“For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels...”
JULY 22
INDIAN
CHRISTIAN
MARTYRDOM DAY

Persecution Relief will observe
22nd July as the
“INDIAN CHRISTIAN MARTYRDOM DAY”

This will be an Annual Event,
to honour and remember the families, widows and
children of the Martyred Christian soldiers,
who lost their lives defending
their faith in Jesus Christ

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The Holy Bible, through the scriptures, clearly commands us to pray.

The “Call to Prayer”, given by the Archbishop Anil Joseph Thomas Couto, elicited a response so powerful – that it became the focal point of conversation in all major newspapers, capturing prime time on television channels, as indeed the whole nation of India.

The Church must believe that praying is invaluable; prayer is the master key.

“that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior”. - 1 Timothy 2:1-3

God commands us to pray for the government and for the people holding high positions - that it is pleasing in the sight of God. So, whom should you please? Man, or God?

We are at a very pivotal time of history. India is on the course to becoming a world leader, but on the other side, while some are pushing the agenda for India to be an exclusive Hindu Nation, let’s pray that India continues to be an inclusive democracy.

The venom of hatred being injected into the society, is a dangerous trend in India – and it’s all done in the name of religion & god. Is god really happy?

As the dust continues to rise and settle, the breathtaking speed of political events in the last few weeks, have left many stunned. It is pretty obvious that a ‘shaking’ is taking place. I encourage my fellow Christians, to continue to pray and fast for India, so that we will see mighty breakthroughs in Jesus’ mighty Name.

Pray that our God, who is immovable and unshakable, will be more and more revealed.

Pray that the Lord will quicken our spirits and affect the way we live and think and carry on our relationships.

Pray that we will throw out every venom of hatred, embrace inclusiveness and love unconditionally, even those who hate us – for Jesus is the personification of love.

I would like to conclude with the words of Oswald Chambers.

“We have to pray with our eyes on God, not on the difficulties.”

God bless you.

Shibu Thomas
founder@persecutionrelief.org
Yes and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.

2 Timothy 3:12

BIBLE

www.persecutionrelief.org
home guard for the police, 35-year old Durjo Sunamajhi was in drunken stupor on October 4, 2008 night when police barged into his house in Budapada village. They carried him away in sleep when he was wearing only a lungi. Neighbours who woke up hearing the commotion saw the police carrying him while he muttered: "Who are you? Why are you carrying me?"

After putting Durjo in the van, police banged on the door that fell apart and searched the house. Hearing the noise, when his wife Gumili got up and asked the police what they were doing.

"Don’t make noise," the police told her. They searched the house and picked up the broken ancestral hunting gun that was lying unused for years.

"My husband never touched a gun. The gun was broken and only the barrel was there," recalled Gumili.

Gumili has not yet understood how the police could charge her husband with the Swami’s murder as he was not even in Kotagarh area on the fateful day.

Durjo had accompanied Debonath Rupamajhi, Andrea Sunamajhi and Sukantho Mallick and reached Muniguda railway station on August 22 to go to Kerala seeking employment.

"When the train came early next morning, they were sleeping and missed it but stayed at the platform," said Jeremiah Sunamahji, who had met Indian president Pranab Mukherjee on September 7, 2015 with a delegation of Kandhamal survivors demanding the release of the seven innocent Christians. He reiterated his uncle was not in Kandhamal on the day the Swami was murdered.

Further, he added that Durjo’s elder brother Sarbe Sunamajhi had even shown the train ticket to Kerala to Kerala to the police to prove that he was not in the area on the day of the Swami’s killing. Sadly, the illiterate villagers did not have the wisdom to preserve their tickets to contest the police claim...
Pastor Suryadev Kumar, a resident of Nadaura village in Kurtha Tehsil of Arwal district in Bihar, had just visited Bro. Jeetender Raj one of his believers at Punpun, which is around 10 kms, south of Patna city, the capital of Bihar State. He then decided to visit Pastor Subash & family, who had just been released from jail, after being imprisoned for over 3 weeks on false conversion charges (a story we had covered).

Pastor boarded the train ‘Patna Intercity’ from Punpun to Patna, with a travelling time of around 15 minutes. He was carrying few New Testament Bibles in his hand, which he placed on the seat beside him.

A co-passenger stretched out his leg on to the seat which touched the Bibles. Pastor Suryadev, very politely told him not to touch the books with his feet as it was the Holy Book of Christians. The passenger then expressed interest and wanted to learn more about the Bible. Pastor Suryadev assumed that his interest was genuine and began sharing about the Holy Bible.

The train had just left the platform and the only thing Pastor can remember after this, is being assaulted and pushed out of a running train.

Pastor Suryadev was found unconscious, grievously injured and lying on the tracks by travelers. Trying to establish his identity, these ‘good Samaritans’ tried calling random numbers listed on his mobile - one of
which reached Pastor Sanjay David.

Speaking to Persecution Relief, Pastor Sanjay David stated that he received a call, alerting him that Pastor Suryadev was in a coma and in hospital. Rushing to the Hospital from Sipara, he received a second call informing him that Pastor Suryadev was shifted from Punpun to PMCH, (Patna Medical College and Hospital), Patna.

After the preliminary tests the Punpun hospital referred Pastor to PMCH as his condition was very serious and he was in Coma. Eventually, he was shifted to a private hospital in Arwal, where he is currently under treatment. By the grace and mercy of God, Pastor Suryadev is now conscious but is in great pain owing to the injuries caused by the fall.

