

***"As it is the business of tailors to make clothes
and the business of cobblers to mend shoes,
so it is the business of Christians to pray."***
~ Martin Luther

INDONESIA: Official Stops Church Service

Sources: Morning Star News, Asia News, Tempo.co

A local village official in Indonesia stopped a church service on February 19th, demanding that the church discontinue meeting. This is only one example of the many challenges recently experienced by Christians in Indonesia. For previous reports, and to learn how you can further pray for believers in this Southeast Asian nation, go to our [country report](#).

While members of the Tabernacle of David Christian Church in the village of Rajabasa Jaya were praying together on Sunday morning, a local chief named Wawan Kurniawan leapt over a metre-high fence and stormed into the service. Pushing the pastor aside, Wawan took to the pulpit and demanded that the service end. In response, some of those in attendance asked the chief to be patient, for they were only praying.

While this was happening, ten other villagers entered the church and joined in the chief's demands. During the ensuing turmoil, someone grabbed the pastor by the neck and began to choke him. Eventually, the congregation was forced to disperse. In his defence, Chief Wawan claims that the church does not have a permit to meet – a requirement frequently demanded by local authorities despite the fact that governmental laws guarantee the constitutional right to gather for worship. Because of the violent nature of the confrontation, the matter has been referred to the police.

Speaking of the incident, the Indonesian Churches Association has called on the authorities to take the matter seriously and not "ignore such intolerant actions." The concern is that, if appropriate action is not taken, others could be emboldened to carry out similar acts of harassment against Christians. "At any time, [social friction] can ignite into an open conflict," explains the association's General Secretary, Jacklevyn F. Manuputty.

Pray that Indonesia's authorities will take appropriate action against the villagers involved in this violent incident, and that the country's governing leaders would strive to ensure greater religious freedom is granted to all people. Further, ask God to strengthen the members of this recently attacked church so they will not succumb to the tactics of the enemy. Rather, may they be encouraged to seek His wisdom and guidance so they can respond appropriately in the midst of a potentially volatile environment and, ultimately, continue meeting together for worship without further threat of interference or violence.



An evangelist in Indonesia.
Photo: VOMC

INDIA: Christians Denied Humanitarian Aid Rations

Source: International Christian Concern

Ten Christian families in Bara Chomri village, Madhya Pradesh, have been denied government rations due to their faith affiliation. These families were summoned to a village gathering on January 26th where they were pressured to give up their Christian faith. The believers were told that if they did not comply, they would be denied provisions distributed to the poor by the government.

According to local sources, the families came to faith in Christ four years ago and, consequently, have faced harassment and abuse ever since. About eight months ago, a visiting pastor was leading a worship service when the believers were attacked by militant Hindu nationalists. The pastor was taken into custody and questioned but eventually released with a warning to never enter the village again.

Madhya Pradesh is one of 11 Indian states that enforce anti-conversion legislation, which militant Hindus frequently misuse to harass Christian



A girl cooking for her family.
Photo: Flickr / India Water Portal (cc)

minorities. For more information on the persecution encountered by Christians in India, go to our [country report](#).

Prayerfully uphold these impoverished Christian families, asking the Lord to meet their urgent practical needs – whether it be through the fair disbursement of provided humanitarian aid or another viable means. Either way, may each one of them find assurance, comfort and peace in the fulfillment of His promised presence and provision (Philippians 4:19). All the while, may the state's governing leaders become enlightened to the various ways their anti-conversion laws are being abused and, as a result, be prompted to duly revise the legislation so justice and harmony will be encouraged among citizens of diverse religions. Although Christians have encountered numerous restrictions and difficulties due to the present laws, pray that their responses would serve as powerful testimonies of God's grace and faithfulness to all who are around them – especially those in need of His eternal salvation.

ALGERIA: Only Ten Churches Remaining Open

Source: Mission Network News

Over the past few years, numerous reports have surfaced from Algeria describing the forcible closure of church buildings and the detainment of various Christian leaders. In one instance, Pastor Salah Chalah and three other believers were charged in December 2021 with "practising non-Muslim rites without permission." To learn more about this incident, and/or to review previously published news reports, go to our [country report](#).

According to the most recent report, four pastors are presently facing trial. The accusations against these Christian leaders include holding a church service in a home and producing Christian media content. As another church was forced to close in January, there are now only ten churches remaining open throughout the entire country of more than 40 million people. The situation remains difficult for followers of Jesus in this nation. "We don't know what's going to happen," states one of them. "Algeria doesn't have democracy or freedom, so they can charge [Christians] with anything."



One of the many church closures in Algeria.
Photo: Morning Star News

Continue to pray for Christians in Algeria who are facing uncertainty and ongoing threats. May they be given the strength to respond to situations of persecution with unwavering faith, courage and perseverance. Please also remember those who are being brought before the courts because of their Christian beliefs, asking the Lord to work in the hearts and minds of the judges so they will be encouraged to bring about equitable rulings in each case. Additionally, in the words of a local believer, "Pray that this persecution may lead into a greater expansion [of the church], and that the Gospel may spread even to different nations across North Africa."

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