

# RELEASE INTERNATIONAL PRAYER ALERT

Tuesday, November 9, 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.*

## **October 29, 2010 - BHUTAN – Believer jailed for three years for screening Christian films**

A Christian in south Bhutan has been jailed for three years for 'attempting to promote civil unrest' – simply for showing films about Christianity.

Forty-year-old Prem Singh Gurung was arrested four months ago after complaints that he was screening Christian films in the remote villages of Gonggaon and Simkharkha. He was recently convicted by a local court in Gelephu, on the Indian border.

The villages Gurung visited are virtually inaccessible and can only be reached by trekking for between 24 and 48 hours from the nearest road, according to Compass Direct news agency. It is believed that Gurung and some friends carried a projector and a generator into the villages on foot. Gurung, who is an ethnic Nepalese, reportedly invited villagers to watch Nepali movies and showed Christian films between the features. Government lawyers were unable to prove in court that Gurung had 'promoted civil unrest' and so had had to content themselves with the charge of 'attempting to promote civil unrest'. He was also charged with violation of a Bhutanese law requiring authorities to examine all films before public screening.

Buddhism is the state religion in Bhutan, which borders India and China. In July, the Government proposed anti-conversion laws similar to those in force in some states in neighbouring India, which have been used to curtail Christian activities.

(Source: Compass Direct)

- Pray that Gurung will be able to appeal against this conviction and sentence.
- Pray that God will touch the hearts of people who have seen Gurung's films so that many will come to Christ.

## **November 4, 2010 - IRAQ – More than 40 Christian hostages killed in besieged Baghdad church**

Iraqi Christians have appealed for UN protection following the militia attack on a church in Baghdad on Sunday in which up to 60 people died.

Gunmen stormed the Church of Our Lady of Salvation in the affluent Karada district, taking the entire congregation hostage and demanding the release of a number of detained militia men.

When security forces surrounded and stormed the church four hours later, a huge gun battle ensued, killing militia men, security guards and more than 40 members of the church, including two of its leaders.

An unnamed Iraqi official quoted by Associated Press news agency reported that the gunmen had started killing their hostages as security forces entered the building. Scores of people were wounded in the attack.

Prime Minister Nouri Maliki condemned the siege on Sunday evening, describing it as an attempt to drive more Christians out of the country. Extremists with links to al-Qaeda have since claimed responsibility for the attack.

During a radio broadcast yesterday, Archbishop Basile Georges Casmoussa of Mosul called on the UN to protect Iraq's beleaguered Christian community.

Release patron Bishop Michael Nazir-Ali, who has Christian contacts in Iraq, said that Christians had anticipated an attack, but the scale of Sunday's tragedy had caught them off guard. He told the PM programme on Radio 4 that he feared that Christians in Iraq were 'sitting targets'. 'They are the one community that is not really armed in any way so its security must be a concern, of course, for the Iraqi Government and, I think, also for the international community,' he said.

(Sources: Associated Press, BBC, Middle East Concern, UCANews)

- Continue to pray for survivors of the attack on the Baghdad church and for all those bereaved through this tragedy. Pray that they will have a revelation of the perfect love of our Almighty God, which drives out all fear.
- Pray that the Iraqi authorities and international community will do more to protect Iraq's Christian community. Ask God to build up His church in Iraq.