Speaking to Persecution Relief he said, “The last thing I can remember of the incident is being pushed out from the train”. Pastor Suryadev requested valuable prayers of the Church for his speedy recovery. Pastor has 6 children – 4 boys and 2 girls. Pray that God will be Jehovah Jireh for this family, meeting all their pressing needs

Pray that God would look down with compassion and send comfort and healing on Pastor. May this time of rest be a time of spiritual rejuvenation through the power of the Holy Spirit.

“I HAVE NEVER SEEN YOU NOR HAVE I MET YOU BUT YOU HAVE HELPED ME MORE THAN ANY OF OUR NEAREST ONES. IN FACT, I EXPECTED THAT MY OWN PEOPLE WILL HELP ME BUT I WAS DISAPPOINTED. THANK YOU PERSECUTION RELIEF FAMILY, FOR ALL THE FINANCIAL HELP PROVIDED TOWARDS MY HOSPITAL EXPENSES. THANK YOU FOR ALSO SPEAKING TO MY WIFE AND ENCOURAGING HER IN THE LORD AS SHE WAS VERY DISAPPOINTED WITH THE INCIDENT. SHE WAS ANXIOUS BECAUSE SHE HAS TO TAKE CARE OF ME AND OUR CHILDREN IN THE AGE GROUP OF 4-13 YEARS. GOD BLESS YOU BROTHER. PASTOR SURYADEV

“For the oppressed will not always be forgotten; the hope of the afflicted will not perish forever.”

Psalm 9:18

If God has laid a burden upon your heart to support Pastor Suryadev, write to us at persecutionrelief@gmail.com
Pastor Maulana Ayub is affiliated to Talim Ministries as Network Leader. He resides with his family in Laharpur, a town and a municipal board in Sitapur district in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh.

On 09th May, as was the usual practice, his family were gathered together for family prayers and reading of the Word. As there was a power-cut, the family stepped out into the courtyard to continue their prayers. Pastor Ayub was reading the Word.

Suddenly, without any provocation, a few people who saw them praying, gathered a mob of 30-40 religious fundamentalists and stormed into this private home and attacked the family. Pastor Ayub who was brutally beaten, bore the brunt of the hate crime and was hospitalized with critical injuries. The radicals also burnt his beard, used abusive language and roughed up his wife and children.

Their home was vandalized and all food provisions were destroyed. Cash of around Rs. 5000/- which Pastor had with him. was stolen by these miscreants. The family were chased out of their home and had to flee for their lives. They took refuge in one of their relative’s home around 20 kms away from their home.

Speaking to Persecution Relief, Rev. Sushil requested for prayer support for Pastor Ayub and his family, who were fearful of further attacks.

If God lays a burden upon your heart to support Pastor Ayub, write to us at persecutionrelief@gmail.com

“I was referred to Persecution Relief by Dr Wati. Thank you for your immediate response to help Pastor Ayub. Your help was much needed and timely, as all of his personal belongings were thrown out and destroyed by the mob. We appreciate your work towards the Persecuted Church in India.” - Dr Sushil Tyagi, Nicodemus Ministry.
Evangelist Vijender Singh along with Evangelist Kanshiram from Churur and Evangelist Sahiram from Ganga Nagar, had gone to 14 Bd. Village, located in Khajuwala Tehsil of Bikaner District of Rajasthan. All of the Evangelists were affiliated with the Brethren Church.

On 22nd May, around 9 am, as the Evangelists were distributing Bible Tracts titled “Parmeshwar Ka Susamachar”, they were
mobbed by local villagers who falsely accused them of indulging in conversion activities. They were then forcibly taken to the Khajuwala Police Station.

Persecution Relief received a call from Bro. Boaz, who briefed about the incident. On contacting the local Police and speaking to the TI Mr. Vikram Singh, we were told that the incident was being investigated. In spite of constant and close follow up with the Police, religious fanatics were parallelly exerting pressure on the Police Administration, not to release the Evangelists. They were detained that night at the Police Station.

Although the three Evangelists - Vijender Singh, Sahiram and Kanshiram – were given Bail from the Sub Division Magistrate on 23rd May, they were not released for their own safety as the fanatics were creating a lot of trouble.

The Religious fanatics filed another complaint against them and they were detained in Police Custody for a non-bailable offence (under IPC 295a). They were produced the following morning but were again refused Bail. They were asked to appeal at the Sessions Court.

Finally, after 7 days in jail, Evangelist Vijender Singh, Evangelist Kanshiram and Evangelist Sahiram, were granted bail.

Much appreciation and gratitude to Bro. Boaz, who stayed in touch with Persecution Relief, updating on their progress since their arrest, Bro. Arun Nagarajan, Evg. Barish Francis and Evg. Kulwinder – all from the Brethren Assembly, who worked very hard in the background to secure their release.

Persecution Relief wants to also recognize the support and assistance provided by Advocate Subodh for his counsel and guidance, the local TI Mr. Vikram Singh and other Police Officials.

