



"A martyr is one who refuses to be separated from the promises of God."
~ Eric Foley

CENTRAL ASIA: Clampdown on Christianity

Source: Release International

Throughout Central Asia, Christians are facing worship bans, arrest and torture as Islamic nationalism gains ground. In late August, we reported on a group arrested in Tajikistan for distributing Christian literature ([read the report](#)). Similar incidents are happening regularly in other neighbouring Central Asian countries, according to a recent report from VOMC's partner ministry, Release International.

A recent survey revealed that 263 people had been punished in Kazakhstan during 2017 for hosting religious meetings, offering religious literature, or other "religious crimes." Most of those prosecuted were Protestant Christians. The clampdown continued into 2018 with almost 80 prosecutions within the first six months.

Churches in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan face regular harassment from authorities for meeting without a permit, while those same authorities refuse to issue the necessary permits. In Kazakhstan, Christians are perceived as a threat to the state. Homes and church buildings are regularly searched. Even praying together can be deemed illegal.



Pastor Batyr
Photo: Release International

Throughout the region, Christians from Muslim backgrounds are facing the worst persecution. One church leader, Pastor Batyr, recounts: "If a Muslim decides to follow Christ, then he is considered to be a traitor – a traitor to our people, our culture and our nation. All former Muslims who believe in Christ are secret and underground. They can never be officially recognized."

Release International has just released a 12-minute video report on the situation in Central Asia. To view this fascinating report, [click here](#).

Remember the Christian workers throughout Central Asia who are spreading the Good News of the Gospel. Pray for deliverance on behalf of those imprisoned for their faith; that, in the meanwhile, God will mightily use their ministry to reach fellow prisoners and guards. May the Lord give His people throughout the region a new vision for how they can best reach out to those around them with His transforming love.

Share a Prayer



PAKISTAN: Pharmacist Fatally Doused with Acid

Sources: AsiaNews, Pakistan Christian Post, International Christian Concern



Persecution in Pakistan poses threat to professing Christians.
Photo: Mission Network News

Faraz Ahmed Badar, a Christian pharmacist at a hospital in Gujranwala, was killed by being doused with acid as he was leaving work at 2:00 a.m. on September 5th. The 26-year-old had been working for two years as manager at the DHQ Hospital.

According to his parents, he had faced regular harassment from a Muslim colleague who did not appreciate having a Christian as his manager. Two months previously, Faraz had been attacked by a group of men in masks who kicked him in the mouth claiming that "a Christian is not even able to lick their shoes." They threatened to kill him unless he quit his job.

Faraz's parents are seeking justice for his death as they grieve the loss of their son. Yet, despite this tragedy, his father Badar Masih states: "My son was targeted for his Christian faith. I don't think we, the Christians, are safe in Pakistan. However, it is our country and we love it with our soul and spirit. We won't seek refuge."

Lift these parents to the Lord as they mourn the loss of their dear son. Remember other Christians in Pakistan who face similar threats on a regular basis. May justice be sought by the authorities. Even so, please intercede for those responsible for these crimes – in hopes that they will personally experience the grace and forgiveness of God.

Share a Prayer



PRAISE REPORT

SUDAN: Release of Church Properties and Bibles

Sources: World Watch Monitor, Steadfast Global

On August 8th, a Sudanese court ruled that properties seized by the government must be returned to the Sudanese Church of Christ (see [this page](#)). Following up on that decision, ownership of 19 properties was officially handed back on September 24th.

In another unexpected move, authorities released a shipment of Bibles believed to have been held in port for six years. The Arabic-language Bibles were released in mid-September and transported to the capital of Khartoum.

There has been speculation on the reasons for this recent action. Some suggest it may be part of a push from Sudan to normalize relations with the United States. Regardless of the reasons, VOMC partner ministry, Steadfast Global, said it well in an October 3rd Facebook post: "The reasons might well be political. We are not quite sure just what is going on, but recent events in this repressive country definitely point to answered prayers!" Continue to intercede for the country of Sudan and its people, praying that God's Word will reach many more in need of Christ as Saviour.



Photo: World Watch Monitor

If you would like to post a prayer of praise or petition on behalf of our persecuted family around the globe, visit [VOMC's prayer wall](#).



The Persecution & Prayer Alert is a ministry of:
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