



Voice of the
Martyrs

PERSECUTION
& PRAYER
ALERT

Persecution & Prayer Alert

Voice of the Martyrs Canada
www.vomcanada.com

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*"God whispers to us in our
pleasures, speaks in our conscience,
but shouts in our pains: it is His
megaphone to rouse a deaf world."
~ C.S. Lewis*

PAKISTAN: Christian Killed After Advocating for Harassed Victims

Sources: Morning Star News, Pakistan Christian Post, Release International

Marshall Masih, a Christian father of four, was gunned down by four men from his neighbourhood in the city of Lahore during the early hours of July 10th. Marshall (who was also known as Bunty) had previously filed a police complaint against two Muslim neighbours, named Shani and Azam, because they had been harassing Christian women in the area and shooting their guns into the air. In retaliation, the two men broke into Marshall's home with the help of two other local Muslims and shot the young father 15 times.

The killing has left an entire family without support, as Marshall was the sole provider for his wife and children, as well as his elderly parents. Following the devastating attack, his sister Goshi stated, "The Muslims were offended that a Christian had taken a stance against their criminal activities and, by killing him in cold blood, they have shown that our lives do not matter."

While police are presently investigating the incident, no arrests have been made at the time of publishing this report. Christians in the community have protested the lack of response from the authorities, stating that the attackers are known drug dealers who had recently been released from jail. Investigations for crimes against followers of Jesus in Pakistan are frequently delayed or dismissed due to pressure from militant Muslim community members. For other reports on the maltreatment of Christians in Pakistan, go to www.vomcanada.com/pakistan.htm.

Please prayerfully uphold Marshall's wife, Mehdi, along with his children, sisters and parents as they deal with the sudden loss of this young man, asking the Lord to minister peace,

protection and comfort in each of their lives. May the local authorities actively pursue justice against those responsible for this senseless tragedy. As for the difficult financial situation the victim's loved ones are now experiencing, pray that our Heavenly Father will abundantly provide for their daily practical needs, as well as provisions of spiritual strength, healing and the grace to forgive the perpetrators of the crime.

INDIA: Rajasthan State to Introduce Anti-Conversion Legislation

Sources: International Christian Concern, The Indian Express, Hindustan Times, VOM Australia

In an affidavit filed earlier this month before India's Supreme Court, officials from the Indian state of Rajasthan announced their plans to introduce legislation that would ban so-called forced religious conversions. The proposal comes after the Hindu-nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) took control of the state following elections in late November, unseating the more centrist Indian National Congress.

If implemented, Rajasthan would become the 11th of the country's 28 states to implement such legislation. A lawyer representing the state claims that the government intends to take "stringent steps to control fraudulent religious conversion and religious conversion by intimidation, threatening, and deceptively luring through gifts and monetary benefits." Unfortunately, such laws have shown to be overbroad and frequently abused by militant Hindus in order to specifically target Christians.

After state elections last year in Karnataka, the victory of the Indian National Congress party resulted in the repeal of similar legislation in June 2023, only a year after it had been passed. For more details, see www.vomcanada.com/in-2023-06-22b.htm. To access previously published reports describing how Christians in India have been affected by anti-conversion laws, go to www.vomcanada.com/india.htm.

Pray for guidance on behalf of Christians in Rajasthan and the country's other states where the widely abused anti-conversion laws have already been enacted. May our Indian brothers and sisters in Christ receive greatly needed wisdom, discernment and courage, especially as they endeavour to share the message of the Gospel to the spiritually impoverished all around them, so that multitudes more will come to faith in Jesus. Further, pray that as the anti-conversion laws are being debated, God will sovereignly guide the legislative decisions of the country's governing leaders – resulting in religious freedom and the protection of human rights for all citizens.

PAKISTAN: New Law Enacted to Protect Christian Girls Under 18

Sources: Agenzia Fides, Zenit, National Catholic Register, Christian Daily, Morning Star News

In a decision referred to as "a step forward" by Christian leaders, the National Assembly of Pakistan recently passed an amendment to an act governing Christian marriages, banning matrimony for Christians under the age of 18. After the law was enacted on July 10th, Naveed Amir Jeeva, a Christian member of the National Assembly, stated, "The legislation aims to

protect young girls from early and forced marriages, ensuring their access to education and health."

The legislation is limited in that it only applies to the Islamabad Capital Territory – a federal region centred around the nation's capital city. However, there are hopes that it will be used as a template to expand such policies throughout Pakistan. A similar law was introduced in the province of Punjab in April but has not yet been passed.

Christian girls in Pakistan are frequently kidnapped, forcibly converted to Islam, and then married to their kidnapers. A recent example of this concerns the abduction of Alina Masih, a 14-year-old Christian girl who was taken from her home in Islamabad on June 24th. The family learned three days later that she had allegedly converted to Islam and married a butcher in the area named Haider Ali. Alina's parents are fighting to recover their daughter but have faced daunting challenges from the police, as well as personal health issues. To review additional reports addressing similar incidents in Pakistan, and/or those relating to other forms of Christian persecution, go to www.vomcanada.com/pakistan.htm.

Prayerfully uphold Alina's family members as they seek to recover this young teenage girl from her kidnapper. While awaiting deliverance from captivity, pray that Alina will also be filled with divine strength, courage and hope, placing her trust in the Lord to rescue her from this horrific situation. In the midst of the ongoing violence against vulnerable victims like Alina, we can be thankful for the recent legislation that was passed by the Pakistani national government in order to prevent such cases from occurring in the future. May the legislation in Punjab likewise be passed, leading to the enactment of similar laws throughout the nation. Moreover, may policies be established and enforced to stop the forcible conversions of Christians at any age. In the meantime, please continue to pray for the safe return of the many innocent Pakistani girls and young women who have previously been kidnapped and presently remain in difficult and forced relationships.

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