If God lays a burden upon your heart to support these Evangelists, write to us at persecutionrelief@gmail.com

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**Testimonial**

“I WOULD LIKE TO THANK BRO. SHIBU, FOUNDER OF PERSECUTION RELIEF, FOR CALLING ME AS SOON AS MY BROTHER EVG VIJENDER AND OTHERS WERE ARRESTED. YOU REALLY ENCOURAGED AND PUSHED ME TO REACH THE POLICE STATION IMMEDIATELY, AS I WAS A FEW KILOMETERS AWAY FROM THAT PLACE. MY SINCERE THANKS FOR CALLING THE POLICE STATION AND SPEAKING TO THE OFFICIALS AS IT WAS VERY HELPFUL TO US. I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO THANK YOU FOR PROVIDING ME WITH LOCAL LAWYERS SUPPORT. I AM REALLY OBLIGED AND I BLESS ALL THE WORK OF PERSECUTION RELIEF IN INDIA. GOD BLESS. – BRO. KULWINDER SINGH BRETHREN ASSEMBLY, GANGANAGAR.”
Adopt a persecuted family

Prayerline24.com
- Daily 6 to 6.45 pm (New York time)
- Dial +1-712-432-8273, access code 218618#

Oklahoma Prayer Line
Sunday 9 to 11 pm – Oklahoma time
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Bro. Halal Ram Sahu and family are residents of Sirsida Village in Kanker district of Chhattisgarh. Originally from the Sahu Samaj community, Bro. Halal and his family became followers of Jesus Christ. However, for the past 4 years, they have been socially boycotted and discriminated by the Sahu Samaj residents.

Sahu “is known as the Jatt caste and also Teli caste of India, known as Sahu Vaishyas, a business caste among Hindus. They bear different surnames in different regions and states of India. Sahu Samaj are basically “businessman” or “moneylenders” in India.

Bro. Halal’s oldest son, Bro. Manish Kumar Sahu got married. Several Christians in the area, gathered for a special thanksgiving prayer meeting on Sunday. After the meeting, as everybody dispersed, Bro. Halal and his wife, Sis. Sushila Sahu left on their motor bike.

On the way, they met another believer lady and stopped to give her a ride since it was for a short distance. Driving with luggage and “triples”, proved dangerous as Sis. Sushila slipped and fell off the motorbike, sustaining severe head injuries. She was rushed to the hospital where she passed away.

The grieving family of Bro. Halal were making preparations for her burial. As the news of her death spread, the local Sahu community, descended on the residence of Bro. Halal. They surrounded the house and demanded that the last rites being administered, should be according to the Hindu rites. The insisted that Bro. Halal and his son Manish, forsake Jesus Christ and come back to the Sahu community.

In spite of the massive pressure from the community, they were adamant that they will not recant Jesus Christ. They were also very determined and forthright that would not cremate their mother’s body but would perform the final rites based on Bible, as per the deceased mother’s last wish.

‘Once the local religious fanatics got wind of this news, a mob of over 100’s, joined the Sahu community, protesting that they would not allow the burial in the village, if not done as per Hindu rituals. In spite of the family proposing to bury Sis. Sushila in the family property, the suggestion was vehemently opposed by the Sahu Samaj District President Gauri Shankar Sahu.

With no recourse, the family took Sis. Sushila’s body, directly from the Hospital, after the post-mortem, to the Police Station in Charama. Police Officer Mr. Brijesh Kumar made every attempt to mediate a compromise between with the villagers and with Bro. Halal and family.

Although the Leader of Sahu Samaj, Mr. Shankar, threatened to self-immolate, if the body was buried in the village, Bro. Halal was equally unflinching and would not agree to a cremation of his wife’s body. Ultimately the body was taken to a public cemetery and the burial service was done by Pastor Arvind, to who’s Church, Bro. Halal’s family belongs.

Speaking to Persecution Relief, Pastor Arvind narrated the aftermath of the burial service.
As they returned home after an eventful day, the fanatic groups were relentless and unforgiving. They continued to conspire and plot, on how they could coerce the “Christians” to forsake Jesus Christ and join back Sahu Samaj.

Apparently, the ruthless mob reached Bro. Sewa Ram, a Christians house, and forced him to forsake Jesus Christ or leave the village that night. They strong-armed and terrified him with death to his whole family, and pressured him into signing a document, declaring that he would no longer follow Jesus Christ. He finally relented.

Next, the mob paid a visit to Suresh Sahu. Although he is not a follower of Jesus Christ, his wife, Sis. Pramila is a strong believer. The mob strong-armed Bro. Sahu’s family to sign a document, renouncing their faith in Jesus Christ. However, Sis. Pramila stood her ground. While every family member was willing, only Sis. Pramila stood strong in her resolve, refusing to recant her faith. Her father in-law, embarrassed and annoyed that his daughter in law was conspicuous in her rebellion, not complying with commands of her husband, took away the piece of land that Sis. Pramila was farming and gave it to his own daughter instead.

When your family misunderstands or rejects you, it is often hardest to bear. After all, we long for the love of those who have nurtured us. To have that love relationship broken, is one of the greatest traumas a human being can face.

Jesus warned us about this in chilling language as He Himself experienced this from his own family.

“He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me.”

And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me.

He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it.” – Matthew 10:37-39 New King James Version (NKJV)

As in Christ’s own words, we must make up our minds on who is more important and not hold on to fleshly ties above our spiritual parentage.

Chhattisgarh Christian Forum Leaders also assisted the persecuted Christians by speaking to the Police Officials to resolve the issue.

Church, praise God for Sis. Pramila, who has endured persecution for her faith. Pray that her faith will be unshakeable and steadfast. Pray that God will make her “light shine out of darkness,” to reflect the glory of the living God.

Pray for Bro. Halal and his son Manish, for Godly comfort as they grieve their loss.

Pray for the persecuted Christians of the Sirsida village, Bro. Seva Ram’s family and for the all persecutors of Christians.

