



Persecution & Prayer Alert

The Voice of the Martyrs Canada
www.vomcanada.com

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*"Blessed be the God and Father of our
Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and
God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our
affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those
who are in any affliction, with the comfort with
which we ourselves are comforted by God."*

~ 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 ESV

CHINA: New Religious Regulations

Sources: China Aid, Release International, International Christian Concern

As of February 1st, a new series of regulations on religion were released by the Chinese government. Consisting of six chapters and 41 articles, the restrictions require all religious leaders and organizations to demonstrate complete devotion to the Chinese Communist Party. For years, the Chinese government has controlled and monitored religious organizations. Under President Xi Jinping, this has become much more overt. The Party has been set as the official head of all religious organizations. Religious symbols are being removed, replaced by flags and pictures of President Xi.

The rules also severely limit communications between churches and overseas organizations. Christian organizations around the world have been working to provide medical supplies to help China's battle with the recent breakout of the novel coronavirus. The supplies were confiscated and the Christian who received the shipment was invited to "have tea" -- a euphemism for interrogation and intimidation.

Despite the threats, Chinese Christians in Wuhan have been seeking ways to bring a message of peace and hope in the midst of the medical crisis. Some have been giving out facemasks on the streets while sharing their faith with passersby. Others have broadcast encouraging messages through video and audio recordings. More information on the restrictions facing Christians in China can be found at www.vomcanada.com/china.htm.

Please pray for the ongoing efforts to spread the Gospel of peace and hope during this time of heightened religious oppression in China. May Christians continue to find new and creative ways to carry out the Lord's Great Commission. Pray that members of the government will realize the futility of their efforts to oppose the work of God. Additionally, pray for wisdom on behalf of church communities that are having to deal with these tightened restrictions.

IRAQ: Four Foreign Aid Workers Missing

Sources: SOS Chretiens d'Orient, International Christian Concern, Christian Post

On January 20th, four workers affiliated with the French organization, SOS Chretiens d'Orient, went missing while in Baghdad. Despite repeated attempts to contact them, no response has been received to date. At last report, there have been no ransom demands made nor any further information on their whereabouts.

The workers, whose names are being withheld for security reasons, were experienced and well aware of the dangers they may encounter. They were in Baghdad to renew their visas and permits, as well as monitor the association's operations. Three of the missing workers are of French nationality and one is Iraqi.

SOS Chretiens d'Orient provides humanitarian aid, as well as support for persecuted Christians in the Middle East. For more information on the plight of Christians in Iraq, go to www.vomcanada.com/iraq.htm.

Please lift up these four missing humanitarian workers in your prayers, asking God to ensure their safety and soon release. Also pray for the protection of other Christians who are seeking to serve Him in Iraq and other dangerous locations of the Middle East. May God's peace come to this devastated war-torn nation -- the peace that derives from a personal relationship with the "Prince of Peace" Himself (Isaiah 9:6).

REPORT UPDATE

BANGLADESH: Rohingya Christians Deal with Aftermath of Attack

Sources: The Voice of the Martyrs Canada Contacts, Mission Network News

In last week's "Persecution & Prayer Alert," an urgent prayer request was issued for Christians who were recently attacked in a Rohingya refugee camp and the imminent forced marriage of a pastor's daughter to a Muslim man (see www.vomcanada.com/bd-2020-01-30.htm). Since the previous report, more details have continued to come to light.

The attack occurred in Kutapalong, the world's largest refugee camp. More than 20 Christian families were attacked with at least 12 people injured. A similar attack happened in May 2019 by the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army who claim to be fighting for the liberation of the

Rohingya. Local police insist that the ARSA is not involved and have downplayed the number of injured.

In the aftermath of the attack, as many as 170 Christians have been moved to a segregated "transit camp" for their protection. We were also saddened to receive news that the forced marriage of the pastor's daughter has taken place. Some of the other kidnapped believers are still missing. There are reports stating that one man has been promised release if he converts to Islam. The son of another kidnapped man has asked fellow Christians to please pray that they will remain brave.

Please continue to lift up these attacked Rohingya believers in your prayers. Ask the Lord to provide safety for all concerned, while granting them courage in the face of violent opposition. Remember each of the abducted victims, including the girl who must now endure the forced marriage arrangement. May she also be rescued from captivity and any further victimization. Ask God to soften the hearts of the perpetrators, so they may come to sincere repentance and salvation in Christ.

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.