



Voice of the
Martyrs

PERSECUTION
& PRAYER
ALERT

Persecution & Prayer Alert

Voice of the Martyrs Canada
www.vomcanada.com

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*"The Lord is on my side;
I will not fear. What
can man do to me?"*
~ Psalm 118:6 ESV

ERITREA: 24 Christians Recently Released!

Source: Church in Chains

A report has recently surfaced, indicating that 24 Eritrean believers were released from prison in early April. While most of the freed Christians had been detained for more than two years, one of them endured imprisonment for over 18 years. As is often the case, few details have been made available, and no official explanation was given for the releases.

This latest development brings the total number of Christian prisoners who have been released during the past year to more than 400. According to Dr. Berhane Asmelash, director of Release Eritrea, an estimated 200 to 220 believers currently remain imprisoned – marking the lowest figure throughout the past 20 years.

Several theories have been proposed to explain the recent increase in releases. Some suggest that the previously noted overcrowded prison conditions may be a contributing factor. Others speculate that Eritrean officials may be questioning the value of prolonged imprisonments, or that governmental opposition towards evangelical Christianity could be waning.

Despite the encouraging outcome, followers of Jesus in Eritrea continue to suffer unprovoked raids and arrests. On March 15th, for example, 13 believers were detained by police. To learn more about that particular incident, and/or to access other reports concerning the persecution of Christians in this highly restrictive African nation, visit www.vomcanada.com/eritrea.htm.

- *Pray that those who have been recently freed from prison will experience the Lord's healing and strength – spiritually, physically, mentally and emotionally.*

- *As these followers of Christ now rebuild their lives, may they also receive the faithful support and encouragement of loved ones and fellow believers.*
- *While we praise God for the increased numbers of released Christians, please continue to lift up those still awaiting freedom from imprisonment, asking that they too would be strengthened, encouraged and reminded that they are not forgotten.*
- *Ask the Lord to work mightily within the hearts and minds of Eritrea's governing authorities, guiding them so that they will serve the citizens of their country with justice, compassion, and a growing openness to the "Good News" of His salvation.*

BELARUS: Supreme Court Denies Churches Legal Status

Source: Forum18

Churches in Belarus continue to encounter increasing pressures under a new religion law that came into effect in July 2024. The legislation requires all churches to undergo re-registration, including those that had previously been approved by the government. As a result, three Greek Catholic parishes that were originally registered in the 1990s have had their applications rejected.

The affected parishes – all of which are located within the Brest region of Belarus – appealed the decision, but their cases were dismissed by the regional court. On April 9th, the Supreme Court upheld the lower court's ruling, leaving the congregations without legal status. Any religious activity conducted by these churches is now considered illegal and punishable under law, placing them at risk of forced liquidation.

Under Belarusian law, any expression of religious belief without official state permission is prohibited, with violators facing potential fines or imprisonment. For more information, including access to other reports addressing the persecution of Christians in this Eastern European country, go to www.vomcanada.com/belarus.htm.

- *Following the denial of their legal status, may God impart wisdom, direction and courage to the church leaders and members of these Greek congregations as they now seek ways in which to corporately gather and worship Him.*
- *Also prayerfully uphold congregations representing other denominations throughout the nation who are likewise at risk due to the growing restrictions on faith activities.*
- *Ask the Lord to strengthen all of His people in Belarus, helping them to remain steadfast in their faith and reflect the light of Christ amid opposition.*
- *Pray that many more Belarusians across the country – whether they work in areas of governance or otherwise oppose Christianity – will be powerfully transformed by the love and truth of the Gospel.*

REPORT UPDATES

PAKISTAN: Child Marriage Law Officially Approved

Sources: Church in Chains, Dawn

On February 11th, the governor of Punjab, Pakistan, signed the "Child Marriage Restraint Ordinance 2026" into effect. The bill raised the minimum age for marriage, providing greater protections for the country's vulnerable youth. It is hoped that this law will now help prevent the kidnapping, forced conversion and marriage of Christian girls. (Further details about the newly implemented legislation are available at www.vomcanada.com/pk-2026-04-23.htm.)

On April 27th, following a heated debate, the provincial Assembly officially passed the bill, marking the final step in the approval process. During the session, an amendment was also adopted – emphasizing that, in matters relating to the new legislation, the best interests of each child must be the primary consideration.

- *Please prayerfully uphold the many young lives in Pakistan that have been negatively impacted as a result of past forced conversions and marriages, asking the Lord to provide healing, restoration and lasting comfort to each of the young victims and their families.*
- *Pray that this new law would be effectively implemented and upheld by the country's authorities, truly serving as a safeguard for other vulnerable children.*
- *Praise God for the legislators who have willingly taken a stand for justice. May many others – including members of Pakistan's political leadership and those of society at large – acknowledge the importance of protecting the dignity and well-being of every precious child.*

EGYPT: Case Against Believer Adjourned

Source: Church in Chains

On April 21st, legal proceedings began in the case against Saeid Abdulraziq, a Christian convert in Egypt. Although the believer has been accused under the country's anti-terrorism laws, advocates believe his arrest is primarily linked to his conversion to Christianity and subsequent involvement in faith-related activities. (To access a previously published report regarding Saeid's case, go to www.vomcanada.com/eg-2026-04-23.htm.)

The hearing on April 21st did not specifically address the substance of the charges against the Christian man. Instead, defence lawyers requested an adjournment to allow sufficient time to review the case and prepare their arguments, which will involve interviews with prosecution witnesses. The request was granted, and the proceedings are scheduled to resume on June 15th. In the meantime, Saeid will remain in detention.

- *Please continue to intercede on Saeid's behalf, praying that he will be further strengthened by God's abiding presence during imprisonment, comforted in the midst*

of uncertainty, and filled with divine peace as he awaits the outcome of his upcoming hearing.

- *May the court officials involved in Saeid's case receive a full understanding of his situation so they can rule with justice, wisdom and mercy.*
- *Also prayerfully remember the many other Christian converts in Egypt who are encountering hostility from the opposing members of their families and communities, asking that they too would receive God's protection and sustaining grace – along with opportunities to personally testify of His life-changing power in each of their lives.*

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