If God lays a burden upon your heart to support these ostracized families, write to us at persecutionrelief@gmail.com
"I thank Persecution Relief team for calling and inquiring about the persecuted believers of my Church. Thank you for your commitment to stand with us in future. I also want to thank you for extending support Sis. Pramila".
Pastor Arvind Kumar Kodeopi
TRIBAL CHRISTIANS FLEE, JHARKHAND

Persecution Relief received a desperate call today, 30 May, 2018 from Pastor Sarbjit Bharti from Jharkhand State. Among the many Christians who congregate at ‘Kripa Bhawan’, 8 families who also belong to Pastor Sarbjit’s Church, have been severely persecuted.

8 families of Bro. Bandhu Kumar, Jeetender Buhia, Ajay Buhia and others, have been harassed since January 2018. All of these families are residents of Satantola Village, located in Patan District in Jharkhand, India. The ostracization and discrimination had grown so intense that these families have abandoned their homes and property and fled from the village. They have taken refuge in the neighbouring village with a fellow Christian.

These families had been followers of Jesus Christ for the last 6 years. However, persecution started in the last one year and grew more intense in the past few months where they were denied basic amenities. Electricity to their homes was cut. Access to community water was denied. The religious fanatics even started visiting their homes and harassing their women folk.

A complaint was lodged with the Chhatarpur Police Station on the 12th January 2018. Getting no response, a complaint was lodged again on the 14th of May 2018. Police claim that they had called the persecutors to investigate the complaint. The persecutors apparently claimed that they are innocent and therefore the situation is in a limbo with no outcome or resolution, although the assaults continue unabated.

These families are poor and break stones for their livelihood. Owing to the persecution and harassment, they have been denied work, driving them to poverty. Finally, unable to live in fear, day in and day out, they have moved to a nearby village, around 2 kms away and have taken shelter at a Bro. Munia’s house. Speaking to Persecution Relief, Pastor Sarbjit Bharti was very troubled for his believers.
Persecution Relief would like to thank Bro Binju Abraham who coordinated with the senior officials and helped resolve the matter quickly.

Church, please pray for Pastor Sarbjit, pray for this community of believers, to stand strong through this senseless persecution.

If God lays a burden upon your heart to support Pastor Sarbjit and the 8 families, write to us at persecutionrelief@gmail.com

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**Testimonial**

“I only came to know about Persecution Relief when one of my Pastor friends told and I saved the number. So, when my believers were facing problem, I called the Toll-Free No – 1800-1234-461 and immediately the call was responded. 8 believer families had run away to a safe place because of the harassment. But you encouraged me and said “don’t worry, let's accommodate them; we will provide all the groceries needed. Let them stay as long as they need to. Don’t bother the local believers with their expenses”. Thank you so much for your timely and practical help.

Thank you for connecting with Senior officials including Collector & SP. A Police team was rushed to the village and compromise was worked out.”

Pr Sarbjit Bharti Palamu Jharkhand
PERSECUTION IS AN IMMENSE PROBLEM. THE MORE THE BODY OF CHRIST STARTS TAKING SMALL PRACTICAL STEPS TOWARDS HELPING THE PERSECUTED CHURCH, THE MORE THE IMPACT.

Founder - Persecution Relief

Helpline to Report Christian Persecution 24x7

1800-1234-461
Pastor Shibu Mathew was arrested by the Kuwait Police on charges of ‘Blasphemy and propagating Christianity in a Muslim land’. He was put in a prison filled with hardened criminals and suffered regular beatings. Nevertheless, he remained steadfast. Every day, he would sit in his cell, and silently sing his “song” to Jesus Christ.

This story is not of defeat or hopelessness but of triumph and God’s amazing faithfulness to His people; reminding us that there is no limit to what God can do with a life fully surrendered to him.

After his release, Pastor shared his story with Persecution Relief. We pick up Pastor Shibu’s journey in 1998, when he went to Kuwait, to help with his father’s business. His father had migrated to Kuwait in 1975 and had a General Trading Company, trading in Oil Field Supplies.

Married to Sister Binu Annie Shibu, they have 4 Children - Jeslin Mariam Shibu, the oldest who is 16 yrs old, followed by Jessica Sera Shibu, Jakes Mathew Shibu and Joel Mathew Shibu.

When his first daughter Jeslin Mariam was born physically challenged, he was overwhelmed with grief and questioned God about this tragedy. In his brokenness, the Spirit of God ministered to him; the entire family committed their lives to Christ in Jan 2007 and were baptized. Here began his journey of knowing the true and living God.

Jeslin Mariam, then 4 years old, had been physically challenged from birth and unable to walk. She could move around by crawling on knees. God supernaturally healed her and she began to walk! This miraculous experience radically shaped his life and drew him closer to God thereafter.

While he was working with his father, he invested most of the time of the time in the Church, ministering to broken lives of people and sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ. Even though the journey was not easy, because of the strict laws pertaining to the middle east countries, it never stopped him from sharing the Gospel. Many times, sacrificing the comforts he had as a business man, in spite of the risks involved, he was ready to take on any challenge even though circumstances were not easy.

The more he served God and his people, the more he became involved. In 2010, he surrendered his life to serving God full time and boldly testified about Jesus Christ. Thus, he started “Christ Embassy Church” where he was pastoring. Several hundreds of people came to Christ through his witnessing. He distributed Bible Tracts too whenever possible, though he was dissuaded from doing so many times by concerned friends. Therefore, it was a matter of time, before the authorities got to hear of his work.

Before his arrest, he and his wife had dreams and prophetic utterances that Pastor would be imprisoned for the glory of God.

The authorities were closely watching him as they learnt about his missionary activities. On 07th Nov. 2017 he was summoned for investigation, arrested and sent to jail.

