



Persecution & Prayer Alert

The Voice of the Martyrs Canada
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*"God will judge us not
according to how much we endured,
but how much we could love."*

~ Richard Wurmbrand

INDIA: Church Demolished Due to Placement

Source: Morning Star News

A church building within the village of Narnepadu in southern India was torn down on January 9th because it was on the west side of the village. Those responsible claim that the location of the building violated principles of Vastu Shastra, a Hindu system of planning and placement similar to the Chinese practise of Feng Shui.

According to the pastor, the church had formerly met in a rented shed, a facility also opposed by some villagers because of its placement on the west side of the village. When the church purchased property to build last year, village elders countered that the plan had opposed Hindu beliefs. Despite this, the church proceeded with the construction.

On January 9th, the village president called a meeting to discuss the situation but Pastor Koteswara Rao was not available. This annoyed the village leader who then ordered other villagers to demolish the church building. Members of the church leadership have filed a complaint with the police, since discussion between the pastoral leaders and village elders to resolve the issue has not yielded any positive results.

Prayerfully uphold the pastoral leaders, asking God to help them resolve the dissention by providing ways to cultivate an amicable relationship with the rest of the villagers, especially as they determine future plans for the rebuilding of the church. Pray for justice to be served and, throughout the process, that the love of Christ will be evident in this situation.

SRI LANKA: Churches Threatened

Source: National Christian Evangelical Alliance of Sri Lanka

Reports received reflect the continuing challenges facing churches throughout Sri Lanka. Christians who attempt to meet together face opposition and threats, as well as the possibility of violence.

In the village of Bakamuna, located in central Sri Lanka, seven Buddhist monks took a Christian woman to the police station on November 10th to file a complaint against her. They protested that she was gathering people in her home for prayer. The officer in charge responded by telling the woman that this was a "Buddhist village" and, therefore, she must stop hosting the prayer meetings.

Also, in Bakamuna, Buddhist monks led a group of youth in a protest during a church service on December 2nd. The monks demanded that the pastor step outside where they questioned him as to whether permission had been obtained from the divisional secretary to conduct religious activities. However, such permission is not legally required in Sri Lanka. The group then began yelling obscenities and threatening the Christians with violence. The pastor called the police who managed to bring the situation under control.

A similar demand for permission occurred in the town of Nittambuwa on November 23rd. Two individuals claiming to be from the district's Urban Development Authority asked if the pastor had received approval to hold worship services. They insisted that permission was required, mandating that the pastor meet with the planning director.

Remember these believers in Sri Lanka as they face pressure from various directions. Pray for their protection from violence and further verbal assault, asking the Lord to give them wisdom and the appropriate words "spoken in due season" when responding to questions and accusations (Proverbs 15:23). May the message of God's grace through Christ continue to spread throughout the nation.

EGYPT: Muslim Imam Prevents Church Bombing

Sources: International Christian Concern, BBC

As churches in Egypt prepared for Christmas celebrations on January 7th, terrorists in Nasr City near Cairo plotted an attack against the worshippers. Multiple bombs were placed on a roof near a church in the city with the intention of detonating them on Christmas Day.

A Muslim imam in a mosque across the street saw what was happening and alerted the police. As the bombs, described as "highly complex and explosive," were being disarmed by explosive experts, one of them detonated -- accidentally killing an officer by the name of Mustafa Abid. Two other officers and an onlooker were also injured. It is expected that the casualty rate would have been significantly higher had the bomb exploded when the building was full of worshippers.

While thankful that the bombs were discovered in time, please pray for the healing of those who were injured at the scene. Also uphold the family, friends and co-workers of the slain officer, Mustafa Abid, as they grieve their tragic loss. May there be a continued unified effort of citizens throughout Egypt, as they work together despite their differences, in the stand against terrorism.

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.