

VOICE OF THE CHRISTIANS

₹100

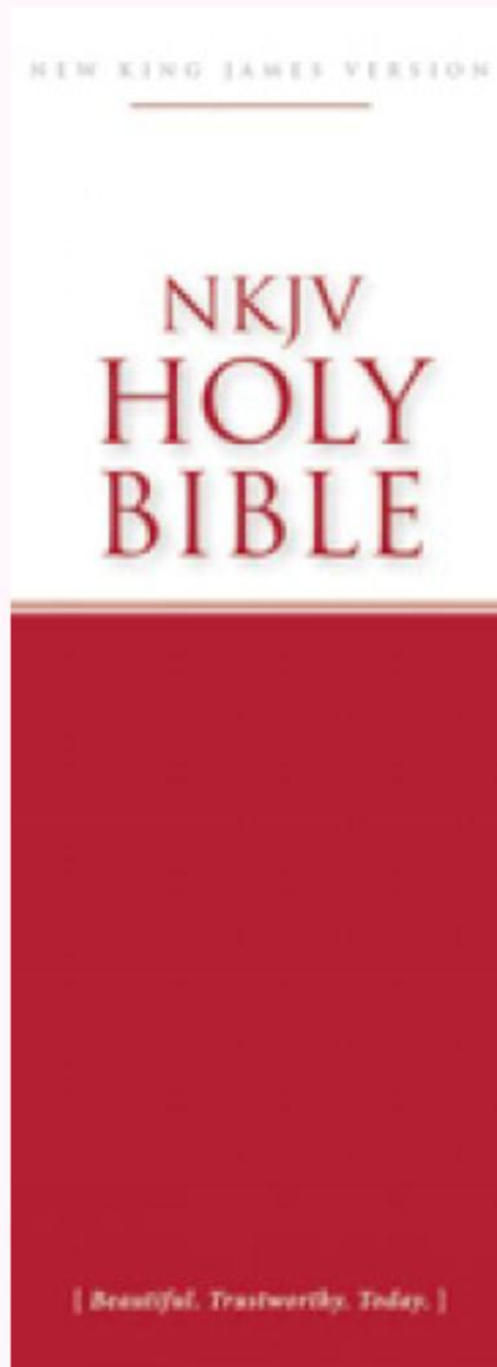
Monthly Edition Volume 1 Issue - 6 April 2018 www.persecutionrelief.org



For Private Circulation within the Church only

An initiative of Persecution Relief

JESUS SAID :
REMEMBER THE
WORD THAT I SAID
TO YOU, 'A
SERVANT IS NOT
GREATER THAN
HIS MASTER.' IF
THEY PERSECUTED
ME, THEY WILL
ALSO PERSECUTE
YOU. IF THEY KEPT
MY WORD, THEY
WILL KEEP YOURS
ALSO. JOHN 15:20



VOICE OF THE CHRISTIANS

APRIL 2018 / Volume 01 / Issue 06

- 04 Chief Editor's Note
- 06 Ambassador in Chains
- 08 Persecution Stories - Church in Action
- 16 Cover Story
- 19 Suffering Opens a Door for the Gospel
- 22 Global Persecution News
- 24 Prayer Calendar
- 26 AICMF Story
- 27 Women in Focus - Adam's Rib
- 30 Persecution Relief Monitor
- 31 State and Trends -Telangana
- 32 A Martyr's Story – Pastor Chamu Purthi
- 33 Abolishment of Anti Conversion Bill Petition
- 34 Are You Covered?
- 35 Events

Chief Editor
Shibu Thomas
founder@persecutionrelief.org

Assistant Editor
Asha
asha@persecutionrelief.org

Subscriptions
persecutionrelief@gmail.com
Tel. +91 9993200020
(WhatsApp)

Writer
Tony Reinke

Marketing
Plot No. 17, Top Floor
ISBT Commercial Area
Near Raj Hans Hotel
Chetak Bridge Circle
Hoshangabad Road,
Bhopal 462023
Madhya Pradesh, India
persecutionrelief@gmail.com
Tel. +91 9993200020
(WhatsApp)

© Copyright Voice of Christians 2018. All rights reserved. Reproduction in any manner is prohibited without the prior permission of the Publisher. The writer of each article is responsible for the point of view expressed. Only the writings of the Editors represent *Voice of the Christian's* view point. Owned, Published and Printed, by Shibu Thomas, H.No. 352, 9-B, Saket Nagar, Ward No. 55, Dist. Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, India. Printed by St. Joseph Printers, 142 Durgesh Vihar, JK Road, Govindpura PO, Bhopal - 462023, Editor: Shibu Thomas. Regd. with RNI No. MPENG/2016/70216.





Chief Editor's **Note**

“We are living in a period of great change in today’s world. Political parties and power structures are realigning. We see communal strife erupting across the length and breadth of India”

The stage looks set. The Rashtra Raksha Mahayagya, which is being held near the Red Fort, started on the 18th and will continue until the 25th of March, for seven days, - with 108 hawan kundis (in which the fire is put and all the oblations or offerings are made - considered like a sanctum sanctorum for a Yajna) with 2,100 priests and 51,000 attendees, including the President and the Prime Minister of India, are gathering to pray for BJP’s re-election in next Lok Sabha.

So, what is the reaction of the average Christian reading this news? Do we pause to think where this is leading or what it means? Or are we disengaged with the reality of times?

We are living in a period of great change in today’s world. Political parties and power structures are realigning. We see communal strife erupting across the length and breadth of India. The present government, of the Bhartiya Janata Party led National Democratic Alliance, since May 2014, is ideologically aligned and governed by the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). Too many cultural shifts are taking place that are shocking.

God however has the last word. Whoever the next government is, they will not be sovereign. They will be governed. And we should pray for them that they would know this: **“The king’s heart is in the hand of the Lord, Like the rivers of water; He turns it wherever He wishes.” (Proverbs 21:1).**

We can gain great insight into what these events mean by understanding the story of the handwriting on the wall. In the midst of the raging wars of the kingdoms of Babylon and Persia, Daniel stood for the Kingdom of God. For Daniel, there was no doubt in his mind. The collapse of his own nation of Judah was done at the will and the hand of His God because he believed, it served a greater purpose.

“He changes times and seasons; He removes kings and sets up kings; . . . the Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom He will” (Daniel 2:21; 4:17)

God knows what is coming and He is the master planner and accomplishes what He plans. God governs all. From the stars in the skies, to the natural world – all of His creation God commands and governs. In the book of Jonah, God commanded a fish to swallow, God commanded a plant to grow, God commanded a worm to kill the plant.

God caused, the Chaldean king Nebuchadnezzar, who in spite of the warning, did not change his behavior. He lost his sanity, ate grass, and his hair grew long as eagle’s feathers

and his nails were like bird's claws. Those who walk in pride, God is able to humble.

When Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were given a choice to life or death or obedience to God, there was no hesitation. Their unshakable faith made 3 kings – Nebuchadnezzar, Darius and Belshazzar, bow their knees and acknowledge Jehovah God.

When Saul was persecuting the first century Church, Jesus asked Saul – why are you persecuting me? Do you think Saul had the courage to persecute Jesus? No. When God's people are persecuted God will fight for His people. The battle belongs to the Lord.

When Stephen was being martyred and stoned to death, Paul stood by the garments. Surely, the early Christians would have prayed for the persecutors who were stoning Stephen and we see the transformation of a Saul to Paul.

The Bible records about the apostles that when these uneducated, uncouth, fishermen, visited a town or city, the "city was in an uproar".

Our struggle is not against flesh and blood but against the rulers, authorities, principalities in the spiritual forces in the heavenly realms. We need to pray for our persecutors. Everything we hear in the print, social, electronic media may seem paradoxical to our finite minds but nothing contradicts the real moral responsibility that humans and angels and demons have to do what God commands.

“The Lord brings the counsel of the nations to nothing; He frustrates the plans of the peoples. The counsel of the Lord stands forever, the plans of His heart to all generations” (Psalm 33:10–11).

God alone will have that supreme role. God is moving to accomplish His purpose in history in India today, just as He moved among the nations, to rearrange the power structure, 2500 years ago. There is a spiritual and a higher purpose behind today's headlines.

Are you up to the challenges of our time?

Will you stand when the winds of difficulty blow?

Are you satisfied building your life on shifting sands and mediocrity?

‘ME’NE, ME’NE, TE’KEL and PAR’SIN’

God governs all. God controls all. God numbers the days of kings and kingdoms; He brings them to victory or loss after weighing them on the scales.

The king and lords and ladies of Babylon are not great enough for this time.

The time is now for you to take action.

The time is now for you to be like Daniel!

The time is now for you to read the handwriting on the wall of our time and seek to understand the will of the God of heaven!

The time is now for you to see the handwriting on the wall and rise to a higher calling and a higher way of life.

The time is now for you to seek the God of heaven and live!

It is time for every knee to bow and every tongue to confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

“Remember the former things of old, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things that are not yet done, Saying, ‘My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure’” – Isaiah 46: 9-10

The handwriting is on the wall. Can you read what it says and move to change your life?

It is a sobering thought.



Shibu Thomas

Founder & President
PERSECUTION RELIEF



AMBASSADOR IN CHAINS

In this series, Persecution Relief would like to highlight the true story of innocent men and women languishing in jails, while their families are stigmatized and abandoned. Persecution Relief family have 'adopted' their wives and children financially and is meeting their livelihood expenses on a monthly basis since the breadwinner is in prison. Please partner with us to support this worthy cause and continue praying for them.



3rd Victim
Bijay Kumar Sanseth - Being popular costs heavy

Sanseth's Wife: Pabitra Sanseth

Backdrop:

Following the aftermath of the Kandhamal tragedy in 2008, seven innocent Christians - six of them illiterates - from remote Kandhamal district in Odisha state of India, are still languishing in jail, following the mysterious murder of Swami Laxmanananda Saraswati on August 23, 2008. This is their story.

Bijay Kumar Sanseth, the only one who has been to school among the seven Christians convicted for the Swami's murder, was a leading government contractor of Kotagarh and a Christian leader from the Baptist community.