Pastor was held in prison for 15 days prior to the hearing and sentencing of...
his case. He was placed in a cell with 15 - 25 inmates, interrogated & beaten sometimes during his detention. With no way of telling the time, day or date, break-fast time was the only way that he could determine that it was the morning of a new day. Inmates used to scare him stating that getting out of jail was next to impossible considering the “Blasphemy” charges, which carried the death penalty.

With no contact with the outside world, most days, he just fasted and prayed and waited upon the Lord. He had no access to his Holy Bible. He would shut his eyes and cry out silently to God, from the depths of his heart.

He prayed, “God, give me the strength to love these people and to tell the truth no matter how much they may abuse me”.

Despite his desperate circumstances and every day in prison seeming like one year, Pastor recalls that the presence of God was abiding and comforting, which made his prison stay bearable.

On the 22nd of November, Pastor clearly heard a voice of God. Just as Apostle Peter was freed from Prison in Acts 12:7-8, Pastor Shibu had a similar experience – hearing the audible voice of God -

Arise quickly! “Gird yourself and tie on your sandals”. “Put on your garment and follow me”.

After this experience, Pastor made peace with the reality that God would either get him released or let him be killed – either way, for the glory of God. He found himself totally trusting God and placing his faith in His ultimate plan and purpose for his life.

On the 22nd of November, the Police Officials declared him a free man. Pastor could hardly believe his ears! To this day, Pastor is unable to grasp how this release materialized but believes that this was a miraculous and divine intervention, as the ‘Angel of the Lord’ ministered to him earlier. He is deeply grateful that God heard his prayers behind those prison walls.

Pastor had kept putting off leaving Kuwait when God had clearly told him to leave for India. Now, the door was firmly closed. Whatever the purpose God had intended for him to go to prison, was accomplished.
Pastor was extremely encouraged by the prayer support he received. In spite of denominational differences, all Christians united across Kuwait and the Middle East, which greatly blessed him.

“This could have happened to anyone. I am not special. I am very grateful to all those people who reached out to help me and my family”.

SISTER BINU ANNIE

This is an excerpt of Sister Binu Annie Shibu, (Pastor Shibu’s wife) in conversation with Persecution Relief. May her testimony serve to encourage other wives who are awaiting the release of their husbands, jailed for the sake of the gospel.

Pastor Shibu had prepared his wife, instructing her on what to do, in the event he was to be detained in the prison. 6 days after his imprisonment, his wife & children, left for India.

Sister Binu claimed that a prophet of God had prophesied that Pastor Shibu would face great difficulty for the sake of the gospel. So, naturally, while she was apprehensive, she was happy for the foreknowledge, which propelled her to fast and pray for her husband regularly.

On the day of the summons to the Police Station, together, they praised and thanked God before Pastor left to the Police Station. When her husband was arrested, she claims that she refused to look for the reason of her trial and suffering but continued to focus on the fact that Christ would never abandon her or her husband. Fasting and praying incessantly, over several days, Sis. claims that she was confident that God would deliver her husband, although the situation as that moment, was troubling.

“I never discouraged him from preaching the gospel but just asked him to be wise and be careful.”

God ministered to her through His word and gave her 2 promises:

“This sickness will not end in death. No, it is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.” - John 11: 4

“They looked to Him and were radiant, and their faces were not ashamed” - Psalm 34:5

Although, many times, she had felt alone, God ministered to her through the song “Emmanuel is always with you”. God ministered to her through His mighty hand and constant reassurance – in the crucial times of Visa stamping & Passport renewals that was needed for the family.

Pastor has now joined his family in India as he continues to pour out his life for the Lord, preaching the Gospel, encouraging believers, and praying for the sick. God continues to do mighty works in and through his life.

The couple are not at all disappointed. They continue to radiate a confidence that comes from trusting God, our ever-present help in trouble.

“This is only the beginning for me,” exclaimed a confident Pastor Shibu.

“I am thankful to God for the privilege I had to be a part of His work and in a small way to suffer for the name of Christ.”

Though people attributed their trials and tribulations to their ‘hidden sins’, they were steadfast in their belief that God would never forsake them but give them the grace to sustain through this season.

Though parents, siblings, friends and well -wishers rallied around, only the Lord is an ever-present help, a strong tower, He only can make a way where there seems no other way.

Pastor and his wife continue to stand on the promises of God and the power of God, to transform every situation into an opportunity to serve Him, for the glory of God.

“For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” – Rom 8: 38–39

Amen.
Two wrongs do not make a right, and in our irritated or angry impatience, we frequently say or do something just as bad or worse as was done to us! Then, where are we? Often, our patience does not delay our wrath as God’s does.

The obvious meaning of Paul’s advice is that we should not take vengeance. In Romans 12:19, Paul repeats this more plainly:

Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,” says the Lord.

This, in turn, feeds directly into Jesus’ teaching in Matthew 5:39-45, where Jesus’ consistent instruction is that we not set ourselves against an evil person who is injuring us, whether verbally, physically or judicially. Rather, Jesus teaches us to be willing to give the offender something that might defuse the immediate situation—and perhaps even provide some small example that will promote his eternal welfare. Patience is of great value in this respect.

This in no way means we are weak, though to them we may at first seem so. Nor does it mean that we approve of their conduct. Though we may hate their conduct and suffer keenly when it affects us, Christ tells us to bless them, meaning we should confer favor upon or give benefits to them. We can do this by wishing the person well, speaking kindly of and to him, and seeking to do him good.

