



Voice of the
Martyrs

PERSECUTION
& PRAYER
ALERT

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Voice of the Martyrs Canada
www.vomcanada.com

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*"Once we serve God, surely we
must go the way of the cross.
So I will not quarrel against the
Lord for what has happened."*

~ Nguyen Hong Quang
Vietnamese pastor

PAKISTAN: Young Teen Kidnapped

Sources: CLAAS-UK, Morning Star News, Release International

On January 9th, a 14-year-old Christian girl was kidnapped just outside her home. The abducted teen's family is concerned that those responsible are planning to forcibly convert her to Islam and then make the young girl marry one of her attackers.

Saneha Sharif was lured from her home in the Korpur area of Sialkot city by a Muslim girl who had recently moved into the neighbourhood. As soon as Saneha stepped out of the house, she was ambushed by five men who forced her into a van that had been waiting nearby. Two women were also involved in the kidnapping, including the mother of the girl who deceived Saneha.

Police were notified of Saneha's abduction, and two of the perpetrators have since been arrested. However, the main culprits presently remain at large. One of Saneha's captors, a Muslim man named Muhammad Dildar, had previously made unwanted advances towards the young teen. Saneha's parents feel that police are not taking adequate action to recover their daughter.

In the aftermath of the incident, Saneha's mother has fallen ill, requiring hospitalization twice for treatment. The girl's father, Sharif Masih, has pled for assistance. "We are very weak and can only plead for the higher authorities to save our daughter from these criminals." Legal assistance has been provided to the family by concerned representatives of Christian organizations.

Under current laws, the minimum marriageable age for Christians in Pakistan is 18. However, girls who have been forcibly converted to Islam are considered Muslim, and thereby can be

legally married at a younger age. In order to help prevent this type of crime, a proposed law that would raise the minimum legal age of marriage to 18 years for both Christians and Muslims is presently being deliberated by officials within the Punjab Assembly. For more reports on the persecution of followers of Jesus in Pakistan, go to www.vomcanada.com/pakistan.htm.

- *Pray for the safe recovery of this precious teenage girl, also asking that those responsible for her kidnapping would be soon located and apprehended.*
- *As Saneha's parents try to cope during this time of uncertainty and concern, pray that God's supernatural peace, comfort and support will sustain them as they await the hopeful return of their daughter.*
- *May necessary laws be passed within Pakistan's legal system that will better protect the country's vulnerable minorities and prevent further cases of abduction from taking place.*

INDIA: Attack Leads to Miscarriage

Sources: Morning Star News, The Voice of the Martyrs Australia, ThePrint

Kunika Kashyap was more than six months pregnant when she went to visit another Christian in her village who had been ill. While Kunika was sitting at the ailing believer's bedside, a relative of hers named Ganga Ram Kashyap began recording the pregnant Christian woman on his mobile phone, hoping to obtain video evidence of her praying.

When Kunika objected and swatted at his hand, Ganga Ram – who serves as the local village chief – suddenly began to physically attack her. Ganga's wife and daughter then joined in the assault, which included strangling, kicking and beating the pregnant woman. According to Kunika's husband, Mandu, "It was only God's doing that enabled her to escape from three people [who were] continuously beating her from all sides."

As a result of the attack, the young woman was taken to the hospital, where it was determined that she had lost her unborn child. Police have filed a report against Ganga Ram and his wife, but no arrests have been made. "Ganga Ram has big contacts," Kunika's husband explains. "Nobody will be able to harm him." The assaulted Christian woman believes the attack was committed in reprisal for her alleged conversion activities within the community. "We are often told we are trying to convert Hindus to Christianity, and [that] we don't want to live peacefully with them. This is not true," states Kunika.

Allegations of forced religious conversions are a major reason for the opposition that Christians face in India. In part, this is because the church is growing in many areas of the country. To access previously published information on the many challenges being encountered by our Christian family in India, go to www.vomcanada.com/india.htm.

- *In the aftermath of their lost unborn child, please prayerfully remember the grieving parents, Kunika and Mandu, asking the Lord to provide them greatly needed comfort, healing and peace.*

- *Also pray for Kunika's physical recovery as this young Christian woman recuperates from her various injuries.*
- *In the midst of increasing intolerance towards Christians in India, may God provide many opportunities for our persecuted brothers and sisters in Christ to extend His love, mercy and grace to those around them.*

VIETNAM: Pastor Arrested for Alleged Anti-State Propaganda

Sources: Christian Solidarity Worldwide, Radio Free Asia

Police in Ho Chi Minh City arrested a 71-year-old pastor named Nguyen Manh Hung on January 16th after he was accused of spreading anti-state propaganda through social media. If convicted, the Christian leader could face up to 20 years in prison.

The pastor's home was also raided by police officers, who seized documents, two phones and a laptop. Additionally, the pastor's son, Tran Hien, was interrogated for several hours before being released. Tran Hien was told that his father would be "temporarily detained for four months."

The apprehended Christian elder has served as a pastor since 2011; and, most recently, as a leader of the Chuong Bo Protestant Church – a place of worship that is not officially registered with the government. As Pastor Nguyen is a frequent advocate for religious freedom, he has faced repeated harassment by Vietnamese authorities.

While most Christians who have been arrested and charged in Vietnam are part of the country's minority ethnic groups, it is significant that Pastor Nguyen belongs to the Kinh people – the ethnicity that makes up the majority of the country's population. To review further information on the persecution of Christians in Vietnam, see www.vomcanada.com/vietnam.htm.

- *As Pastor Nguyen is presently being held in custody, please pray that this faithful Christian leader will tangibly sense God's strengthening presence with him.*
- *May all charges against this pastor be dropped, allowing him to be released soon and reunited with his family.*
- *Also prayerfully uphold all who are concerned for the well-being of this faithful church leader – his family, friends and congregation/community members – asking our Heavenly Father to also sustain them daily with needed strength, encouragement and hope.*

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