

"Our motto must continue to be perseverance. And ultimately I trust the [Lord] Almighty will crown our efforts with success."

~ William Wilberforce (1759-1833)

NIGERIA: Violence Continues Unabated

Sources: Morning Star News, International Christian Concern, Punch, TVC News

In areas throughout Nigeria, violence has continued relentlessly, disproportionately affecting the Christian population. Those responsible for the brutality are generally members of Islamic terrorist groups such as Boko Haram or the nomadic Fulani herdsmen. While attacks perpetrated by the herdsmen often stem from conflicts over their free-ranging cattle, the accompanying violence also commonly involves a religious element, as militant members of the predominantly Muslim group specifically target Christians and churches. Within the past month, multiple attacks have occurred in at least four different Nigerian states. (For previously published reports on the suffering of Nigeria's Christians, go to our [country report](#).)



A Nigerian church service.

Photo: Flickr / SIM USA (cc)

Kaduna State

Pastor Manasseh Ibrahim, who led a church in the Kurebe area of Kaduna State, was ambushed and killed on April 23rd as he was travelling to a church conference. Although the motive and identities of the perpetrators remain unknown, it is believed that the pastor was attacked by bandits.

In a separate incident, the village of Ambe was raided around midnight on May 5th by a large number of Fulani herdsmen armed with guns and machetes. During the attack, six Christian villagers were killed and eight others wounded. According to a police spokesperson, one of the assailants was apprehended by the villagers, and a police investigation is underway.

Plateau State

In the early morning of April 19th, militant Fulani herdsmen attacked the farming community of Tilengpan Pushit while the residents were sleeping. During the raid, a total of 12 people were killed. According to a survivor, most of the victims were women and children.

The state's governor, Caleb Mutfwang, expressed his "heartfelt condolences" to all those who have been affected by the attack. He also appealed to Christians to remain steadfast, stating that his government will continue to collaborate with security forces to better protect vulnerable communities.

Benue State

At least 28 Christians were killed in Benue State between April 20th and April 22nd. Dozens of surviving victims have been treated for injuries sustained during the violence, and several other believers were reportedly kidnapped. The attacks happened in three villages located within the Gwer West area of the state.

In response to the recent wave of attacks, protestors blocked a major roadway on April 23rd to protest the inaction of the government in addressing the issues leading up to the violence. One of their demands includes the need for enforced legislation to prohibit open grazing, a practice that has resulted in many of the attacks perpetrated by Fulani herdsmen.

Enugu State

At least six Christians were killed in the southeastern Nigerian state of Enugu on April 28th. The slain victims, who included children, were from the village of Ugwuoro Nimbo. As a result of the incident, seven other believers were treated for injuries caused by machete cuts.

While the state governor has assured local villagers that those responsible for the attacks will be pursued and captured, residents in the area remain fearful of further violence. According to a community leader, villagers have been leaving their homes each evening and staying in safer locations to avoid possible repeat of attacks.

Please prayerfully remember all the innocent Nigerians who have been affected by these recent attacks, including survivors suffering from physical and emotional wounds, family members mourning the loss of their loved ones, and villagers living in dread of other similar incidents possibly occurring. May God minister complete healing to each of these traumatized believers – comforting their grieving hearts and providing them His peace, strength and protection. Further, pray that the country's governing authorities will actively work to resolve the various issues associated with this violence, and that those responsible for committing such horrific crimes would be brought to justice.

REPORT UPDATES

ALGERIA: Sentence Upheld for Pastor Youssef Ourahmane

Source: Middle East Concern

Pastor Youssef Ourahmane is a senior pastor and vice president of the Église Protestante d'Algérie (EPA). In March 2023, he was charged with organizing an unauthorized religious assembly and sentenced to two years in prison, along with a fine of 100,000 dinars (approximately \$1,000 CAD). Following an appeal of the verdict, the pastor's conviction was upheld, but his sentence was reduced to one year in prison.

Another appeal hearing took place on April 23rd. The verdict of this most recent hearing, which was released on May 2nd, upheld the one-year prison sentence and fine. However, the sentence has since been suspended pending a further appeal to the Supreme Court.

In an episode of the *Closer to the Fire* podcast, host Greg Musselman interviewed three Algerian church leaders about the challenges they are encountering. You are encouraged to view this [inspiring video](#). For more reports on the persecution facing Christians in Algeria, go to [this report](#).

Continue to prayerfully uphold Pastor Youssef during this difficult time, asking that his case be heard soon by the Supreme Court. May God's truth and justice ultimately prevail. Please also pray for the many other church congregations throughout Algeria that are being subjected to ongoing restrictions from the government. For believers who are able to gather together, even if done so in an informal manner, may they be a tremendous source of blessing and encouragement to one another.



Pastor Youssef Ourahmane
Photo: Middle East Concern

CHINA: High Security for Trial

Source: ChinaAid

The case of Chen Wensheng was heard by the Hengyang City Shigu District People's Court on April 18th. However, when Chen's relatives and friends arrived that morning to attend the trial, they found about 40 black-clad special force officers guarding the entrance of the court building. In addition, the entire street was blocked off under the pretext of performing a "drill" so that any supporters could be prevented from attending the trial. Despite aggressive actions by the police, Chen's



Evangelist Chen Wensheng
Photo: ChinaAid

supporters are reported to have demonstrated "patience and calmness."

Chen Wensheng is a street evangelist who has gained a reputation as a "Gospel Warrior." Having been arrested several times, Chen is now on trial for allegedly "organizing and financing illegal gatherings." Sources report that he is "radiant and joyful" despite his imprisonment and actively spreading the Gospel message while in detention. For more information on this believer's case, see [this page](#).

Pray that the case against Chen will soon be dropped so he can be rightfully released from custody. In the meantime, may this dear brother in Christ receive ongoing strength, encouragement and wisdom as he faithfully ministers the hope of the Gospel to those imprisoned along with him. Continue to remember his wife, along with other family members and friends, who are missing him during this time of separation, praying that they too will receive greatly needed encouragement from the Lord.

CHINA: Verdict Against Christian Elders

Source: ChinaAid

In November 2021, Wu Jiannan and Hao Ming were arrested on suspicion of fraud. On March 15th, 2023, after spending more than two years in detention, the two Christian elders were released on bail pending their trials.

On April 9th of this year, the trials for both of these Christian workers finally took place. Considered guilty by the Jingyang District People's Court, they were each sentenced to three years in prison with a five-year suspended sentence. Each of these accused men were also fined 30,000 yuan (approximately \$5,700 CAD). Additionally, Elder Wu was ordered to return all the funds received from the church, which amounted to approximately \$20,000.



Elder Hao Ming with his wife.
Photo: ChinaAid

Elder Hao Ming, who has rejected all the accusations, never pleaded guilty nor accepted the punishment. This Christian elder says that he does not plan to appeal the verdict; rather, he is relying on God's righteousness for vindication. To learn more about the cases against these two church leaders, along with reports addressing the many challenges encountered by our persecuted Christian brothers and sisters in China, go to our [country report](#).

Prayerfully ask God to minister great peace and comfort to both of these accused men and their individual families. May He also continue to guide, strengthen and encourage all other followers of Jesus throughout China who are likewise facing governmental opposition because of their faith and Christian activities. May the Lord work mightily in the lives of the country's authorities – softening their hearts towards the things of God – so that His people will be permitted to worship openly and freely without any threat of arrest or harassment.

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