Situations like this may be the most difficult test we will ever face. Patiently deferring retaliation and committing the circumstance to God’s judgment are indispensable to the best possible solution. But the primary point of Jesus’ instruction, however, is not how to resolve these situations, but that we may be children of our Father. By imitating God’s pattern, we will resemble Him and take a giant stride toward being in His image.
Singapore (AsiaNews) - US President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un have signed a “historic” agreement in front of the entire world. Before gathered journalists, Kim added that “the world will see change” and Trump emphasized the same thing, adding: “Thank you. This is fantastic”.

Trump and Kim had shaken hands this morning at 9 am (local time), opening up new possibilities for peace on the Korean peninsula. It is the first-time meeting between a US president and North Korean leader in 65 years, since the end of the Korean War. The content of the signed agreement is not yet known. It is assumed they have found a common line for denuclearization of the Korean peninsula and for supporting the stability and economy of North Korea.

Both, talking to journalists, said they wanted to put aside “the past”. After the greeting, the two had a 45-minute conversation alone and then gathered together with the related staff to sign the agreement.

South Korean President Moon Jae-in expressed hope for a positive outcome from the talks. The Korean Church has accompanied the preparation and the meeting with a prayer novena.
A federal appeals court has rejected an atheist’s continued attempts to have the motto “In God We Trust” removed from American currency, concluding that the printed phrase is not compelled speech and agreeing with a lower court ruling that the complainants in the case have ample alternatives to cash if the motto bothers them that much.

As previously reported, atheist Michael Newdow, who has filed numerous suits challenging the mixture of God and government, first submitted a complaint in the Southern District of New York in March 2013, asserting that the motto violates the Establishment Clause of the United States Constitution as it serves to proselytize unbelievers.

“The Supreme Court has recognized in a number of its cases that the motto, and its inclusion in the design of U.S. currency, is a ‘reference to our religious heritage’” it wrote. “We therefore hold, in line with the Supreme Court’s dicta, that [the motto appearing on currency does] not violate the Establishment Clause.”

As previously reported, the motto “In God We Trust” has appeared on U.S. coins since 1864 and began being printed on paper currency in 1957. The phrase is to believed to have originated with the Star-Spangled Banner, written during the War of 1812, which declares, “And this be our motto: In God We Trust!”

In 1956, Congress passed a resolution making “In God We Trust” the national motto, which was again upheld by the U.S. House of Representatives in 2011 by a 396-9 vote.

Indonesian court gives Ahok harsher sentence than prosecutors requested.

Indonesia’s top Christian politician has been convicted of blasphemy and sentenced to two years in prison. Prosecutors had recommended a light suspended sentence for Jakarta governor Basuki Purnama (popularly known as Ahok) after blasphemy charges led to his failed bid for re-election last month. Instead of finishing his term running the capital city through October, Ahok will now have to appeal his conviction from jail.

“It’s a sad day, and it’s frightening,” Andreas Harsono, an Indonesia researcher for Human Rights Watch, told the Times. “If the governor of Indonesia’s largest and most complex city, and who is an ally of the Indonesian president, can be brought down and humiliated this way, what will happen to normal Indonesian citizens?”

“Indonesia’s ability to hold itself up as an example of a moderate, tolerant, Muslim-majority democracy is further threatened and is now very questionable.”

Indonesia recently ranked as the most religious of 22 nations in the 2017 edition of Ipsos MORI’s Global Trends survey. The archipelago’s National Commission for Human Rights received nearly 100 reports of religious freedom violations last year, continuing a three-year trend.

One year ago, Indonesia’s Nahdlatul Ulama, the world’s biggest Muslim organization, defended Christians and denounced extremism. However, signs that Indonesia’s renowned pluralism may be imperiled have steadily increased in recent years, including a “national harmony” law that has closed 1,000 churches.
The Christian pastor who was abducted on Sunday with his family in Burkina Faso’s north-eastern province of Soum has been released.

Local sources told national broadcaster Omega Radio that Pastor Pierre Boena, his son David and his daughter-in-law, Ami Sawadogo were released yesterday (7 June).

The report does not specifically mention the two granddaughters, Fasne-wendé Ouédraogo and Pélagie Sawadogo, who were also abducted during the raid on Sunday, but does state that the pastor was released “with all the other members of his family in Malian territory”.

The reason for their release is not known, nor is it known whether a ransom was paid.

Pierre Boena, a pastor with an Assembly of God church, was kidnapped on Sunday evening in his village of Bilhore, near the border with Mali.

At the time of the attack he was at home with four family members and a church member, Pauline Sawadogo, who was visiting with her two daughters, Sanata and Zoenabou, local sources told World Watch Monitor.

No group has yet claimed responsibility for the recent kidnappings but World Watch Monitor understands that the perpetrators are believed to be members of the Fulani ethnic group.

The recent kidnappings of the two Christian church leaders has created an atmosphere of anxiety among Christian communities in the land-locked Sahel nation, seen as a model of tolerance in a troubled region.

A US missionary kidnapped in Niger in October 2016 is alive, according to the West African nation’s president. Jeff Woodke, who worked for Jeunesse en Mission Entraide et Developpement (JEMED), a branch of the US-based Youth with a Mission, was abducted by unknown assailants late in the evening of Friday 14 October, 2016, from the town of Abalak in northern Niger.

For 20 months, there has been no news of Woodke, but on Monday, 4 June, President Mahamadou Issoufou told TV channel France24 that both he and a German aid worker kidnapped in April this year are alive.

“We have some news; we know they’re alive,” the president said. “We continue to create the conditions for their release. Perhaps the contacts that are underway will help to achieve that goal.”