Police called up Bijay on his mobile phone on December 12, 2008 when he was in the Kotagarh market.

"When he came back home in the evening, he told me that police had called him to the station and that a senior officer wanted to meet him next day," Pabitra Sanseth, Bijay's wife recounted, sitting in her house at Madhuguda, 8km from Kotagarh.

On December 13 morning, Bijay went to the field to till the land with his new tractor and returned home by 10 am. That was to proceed to the police station as the police had asked him to. Bijay did not return home for the night, Pabitra said. Later she came

to know that Bijay had been taken to Rayagada jungle, over 100 km from Kotagarh.

However, the investigating officer cooked up a different story and told the court that "on 12.12.2008 he got reliable information regarding presence of the accused persons Bijay, Garnath, Buddha, Bhaskar near a forest near village Sartul under Kotgarh police station to attend a meeting held by Maoists. On 13.12.2008, he reached Kotgarh P.S. and found that Kotgarh police had already apprehended Bijay and Garnath. He interrogated both of them. On the next day, he apprehended Bijay, Garnath, Buddha and Bhaskar and shifted them to Chandili police station on security point of view for further interrogation."

But the investigating office also made a fanciful claim alleging that Bijay was with six others who stood near the gate of the Kotagarh High School on the busy main road and discussed publicly the conspiracy to murder the Swami. This claim was attributed to Mahasingh Kanhar (Prosecution Witness 17), a Kandho tribal migrant to the region and active member of Sangh Parivar. Mahasingh who had initially refuted the prosecution claim attributed to him, but he made a U-turn and later endorsed the prosecution claim on his retrial...

Church in Action

(This entire cooked up plot that stretches human imagination to wildest level is dissected and the fallacy exposed in the chapter titled 'Questionable Evidences'.)

"Wherever I go, people tell me 'He was a good man. Why he is in jail?'" Salei Sanseth, illiterate father of Bijay told me in October 2015 at his house - adjacent to the house of his imprisoned eldest son.

"The popularity of my son and his high contacts with government officials have led to this tragedy," Salei explained how his son got framed up as accused in the Swami's murder.

"Many were jealous of him," summed up Salei. As the secretary of the Baptist Union in Kotagarh, he added, Bijay knew three of the accused Christians and all of them were named in the murder along with Bijay.

In their hurry to cook up the case, the investigation team even failed to record his proper age. While the charge-sheet says he was born in 1972, his real year of birth in the voter id is recorded as 1966.

TEARS MAY BE RARE BUT THE JOY OF THE LORD IS FOREVER

Shibu Thomas
Founder - Persecution Relief

www.persecutionrelief.org

CHURCH SET ON FIRE INTENTIONALLY, TAMIL NADU



Pastor Krishna Raj was badly burnt after the cladding from the roof of the Church, fell on his shoulders, causing him grievous injuries. The Church was ‘intentionally’ set on fire by religious fundamentalists.

Pastor Krishna Raj ministers at “Hallelujah Church”, in Sengipatti, a village in Budalur taluk of Thanjavur district of Tamil Nadu. On the 12th of March, as had been the practice for several years, Pastor left his residence around noon, to go to the Church which is nearby, to pray in solitude for an hour.

The Church building was made of concrete walls and corrugated steel roofing. Owing to summer heat in Tamil Nadu, coconut fronds clad the roof, above the steel sheeting. Pastor had built the Church around 6 years ago, where over 30 believers congregated every Sunday to worship Jesus Christ.

Around 12.30 pm, while he was still inside the Church, on his knees in prayer, he was rudely disturbed by the

shouts of “Fire! Fire!!”. As the Pastor rushed out, he was surprised to see most of the neighborhood gathered outside the Church. By the time, he could comprehend the turn of events, a large quantity of smoldering coconut fronds fell on top of him and badly burnt and bruised his shoulders. Pastor was rushed to the nearby Government Hospital, where he was given first-aid for the burns and released.

However, on the 15th March, the wounds were still inflamed and yet to heal, causing a lot of pain and discomfort. So, he was readmitted in the Hospital for further treatment.

Speaking to Persecution Relief Founder, from the hospital bed, Pastor expressed that he was very discouraged and felt abandoned as nobody had come to enquire about his welfare.

He told the Founder, “No one has come to enquire about me or the incident. You are the first person, who has called – who I have never spoken to or seen before, who is calling to enquire about the incident and is offering me words of comfort. Please pray for me,

the Church and my family”.

He was concerned about the future of the Church, since this was the only place where people congregated. He had spent close to 1 Lakh to construct the Church building to accommodate 50 believers, which was now lost in the fire. He claimed that he had no money to get treated at a Private Hospital nor money to rebuild the Church. His new motor bike that was parked near the Church, was also burned.

Pastor is married and is living with his wife and a 4-year old daughter.

Police have determined that unknown vandals had intentionally set fire to the Church and are treating this case of arson as a hate crime. The fire mostly damaged the roof of the Church and partially damaged the rest of the structure. Authorities are still trying to determine who is responsible for the vandalism, Pastor said.

Relief Provided

Persecution Relief extended financial support to meet Pastor’s immediate medical expenses. The Team also encouraged and counselled the Pastor.

Creating awareness through our website and other social media platforms, Pastor had a few benefactors extending further financial support.

CHRISTIANS BRUTALLY BEATEN – SINCE JESUS CHRIST EVICTS “DEVATA’S” FROM VILLAGE



Missionaries Pr. Somangal D Samad and his wife Sis. Meena are ministering in Mayurbsanj village in district Rairangtur of Odisha. They are affiliated to Indian Evangelical Mission. They have been shepherding 5 families living at Kendupura, Dhenkanal district of Odisha which is around 170 km's away.

Sister Meena, speaking to the Founder, Persecution relief, stated that on 27th of February, members of 5 Christian families were beaten up from 5 pm to 11 pm, by local religious fanatics in the village. The radicals allegedly claim that ever since the families belonging to the Christian faith started believing in Jesus Christ, their own gods and devata's have “run away” from the village.

Thus, says the LORD: ‘Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of this

great multitude, for the battle is not yours, but God's'. The battle belongs to the Lord and the devil will flee seven ways.

The believers Bro. Rengul Kulda and his wife Sis. Dusama, Bro. Uschaba & his wife Sis. Malti, Bro. Raju, Bro. Pandu's mother & Bro. Santa were brutally beaten up. In spite of the persecution and ostracization by the villagers, members of these 5 families, stand firm and steadfast in their commitment to Jesus Christ.

They have been excommunicated and expelled from the village and are currently staying in the neighbouring village with one of the believer relatives, who is a widow and very poor. May God bless this widow who is in need of receiving charity herself, yet had the heart to share her little, in faith, that God could use it.

Relief Provided

Persecution Relief has provided financial relief to the injured to meet immediate medical expenses, livelihood and relocation expenses.

PRAYING AS A FAMILY AT HOME IS ALSO NOT SAFE IN INDIA



Pastor Kholapuri Prabhakar is a graduate of NTC Dehradun, ministering at Karim Nagar District in Telangana. He ministers at Bethesda Prayer Healing house along with his father Pastor Moses.

On 26 February, Pastor Prabhakar, along with his 50-year old father Pastor Moses and mother, his sister and brother Emmanuel were praying at their home. They started the prayer at 10.00 am and went on praying until 3.00 pm in the afternoon. A mob of religious fanatics saw the name board displayed and started shouting abuses, asking for Pastor and his father to come outside.

When Pastor did not respond, the fanatics trespassed illegally into the house and brutally beat up Pastor Prabhakar, his father Pastor Moses and his brother Emmanuel. The women were also not spared as they were pushed and manhandled shamefully by these radicals.

Pastor's brother broke his leg from the beating and required surgery.

Relief Provided

Persecution Relief Team provided immediate medical expenses for the family's medical treatment, while praying also encouraging the family. Financial relief was also provided for the surgery expenses.

ADOPT

A PERSECUTED FAMILY



Call +91 9993200020

Email : persecutionrelief@gmail.com

GOD'S POWER OF DELIVERANCE

Pr. Prem Singh Chouhan had accepted Jesus Christ as his personal Lord and Saviour in 2008. After completing his Bible training from Jeevan Jyoti School for 1 year, he started ministering with Christian Evangelistic Assemblies (CEA) in 2011.

Pr. Prem is currently ministering in Katahari village, located in Kerakat Tehsil of Jaunpur district in Uttar Pradesh, India. Every Sunday around 250 believers attend the worship service.

On Sunday, 04th February, Worship service ended around 1:30 pm. Unexpectedly, Sub-Inspector, Mr. Shailender Pandey and a Constable entered the Church. They started taking photographs of the Church and demanded that the Pastor accompany them to the Police Station as they had received complaints of conversion. Immediately, all the believers who were around, began to testify that no one had been converted but that they had seen the visible power of God and experienced miracles and changes in their own lives.

Nevertheless, Pastor was taken to Thana Badlapur on a Motorbike, seated between these 2 policemen. After a little distance, they were met by 2 other Police men, who transferred Pastor on to their bikes and took him to Badlapur Police Station.

As soon as he reached there, he was shocked to find an agitated mob of around 25 religious fanatics already waiting for him. They began

to question him about his role as a Pastor, and why he did not worship Hanuman or Ram. Pastor Prem got a wonderful opportunity to witness about Jesus Christ. He talked about his own personal conversion and how he was saved by Jesus Christ and was delivered from all his sins.

In the meantime, the 150 believers who managed to locate Pastor, also arrived at the Police Station. They were also subjected to questions on why they were following Jesus Christ and each one of them spoke with conviction and faith about the healing power of Jesus' blood. Many testified of being healed from Tuberculosis (TB), Demon possession, Cancer, Addiction etc. The Station in-charge was shocked at their faith and belief.

Last but not the least, the Village Pradhan (Village Headman), Mr. Anil Kumar, personally testified on the character of Pastor Prem. He advocated the release of the Pastor stating that he was 'an honorable man', not involved in any conversion activity or breaking the law. He also mentioned that the Christians were 'like family'. Based on the testimony and affirmation of the Village Pradhan, and the assurance that they would not worship at his home in the future, Pastor Prem was released last night at around 8.00 pm.

