



Persecution & Prayer Alert

The Voice of the Martyrs Canada
www.vomcanada.com

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*"We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed;
perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted but
not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed...."*

~ 2 Corinthians 4:8-9 ESV

INDIA: Church Demolition and Arrests

Source: Steadfast Global

In the early morning of March 9th, authorities ordered the destruction of a place of worship in the town of Chelur in Karnataka State. The action was taken after governing officials received pressure from Hindu militants in the area. Local Christians were able to capture the destruction on video. To view the footage, go to www.vomcanada.com/india-videos/video/in-church-demolition.html.

Additionally, the pastor and a number of other church members were arrested for alleged document discrepancies. The pastor refutes these accusations, insisting that all building permits were in place. At last report, eleven Christians were placed in detention, and ongoing efforts are being made to secure bail for them.

Please prayerfully remember these Christian men, their families, as well as those attempting to provide them assistance. Pray that this matter will be resolved quickly and in a diplomatic manner so these earnest followers of Christ will be able to peacefully gather together for worship. May the 'One True God' minister His life-transforming love and truth to the militants opposing them, so they may too become recipients of His mercy, grace and eternal salvation.

CHINA: Online Preaching Banned

Source: China Aid

Authorities in Shandong province have issued an order banning online preaching. In a notice sent to the official churches of the province, the order stated that "all livestreamed preaching should be stopped immediately." With the outbreak of COVID-19 in China, the prevalence of Internet-based services has increased significantly. Non-registered churches have also begun using online services after being shut down by authorities.

Along with the restriction on online preaching, the memo also called on the churches to assist in the rooting out of any non-approved churches in their communities. They were told to help "positively guide" those Christians in ways their spiritual needs can be met, as long as they don't gather together. No specifics were given in terms of what that exactly means. For more details on the persecution of Christians in China, go to www.vomcanada.com/china.htm.

Ask the Lord to grant His divine wisdom to the leaders of the registered churches, as they seek to maintain the ministry they have while working under a restrictive governmental system. Please uphold the multitudes of Christians throughout China who are longing to fellowship together and have a yearning to learn more about His Word despite the authorities' efforts to discourage and defeat them. May the words of Jesus be fulfilled in their situation: "I will build My church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18).

REPORT UPDATES

PAKISTAN: Hearing Delayed for Huma Younus

Source: UCA News

The concerned parents of Huma Younus, a teenage girl who was forced into marrying a Muslim man, have expressed anger after yet another delay of legal proceedings in their attempts to annul the marriage. Huma, 14, was abducted from her home on October 10th and taken 600 kilometres away where she "converted" to Islam and married her kidnapper (see www.vomcanada.com/pk-2020-02-20.htm). While forcible marriage is not illegal in Pakistan, the Child Marriage Restraint Act does require permission from the guardian(s) if the person is under 18 years of age.

Although a hearing was scheduled for March 4th, Huma was not present in the court to personally testify. The parents presented her baptismal certificate and a testimony from the school to prove her age, but it was ignored. The judge decided to give the police more time to determine her age. The girl's mother, Nagina, informed the court that the police investigator, Akhtar Hussain, knows where their daughter is located but supports the abductors. The court has ordered Hussain to present Huma to the court on March 29th so that a medical examination of her age can be conducted.

Please intercede for Huma's safety in the weeks leading up to the next hearing. Pray that the courts will rule justly, working to protect the abducted young teen from further exploitation.

As the members of Huma's family anxiously await her hopeful release and return home, may the Lord's peace rest on them during this time of uncertainty and frustration.

IRAN: Second Sentence for Convicted Christian

Sources: Middle East Concern, Article Eighteen

Ismaeil Maghrebinejad, 65, a believer in Christ for nearly 40 years, has been facing regular harassment from security forces for the entire time. His daughter believes part of the reason for his troubles is because she and her husband, now both living in the United States, are involved in ministry to Christians in Iran via the Internet.

In January 2019, Ismaeil was arrested (see www.vomcanada.com/ir-2019-02-07.htm), then further charges of apostasy were added in October. This year, on January 11th, he was convicted of "insulting Islamic sacred beliefs" and sentenced to three years in prison. In a subsequent court decision, which took place on February 27th, another conviction was added for his alleged "membership of a group hostile to the regime" -- resulting in an additional two years of imprisonment.

Please pray for Ismaeil and his family as they face these harsh sentences. May his health and strength be renewed daily, and his steadfast love for the Lord serve as a powerful witness to every person with whom he is in contact. Furthermore, pray that the Iranian authorities would be willing to abide by their constitution, which guarantees freedom of religion, and thus authorize his rightful release. Intercede on behalf of those who oppose the Gospel, in hopes of them coming to know the reality of the Risen Saviour and turn to Him in faith.

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.