It is the first proof of life since the kidnapping of the two Western citizens in the Sahel country.

Little had been known, or at least divulged, about Woodke’s condition or location, other than that his captors were tracked to neighbouring Mali by Nigerien authorities. No group has publicly claimed responsibility.

The German Joerg Lange, employed by the aid group Help, was kidnapped by armed men on 11 April, in Niger’s western town of Ayorou, which shares a border with troubled northern Mali.

No group has claimed responsibility for his abduction, but a security source, speaking on condition of anonymity, told AFP that his kidnappers had “already taken him to northern Mali”.

On Monday, President Issoufou said he did not know exactly where the pair were being detained, but that “it is more likely that they are in Mali”.

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TOLL FREE HELPLINE NUMBER FOR THE PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS IN INDIA

1800-1234-461

www.persecutionrelief.org
Facebook.com/persecutionrelief
Email: persecutionrelief@gmail.com

Twitter.com/persecution
Youtube.com/persecutionrelief
Imagine ISIS kidnapped a relative of yours and then you see their brutal beheading on television. Many different emotions can take over, including anger, grief, and depression.

CBN News found a group of Egyptian Christians, however, who responded much differently. They are happy their family members stood firm in their faith. Widow Mariam Farhat told us she “was very proud” that her husband “stood firm in his faith and that he didn’t deny Jesus.” That surprising reaction is happening 150 miles south of Cairo, in the village of Al Aour.

Residents there honor the sacrifice of 21 Egyptians brutally murdered last February by ISIS. Their pictures are prominently displayed in the sanctuary of Virgin Mary Church.

Thirteen attended the church. The martyrs left behind family members like 23-year-old Farhat. She became a widow when the militants beheaded her husband Malak Ibrahim in Libya.

She first learned of his murder when she saw the now infamous video on local television.

“We were very sad for the first two days, but we hadn’t seen the video,” she recalled. “When we saw them in the video calling to Jesus we were very comforted.”

And that’s why Mariam and other families say they are now joyful, not sad.

Bebawy Al Ham’s brother Samuel was among those killed.

“We were always praying that God would make them steadfast in their faith,” Bebawy told CBN News. “We were very happy with what they said on the video: ‘Jesus Christ have mercy on us.’ When we found out they had been killed for being Christian, we were very comforted, because these were God’s children and he took them.”

Although Samuel’s wife and children now live without a husband and father, his family told CBN News their faith is stronger; they forgive the jihadis, and even pray for ISIS.

“I pray for them that God may open their hearts, and they may know the truth and know that what they do is wrong and then do the right thing,” Bebawy said.

Egyptian Christians are encouraged to know they are not alone. In the United States there’s a growing move-
“I pray for them that God may open their hearts, and they may know the truth and know that what they do is wrong and then do the right thing.”

ment among Christians to demonstrate unity and solidarity with those who are suffering for Christ in the Middle East. Rev. Patrick Mahoney, director of the Christian Defense Coalition, explained.

“What we thought was how could we identify and stand in solidarity with our brothers and sisters in Christ who are being brutalized around the world for their Christian faith?” he said. “What tangible thing could we do, what practical thing could we do?”

Immediately, orange jumpsuits came to mind. Mahoney and others launched the #orangejumpsuitcampaign. The movement has expanded to orange scarves, sweaters, and ribbons.

“It’s to remind our brothers and sisters that we love them, and we’re standing with them and to remind decision makers here in America and across the globe—the free nations of the world—we cannot be silent on this issue,” Mahoney said.

He said the response has been amazing. Non-Christians have joined in as well.

“A Jewish rabbi, to stand in solidarity with persecuted Christians is dying his beard orange, which I think is incredible and I can’t wait to see that,” Mahoney said.

Mariam was encouraged after she viewed cell phone photos of Americans wearing orange.

“May the Lord make their love grow and grow. We are very happy with their love and we don’t deserve their love,” she told CBN News.

Mahoney said every five minutes around the world a Christian is killed for his faith.

“People don’t understand the kind of barbarism and brutality they are going through,” he said.

“And you know when I visit persecuted Christians in the Middle East there is one thing that they always ask—it doesn’t matter if it is Iraq, Syria, wherever it might be— it’s this: ‘Please remember us!’”

And wearing orange on the job or at church helps people remember them.

“I think people need to understand that if we do not act quickly, the public expression of Christianity may be extinguished in the Middle East. As Elie Weisel, Holocaust survivor and Nobel Peace Prize winner, says, “we must always take sides. Silence only helps the oppressor, never the oppressed,’” Mahoney said.

Mariam also has a message for others who have suffered or still face danger from ISIS.

“Don’t be sad or cry. God will support us all,” he said. “And he will fulfill his promise that he is the father of the orphans and the widows.”
GET PERSECUTION UPDATES

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www.facebook.com/persecutionrelief
*Acts of violence committed against Christians in India, recorded by Persecution Relief*
### Media stories about Christians & Minorities

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*News highlighting trend against Christians & minorities (broadcasting, publishing, Internet)*

**Highlights:**

- **28** acts of violence committed against Christians in India were recorded
- **50** media stories highlighting trend against Christians and minorities were recorded
- The month of May has witnessed pockets of protests and criticism across the Country against the Church, designed to undermine credibility of the Church
- Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Telangana and Madhya Pradesh, continue to top the most hostile states in India, in the last 5 months
- Pastor Abraham Topno from Jharkhand was murdered.