Please continue to uphold this man of God and all the congregation in your prayers. We praise and thank God for displaying His strength through our weakness. Please also pray for the enemies of the gospel. While we pray for the good of our



enemy, we pray that God would restrain their evil actions.

Relief Provided

Persecution Relief Team spoke to the Superintendent of Police and to the Village Pradhan. Permission was granted to conduct worship service from the same location and also for the protection of the Christians during service. The Team encouraged and prayed with the Pastor to stand strong for Jesus Christ in spite of persecution

PASTOR BRUTALLY BEATEN AND PERSONAL LAND GRABBED, TELANGANA



Pastor Stephen Paul has been pastoring at J.C. Grace ministries for the past 17 years. The congregation worshiped at a rented property, located in a village in Tadwai, in Kamareddy District, Telangana, which is 10 kms away from his residence.

Pastor Stephen had bought a plot of land for the explicit purpose of constructing a building to worship. In order to start work, he visited the Government Mandal Office, to enquire on the procedures and formalities. Once there, he was directed to meet with a Mr. Satish Murtikattu, who works out of Tadwai.

On the 20th February, he went to



meet Mr. Satish Murtikattu. However, before he could enter the office, he was rudely stopped by a mob of unidentified religious fundamentalists. He was forcibly dragged to an animal shed nearby and brutally beaten up with sticks and chains. Pastor Stephen is the lawful owner of the property which is worth around Rs. 7 Lakhs. Original documents of the land which were in his possession were seized.

In a cruel twist, although, Pastor was subjected to tremendous psychological pressure and was also brutally assaulted. Further, under duress, he was made to sign off the entire deed, in the name of unknown persons, for a token sum of for Rs. 3 Lakhs. The total area of the land was 900 sq. ft.

Although he is sad about the brutality and the loss of his land, which he bought from his meagre resources, his trust and his hope is in

the righteous judge Jesus Christ who will avenge his loss.

Pastor Stephen alleges that Mr. Satish Murtikattu who works at the Government Mandal office and Village leader Madan Narsimlu and his henchmen are a nexus, and responsible for the crime.

Relief Provided

Persecution Relief provided financial relief to Pastor, to meet the immediate medical expenses. The team also counselled, prayed and encouraged Pastor in the Lord.

PASTOR BRUTALLY BEATEN AND PERSONAL LAND GRABBED, TELANGANA



Holy Jesus Fire Mission Church, in Harpura village, Gurdaspur District, Punjab, is shepherded by Pastor Gurunam Singh, for the past 2 years with over 300 believers congregating every Sunday. He had committed his life to following Jesus Christ, 10 years ago.

The Church had organised a Convention and invited Pastor Palvinder Singh from Amritsar as the main speaker. Posters were printed and put up in many different places in the town, inviting the Public to attend the event.

Unexpectedly, Pastor Gurunam started receiving threatening calls, challenging him to cancel the Convention or face dire consequences, as they were members of the Sathkar Committee.

Pastor Gurunam had secured permission from the Police and relevant authorities, to conduct this Convention. Trusting in the protection of Almighty God, he went ahead, and with ample Police protection, the Convention was peacefully conducted.

A few days after the meeting, the threatening calls resumed. The “Jathedhar – Sathkar Committee”, demanded that the Pastor remove his turban before he speaks about Jesus Christ. He suggested that Pastor was using his Sikh attire and vocabulary to manipulate and fool people into conversion.

The Jathedhar – Sathkar Committee have threatened to kill Pastor if he does not discontinue wearing the turban. Pastor explained that Aaron in the Bible wore a turban; also, in the Old Testament, the Turban was an essential part of the priestly garment of the Hebrews.

He told the radicals -
“If you have a problem that I am wearing a turban and preaching Jesus Christ, please go lodge a complaint with the Police. If the Police finds it offensive, I will remove it because the Bible commands us to obey authorities”.

Separately, Pastor handed in a written complaint letter to the Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Batala,

about the death threats received from the Jathedhar – Sathkar Committee, Ranjith Singh. Police are investigating.

Church, please pray for the safety of the Pastor and his family, from those that are seeking to harm him. Pray that God will put a hedge of protection and safety around the congregation and fill their hearts with overflowing and perfect peace of God.

Relief Provided

Persecution Relief Team counselled and prayed with the Pastor and encouraged him in the Lord. Persecution Relief assured him of every kind of support, if needed.



ADOPT A **MARTYRED** FAMILY



Call +91 9993200020

Email : persecutionrelief@gmail.com

EVEN IN DEATH, CHRISTIANS ARE PERSECUTED, ODISHA



Tangaguda village in Malkangiri district of Odisha, has around 35 families residing there, of which 3 families are followers of Jesus Christ and worship at IMST (Indian Missionary Society)

On 27th February, Bro. Sukra Markhami's ailing 2-year-old daughter, passed away. As they got ready with the preparations for her last rites and burial on the family property, the local villagers stopped the funeral and demanded that they

bury the body of the child outside the village.

Emotions can become powerful during the time of death of a loved one. Bro. Sukra was adamant that as a parent, he had the right to bury the child on his own property. Ultimately the villagers conceded that the family may bury the child on their land, only after fixing a as "penalty amount". payment of Rs. 5000/- . After paying the villagers and completing the burial of their child, the grieving

"THE VILLAGERS CONCEDED THAT THE FAMILY MAY BURY THE CHILD ON THEIR LAND, ONLY AFTER FIXING A AS PENALTY AMOUNT. PAYMENT OF RS. 5000/- . AFTER PAYING THE VILLAGERS AND COMPLETING THE BURIAL OF THEIR CHILD, THE GRIEVING FAMILY RETIRED FOR THE NIGHT"

family retired for the night. In a previous incident, the village had penalized Bro. Markhami's family of several thousands of rupees and a cow as 'penalty'.

Later that night, around 12.30 am, this mob 25-30 local village fundamentalists, trespassed illegally into Bro. Sukra's property, in an intoxicated state. As Sis. Debe, the grieving mother, opened the door to their humble home, they doused her with petrol and tried to get hold of her. By the grace and mercy of God, she managed to give them the slip and fled for her life, in the cover of darkness, into the nearby jungle. The other 2 members of the family, Bro. Sukra and his 12-year old daughter Savitha were not spared. The little girl was brutally beaten and hit severely on the head, inflicting horrific and critical injuries. Both were left unconscious after the violent beating.

The 2nd Christian neighbour Jaga Markhami who came to their rescue was overpowered and brutally beat, breaking his leg, leaving him unconscious. Cash of Rs. 10,000/- was stolen from his house and his cycle damaged beyond repair.

The 3rd Christian neighbour Ganga Markhami also suffered the same bloody and vicious attack which

left unconscious, with a broken left hand.

Gratified that they had killed the Christians, the persecutors left the bloody crime scene. When other believers learned about what transpired, they contacted the local Pastor Mala who arranged for all the Christians to be rescued from the village.

The 6 victims who survived this senseless act of violence, with varying degrees of critical wounds, were admitted treated at the local government hospital. Evangelist Sashi Bhusan was with them at the hospital.

To add insult to injury, Bro. Sukra Markhami's home has been completely burnt and razed to the ground. The families have been left traumatized and dumbfounded with this deadly display of hatred, intolerance, discrimination and violence against them.

Bro. Remo Paul helped the Christians in filing a Police complaint. The main perpetrators of this brutal crime were 1) Madkami Irma, 2) Padiami Irma and 3) Padiami Muka – who have been booked under IPC 1860, for the following sections: #323, #4542, # 427, #380, #506, # 153-A and #34

On the 01st of March, Police negotiated a "Peace agreement" between the 2 parties. However, the case registered against the persecutors stands.

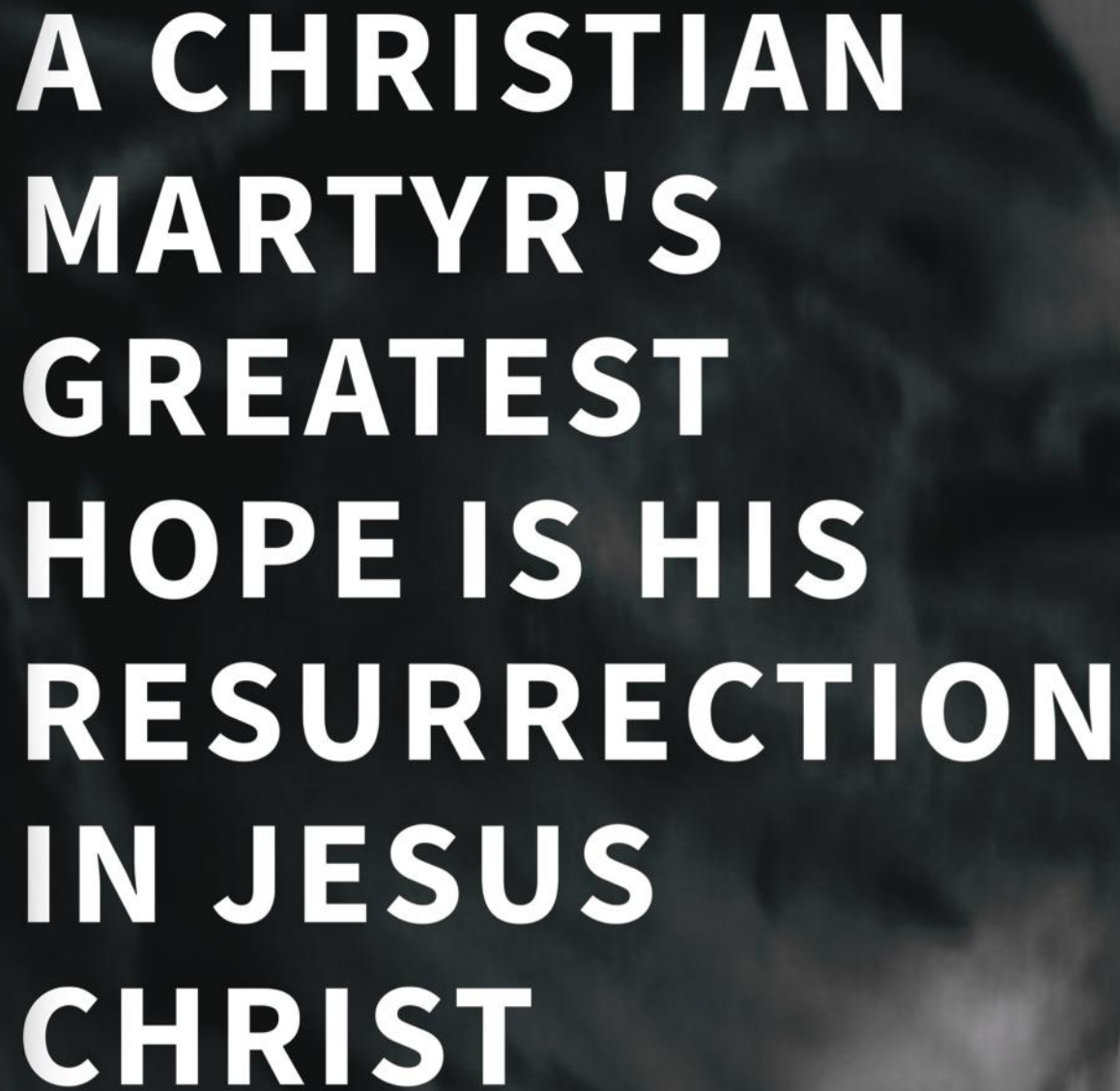
As Christians, we need God's abundant grace and not be fearful or troubled at these events. Jesus Christ himself spoke of the world's hatred towards Christians:

