



Voice of the
Martyrs

PERSECUTION
& PRAYER
ALERT

Persecution & Prayer Alert

Voice of the Martyrs Canada
www.vomcanada.com

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*"A church that does not
remember its persecuted brethren
is no church at all..."*

~ Anonymous Lutheran pastor

DR CONGO: Christians Targeted by Islamic Terrorists

Sources: Barnabas Aid, Mission Network News

Islamic militants in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) claim to have killed more than 80 Christians during several recent armed assaults in the northeastern region of the country. The deadliest incident, which took place on May 5th, is believed to have claimed the lives of an estimated 60 believers, whom the attackers referred to as "Christian combatants."

The Islamic State Central Africa Province (ISCAP) uses the term "combatants" to describe Christians who refuse to convert to Islam or accept the status of *dhimmi* – a condition of subjugation in which non-Muslims are permitted to live under Islamic rule in exchange for the payment of what is known as *jizya* tax.

A statement from the aggressors declared, "Let the worshippers of the cross know that they have no security except by submitting willingly or paying the *jizya* in humiliation." ISCAP claims to have killed nearly 1,000 Christians in northeastern DRC since December 2024.

Despite being one of the world's wealthiest nations in terms of natural resources, the DRC remains marked by widespread poverty. This contrast has drawn the attention of external forces that are seeking control over the nation and its wealth, thus contributing to ongoing instability. Notably, the country is also one of the most predominantly Christian nations in Africa. For additional reports concerning the life-threatening dangers encountered by followers of Jesus in this Central African nation, go to www.vomcanada.com/drc.htm.

- *Pray that God's comforting presence will be sensed in tangible ways by those who have lost loved ones, and that His healing ministry would restore the health and emotional*

well-being of all who were physically harmed and/or traumatized during these recent attacks.

- *May those of our Congolese brothers and sisters in Christ who were displaced receive safe shelter, compassionate support and divine guidance as they now navigate their way to new hope-filled beginnings in the aftermath of the violence.*
- *In general, ask the Lord to mightily intervene throughout this war-torn nation, so that His peace and justice will prevail and communities would be protected from further attacks – resulting in lasting harmony and stability for all.*

AZERBAIJAN: Christian Worship Locations Demolished

Sources: International Christian Concern, Radio Free Europe

In mid-April, reports began to circulate that two significant places of worship had been demolished in Stepanakert, the capital located within the disputed region of Nagorno-Karabakh. Recent satellite imagery has since confirmed that the Holy Mother of God Cathedral and the Church of St. Jacob have been completely destroyed.

Nagorno-Karabakh is a region historically inhabited by ethnic Armenians, though it has long been claimed by Azerbaijan. After many years of armed conflict, Azerbaijan seized control of the territory in September 2023, triggering an exodus of about 120,000 Armenians from the area.

Leaders of the Armenian Apostolic Church have warned that Azerbaijan's predominantly Muslim leadership may attempt to erase the Christian heritage of the Armenian people by demolishing monuments, monasteries, churches and other religious sites. Previously published *Persecution & Prayer Alert* reports addressing the challenges facing believers in Azerbaijan are available at www.vomcanada.com/azerbaijan.htm.

- *Pray for God's protection over those of our Christian family who are still residing in this disputed region, and that others who have opted to flee the area would receive His comfort, provision and a sense of belonging as they endeavour to rebuild their lives.*
- *Intercede for Azerbaijan's governing leaders, praying that they would be mindful to duly respect the religious faith and heritage of this large group of Armenian citizens by preserving their historical sites.*
- *Pray that the message of the Gospel would be heard throughout the nation, planting seeds of spiritual truth that will lead many lives to salvation and lasting transformation through the power of Christ.*

CHINA: Total of 31 Christians Recently Sentenced

Source: ChinaAid

In March 2024, leaders of a house church fellowship in Suizhou, a city located in central China's Hubei Province, were arrested as part of a major crackdown on itinerant ministry workers. In an apparent attempt to minimize public and international attention, authorities conducted the trials in small numbers, often with only one or two defendants at a time.

According to a recently released report, a total of 31 believers have now been sentenced to imprisonment, with terms ranging from 28 to 48 months. Among them is 77-year-old Pastor Yang Zhijin, who was sentenced on May 21st to 38 months in prison for allegedly "using a cult organization to undermine the implementation of the law."

The convicted believers are itinerant workers who travelled to minister among ethnic minority groups in western China. To review other reports about the persecution of our Christian family in this Communist nation, visit www.vomcanada.com/china.htm.

- *Prayerfully uphold these recently sentenced believers, asking the Lord to provide each one of them – as well as their concerned families – divine strength, protection and sustaining grace.*
- *As they begin serving their prison sentences, in hopes the convictions will be rightfully overturned, may these faithful servants find meaningful opportunities to share the message of God's love and eternal salvation with others around them.*
- *Pray that the Gospel message would continue spreading exponentially throughout China – bringing hope, encouragement and new life to many more spiritually searching hearts.*

The "Persecution & Prayer Alert" is a ministry of:
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