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**PERSECUTION INCIDENTS (JAN - MAY 2018 )**

- **MAY, 28**
- **JAN, 39**
- **APR, 34**
- **FEB, 33**
- **MAR, 45**

**MEDIA STORIES HIGHLIGHTING CHRISTIANS & MINORITIES**

- **MAY 50**
- **JAN, 45**
- **APR, 64**
- **FEB, 53**
- **MAR, 59**
PRAY FOR PEACE AND UNITY IN ODISHA

Highlights:

- Several incidents of Social discrimination and ostracization of Christians in interior villages continue because of his faith.
- Physical violence, arrests on false allegations and stopping church services were frequent crimes, while attacks on churches, vandalizing and threats continue to be on the rise.
- In 2008, Odisha state was the scene of the most violent anti-Christian crimes.
- Odisha was the first state to pass the law named as ‘Orissa Freedom of Religion Act, 1967’ the Law criminalizes an act of conversion through fraud, force or allurement with jail terms.

Odisha in Focus

On Sunday, 10th June, at Kumelsingha village in Attabira Tehsil, Bargarh, Odisha, Hindu fanatics disrupted a family prayer and beat up a visiting Pastor. The attackers entered forcefully, dragging out Pastor Mukunda, abusing him for following Jesus Christ. They proceeded to beat him viciously with lathis, stripping him down to his underwear and burning his clothes. Getting an opportunity to step back into the house, Pastor scaled the rear wall and escaped in the cover of darkness, into the nearby fields. He lay on the floor of the fields for nearly 2 hours. Eventually using his mobile phone, he called his friends who rescued and hospitalized him.
Pastor David Lugun of Jharkhand shot dead

Pastor David Lugun of Jharkhand was shot 3 times, at point blank range and he was killed on the road just before his house on 29th of July 2015.

He was very effective in evangelism and in a very short time formed a house church with 7 families. In November 2014, a few anti-social elements, stole his motor bike and threatened him not to inform the police. Earlier, a few believers were badly tortured by religious fundamentalist and where made to sit in dirt all night & it was raining heavily. They demanded that they come back to their old life detesting Jesus. Despite of all these persecutions, the believers did not forsake Jesus.

On 19th July 2015, a group of anti-social elements rounded Pastor David & warned him not to preach about Jesus, but Pastor feared God than fearing man, decided to stick to his calling and continued to proclaim love of Jesus to all villagers.

On 29th July 2015, around 7:00 pm, 3 armed masked men came on a motor-bike to Pastor’s house, dragged him out on to the road, fired 3 bullets and shot him dead.

All of his immediate and extended family members were harassed, intimidated & threatened and forced to leave the village. But Sis. Susanna was fearless and trusted God to be her refuge.

Witnessing the death of her husband, Sis Susanna Lugun, the wife of slain Pastor David Lugun, never imagined that her beloved husband’s death would become a catalyst to bring many people to the vineyard of the Lord. He brought scores to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Now, after his death, the widow who had lived in her husband’s shadow, was inspired by the Holy Spirit, to resume the worship services at her home. Her brother in law conducts Sunday worship service while she continues to be a “light house” in the village. She has a 4-year-old son Sonyam.
Lessons learnt from past recorded cases and recommendations to mitigate risks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of persecution</th>
<th>Precautions</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| 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 tracts are not inflammatory or derogatory about other gods |
| 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 |
| 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 |
| 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 |
| 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  
• Inform Persecution Relief who will provide their basic needs |
"When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die."

Dietrich Bonhoeffer
CIA DOCUMENT TAGS VHP AND BAJRANG DAL AS MILITANT RELIGIOUS OUTFITS

Credit: - PRAGYA KAUSHIKA, theprint.in
The CIA’s World Factbook calls the RSS a ‘nationalist’ body; also on the list is the Hurriyat Conference under the separatist groups tag.

New Delhi: Sangh affiliates Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) and Bajrang Dal have been classified as militant religious outfits in the recently updated World Factbook, published by the US’ Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).

Sources said the move has not gone down well within the saffron outfits and the two are expected to seek legal options to get the tags removed.

The Bajrang Dal confirmed to ThePrint that it was exploring legal options.

“This came to our notice a few days ago. We are consulting experts and seeking legal advice to counter this,” said Manoj Verma, national convenor, Bajrang Dal.

The two organisations have been named as militant religious outfits under the tag ‘Political pressure groups and leaders’. Under the same heading, the Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh (RSS), the ideological parent of the ruling BJP, has been classified as a nationalist organisation.

Others on the list include the All Parties Hurriyat Conference, which has been labelled as a separatist group, while the Jamiat Ulema-e Hind (Mahmood Madani) has been deemed a religious organisation.

‘Nationalist, cultural organisations’

Leaders of the Sangh outfits claimed they did not have anything to do with religious fanaticism and that they were just nationalist and cultural organisations.

“They would any intelligence agency cite our organisations as being militant. Who gave them the right? We have international branches as well but we’ve never troubled anyone. We are nationalists. We will see what can be done to get this right,” said a Bajrang Dal leader.

Leaders in these saffron outfits were also furious that they had been tagged with organisations like the All Parties Hurriyat Conference, which they insist was a separatist organisation.

What’s World Factbook?

The website of the World Factbook says it is an annual publication of the CIA with almanac-style information about the countries of the world.

The Factbook provides a two-to-three-page summary of the demographics, geography, communications, government, economy, and military of 266 US-recognised countries, dependencies, and other areas in the world.

It is prepared by the CIA for the use by US government officials, and its style, format, coverage and content are primarily designed to meet their requirements. However, it is frequently also used as a resource for student papers, websites and non-governmental publications. As a work of the US government, it is in the public domain.
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