"If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you"
"John 15: 18.

Relief Provided

From the moment the Christians were evacuated from the village by Pastor Mala, Persecution Relief has closely monitored the situation. We assisted in the relocation of the families and extended financial support to meet their medical expenses.

There had been massive generation of traffic to this particular story where it had been falsely stated that Sis. Debe had been burned. Persecution Relief proactively countered online attempts to pedal fake news on social media by widely sharing the truth.



A CHRISTIAN MARTYR'S GREATEST HOPE IS HIS RESURRECTION IN JESUS CHRIST

Shibu Thomas Founder - Persecution Relief

Report Christian Persecution 24x7
1800-1234-461
WWW.PERSECUTIONRELIEF.ORG

SUFFERING OPENS A DOOR FOR THE GOSPEL



TONY REINKE
Senior writer,
desiringGod.org

It's illegal to share the gospel of Jesus Christ to Muslims in Tehran, Iran. So when I think of gutsy women I think of Maryam Rostampour and Marziyeh Amirizadeh.

The two Christian converts from Islam met one another at a conference in Turkey, became friends, and committed their lives to reaching the lost by canvassing the streets of Tehran. For three years, they sought gospel opportunities and spread New Testaments throughout the city — “accurate modern translations of the New Testament in Farsi to supplant the Islamic version allowed in the public shops, which had been rewritten to support the Koran” (Captive in Iran, 36).

The government-approved Christian writings in Tehran leave readers with the impression that Jesus was nothing more than a prophet.

Such lies had to be subverted, and these courageous women set out to combat the lie by trafficking bulk Bibles — once transporting three thousand copies into the city in one vanload under the cover of night. On foot, the women carried several copies of the New Testament in backpacks to hand out every chance they got. They boldly shared the gospel of Jesus Christ in one of the most foreboding Muslim cities on earth.

Two brave women, and two backpacks re-stuffed with Bibles, in one huge Muslim city, can accomplish a lot in three years — like safely distributing 20,000 copies of the New Testament.

And they would pay for it.

SUFFERING OPENS DOORS

Never comfortable, always anxious



Martyrdom



“To suffer for Christ is to be positioned firmly within **the sovereign will of God, often for new gospel witness.**”

about who was watching, always fearful they would accidentally approach someone on the street with the gospel who was a police informant or someone who would rat them out, their gospel work was always a personal threat. Little did they know how closely they were being watched until March, 2009, when they were summoned to the local police station, arrested, and tossed into a disgusting detention center.

In the filth of the detention center came a new gospel surprise, as the women later recounted.

Most amazing of all, we were in the best place we'd ever been for witnessing to people hungry for the gospel of Jesus. We had spent ourselves and our resources traveling all over the country with the message of salvation, always mindful of the danger if the wrong person overheard us. Now we were stuck in jail, and God was bringing spiritual seekers in waves. The living conditions weren't very good, but we didn't have to deal with travel and traffic! And we could tell our fellow prisoners the story of Jesus openly because no one would come into this rat hole to spy on us. (38)

“We were more free inside the prison to give the message of salvation than outside the prison.”

Charged with sedition and threatened with torture and even execution, the women eventually landed in Tehran's notoriously dangerous penitentiary, Evin Prison. They would call it “Our Church,” and spend nine months there, continuing their gospel mission among the prisoners. They would eventually be released and tell their story in the book *Captive in Iran: A Remarkable True Story of Hope and Triumph amid the Horror*

of Tehran's Brutal Evin Prison.

SUFFERING FOR THE NAME

Persecution normally happens in subtler ways for Christians in the West — a cold shoulder, a subtle jab in a conversation, a workplace bias, or getting overlooked in a promotion. Persecution may increase to the realm of verbal mocking, insults, and false accusations meant to undermine your character. In some places in the world, it can advance all the way up to beating, imprisonment, stoning, beheading, crucifixion, or burning at the stake (Matthew 5:11; 1 Peter 4:14; Matthew 23:34).

Whatever expression it takes, all persecution is stoked by our public identity with Christ, a point Christ himself reiterates to his followers. They will all suffer “for his name.”

- Matthew 10:16–22
- Matthew 24:9–14
- Mark 13:9–13
- Luke 21:10–19
- John 15:20–21
- Revelation 2:3

When Jesus says, “you will be hated by all for my name's sake,” we get the point fairly quickly (Mark 13:13).

I will suffer because I have identified myself with the name of Christ. We pause, maybe flinch at what this potentially means for us, and then move along in our reading.

CONSEQUENCE OR OPPORTUNITY?

But we should learn to flip this point around in another direction.

To suffer “for the name of Christ” has a second, more profoundly important dimension, as Jesus

“WE WERE MORE FREE INSIDE THE PRISON TO GIVE THE **MESSAGE OF SALVATION THAN OUTSIDE THE PRISON.**”

explains in this same context. “For they will deliver you over to councils, and you will be beaten in synagogues, and you will stand before governors and kings for my sake, to bear witness before them” (Mark 13:9).

“To suffer for Christ is to be positioned firmly within the sovereign will of God, often for new gospel witness.”

Do you see what he did there (and in most of the passages listed above)?

To suffer for the name of Christ is a two-sided equation. The name of Christ is the cause of our added suffering, but the name of Christ also becomes the purpose of our suffering. As cause, we can expect to suffer for the name of Christ. As purpose, we can expect to suffer, so that in our suffering we might testify to the name of Christ.

This same equation works in the mind of Paul.

From the very outset of his ministry and all through his letters, “for the name of Christ” was both cause and purpose, both consequence and opportunity, behind every pinch of his suffering.

- Acts 9:15–16
- 2 Corinthians 4:7–11
- 2 Corinthians 12:9–10
- Philippians 1:27–30

Thus, for Jesus and Paul, to “suffer for the name of Christ” becomes both

a marker of the allegiance that brings the suffering in the first place (identifying with Christ) and also God’s purpose in our suffering (new gospel opportunities).

Of course, we would always be wise not to draw undue persecution on ourselves, but we should not be too quick to evade the inevitable push-back and cultural pressures we now face in following Christ. To suffer for the name of Christ is to be positioned firmly within the sovereign will of our Father, often for new gospel witness, new opportunities to magnify the name of Christ in ways a more comfortable life would never have afforded us.

GOSPEL FORWARD

“One of the glaring omissions in modern church growth studies is the key part that suffering has played in the growth of the church” (Fernando, 83). Yes. Suffering and gospel growth go hand-in-hand. (One reason why prosperity preachers will never hold to the true gospel for very long.)

The most suitable way to proclaim the glories of the cross is in the cruciform position of scorn. This seems true of Paul’s testimony. “Paul thinks suffering not only accompanies the apostles’ proclamation of the gospel, *but is a proclamation of the gospel*” (Plummer).

“Wherever the world blockades Christ-followers by oppression, new roads are opened to advance his name.”

When and where the world blockades Christ-followers by oppression, new roads are opened to advance the name of Christ.

“We were more free inside the prison to give the message of salvation to many prisoners than outside the prison,” Marziyeh Amirizadeh recounted in one interview. “When we were free [outside the prison], we had to pray and ask God to lead us to the right person to talk. Inside the prison we could talk to anybody. One day my interrogator became angry and asked why we were talking to prisoners about Jesus. And I said: ‘We talk to prisoners about Jesus because you arrested us, and put us in prison, and prisoners are curious. They all want to know: Why are you here? What is your charge?’ So we had to explain the gospel.”

Marziyeh herself chuckles now when she recounts this ironic turn of events, which serves to all of us as a modern illustration of and inspiration for what it really means to suffer *for the name of Christ*.



WEST & CENTRAL AFRICA

BOKO HARAM FREE KIDNAPPED MUSLIM SCHOOLGIRLS, BUT KEEP CHRISTIAN CAPTIVE



A view shows girls hostel at the school in Dapchi in the northeastern state of Yobe, where dozens of school girls went missing after an attack on the village by Boko Haram, Nigeria .

Boko Haram militants **freed** the majority of the 110 **kidnapped** Dapchi schoolgirls on Wednesday (21 March), but are still holding captive a Christian girl who refused to convert to Islam.

“I don’t know why they brought us back but they said because we are children of Muslims. One [girl] is still with them because she is a Christian,” Khadija Grema, one of

the released girls, told journalists.

