

# RELEASE INTERNATIONAL PRAYER ALERT

Tuesday, October 12, 2010

*Prayer support is crucial to those who suffer for their faith in Jesus. Please use these alerts to prompt your own prayers, and to facilitate prayer in your church and other Christian meetings. Please also send it on to other Christians. This information can also be reproduced in church magazines and news bulletins, provided the source is acknowledged.*

## **Sept 28 2010 – LAOS – Urgent prayer request for five Christians detained in north**

The church in Laos is calling for urgent prayer for five Lao Christians being held by police in the north of the country.

The five were among 37 young Christians who were detained by police as they planted trees in Meungfeung district on Saturday, September 18. Thirty-two of them were later released, including one young woman who has a four-month-old baby. But five remain in custody.

Release partners are concerned that the group may be ill-treated in jail. Christians arrested in Laos in the past are reported to have suffered harsh interrogation and abuse, even torture.

A partner of Release said: 'Please pray for them and for their families, who are very worried. Their group are all praying and fasting too. This is a big challenge for the new Christians involved.'  
(Source: Voice of the Martyrs New Zealand)

- Ask God to strengthen the faith of all 37 Christians who were originally detained by police. Pray that they will know God's protection and His peace.
- Pray for the immediate release of the five Christians still in custody.

## **Sept 30 2010 – PAKISTAN – Christians critically injured in latest raid by militants**

Islamic militants attacked Christians in the Gujarat district of Punjab in just the latest in a string of assaults on their community in less than a month.

About 40 extremists wielding firearms, axes and clubs rampaged through the streets of Mohalla Kalupura, firing at people and houses and beating some Christians so severely that they were 'left for dead', according to Compass Direct news agency. Several residents were 'critically injured' in the raid on September 23.

Among those seriously injured was Tariq Gill, a man against whom blasphemy charges were dropped in September 2009. Tariq's parents were also badly hurt; his mother was stripped naked and dragged through the streets. The attack on Gill, who was cleared after Christian leaders and Muslim elders intervened in his case, proves that even an acquittal is no guarantee of safety for those accused of blasphemy in Pakistan.

Church leaders say that militants have attacked Christians in Mohalla Kalupura more than ten times since September 8. They report that the attackers threatened to mount an attack on the colony similar to the brutal raid on Gojra in August 2009 in which at least seven Christians were burnt to death.

Christian leaders allege that three senior politicians were involved in either leading or organising the attack. They also accuse local police of failing to act to apprehend the culprits. Christians have since staged protests at the National Press Club and at Parliament House in Islamabad, demanding justice for those injured.

(Sources: Compass Direct, VOM Australia)

- Ask God to heal all those attacked and traumatised by recent attacks on Mohalla Kalupura.
- Pray that the authorities will act fairly and with integrity to bring the culprits to justice.

## **Oct 4 2010 – PAKISTAN - Christian lawyer and family shot dead for standing up to loan shark**

A Christian lawyer, his wife and five children are believed to have been murdered by Islamic extremists after he dared to challenge a Muslim loan shark.

Edwin and Ruby Paul were shot dead at their home in Haripur in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, north-west Pakistan, along with their five children aged between six and 17, on September 28. A Muslim neighbour told Compass Direct news agency that the lawyer had been warned to leave the area by armed men the previous day.

Edwin had taken up the case of a Christian taxi driver who had taken out a loan of 150,000 rupees (just over £2,000) from an influential local Muslim to buy a taxi, only to find that the interest rate had been raised to 500 per cent without his consent. When the Christian failed to pay the lender, a man with alleged links to extremists, his home and taxi were seized.

Edwin had only moved into the area with his family in February. When he registered a case against the loan shark with police, he was reportedly beaten and received death threats from the man's associates. Edwin had appealed for help in letters to the provincial government, Christian organisations and churches – but no one was prepared to intervene for fear of extremist reprisals, according to a local church leader.

(Source: Compass Direct)

- Pray God's peace and protection over Christians living in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Ask God to grant His wisdom to pastors in the province.
- Pray particularly for friends of Edwin Paul and his family. Pray that God will comfort and strengthen them.

### **News update:**

A church in Bekasi City, West Java, has agreed to move temporarily to a site offered by the Government, following an attack on its pastor and one of its elders (*Prayer Alert, September 22, 2010*). Rev Luspida Simanjuntak and her church have now moved from Ciketing to a government-owned building – on the condition that officials keep their promise to build them a new place of worship within two years. Rev Luspida required hospital treatment after Islamist extremists attacked her on September 12. Church elder Hasian Sihombing was critically injured. Pray God's healing over Hasian and His protection over the whole congregation. (Source: Compass Direct)