



***"Not all of us are called to die  
a martyr's death, but all of us  
are called to have the same spirit  
of self-sacrifice and love to the  
very end as these martyrs had."***

~ Rev. Richard Wurmbrand

## IRAN: Three Christians Facing Lengthy Prison Sentences

Source: Article18

Three Christian converts, including a woman who is pregnant with her first child, have been sentenced to lengthy prison sentences on charges relating to their religious beliefs and worship meetings. The Iranian believers were sentenced by Judge Iman Afshari at a Revolutionary Court on March 8th.

Narges Nasri is 37 years old and halfway through her first pregnancy. She received the stiffest sentence among those of the three accused Christians: ten years for "propaganda activities contrary to Islamic law," five years for membership in an "opposition group," and an additional year for "propaganda against the state." The charges allegedly stem from a social media post that Narges had made.



Left to right: Abbas Soori, Narges Nasri,  
and Mehran Shamloui.

Photos: Article 18

Abbas Soori likewise received a sentence of ten years for "propaganda activities contrary to Islamic law" and an additional five years for membership in an "opposition group." Abbas had been previously accused of distributing propaganda in 2022. As a result of these former charges, rather than being sentenced to prison, the believer received ten years of "deprivation of social rights," which carries numerous restrictions relating to areas such as employment, health care and education. (For more information on this previous incident, go to [this report](#).) The third Christian sentenced on March 8th was Mehran Shamloui who received a term of eight years for spreading propaganda and 30 months for membership in an "opposition group."

All three followers of Jesus were arrested during concurrent raids on their homes in Tehran on November 3rd. At least ten other Christians were arrested on the same day through coordinated raids across the country. For additional reports on the persecution experienced by our Christian brothers and sisters in Iran, go to our [country profile](#).

- ***Remember these three believers in your prayers, along with the many other Iranian Christians who are presently being detained because of their faith in Christ, asking that all charges against them will be dropped.***
- ***Pray that our imprisoned Christian brothers and sisters in Iran would rest in the assurance that Christ's presence is abiding with them. As a result, may they experience His sustaining peace, comfort and encouragement.***
- ***Prayerfully ask God to also provide greatly needed comfort to these detained believers' families, friends and fellow church members.***

## INDIA: Large Mob Attack at Pastors' Gathering

Sources: VOM Australia, VOM Contacts

On February 19th, a group of pastors had gathered in Kusumba Village, a town located in the Jalgaon District of Maharashtra, India. As the meeting was taking place, a mob of approximately 400 Hindu nationalists suddenly attacked, brutally assaulting many of the pastors. As a result of the violence, two of the church leaders were left in critical condition.

In addition to the physical assaults, the Hindu militants destroyed various furniture items belonging to the Christians, along with six motorcycles. Shortly thereafter, police arrived at the scene and managed to bring the situation under control. Despite having committed the violence, the attackers were all allowed to leave, while 28 pastors were detained for questioning before being released that evening. According to local reports, the violent incident has deeply affected all of the Christians in the community.

In India, mob attacks against Christians are common, particularly by those determined to make the country a Hindu nation. For more details on the violent opposition inflicted against followers of Jesus in this South Asian country, go to our [country report](#).



Pastors and church leaders in India.  
Photo: VOMC

- ***Pray for the complete physical and emotional healing of all those who were injured in this most recently occurring assault.***
- ***May the Lord also minister needed peace and courage to their families, as well as others in the surrounding Christian community who were indirectly affected by the incident.***
- ***Pray that such acts of violence would not be overlooked by the authorities. Instead, may necessary measures be taken to ensure all perpetrators are held accountable.***
- ***Despite the strong opposition against our Christian family in India, may the ongoing ministry of the Gospel continue to shine the light of God's eternal salvation and hope throughout the nation.***

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## PAKISTAN: Needed Freedom from Kidnapping

Sources: UCA News, Pakistan Christian Post, Morning Star News, ICR Canada, CLAAS-UK, ECSPE

On January 5th, 12-year-old Saba Shafique was abducted from her home in Lahore, Pakistan, and forced to convert to Islam before being married to her abductor. This devastating incident occurred despite the country's laws prohibiting child marriage.

The man responsible, Muhammad Ali, was a Muslim neighbour who became friends with Saba's family. On the day of the kidnapping, Muhammad took the Christian girl to the bazaar. However, rather than returning to her home afterwards, they travelled by bus to the city of Sialkot where a cleric fabricated a certificate claiming that Saba had converted to Islam. The cleric then falsely stated that Saba was 18 years old before marrying them. A few days later, fearful that he would be discovered by the authorities, Muhammad fled the area – taking Saba with him – and travelled to a village in Sindh Province.



Saba Shafique and her mother.  
Photo: Christian Daily International-Morning Star News

While initially it appeared as though the police were not adequately investigating the case, Lahore authorities had conducted a raid on March 5th in conjunction with police from Sindh Province. Thankfully, following the arrest of her abductor, Saba was recovered and then safely returned to her family the next day.

In a separate incident, a 14-year-old Christian girl named Saneha Sharif was lured from her home in Sialkot on January 9th. The young teen was forced into a van by a group of seven individuals, one of whom was identified as her neighbour. (Further information on this kidnapping incident is [available here](#).)

Although an eyewitness was able to identify those responsible for the abduction, Saneha remained missing for weeks. Finally, the police recovered the girl on February 19th. However, rather than returning Saneha directly to her family, she was placed in a government shelter. Due to the trauma of the incident, the young teen was unable to articulate clearly what had happened to her. After multiple court hearings, she was finally able to express her desire to return home on March 6th. At that point, she was finally released by the government and rightfully placed in her parents' custody.

Following Saneha's release, Nasir Saeed, who serves as the director of CLAAS-UK, condemned the situation, stating: "Forced conversions and abductions of underage Christian and Hindu girls have become a pattern in Pakistan; and despite court orders, justice is often delayed. Saneha's case is a rare victory, but many others remain unheard." For previously published reports addressing the severe challenges facing Christian women and girls in Pakistan, and/or to view informative video interviews, visit our [country profile](#).

- ***Praise God for the safe return of these two girls to their concerned families!***
- ***As Saba and Saneha now go through the recovery process, may the Lord minister greatly needed psychological and physical healing in each of their lives.***
- ***Pray that those responsible for the girls' abductions will ultimately be brought to justice.***
- ***Intercede on behalf of the many other victimized girls and young women who have yet to be released from their abductors, asking the Lord to divinely intervene in each of their situations.***
- ***May great measures be taken in Pakistani society to ensure the protection of vulnerable minorities, so that such incidents of kidnapping and violence will no longer take place.***

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