A relative of another of the freed girls stated that she had said the Christian girl was still being held because she had refused to convert to Islam.

The girls were abducted on 19 February 2018 from a government Science and Technical Secondary School (High School) in the town in north-east Nigeria. Around 70 were returned to Daptchi in the early hours of 21 March. Government officials have stressed authorities did not pay a ransom to secure their release.

Boko Haram have previously conducted targeted abductions of schoolchildren, including in Chibok in 2014. Although many of the “Chibok girls” have been released, over 100 are still thought to be held by Boko Haram. Those who were released stated that during their captivity they were forcibly converted to Islam and married to Islamist militants.

Credit - www.globalchristiannews.com



MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

THREE CHILDREN KILLED AS SYRIAN REBELS ROCKET CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

A young girl in Syria, who needed to fill containers with water, sat and cried as they were too heavy for her to carry home. Credit: Barnabas Fund

Three children an Armenian Christian school in the Syrian capital Damascus were killed on Tuesday 6 March after rockets fired from East Ghouta hit the school, in events which have been almost entirely

ignored by the world's media.

Many Christian families are now understood to have left Damascus to take shelter in villages after weeks of rocket attacks from the rebel-held enclave, which is controlled by multiple jihadist factions.

Humanitarian aid convoys entered East Ghouta earlier this week following the announcement of a ceasefire brokered by the United Nations.

The two largest rebel groups in East Ghouta stated that they would adhere to the UN's demand for a suspension of hostilities, but this has not led to a cessation of rocket attacks on Christian areas in Damascus.

Christians in Syria criticize western media for failing to report attacks on the Christian community by rebel groups.

PAKISTAN CHRISTIANS PROCESS IN LAHORE, MONTH AFTER MOB ATTACK

Some 200 Pakistani Christians who fled their neighborhood in a Lahore suburb over a month ago, after mobs of Muslims demanded the arrest of a Christian for alleged blasphemy, were back in the streets on 25 March for a Palm Sunday procession, as in a video by Catholic news agency UCAN:

Hameed Masih*, whose family was one of those to flee, told UCAN: "We definitely got a boost from being able to profess our faith openly in the streets after being haunted and living in terror. It was a big deal."

World Watch Monitor reported that as many as 800 families fled after 20-year-old Patras Masih was accused of using his phone to post a blasphemous picture in a Facebook group. He surrendered to the police on 19 February and was handed by the court to the cybercrime wing of the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA).

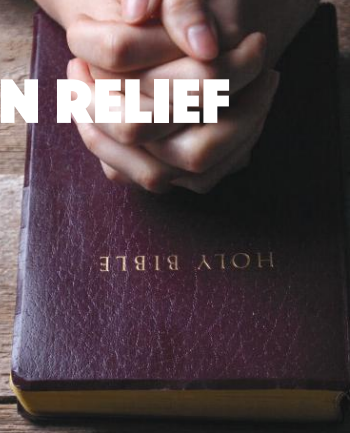
Four days later his cousin Sajid Masih was summoned by the FIA office in Lahore and during the investigation jumped from a fourth floor window, suffering multiple fractures. He claims he was tortured

by police and jumped to avoid being forced by officers to perform a sex act on his cousin.

Patras is still in custody, awaiting a first hearing, while both his and Sajid's families remain in hiding.

"There is a systematic delay in these cases," Lahore-based lawyer Asad Jamal, who has represented several people accused of blasphemy, told Al Jazeera.





Theme: Diffusing the power of Magicians enchanter's sorcerers and magicians

- April 01:** Almighty God, we pray that the fear, reverence and respect for God will be impressed upon all Your children – as the fear of the Lord is still the beginning of wisdom
- April 02:** Almighty God, we pray that You will dispel the darkness in the nation of India - who gives heed to soothsayers and diviners, seeking wisdom in the occult.
- April 03:** Almighty God, we pray that Your saints will recognize that they are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation a people for God's own possession...to live as aliens and strangers in this land of India
- April 04:** Almighty God, help Your people not to seek mediums or sorcerers; not to make themselves unclean as You are the Lord our God.
- April 05:** Almighty God, we pray against all the allurements of the occult, and that Jesus Christ alone will stand as the embodiment of God's revelation.
- April 06:** Almighty God, You oppose the involvement in occult because it belittles God and exalts man, who craves for power that belongs to God alone
- April 07:** Almighty God, we pray that Your saints will test every spirit to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world
- April 08:** Almighty God, we pray that Your servants would not use deception to preach 'another Jesus, another spirit, or another gospel' - but the speak the truth of the gospel in humility
- April 09:** Almighty God, we pray against the spirit of anti-Christ that has spread in Christendom and is deceiving Your saints for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. Expose them Lord.
- April 10:** Almighty God, we pray that You would prepare, equip and empower your servants to respond both to simple curiosity and dedicated involvement in occult practices among church members.
- April 11:** Almighty God, help us to heed Your warning, not to turn to mediums and familiar spirits, to prostitute himself with them, You will set Your face against that person and cut him off from his people.
- April 12:** Almighty God, we pray that You would give Your saints discernment about false apostles, deceitful workmen, who are disguising themselves as apostles of Christ
- April 13:** Almighty God, pray that You will keep your Church alert and vigilant against the activity of satan, who comes with false signs and wonders
- April 14:** Almighty God, we have the example in Saul who died for his lack of faith and not keeping the command of the Lord, and consulted a medium, seeking guidance. Help us to refrain from any such activities

- April 15:** Almighty God, we pray against the prophets who see false visions who give lying divinations saying that you have spoken. Silence them Lord.
- April 16:** Almighty God, we pray that we will never reject Your word, which is a lamp unto our feet and light unto our path, for rebellion is like the sin of divination, and arrogance like the evil of idolatry.
- April 17:** Almighty God, keep us holy and consecrated, so as to inherit the kingdom of God. Keep us away from all practice of idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, and orgies.
- April 18:** Almighty God, we cancel pray that “no wise men, enchanters, magicians, or astrologers” will influence the rulers or the people of India
- April 19:** Almighty God, we pray that You would stir faith in Your saints, that cleaves to Jesus, loves Jesus, adores Jesus, trusts Jesus, extols the all-sufficiency of Jesus, and shuns, in all her many costumes, the temptress of the occult.
- April 20:** Almighty God, we pray against every spirit of divination and every person that uses it to bring gain by fortune telling, will be cancelled and cast into the consuming fire
- April 21:** Almighty God, dispossess and destroy the dealings with the world of spirits or of supra-normal forces which are not oriented on Jesus as He has revealed in the Bible.
- April 22:** Almighty God, we pray that you would close the mouth of all tantric and magicians, so that they will not be able to answer anyone who approaches them.
- April 23:** Almighty God, please cause those who consulting mediums, tea leaves, fortune cookies, horoscopes, crystal balls, palmists, or any other oracles beyond God’s Word, to repent this wrong because it belittles God as an inadequate revealer of mysteries.
- April 24:** Almighty God, please forgive Your people who have disobeyed Your word and indulged in séances, necromancy, and all forms of communicating with the dead, and all forms of supra-natural psychic phenomena.
- April 25:** Almighty God, we pray for children, older teens, early teens, and young children, to be protected and not fall prey to the deceptive and seductive ways of the occult hidden in things like movies, television, yoga, etc.
- April 26:** Almighty God, we pray to You that You would frustrate all plans of divination which when it is directed against Your people and used for the purpose of gaining power and for controlling people and events to their liking
- April 27:** Almighty God, we pray that You would confirm the words of Your chosen spokesmen – through signs and miracles
- April 28:** Almighty God, we pray that You would cancel all powers of darkness in people who dabble in astrology and look for guidance to their horoscope and strive to know what the day will bring. Pray that You would judge them God.
- April 29:** Almighty God, may all Your people come confessing and divulging their practices, and those who practice magic arts bring their books together and burn them in the sight of all . . . so, the word of the Lord may grow and prevail mightily.
- April 30:** Almighty God, capture and change the heart and minds of all those who are involved with magical art, sorcery, witch craft and the occult.
- April 31:** Almighty God, we pray against every new age teaching, beliefs whose roots are Gnostic, Eastern, and New Thought.



PERSECUTION RELIEF RECOGNISED



All India Christian Minority Front (AICMF) organization has been working for the minorities since last 16 years all over in India.

In 1517, Martin Luther popularized Protestantism in Germany. He was the first to revolutionize the traditional practices. He added several principles to the art of translation of the Bible. The vision of Martin Luther is lost; this award function is an effort to remember his view of Christianity.

Recently, AICMF organised an Award Ceremony “Martin Luther Vision is our Mission”. This event took place on 3rd February at Rajinder Bhawan, New Delhi.

Persecution Relief Founder, Bro. Shibu Thomas, was chosen for the Martin Luther Award for the category “Civil Rights & Justice – Bravery”.

Many other Activists and Social Workers were also recognized for their contribution to society.

Memorable visit to Martyr's widows



"You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God". (2 Corinthians 9:11)

This is the story of 2 sisters – one, living the American dream with her family and the second sister, a widow, living in the remotest rural corners of a village in India, her husband martyred for Jesus, with 4 children to feed. While there might be significant differences in their lifestyle, thinking and values, they are nonetheless united in their belief and faith in Jesus Christ. Both called by God to be Christ's ambassadors that demands that we step outside of our insulated Christian circle and bridge the gap between Christ's church and today's world.

Sister Aleyamma, while working in the USA as a nurse, and reading a story on the martyrdom of a saint of God, Pastor Chamu Purthy, in Jharkhand, was stirred in her spirit. As she prayed to God for special grace and comfort for the widow and her 4 children, she resolved in her mind to help the widow's family financially.

God challenged her and asked if that would be the same reaction if the widow was her biological sister! Chastised by the Lord, Sr. Aleyamma began praying, seeking a way to visit Jharkhand, to encourage and minister to this Sister. It is indeed honorable, "to visit orphans and widows in their affliction" (James 1:27). So, after months of planning with Persecution Relief, she set out for Jharkhand, "the land of forests" to meet with Sr. Sonamathi, widow of Pastor Chamu Purthy who was martyred for his unwavering faith in Jesus Christ, on 11 Oct. 2016.

