



## Persecution & Prayer Alert

The Voice of the Martyrs Canada  
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*"In Christianity, Jesus shows Christians how to answer persecution with love. Although this suggestion might seem impossible to some and ridiculous to others, Jesus' teachings were always radical; and they are only possible if the Gospel message is true."*

~ Nabeel Qureshi

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### CHINA: Three Christians Detained in Unknown Location

Sources: ChinaAid, The Christian Post

The Church of Abundance in Xi'an, Shaanxi Province, issued a public prayer letter on October 17th, stating that two pastors and another believer have been in custody for 60 days. Since being detained, the Christians have not been heard from.

On August 17th, police detained Pastor Lian Changnian on charges of alleged fraud. He was then placed under "residential surveillance" along with Pastor Lian Xuliang and Sister Fu Juan. According to authorities, the pastors were detained in their own residences, but family members have no idea where they are currently being held. Fu Juan's location is also unknown, and her husband has not received an official notice of her arrest. According to church members, several female congregants have been summoned by the authorities since mid-August. Some of these believers were abused, threatened and beaten by police officers.

According to lawyers, "residential surveillance" is supposed to be a form of detention in which an individual is confined to their own residence. However, those accused can be held in other locations if there are national security risks or concerns of terrorist activities. Since no answers have been forthcoming, it is unknown what claims the authorities are making about the detained Christians.

Religious advocates have raised concerns about the recent election of Xi Jinping as president of China for a third term. Under his leadership, China has become increasingly oppressive towards

those who disagree with the ruling party's Communist views. Many believe that President Xi is leading the country back to the repressive policies originally instituted by Mao Zedong, reversing any reforms and openness previously enacted. Speaking of the re-election, Bob Fu from ChinaAid warned: "The international community will have to prepare for the continuing acceleration of the worsening record on human rights abuses and religious persecution under Xi's new Cultural Revolution." For more information on the persecution facing Christians in China, go to [www.vomcanada.com/china.htm](http://www.vomcanada.com/china.htm).

*Pray that these detained Christians will soon be released unharmed and reunited with their loved ones. In the meantime, as concerned family members await news of the believers' whereabouts, may each one of them be filled with the Lord's reassuring peace and comfort. Additionally, please prayerfully remember the many other Christians throughout China who are experiencing various forms of relentless oppression by repressive governmental forces.*

### **PAKISTAN: Family Under Threat Unless Father Renounces Christianity**

Sources: CLAAS, The Friday Times

Yasir Masih, a father of two, resides in Karachi, Pakistan. Several months ago, the Christian man's wife left their home after being convinced by Yasir's aunt to convert to Islam. Since that time, other members of the family have been pressuring him to also convert.

Recently, Yasir's wife asked him to meet with her. When he arrived at the designated meeting place, however, he was greeted by a crowd consisting of about 150 to 200 people. A gun was placed on the table, along with some money. In addition to bribing him with the money, he was also promised a new house if he converted to Islam.

When Yasir turned down the offer and started to leave, he was warned that things would become very bad for him and his children if he refused to cooperate. His eldest daughter was then asked if she would prefer to live with her mother or father. She replied that she wanted to live with "Jesus Pappa." Despite an outbreak of anger from the crowd, Yasir and his children were allowed to leave.

Yasir has turned to the police, but they refuse to help, even though his wife has confessed that she tried to poison him and their two children. The Christian man and his children have since gone into hiding due to the pressure and death threats they received. He and his children are now being provided assistance from CLAAS, an organization committed to supporting Pakistani believers who are being persecuted for their faith. For other reports addressing the suffering of our Christian brothers and sisters in Pakistan, go to [www.vomcanada.com/pakistan.htm](http://www.vomcanada.com/pakistan.htm).

*Pray that Yasir will remain steadfast in his faith despite the ongoing pressure perpetrated against him. May the Lord give him and his children inner strength and an overriding sense of calm during this difficult time of upheaval. Furthermore, pray that Yasir's wife, as well as the other Muslims who are opposing him, will come to recognize the truth of the Scriptures and, as a result, readily receive the Lord's provision of eternal salvation.*

## **INDIA: Anti-Conversion Law Passes in Karnataka State**

Sources: Deccan Herald, The Indian Express, Crux

On September 28th, the Indian state of Karnataka joined several others by officially enacting laws that restrict conversion from one religion to another. The "Protection of Right to Freedom of Religion Act" officially seeks to prohibit "unlawful conversion from one religion to another by misrepresentation, force, undue influence, coercion, allurement or by any fraudulent means." While restricting coercive conversions is laudable, such laws have frequently been misused against religious minorities throughout India.

The bill was passed by the Legislative Council on September 15th, despite objections by opposition members, who walked out in protest. The legislation received the governor's assent on September 28th and is in effect retroactive to May 17th. Although the bill had passed the Legislative Assembly in December, it was not brought before the upper house until the Hindu nationalist BJP obtained a majority of seats in council to guarantee its passing.

Christians have raised concerns, calling the law "draconian." Anyone convicted of participating in an "illegal" conversion will now face five years in prison, extended to ten years if it involves the conversion of a minor. The law also allows anyone associated with an individual to lodge a complaint against them, opening ways to further harass Christians. Hindu nationalists have claimed that Christian groups use social services such as schools and hospitals to illicitly convert Hindus. To read previously published reports on the persecution of Christians in India, go to [www.vomcanada.com/india.htm](http://www.vomcanada.com/india.htm).

*Pray that Christian leaders in Karnataka, along with those of other Indian states, will be granted God's wisdom and direction as they navigate these widely abused laws. May believers receive divinely appointed opportunities to continue reaching out to those around them with the Gospel message, even in the midst of these dangers. Pray that governing officials in India will realize the value of respecting diverse opinions and, therefore, endeavour to work harmoniously with members of all religious communities.*

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