



Persecution & Prayer Alert

The Voice of the Martyrs Canada
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*"In times of affliction, we
commonly meet with the sweetest
experiences of the love of God."*

~ John Bunyan

UZBEKISTAN: Military Joins in Church Raid

Source: Forum 18

On November 25th, a Baptist church in Tashkent was raided. While not an unusual situation, this is the first time such a raid included members of the Uzbek military, as the National Guard joined 20 plain clothes officials from the secret police, the Justice Ministry, and the district police.

Officials searched throughout the building, confiscating over 7,000 items - including literature, songbooks and DVDs. Fourteen of the church attendees were taken to the police station where they were detained for over nine hours and then forced to sign statements that they had participated in an "unauthorized meeting."

When asked why the secret police and military were there, the Christians were told "it is a special operation" without receiving any further clarification. Officials have demanded that all churches register; something many refuse to do fearing government interference and control.

Raids against Christians do not only happen in organized meetings. On November 19th, a group of believers in eastern Uzbekistan were sharing a meal when police entered the apartment. They confiscated Bibles, DVDs, CDs and assorted literature, even though all the items had been purchased through the state-registered Bible Society of Uzbekistan. Two computers were also confiscated without a warrant. The police claimed that the literature would be sent for "expert analysis," which often means it will be destroyed. More accounts of religious opposition in Uzbekistan are available at www.vomcanada.com/uzbekistan.

Remember these Christians and others throughout the country who are facing ongoing pressure from officials. Pray that the Word of God will continue to spread unhindered. As the officials review the confiscated literature, may it pique their interest in Christianity and be powerfully used to convict them of their own need for Christ.

CHINA: Christians Positively Respond to Persecution

Source: ChinaAid

Despite ongoing attacks from authorities, members of the Early Rain Covenant Church have continued to preach on the streets. In October, 20 members of the church were detained for street evangelism. Despite the danger, church members gathered together again on November 14th to hand out fliers.

After 10 people were taken away for interrogation, other members of the church gathered together to pray for them, stating: "May the Lord grant the church peace and stamina. May we preach the Word and God's sovereignty in tough times...in and out of season." Thankfully, those detained were eventually released.

Christians also stood firmly in the face of harassment when police raided the Dao'en Church in Jiangsu on November 21st. As officials interrupted the worship service, the gathered believers continued to sing hymns of praise. This is not the first time their church had been raided. On September 7th, the local religious affairs bureau had arrested seven congregants. For more information on the persecution facing Christians in China, go to www.vomcanada.com/china.

Please join with these church members in their prayers for strength as they continue reaching out with the Gospel message of peace. May God continue to be worshipped and glorified throughout China, even in times of suffering and persecution. Pray that the officials involved in these raids will have opportunities to reflect on what they witness and hear, leading them to faith in Christ as well.

PRISONER UPDATE

IRAN: Christian Refused Permission to Visit Dying Mother

Source: Middle East Concern

Ebrahim Firouzi has been imprisoned since 2013 on charges, including "actions against national security" (see www.vomcanada.com/ir-2015-05-14.htm). He is presently being held at the Rajai Shahr Prison, considered one of the harshest in the country.

Ebrahim's mother has been suffering with cancer and appealed several times to the courts, asking that he be granted permission to visit her, since she was too sick to travel to the prison. Officials refused and, sadly, she passed away without seeing him. The funeral was held on December 4th and Ebrahim was unable to get permission in time to attend the service.

Continue to remember Ebrahim in your prayers. Pray for his brother and sister as they are also grieving the loss of their dearly beloved mother.

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:
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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.