Reaching Sr. Sonamathi's residence after 6 hours of travelling in 2 cars through 'kutcha' roads, was exhausting but worth every minute of it. Neatly dressed with a freshly laundered and crisply pressed saree, Sr. Sonamathi was a miraculous sight. Her straight back, peaceful face betraying no emotion, totally in

“

Losing her beloved husband, Pastor Chamu Purthy, has made her more self-aware. A little sad, but calm. **Resigned to it. Less angry, less annoyed at the world, less bitter about what was taken away. Grief does not go away, it has no expiry date"**

control, Sr. Sonamathi and her well turned out four children, greeted our entourage to her humble home. Seeing her radiant face and trust in God, we were impressed by her transformation and encouraged to renew our faith.

Just to recap: Pastor Chamu Purthy, a powerful instrument of God, had influenced the entire village, with his selfless dedication and devotion, in serving the spiritual, physical and practical needs of the villagers. Now,



Women in Focus - Adam's Rib



after his death, the pastor's widow, Sonamati Dhan, who had lived in her husband's shadow, doing the dutiful wife-and-mother things, emerged after his death, shepherding the few brave ones who had gathered every Sunday morning. She continues to be a "light house" Christian and conducts weekly prayer meetings in their Sandigaon village in India's eastern Jharkhand state. She also works at the village's primary school as a teacher.

As Sr. Sonamathi led complete worship service, the presence of the Lord and the anointing of the Holy Spirit were richly manifest in the prayers, message and the lusty singing of the small congregation. After the worship service, as we sat around and broke bread, as my thoughts drifted to 2 years ago, where I had encountered a broken and traumatized person.

Sister recalled that immediately after her husband's death, she had 2 choices. She could either surrender to God what had happened or chose to fight the reality of it. She chose to trust God, to surrender her emotions her fears including her grief. She claimed that after her return from Kumbanad Convention, the experience gave her confidence. God took over and miracles began happening. In those moments of surrender, there were

glimmers of hope, love and life. Upon surrendering, she was able to acknowledge all of the people who wanted to help her with her kids, her home, her work...everything. And, more importantly, she learned how to let them help.

Losing her beloved husband, Pastor Chamu Purty, has made her more self-aware. A little sad, but calm. Resigned to it. Less angry, less annoyed at the world, less bitter about what was taken away. Grief does not go away, it has no expiry date.

Her 4 children, always within earshot, look up at their mother, their anchor. Angel has just got her Appointment Order from the government. She will start as a Police Officer by next month. Saritha, the next daughter is completing her B. Ed. aspiring to become a teacher like her mother. Anjali and Samuel, the youngest of the lot, saw their father shot dead in cold blood, right outside their home. They are still in school.

Sis. Aleyamma's joy was compounded to meet with Sis. Susanna Lagun, the widow of Pastor Yohan Maria visiting from Odisha.

"For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink." (1 Corinthians 12:13).

These are sisters in Christ, they are God's women, unique and responsible in obeying God; both of Sr. Aleyamma to visit and encourage Pastor Chamu's widow and for Sr. Sonamathi, to go back and revive her husband's legacy – where no man was willing to go. Their obedience resulted in their deliverance.

God takes the most unjust and

tragic events in the history of the world and makes it a blessing to all. Jesus Christ did not deserve to be falsely accused! He did not deserve to be sentenced to die the agonizing death of the cross. He willingly endured this so that you and I could be forgiven our sins and have a relationship with God that will last forever.

God is an expert at taking tragedy and turning it into triumph. her children, her community.

Pray for Sr. Sonamathi and her children. Even though they are radiant, they are hurting. They need our prayer! Don't forget them just because the crisis is over.

Ultimately, this is our goal: to be joined together as brethren (brothers and sisters) in Christ. To work together, not only tolerate one another, but to love one another. We must desire to be a community reflecting the holiness which Jesus Christ taught and exemplified in his life.

Any difference of race, education or gender has no significance in Christ Jesus. We are all equal. We stand with Abraham to inherit the promise of everlasting life on heaven.

As a community of believers, we invite you to write to us, if you would like to visit and meet with the martyr's widow family.

"Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen." (Ephesians 3:20-21)

