

"When they deliver you over, do not be anxious how you are to speak or what you are to say, for what you are to say will be given to you in that hour. For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you."

~ Matthew 10:19-20 ESV

NIGERIA: Church Leader Kidnapped in Raid

Sources: Open Doors, Morning Star News

A leader of the Christian Association of Nigeria was kidnapped on January 3rd when Boko Haram raided the town of Michika which is located near the border with Cameroon. Fighters came into town with a convoy of vehicles. Nigerian soldiers readily responded and, in the confusion, town people fled into the bush. While the military drove out the attackers, killing most of them, Pastor Lawan Andimi was taken hostage as the remaining terrorists fled.

Two days following the attack, a video was released. Over the six-minute address, Pastor Lawan pleads for help from church leaders. Along with that, he recounts his trust in the sovereign help of God. "I have never been discouraged because all the conditions that one finds himself are in the hands of God," he proclaims. In order to view the English portion of the video, [click here](#).



Pastor Lawan Andimi

Pray for the soon release of Pastor Lawan and, in the interim, for his safety while in captivity. Remember his concerned family and fellow colleagues who need God's peace and encouragement in the face of such uncertainty and fear. Intercede for other Christians throughout Nigeria who are at risk of danger due to the threats of Islamic militants, including 16-year-old Leah Sharibu. In the midst of this troubling situation, may churches continue to reach out to the members of their communities with the love and grace of God.

INDIA: "Illegal Practice of Medicine" Charges for Praying

Source: Morning Star News



Lalsingh Tomar (left), Pastor Mukam Kiraad
(in blue) and Nanliya Rawat (right)
Photo: Morning Star News

Three Christians were arrested in the village of Vadi in Madhya Pradesh on December 16th after fellow villagers accused them of practising illegal medicine. They spent 11 days in jail before being released on bail. Pastor Mukam Kiraad, along with two members of his church, Lalsingh Tomar and Nanliya Rawat, were shocked to learn they were charged with medical malpractice after praying for physical healing.

Christians were gathered for worship on December 10th when more than a dozen villagers barged into the home. While some of the intruders filmed what was happening, others seized cell phones, Bibles, literature, and a bottle of oil. Nine Christians were detained and then released that evening. However, Pastor Mukam and the two others were called back on December 16th and placed under arrest. A hearing was scheduled to commence on January 8th. To learn more about the persecution facing Christians in India, visit our [country report](#).

Please bring these three arrested believers before the God's throne room in prayer, petitioning that all charges be dropped so they will be free to continue in their service for Him. At the same time, may He provide opportunities for them to use this incident as a means of leading others to salvation through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. On behalf of the many believers throughout India, pray they will be given discernment and the right words to say as they interact with those who lack an understanding of the Christian faith.

UKRAINE: Books Banned in Luhansk

Source: Forum 18

Authorities in the unrecognized Luhansk People's Republic in eastern Ukraine have banned 12 books, including a popular translation of the Gospel of John, calling them "extremist" materials. The November 26th ban came a week after the Luhansk Supreme Court overturned a ruling ordering the destruction of books belonging to a Baptist pastor. Along with the Gospel of John, the banned books include the main hymnbook used by the Council of Churches Baptists, a regular magazine published by the church group, as well as children's books.

The region of Luhansk was seized by pro-Russian rebels in 2014 and declared autonomy from Ukraine. The rebel administration has banned freedom of religion and belief except for those granted permission from the authorities. More information on the worship ban in the region is [available here](#).



Prayerfully uphold the Christians of this region, as they now must contend with the oppressive regulations. Ask God to grant each of these believers wisdom and favour in their dealings with governing authorities. May their churches find effective ways to continue spreading the Good News of the Gospel to those around them – including the opposing officials who are in need of eternal salvation.

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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