES

PAKISTAN: Accused Christian Acquitted

Source: Morning Star News

In June 2024, Chand Shamaun was arrested and charged with insulting Islam, a charge that is commonly used in Pakistan against citizens belonging to minority religious groups. In fact, a recent report indicated that a record number of blasphemy cases had been filed during the year of 2024 – reaching a total of 344 official accusations. For the accused, imprisonment is typically dangerous and, in some cases, even deadly. And those who've been released on bail or acquitted frequently face vigilante violence from people who still perceive them to be guilty.

In Chand's particular situation, it became clear early on that there were problems with the case against him. In October, the Lahore High Court released him on bail after hearing his case. However, upon his release, he was forced into hiding because of the people's threats against him. For more details, see www.vomcanada.com/pk-2024-11-07.htm.

On May 10th, a final verdict was reached when a judge acquitted Chand of all charges. The court noted that prosecutors had "miserably failed" to establish their case against the innocent Christian man, even suggesting that the accusers may have "spun out an imaginary story with their imagination."

- *Praise God for this encouraging court ruling, and for the fact that justice has been served in Chand's case!*
- *Pray for his safety as he now deals with the aftermath of the initial accusations against him. May those who hold anger against this Christian man no longer threaten him nor make any attempt to harm him, but rather may they realize and acknowledge his innocence.*

- *Pray for the many other believers presently facing accusations of blasphemy in Pakistan, asking for the Lord's intervention to take place in each of their situations as well – so that His justice will ultimately prevail.*

CHINA: Long-Awaited Trials for Pastoral Couple

Source: ChinaAid

Yang Rongli and Wang Xiaoguang are a pastoral couple who have been subjected to ongoing persecution from the Communist government for many years. In 2009, they were sentenced for allegedly disrupting public order. As a result, Yang spent seven years in prison, while Wang served three years. In August 2021, the couple had been arrested again. This time, they were accused of fraud in relation to the donations received by the church from its members. After almost four years, both cases have finally gone to court, through which the husband and wife were each tried separately.

The hearing against Yang began on April 17th. Claiming that it was a sensitive case, the court insisted that the trial be non-public. Ultimately, defense lawyers were not allowed into the courtroom to represent their clients. In protest, three lawyers formally resigned from the case while a fourth publicly demonstrated outside the courtroom as a show of resistance. At last report, no information was available about the status of Yang's trial.

Wang's trial began on the morning of April 18th. According to a report from their son, the pastor refused to admit any wrongdoing. Instead, when the time came for his defense, he stood before the court and pulled out a prepared sermon from which he preached to those present. In his homily, he explained the principles of the Christian faith, including the Bible's teachings on giving. In recounting the incident, the couple's son stated, "I couldn't help laughing, but I know in my heart that this was his style."

Christians throughout China repeatedly experience opposition and accusations from governing authorities. Numerous previously published reports concerning the challenges faced by this ministerial couple, along with reports addressing the situations encountered by other persecuted believers, have been made available at www.vomcanada.com/china.htm.

- *Continue to prayerfully uphold Pastors Yang and Wang, in addition to the fellow church members who were charged along with them.*
- *Pray that those in the courtroom who heard the message spoken by Pastor Wang would respond with open hearts to the presented Scriptural truths and, as a result, realize their need to turn in repentance to God and receive His gift of salvation through Christ.*
- *Please also remember to intercede for the many Chinese believers who are presently facing opposition on numerous fronts. May justice prevail in each of their cases as well.*