Bro. Shibu Thomas

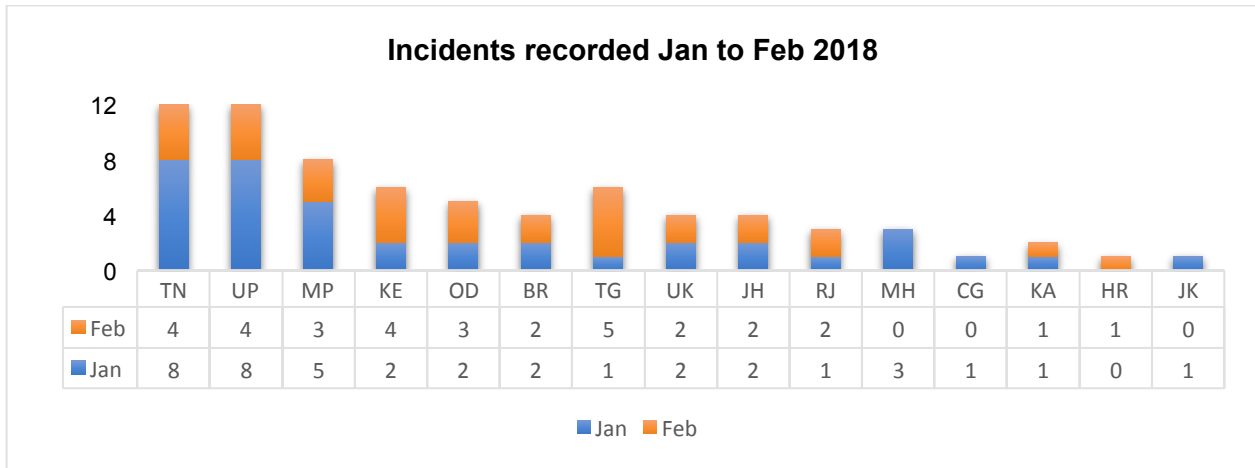


GET PERSECUTION
UPDATES

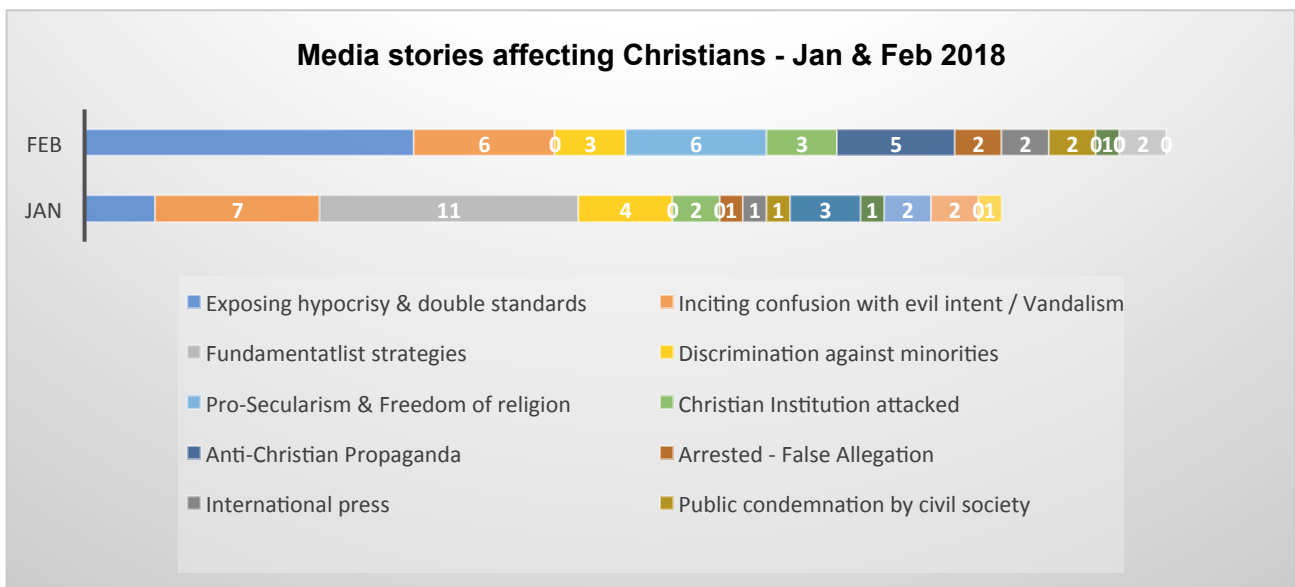
JOIN
THE MOVEMENT

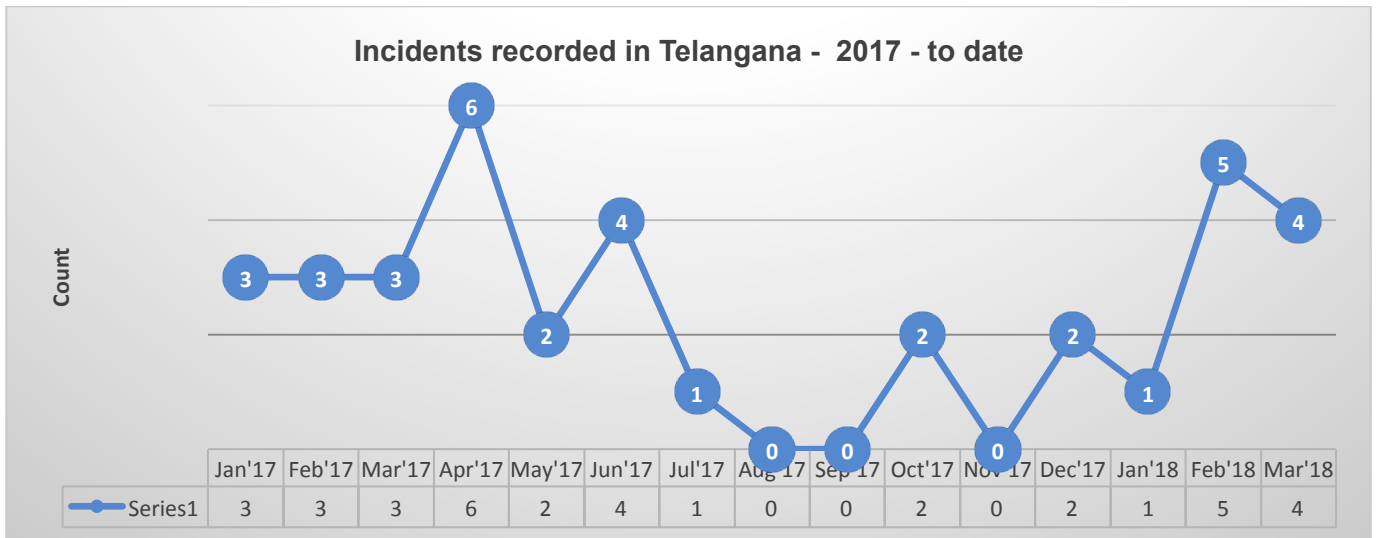
www.facebook.com/persecutionrelief

PERSECUTION RELIEF MONITOR



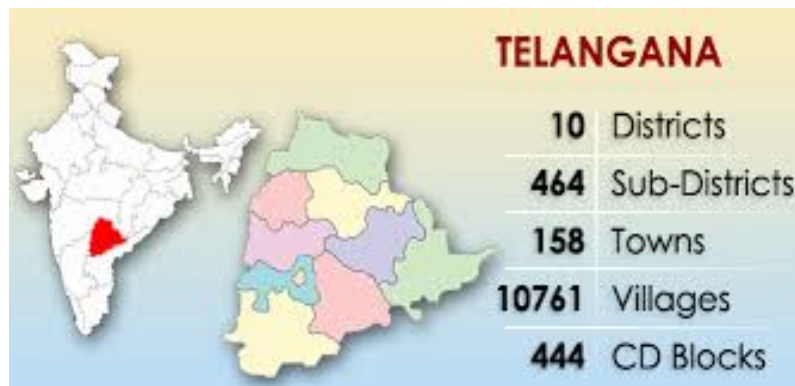
- Persecution Relief recorded **39 and 33** incidents of persecution against Christians, in **Jan and Feb.'18**, across India
- **45 and 53** media stories covering Christian persecution, discrimination against minorities, condemnation by International media were recorded
- **Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh** continue to dominate the states with highest numbers of persecution incidents
- There has been a surge in anti-Christian attacks in Telangana - the primary charge is of “forced conversions”
- Armed Hindu extremists continue to attack Christians with impunity causing serious injuries
- Incidents of threats of land grabbing against Christian homes and Churches and looting their properties is prevalent
- Campaign against Christians based on fearmongering – deliberately arousing public fear is rampant
- House Churches and prayer meetings held in the privacy of homes are arbitrarily attacked and shut down
- Consistent and strategic attacks on Christian Institutions – Colleges, Churches, Schools, hospitals continue
- According to media reports and interviews, the ruling party continues to make and amend various constitutional provisions, in its attempt to create a "Hindu Rashtra" (nation)





Summary:

- Telangana ranks fifth among the states that most hostile towards Christians
- There has been a surge in anti-Christian attacks in Telangana - the primary charge is of “forced conversions”
- House Churches and prayer meetings held in the privacy of homes are arbitrarily attacked, violating the privacy and sanctity of an individual or a family, and is shut down with impunity
- The political instability in the state in the last one year has aggravated the situation.
- As anti-Christian violence continues, fear and insecurity continue to increase among minorities
- Law enforcement agencies are increasingly being used by the state to stop and disrupt worship in Churches



Prayer Points:

- Church, pray for the State of Telangana, which was officially formed on 02 June 2014
- Pray that the communal mindset will be crushed in Jesus’ name
- Pray that the partisan and discriminatory attitude against Christians, will be erased in Jesus’ name
- Pray that Christian Persecutors will be transformed in Jesus’ name
- Pray for the safety and protection of all Christians in the State of Telangana
- Pray for Chief Minister of Telangana, Mr. Chandrashekar Rao, for his cabinet and the bureaucrats, that God will fill them with divine wisdom to govern wisely





PASTOR CHAMU PURTY

...SHOT BEFORE HIS FAMILY FOR THE SAKE OF CHRIST



Pastor Chamu Purty was pastoring a small church in the village Sandigaon, Jharkhand, which is 13 kms off the main NH 75.

On 13th October, around 11:30 PM, around 10-12 people with arms knocked their mud house door seeking prayer. Peeping through the small window, his wife, Sr. Sonamti Purty saw armed men standing outside. Reluctant to let her husband outside, Sr. shouted out that her husband had retired for the night. These irate men began to pound on the door and broke it open with axes and attacked the pastor. The Pastor was attacked and shot dead in cold blood. Sr. Sonamati and her son, who witnessed this nightmare, managed to flee in the cover of darkness and hid in the jungle through the night. Pastor Chamu Purty is survived by his wife Sonamati Purty and three daughters and a son.

Pastor Chamu had dedicated his life towards not just spiritual enrichment but also practical upliftment of the villagers in that he modified his two-wheeler and attached it with a cart that could be useful to carry any sick person to the block hospital which was around 13 kms from the village. He was a powerful instrument of God, influencing lives of the entire village, that the whole village mourned over his sudden death.

Although the Church was closed down and over 100 believers scattered, no male pastors were willing to go serve in the village. However, after attending the Kumbanad Convention, on her return to the village, Sr. Sonamathi was inspired by the Holy Spirit, to resume the worship service. Today over 7 families gather to worship with her.

Abolishment of Anti Conversion Law in India



Freedom of religion in India is a fundamental right guaranteed by Article 15 and Article 25 of the Constitution of India

Article 15(1) in The Constitution of India 1949

- The State shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them

Article 25(1) in The Constitution of India 1949

- Subject to public order, morality and health and to the other provisions of this Part, all persons are equally entitled to freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess, practice and propagate religion

Credit: //indiankanoon.org

So far, seven Indian states – Madhya Pradesh Chhattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh, Gujarat, Arunachal Pradesh, Odisha and Jharkhand, have officially passed the Anti-Conversion law.

Church / Readers, your signature and support could make this a reality. Freedom of religion is our Constitutional right. By clicking on the link, you are asking the Prime Minister to abolish this draconian law across India. It is the responsibility of every Christian to sign this petition and make our voices count as it will adversely affect you and your children generation, either directly or indirectly.

<http://persecutionrelief.org/stop-the-killing-brutalizing-of-christians-in-india/>

<https://www.ipetitions.com/petition/abolishment-of-anti-conversion-law-in-india/>

Are you covered?

1. Financial transactions

- It is mandatory for all Christian Organizations (Church, orphanage, old age home, schools etc.) to be registered either with a Society/Trust etc.
- All collection of funds in Church should be transparent and accounted for
- All funds received / deposited in Bank, must be well documented and audited

2. Distribution of tracts

- Inform the Police that you are visiting a particular area to distribute the tracts
- Secure permission before going
- Ensure the content of the tracks are not inflammatory or derogatory about other gods

3. Anti-Christian Propaganda ('Love Jihad', 'Ghar Vapsi', Bahu Lao, Beti Bacho')

- Create awareness among the Church members
- Record (audio & video) the proceedings so that the Church can pray against such activities

4. Protection for woman and children

- A dedicated email address has been created for women and children

to file complaints related to abusive behavior, harassment and hateful conduct on social media

- Please visit the website click here to learn more
- Such complaints may be sent to complaint-mwcd@gov.in

5. Conversation in unfamiliar settings

- Be mindful of your conversation when travelling in a hired vehicle or public mode of transport
- The Driver of the vehicle may be listening to your conversation so ensure that you are not discussing your plans openly
- We have had situations of a similar nature where the driver has been the conduit to inform religious fundamentalists of our movements
- Do not engage in negative conversation about any persons or groups

6. Boycotted and isolated in villages

- When Christians are boycotted in a village - either being denied access to the community well, or to the grocery store or ration shop, or government hospital, or cattle being denied access to water or land to graze - please contact the nearest Church to your village
- The nearest Church should 'adopt' these families temporarily

- Persecution Relief will provide their basic needs

7. Forced Conversion

- No Church Leader or member may force/pressure an individual to convert to Christianity
- It is totally unlawful to lure someone to 'accept' Christ, with the promise of healing/prosperity/ secured life/jobs.
- When a new Christian 'accepts' and commits to following Christ, please ensure that you keep an audio recording of his self-confession as evidence of his personal choice

8. Unlawful Arrest

- If the Police threaten to arrest you, politely insist to see the 'Arrest Warrant' Police cannot arrest you without a warrant. So, don't agree to go with the Police to the station without seeing this document
- Request to know all the facts before you go to the police station like what is the complaint against you, who has lodged it. Also request for a copy of the complaint.
- Ask a copy of the Report/FIR and make sure you read and understand the contents
- Do not give your mobile phones to the police to the extent possible - resist giving it to them as it is your personal property

Concluded.

PERSECUTION RELIEF EVENTS

Persecution Relief continues to diligently highlight and expose the atrocities against defenseless Christians, in pursuit of justice and freedom to worship Jesus Christ in India, which is every citizen's right according to the Constitution.

Persecution Relief while actively providing comprehensive support to the persecuted Christian, is redoubling its efforts, and has been both, actively and proactively campaigning to keep the voice of democracy, the voice of reason, the voice of

justice and the voice of legitimacy loud and clear, defending the rights of the persecuted Christians, exposing them to rest of the world.

Persecution Relief is making every effort to represent Christian community facing every persecution in India by reaching out to the law makers for a solution.

Facts & Figures recorded in the Persecution Relief Annual Report, was handed over to the following members of Parliament:

On 06th March 2018, Hon. Member of Parliament raised the burning issue of the growing incidents of atrocities against Christians in the country at the Lok Sabha.

