



Persecution & Prayer Alert

The Voice of the Martyrs Canada
www.vomcanada.com

Thursday, May 24, 2018

*"The Christian, even when
he is condemned, gives thanks."
~ Tertullian (c. AD 210)*

INDIA: Anti-Conversion Legislation Expanding

Sources: Christian Post, Mission Network News, Hindustan Times

The North Indian state of Uttarkhand is now the seventh state in the country to pass legislation restricting religious conversions, particularly from Hinduism to Christianity. This law carries a jail term of up to two years.

Passed by the state assembly in March, and signed into law by the governor in April, the law bans any conversion by use of force, fraud or inducement. The new law was passed in response to a High Court ruling last November which referred to conversion for the purpose of marriage as "sham." The court recommended a "Freedom of Religion Act" like that found in other Indian states.

Experience in various areas of India indicates that similar legislation has frequently been applied unjustly against Christians, particularly among those who are considered by Indian society as low-caste Dalit people. Unwarranted accusations are often used to harass and restrict Hindus from converting away from their religion. More about persecution in India may be reviewed at www.vomcanada.com/india.htm.

Pray that the state and federal governments in India will respect their constitution and protect the religious rights of all citizens. May the Christians residing in this country continue reaching out with the message of hope in Christ, despite potential new opposition.

RUSSIA: Church Attack in Chechnya

Sources: World Watch Monitor, Radio Free Europe

On Saturday, May 19th, four gunmen stormed the Archangel Michael Orthodox Church in Grozny, Chechnya. Before they were shot dead by police, they had killed one church member and two security officers. Two other officers and another church member were also injured.

According to the pastor, churchgoers heard shouts of "Allahu Akbar" outside the church and rushed to bolt the doors just as the attackers tried to break in. It appears that the attack started as a hostage attempt. Along with guns, the four perpetrators also carried axes and Molotov cocktails. The self-proclaimed Islamic State (ISIS) terrorist group has claimed responsibility.

Chechnya, which is located in southern Russia, has been a hotbed for Islamist activity -- often attacking police, government officials and moderate Muslims. Militants have been attempting to establish a Muslim emirate in the region for years. The population is predominantly Muslim after most of the Christian population fled during the separatist wars of the 1990s.

Please remember the friends and families of those tragically killed in this attack. Pray for the healing of those injured and peace for members of the church who witnessed the violence. May the governing authorities act justly toward those responsible.

PRAISE REPORT

NIGERIA: Army Rescues Nearly a Thousand Captives

Sources: International Christian Concern, CNN

After a week-long battle, the Nigerian army has freed almost a thousand people from Boko Haram captivity. The operation led to the deaths of over 50 of the terrorists. According to the Nigerian military, the joint operation with the Cameroonian army remains ongoing.

Those rescued are mainly women and children, as well as some young men who had been forced to fight alongside the militants. The freed hostages have received necessary medical treatment. Praise the Lord for those released and continue to remember others remaining in captivity.

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 at www.vomcanada.com/prayerwall.htm.

The Persecution & Prayer Alert is a ministry of:
The Voice of the Martyrs Canada, P.O. Box 608, Streetsville, Ontario, L5M 2C1
Tel. (905) 670-9721 Website: www.vomcanada.com

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If you would like to encourage someone to read or receive this weekly prayer alert, please use our online form at www.vomcanada.com/pnpforward.htm and help spread the message of the persecuted church around the world.

For information on additional ways to support members of the persecuted church overseas, review the list of options at www.vomcanada.com/take-action.htm.