



Persecution & Prayer Alert

The Voice of the Martyrs Canada
www.vomcanada.com

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*"Let goods and kindred go,
This mortal life also:
The body they may kill:
God's truth abideth still,
His Kingdom is for ever."
~ Martin Luther*

VIETNAM: Christians Repeatedly Beaten and Arrested

Sources: International Christian Concern, Christian Post

For many years, Christians living in the highlands of Vietnam have faced persecution and harassment from both government agents and fellow citizens. In this communist country, where Christianity is considered a threat to the regime, Hmong Christians face frequent discrimination - to the point of imprisonment and torture.

In the village of Phá Lóm, a group of 33 Protestant believers have experienced ongoing harassment from authorities during recent months. According to their pastor, Hoang Van Pa, they have been told to renounce their faith or suffer the consequences. When the believers refused, the raids took place repeatedly. In addition, four of the believers were arrested and beaten.

In one instance, the Christians were brought to an open trial before others in the community. During the trial, a statue of Buddha was brought to them and they were ordered to bow down before it. At the trial, one of the authorities announced that since there was no Protestant religion in Vietnam, they must convert to Buddhism or be expelled from the country.

This is not a new threat. In 2018, more than 100 Hmong believers were expelled from their homeland and made their way to Thailand, where they have applied for refugee status. For more information on Vietnam, including video reports, to go www.vomcanada.com/vietnam.

Please uphold these Christian brothers and sisters in your prayers. Pray that they will find the grace and strength of God to stand firm. For those facing expulsion, as well as others who are being threatened in this manner, ask the Lord to divinely lead them so they can establish their

future homes in safe and harmonious communities. May God's Spirit continue working in the lives of the opposing villagers, so they too will discover 'hope in Christ' as evidenced through the steadfast witness of the Christians they have been challenging.

PAKISTAN: New Security Updates Required of All Churches

Source: Mission Network News

In a move presented as a way to protect Christians, new regulations in the province of Punjab may result in the closure of churches. As of January 2nd, the government is requiring minimum security updates to all church properties. According to one ministry leader, the requirements are short on details but will likely require metal detectors and security cameras with offsite monitoring and storage.

Any church found not in compliance with these new regulations by March 31st faces closure. Some churches have already been scheduled for inspection. One major challenge is that the Christian community in Pakistan is generally an impoverished and oppressed minority, and thus many churches do not have the financial resources for the mandated equipment.

Another danger is the perception given by the authorities. While it is reasonable to expect churches to be responsible for their own security, this can be perceived as a veiled statement that the police will not be available to protect them in the future. As a result, some militant groups may consider this an opportunity to attack unabated. For more information on the dangers facing Christians in Pakistan, go to www.vomcanada.com/pakistan.

Pray for the protection of Pakistan's Christians from malicious attacks and discrimination. May an understanding and compromise be reached with the provincial government in Punjab. Remember the believers in this country who are imprisoned for their faith, as well as those living day-to-day in fear of harm, asking God to also grant them the assurance of His abiding presence, provision for their needs, and the resulting peace.

NORTH KOREA: Bible Used to Track Defectors

Source: International Business Times

In an attempt to monitor defectors, North Korean secret police agents have been studying the Bible. The purpose is for them to be able to gain rapport and trust with defectors in China and South Korea. In so doing, they hope to gain information on the whereabouts of other defectors, as well as ways to track and monitor them.

For defectors who have fled to China, once identified by the undercover agents, they can be reported to Chinese authorities, who will then arrest and repatriate them to North Korea.

Pray for a spirit of discernment on behalf of the North Korean defectors, especially when approached by anyone with wrong motives. At the same time, ask that God's Word will work

mightily in the lives of the police agents reading it, even if the research is being conducted for the wrong reasons (Isaiah 55:11).

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.

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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.