



## Persecution & Prayer Alert

The Voice of the Martyrs Canada  
www.vomcanada.com

Thursday, August 30, 2018

*" The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge.... I call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised, and I am saved from my enemies."*

~ 2 Samuel 22:2-4 ESV

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### **PAKISTAN: Eyesight Lost in Attack**

Sources: Morning Star News, Christians in Pakistan

A young Christian in Karachi lost his sight in one eye after armed neighbours attacked his family on August 18th. Other family members were also assaulted but suffered only minor injuries.

Since Alvin John and his family moved into a new home in late 2017, they have faced harassment and intimidation from neighbours opposed to their Christian faith. On this specific night, Alvin's 25-year-old son Vikram had exchanged words with some area youth before coming into the house. The dispute started when Vikram was defending his younger sister who had been teased.

Moments after going into their home, bricks and stones were thrown -- smashing a window and damaging the gate. The attackers demanded that the family leave if they wanted to stay alive. The men then left but returned later that night, forcing their way into the house. Vikram sustained various injuries, but the most severe was the damage of one eye, in which he lost all sight. Alvin and his other son, Sunil, were also beaten but without serious injury.

Alvin believes that the person who led the attack is affiliated with an Islamist political party notorious for supporting gangs throughout Pakistan. The incident has been reported to police, but Alvin is concerned that political backing may prevent the gang from facing charges.

*Please pray for the healing of Vikram's eye in hopes that his sight will be perfectly restored and that his other wounds will heal properly. Remember to uphold the rest of his family as they continue to experience harassment from others residing in their community, asking God*

*to protect and care for them. In spite of the hardships they have endured, may the members of the attacked family be testimonies to their enemies of the grace of God. Also intercede on behalf of those responsible for the attack that they will be held accountable for their actions, respond to God's conviction, and come to a point of repentance and salvation.*

## **CHINA: Churches Facing Government Crackdown**

Source: ChinaAid

As the Chinese government institutes new religious guidelines, churches throughout the country are facing significant problems from authorities at the local, provincial and national levels. New policies are pressuring churches to align with government ideologies in an attempt to "unify national thought."

As a result, crosses are being torn down and authorities are ordering churches to sing patriotic songs and hang the national flag. Unregistered "house" churches are also being pressured to join along with the registered churches, where they would be under more control of the authorities.

Even registered churches have not been spared. Since the beginning of the year, more than 20 of them -- including those that are registered -- have been closed in the northern province of Qinghai. The associate secretary-general of the official Three-Self Patriotic Movement (TSPM) has written a letter of protest against the closures.

Churches refusing to join the official TSPM movement, however, are facing the most opposition. Officials have forced landlords to stop renting to churches. Pastors have been fined. Christians of a church in Henan province were forced to sign a letter committing to follow the Communist Party and not Christianity.

For members of the Zion Church in Beijing, officers promised church attendees good jobs and better schools for their children if they committed to leaving the church. Six branches of the Zion Church were recently closed by authorities with claims that these members have refused registration.

These are only a few of the many ways in which Christians within China have been threatened and harassed because of their faith in Christ. For more information on the opposition facing Chinese believers, go to [www.vomcanada.com/china.htm](http://www.vomcanada.com/china.htm).

*In the midst of this increasing storm of opposition, pray that the Christians of these harassed Chinese churches will hold firmly onto their faith, anchored to the Rock of Ages. May their church members have the right words to say when confronted by governing authorities (Luke 12:11-13). Ask that pressure will be placed on the Chinese government to respect the country's constitutional freedom of religion by allowing people to worship the God of all creation.*

## REPORT UPDATE

### **NIGERIA: Audio Recording from Leah**

Sources: The Cable, Christian Solidarity Worldwide

As speculation abounds regarding the fate of Leah Sharibu, an audio recording of her voice, along with a still photo, has surfaced in which she calls for the government to intervene. Family members have confirmed that it is, in fact, her voice.

In the recording, Leah says:

*"I am Leah Sharibu, the girl that was abducted in GGSS Dapchi. I am calling on the government and people of goodwill to intervene to get me out of my current situation. I also plead to the members of the public to help my mother, my father, my younger brother and relatives. Kindly help me out of my predicament. I am begging you to treat me with compassion. I am calling on the government, particularly, the president to pity me and get me out of this serious situation. Thank you."* (The actual recording is available at <https://bit.ly/2BYOZLs>.)

The 15-year-old student was the only Christian among the 110 schoolgirls abducted by a faction of Boko Haram in February. Following negotiations, the others were released. Leah was held for refusing to convert to Islam in exchange for her freedom. The strength in her voice and concern for her family serve as a testimony of her unwavering faith and character.

The emergence of this "proof of life" has given rise to speculation that renewed negotiations may soon be underway. The Voice of the Martyrs Canada, in cooperation with other organizations, is calling on the Nigerian government to expedite her release, along with the remaining Chibok captives. We also call on Christians around the world to support Leah and her family in prayer. More information on these and other accounts of persecution in Nigeria is available at [www.vomcanada.com/nigeria.htm](http://www.vomcanada.com/nigeria.htm).

*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](http://www.vomcanada.com/prayerwall.htm).*

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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](http://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](http://www.vomcanada.com/take-action.htm).