He highlighted the number of incidents recorded vs. the number of complaints registered by the Police, highlighting the reluctance and collusion of the administration, which helps the culprits roam scot-free. He requested the Government to take immediate action in this regard, so that the minorities in the country can live in peace and security, without discrimination.

- **Hon. Minister Alphons Kannanthanam**, Union Minister of State for Electronics and Information Technology, Culture, and Tourism, was briefed by the Founder

- **An "Open Letter to the Prime Minister Narendra Modi"** was sent in light of the growing atrocities committed against the minority Christian community

- Based on Persecution Relief Annual Report, many National and International Print and Digital Media highlighted Christian persecution in India, across the world

- The following Petitions – **"Stop the killing and brutalizing of Christians in India"** and **"Abolishment of anti-conversion law in India"**, are on-line and still in progress. If you have not yet signed our Petition, please sign and share.

<http://persecutionrelief.org/stop-the-killing-brutalizing-of-christians-in-india/>

<https://www.ipetitions.com/petition/abolishment-of-anti-conversion-law-in-india/>



Hon. Member of Parliament, Anto Antony Punathaniyil, member of the Indian National Congress and Member of Parliament and elected member of the 15th Lok Sabha from the Pathanamthitta electoral district in Kerala.



Hon. Minister Hemant Soren, Leader of Opposition, Jharkhand Legislative Assembly

Events



Dr. Simon Samuel, Principal and Dr. George Oommen, Dean of Student Affairs, New Theological College (NTC) with Founder, releasing the Persecution Relief Annual Report. NTC is one of the many Bible Colleges where Persecution Relief conducted awareness sessions about the current persecution situation in India



Founder Persecution Relief met with Pastor D. Mohan, General Superintendent of the Assemblies of God of India and Vice Chairman of the World Assemblies of God. He discussed with him about the current situation prevailing in India and shared his vision for the persecuted Church.



Persecution Relief was represented at National Mission Consultation 2018, organised by Friends Missionary Prayer Band.



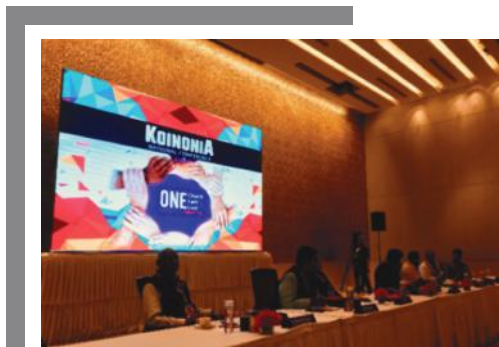
Hon. Minister Ajay Singh, Leader of Opposition, Madhya Pradesh Legislative Assembly



Founder, Persecution Relief, met with General Secretary and National Director for the Religious Liberty commission of Evangelical Fellowship of India, Rev. Vijayesh Lal and handed him a copy of the Annual Report 2017.

Ms. Fiona Bruce MP, House of Commons, Westminster, London, was informed about the alarming rise in Christian Persecution in India. Further, the Annual Report of 'Persecution Relief' was forwarded to "All Party Parliamentary Group for International Freedom of Religion or Belief". This Group exists to raise awareness and profile of international freedom of religion or belief as a human right among Parliamentarians, media, government and the general public in the UK, and to increase the effectiveness of the UK's contribution to international institutions charged with enforcing this human right. APPG members were also appraised by Persecution Relief.

Persecution Relief Team met with major Mission Leaders and Church Pastors, appraising them about the current situation Christians are facing across India. All of them have assured their help and support towards the persecuted Church.



Pastor Satish Kumar of Calvary Temple, Hyderabad, initiated 'Body of Christ' forum, connecting key Christian Leaders, representing almost all states of India, to stand with the persecuted Church. The Leaders have decided to meet every 2 months. Persecution Relief spoke on the current situation about Christian Persecution, in the forum. Founder, Persecution Relief handed over a copy of the Annual Report 2017.

write to us@ https://christianpersecution@persecutionrelief.org



Serve Persecuted
Love Persecutors



TOLL FREE 1800-1234-461

write to us@ persecutionrelief@gmail.com

PERSECUTION RELIEF (PR)

has launched a 24x7 Toll Free Number 1800-1234- 461 to report Christian persecution in India. You can reach us free of charge at this number.

WHO ARE WE?

Persecution Relief is an inter-denominational initiative, to provide comprehensive support (prayerfully, financially, politically and judicially) to the persecuted Church in India. We are a group of 'Born Again', Spirit filled, Kingdom of God Believers, who have initiated this movement.

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

- ✓ Pray for the persecuted Christians and the persecutors.
- ✓ Please inform us of any Christian Persecution case you may come across in India.
- ✓ Please freely share the **PERSECUTION RELIEF TOLL FREE NO: 1800-1234-461** with everybody who is working in the Mission field across India e.g. Pastors, Priests, Evangelists, Missionaries, co-workers, family members and your church's.
- ✓ Inform us if you know or hear of any Christian who has been languishing in jail without charges or trial, booked on false charges of conversion etc. across India.
- ✓ Inform us about the widows whose husbands have been martyred for Christ.

The task is huge and the task belongs to every Jesus' follower. Let us rise up to this challenge and opportunity, to respond in love and compassion as we bring light and life to brethren. Together, let's stand and lift up the persecuted Church in India.

..... stand firm in the one Spirit, striving together as one for the faith of the gospel, without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you. This is a sign to them that they will be destroyed, but that you will be saved—and that by God.

Philippians 1:27-28

<http://facebook.com/persecutionrelief>
<http://persecutionrelief.org/index.php/contacts/join-now>
<http://twitter.com/persecutorr>



Events

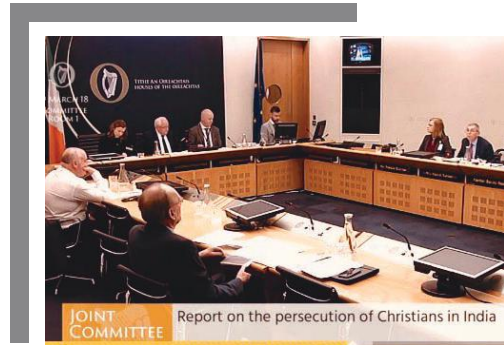


The France24 Crew

France24, a 24-hour international news and current affairs television network, broadcasts 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to 250 million TV households, in 177 countries around the world, based in Paris, France. On 01 April 2018, they ran an Easter Special Report, on the persecution of India's Christian minority along with Persecution Relief.

The France24 Crew, travelled with the Founder, to get first hand reports of the reality on the ground, interviewing innocent victims.

France24 also met with Hon. Minister Ajay Singh, Leader of Opposition, Madhya Pradesh Legislative Assembly, the state which has recorded high numbers of incidents against Christians. He denounced the bill which violates the freedom of conscience and religion, which is contrary to the constitution. Among several ground visits, the crew visited the site of the demolition and partition of Pushpa Mission Hospital in Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh. France24 drew attention to the Anti-conversion bill in India, through the documentary.



On 29th March, 2018, Persecution Relief was represented by Pastor Baiju George, Ireland, in front of the TDS (Teachtaí Dála (Deputies) and Senators to the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Foreign Affairs of Ireland (legislature of Ireland).

Persecution Relief's Annual Report 2017, detailing attacks on Christians in India was used for discussion at the meeting. The initiative was made by a religious organization working for the persecuted Church globally 'Church in Chains'. The representatives were shocked to read about the reality on the ground and commended the religious organisation for bringing the report to the committee. They lamented the fact that reports of persecution did not receive much media attention. The Joint Committee conceded that they would act on the report's recommendations by inviting the Indian Ambassador to attend the committee to respond to the report and that he would also write to Minister for Foreign Affairs, encouraging him to take up the matter at the next meeting of the EU Foreign Ministerial Council.



VOICE

OF THE CHRISTIANS

Subscribe Today !

- 'Voice of the Christians' magazine is now available - never miss an issue!
- Free postage direct to your home
- 12 issues a year of your personal copy delivered to your home or office
- 40 pages of updates on the Persecuted Church in India
- Opportunity to partner with Persecution Relief to serve the Persecuted Church in India

Please mail us at persecutionrelief@gmail.com or WhatsApp us at +91 9993200020

Billing/Payments:

First Name:

Last Name:

Email address:

Mobile Telephone No:

Mailing Address:

Send us your subscription payment of Rs. 1200/- (@ Rs.100 x 12 months) for one year. You can safely and conveniently pay online. Cheques may be mailed to:

VOICE OF THE CHRISTIANS

State Bank of India

Account Number: 0000067396433661

IFSC Code: - SBTR0000607,

Bhopal (Arera Colony), 17, Rishi Nagar, Char Imla,

Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, PIN-462016, INDIA.

If you're a new subscriber, your magazine will arrive in approximately two weeks after we process your subscription order. Your prompt payment will ensure that your subscription continues without interruption.

Toll Free helpline number for the Persecuted Christians in India

ഓരതത്തിലെ ചീഡിതരായ
എല്ലാ ക്രിസ്ത്യാനികൾക്കും വേണ്ടി
ടോൾ ഫ്രീ നമ്പർ

ಭಾರತ ದೇಶಮುಲೆ
ಹಿಂಸಿಂಪಬಡುಚುನ್ನು
ತೈಸ್ತವುಲ ಸಹಾಯಮುತೈ
ಲೆಲ್ ಪ್ಲಿ ಪಲ್ಸ್ ಲೈನ್ ನಂಬರು

ಇந்தಿಯಾವಿಲೆ
ಕಿರಿತ್ತವರ್ಕುಕ್ಕು
ಁತಿರಾನ್ ವನ್ಮುಠಱ
ಁಠ್ಪಟ್ಟಾಲ್ ತೂಡರ್ಪು
ಕೂಱ್ಱ ವೇಣ್ಣಡಿಯ
ಕಟ್ಟಣಮ್ ಇಲ್ಲಾತ
ಇಲವಸ ತೂಱಲಪೇಸಿ ಁಣ್ಣ

भारत में सताए हुए
ईसाइयों के लिए
टोल फ्री हेल्पलाइन नंबर

1800-1234-461

