



Persecution & Prayer Alert

The Voice of the Martyrs Canada
www.vomcanada.com

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"The world today is full of troubled and hurting people who need the Saviour's gentle care.... When we've been a beneficiary of God's loving compassion, we can't help but want to extend it to others."

~ A. Kieda in reference to Matthew 9:36

NIGERIA: Reports of "Unfolding Genocide"

Sources: Forbes, Christian Post

For several years, suffering has been a way of life for Christians in Nigeria. In 2010, the International Criminal Court (ICC) opened a preliminary examination into this troubling situation which was formerly caused by the violence of Boko Haram militants. Thousands of lives have been lost throughout the years that followed, along with the destruction of numerous homes and churches, and the abduction of hundreds of innocent victims -- including teen Leah Sharibu who was taken captive in February 2018 and is still missing to date.

As horrific as the crimes perpetrated by Boko Haram have been, this terrorist group has been eclipsed in recent years by Fulani militia groups. While the exact death toll is unknown, Christian leaders claim that over 6,000 believers have been maimed or killed -- many of them vulnerable children, women and the aged. Open Doors refers to the attacks as a "religious cleansing"; in other words, an attempt to eradicate Christianity from the region. Others refer to it as genocide.

On June 15th, the United Kingdom's All-Party Parliamentary Group for International Freedom of Religion or Belief released a report titled, *Nigeria: Unfolding Genocide?* The document outlines the fact that thousands of innocent lives have been lost and multiple homes destroyed, concerns that have prompted the organization to call on the involvement of the international community. This call includes providing humanitarian assistance for those who are suffering, a response from the international community, and proactive action taken by the Nigerian government. To view the report, go to www.vomcanada.com/download/appg-nigeria.pdf. British representatives have also taken their concerns to the ICC earlier this year, asking for further investigation.

The response of the Nigerian government to allegations referencing its passivity over the horrendous atrocities committed by the country's militants has been dismissive. President Muhammadu Buhari's spokesperson refers to a "misleading campaign" with "false allegations of persecution of Christians." Such an apathetic response leads to another concern, questioning potential bias on the part of the president, the son of a Fulani chief. For more information on the persecution of Christians in Nigeria, go to www.vomcanada.com/nigeria.htm.

Intercede for Nigeria's Christians who are facing these ongoing campaigns of violence from various opposing sources. Pray that the government will act responsibly on behalf of these innocent victims by making efforts to halt the alarming number of casualties, rampages of destruction, and the resulting grief and suffering. May action from the international community serve as an impetus to bring about positive change and, therefore, a brighter future for all Nigerians.

MALI: Raid of Three Villages Results in Tragic Loss

Sources: Christian Post, Reuters, Barnabas Fund

Suspected Fulani militants killed twenty-seven people in three predominantly Christian villages of Central Mali. The village of Tillé was raided on May 26th, resulting in the deaths of seven, some of them burned alive. Over the next 24 hours, the attackers moved on to the villages of Bankass and Koro, killing another twenty villagers.

In 2012, al-Qaeda affiliates seized control of the northern two-thirds of Mali. They were driven back by French forces but have since regrouped, expanding into neighbouring Burkina Faso and Niger. The stated aim is to establish an Islamic state which clearly involves the attacks of any groups or individuals not compliant with their agenda, causing valid concerns for Christians.

Remember the survivors remaining in these villages, including the families and friends of those who have been tragically slain. As they now contend with the resulting trauma -- along with the fear and uncertainty of potential further risk -- pray that God's peace, comfort, healing and protection will be tangible realities in their lives. May steps be taken by governing officials to ensure their safety and bring those responsible to justice in hopes that the perpetrators will experience genuine heartfelt repentance and transformation.

SUDAN: Christians Attacked After Incitement from Mosque Leaders

Sources: Christian Solidarity Worldwide, Morning Star News

Several South Sudanese Christians were attacked in Khartoum after mosque leaders called on their followers to rid their "Muslim area" of Christians. After evening prayers on June 6th, when imams raised the call, the mob attacks ensued. In one incident at a local market the following day, a group of Christians were targeted with batons and rifles. Many were severely injured, including 18-year-old Ariere Sathor. In addition, 16 temporary plastic shelters, where the South Sudanese refugees had been staying, were burned down.

According to one local source, these Christians have been harassed for a long time. Yet their attackers were emboldened to attack after claims were made by the imams that those practising Christianity were infidels, criminals and brewers of alcohol.

On June 20th, a separate attack took place in Omdurman, a populace city located on the west banks of the Nile River, across from the capital of Khartoum. During this incident, a Christian father of four by the name of Mariel Bang was stabbed to death and several other believers were injured. It was reported that the throng of young men responsible for this most recent outbreak of violence kept shouting "Allah Akbar" during their attack. More information on the difficulties facing Christians in Sudan is available at www.vomcanada.com/sudan.htm.

Please prayerfully lift up the many who've been injured, asking God to minister His healing upon them both physically and emotionally. Also uphold Mariel's family who are grieving their sudden loss. May the Lord prove Himself mighty on their behalf by providing for their spiritual and practical needs "according to His riches in glory" (Philippians 4:19). In addition, pray that His provision and protection will be extended to encompass the above mentioned refugees so each family represented may have a safe place to call home.

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.