



Voice of the  
Martyrs

PERSECUTION  
& PRAYER  
ALERT

## Persecution & Prayer Alert

Voice of the Martyrs Canada  
www.vomcanada.com

Thursday, December 5, 2024

*"The steadfast love of the Lord never  
ceases; His mercies never come to  
an end; they are new every morning;  
great is Your faithfulness."*

~ Lamentations 3:22-23 ESV

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### **INDIA: Christians Banned from Eight Villages**

Sources: Christian Solidarity Worldwide, AsiaNews, Christian Post

On November 17th, the leaders of eight villages in Sukma, a district in the Indian state of Chhattisgarh, passed a joint resolution that prohibits Christians from staying in their communities. As a result of the decision, all Christian residents have been required to renounce their faith or leave. The order impacts around 100 believers, whose fields, properties and belongings were threatened with confiscation if they did not comply. One local chief who supported the decree claimed that the village council supersedes the Indian Constitution, thus negating any arguments about the believers' right to freedom of belief.

On the day after the ordinance was passed, some of the affected Christians went to the police station in Michwar. However, the officers refused to file a report about the situation. The believers then led the authorities to a field where a mob of at least 1,500 people were looting the Christians' crops. Despite witnessing the violent incident, the police refused to intervene.

After representatives from the Chhattisgarh Christian Forum approached the local authorities in Sukma, an official police report was finally filed. At last report, 40 Christian villagers from eight families have been forced to move due to the looting and are presently being housed within a church building in Michwar.

According to the United Christian Forum, there has been an increase in violence and discrimination against followers of Jesus in at least 23 of India's 28 states this year. For further reports on the persecution of Christians in India, as well as other ways in which you can pray for our suffering South Asian family in Christ, go to [www.vomcanada.com/india.htm](http://www.vomcanada.com/india.htm).

*Prayerfully uphold these recently displaced Christians, asking God to provide them needed protection, comfort and practical provisions as they cope with the loss of their homes, belongings and livelihoods. May the state authorities intervene in this situation, ensuring that reparations are made for all losses and damages sustained during the mob attacks. In general, pray that followers of Jesus throughout India will stand firm in their faith despite intense pressure, discrimination and oppression, enabling the ministry and witness of the church to continue impacting the lives of the spiritually needy in this troubled region of the world.*

### **MYANMAR: Nine Killed in Church Bombing**

Sources: Radio Free Asia, UCA News, Barnabas Aid

Kachin State in northern Myanmar has been an area of political and military unrest for decades, as government forces continue to fight against the Kachin Independence Army. Fighting intensified after the military junta seized power in 2021; and ever since the political takeover, Christians have frequently suffered the brunt of the violence.

In a recent incident, a church building in the village of Konlaw near the Chinese border was struck by a bomb on November 15th. The church was located next to a camp for displaced persons who had fled the fighting that was taking place in the region. During the bombing attack, nine people were killed, including six children who had been playing on the church property. In addition, 11 others were wounded, seven of whom remain in critical condition. In just one family, both parents were killed, along with their four children.

While much of the fighting in Myanmar is political in nature, religion plays a significant factor. The military regime is primarily controlled by the Buddhist majority, whereas the Kachin and Chin populations are predominantly Christian. As a result, churches have frequently been the targets of military strikes. To review previously published reports addressing the ongoing conflict in Myanmar, go to [www.vomcanada.com/myanmar.htm](http://www.vomcanada.com/myanmar.htm).

*Please intercede on behalf of the families and friends of those who were tragically killed in this recent bombing attack, asking God to provide them greatly needed comfort and strength. Pray that His healing touch would also be upon each of the injured victims, resulting in their complete recovery – both physically and emotionally. Overall, may the Lord further the ongoing ministry of Christians in Myanmar who are boldly reaching out to those around them with the Gospel message, so that multitudes in need of eternal salvation will experience His everlasting love, peace and hope.*

## REPORT UPDATE

### **MEXICO: Christians Displaced Again After Negotiating Agreement**

Sources: Christian Solidarity Worldwide, Church in Chains

Members of the Great Commission Baptist Church in the Mexican villages of Coamila and Rancho Nuevo have frequently encountered opposition from community leaders for refusing to participate in festivals that go against their Christian beliefs. In March 2024, these difficulties came to a head when Pastor Rogelio Hernández Baltazar was arbitrarily detained, along with other church leaders, for 48 hours. Eventually, 151 believers were forced to leave their homes and find refuge in the nearby city of Huejutla de los Reyes.

In September, a new municipal government took office, leading to negotiations between the displaced Christians and leaders of both villages. This led to an agreement in which the believers would be allowed to return to their former villages, plus have the electrical and water services reconnected to their homes. In exchange, the Christians agreed to contribute financially to the communities' funds. Furthermore, it was decided that all criminal investigations relating to these incidents would be closed. More details regarding the proposed agreement are available at [www.vomcanada.com/mx-2024-10-17.htm](http://www.vomcanada.com/mx-2024-10-17.htm).

While the displaced Christians were optimistic that they would be able to return to their homes, they quickly discovered that their village leaders were not prepared to abide by the terms of the agreement. The ostracized community members were informed that in addition to contributing towards the villages' funds, they would have to financially support the local Roman Catholic church – even though the Baptist congregants are already supporting the ministry of their own church. They are also forbidden to speak with other villagers about their evangelical beliefs.

Additionally, the village leaders placed a ban on all conversion activities, stating that the movements of those affiliated with the Baptist church would be strictly monitored to ensure they have no contact with other Christians beyond the mentioned communities. Finally, the evangelical Christians were notified that they would not be reinstated on their villages' rolls for a year, meaning they will no longer have access to healthcare, education, nor any other government benefits. When municipal and state authorities were made aware of the unjust situation, they were unwilling to take action to enforce the terms of the agreement.

Considering they are no longer welcome in their former home villages and would not be receiving any support from the authorities, the exiled Christians have been forced to move from Hidalgo State to the neighbouring state of Veracruz. There, in the village of Chalma, they were offered an opportunity to rent land that they could potentially purchase at a later time. At last report, these believers are living in tents while awaiting government aid.

Rancho Nuevo and Coamila are indigenous Nahuatl-speaking communities where religious practices frequently combine elements of Catholicism with pre-Hispanic Mayan beliefs. The resulting syncretistic religion frequently involves heavy alcohol consumption and the practice of many other non-Christian components. Evangelical Christianity is often viewed by residents of

these communities as a foreign and unwelcome religion. To read more reports on the persecution of evangelical believers in Mexico, and/or view informative videotaped documentaries, go to [www.vomcanada.com/mexico.htm](http://www.vomcanada.com/mexico.htm).

*Prayerfully lift up these displaced believers as they seek to rebuild their lives in a new community, asking our Heavenly Father to divinely guide, protect and provide for each of their spiritual and practical needs. Throughout the process, may they tangibly sense the Lord's peace amid all the turmoil and uncertainty, assuring them of His abiding presence and tender-loving care. In the meanwhile, ask God to speak to the hearts of the opposing villagers in Coamila and Rancho Nuevo, in hopes that they too will eventually respond to the message of the Gospel by placing their faith in Jesus Christ.*

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The "Persecution & Prayer Alert" is a ministry of:  
Voice of the Martyrs Canada, P.O. Box 608, Streetsville, Ontario, L5M 2C1  
Tel. (905) 670-9721 Website: [www.vomcanada.com](http://www.vomcanada.com)