

PRAYER FOCUS

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ARNA-Access Restricted Nations in Asia

PRAYERS FOR THE PERSECUTED

“Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented — of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth.” Hebrews 11:36-38 (NKJV)

The apostles and followers of Jesus Christ our Lord experienced severe persecution during the New Testament. It has not stopped to this day. Our country working teams in the Access Restricted Nations in Asia (ARNA) share their stories of difficulties and suffering because of their faith.

In Laos, new believers suddenly found their houses and farms burned down and had to live in the jungle because their animist community did not approve of their newfound faith. Some were arrested because of illegal gatherings. In Afghanistan, Christians are hiding because the Taliban are after them. They could be killed at any time. In Nepal, believers were falsely accused of proselytizing and were jailed. In Vietnam, the authorities impose regulations that make it difficult for Christians to practice their faith. In North Korea, parents dare not disclose their faith to their



Rohingya brethren secretly gathering at the refugee camp.

indoctrinated children, who might report them to the authorities. In Sri Lanka, radical Buddhists persecute Christians. In China, Christians are constantly under surveillance; churches are destroyed without warning. In Myanmar, the Karen people, mostly Christians, have been at war with the Burmese military for decades. In Chin State, 550 churches were burned when the Burmese Army burned the cities twelve times during Covid. Muslim-background converts at the Rohingya Refugee camps in Bangladesh keep their faith a secret to avoid the ire of the Muslim community



around them. Some of those that we are discipling have been physically attacked. In Pakistan, Christian families fear their daughters, who may be abducted, raped, or forced to marry Muslim men. Persecution continues to create fear among believers.

We can never fully understand the pain and suffering they go through whenever they are persecuted. They live where people are hostile to Christians, not by their choice. They were born there.

On 6 November, Christian communities will observe the International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church. Let us join them in prayer. Over 360 million Christians worldwide live in places where they experience high levels of persecution. Pray that they will be resilient to their situation. May they endure hardship and remain faithful to the end, putting their trust in our living God. May they experience God’s comfort and abiding presence during moments of pain and suffering.

“We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed.” 2 Cor. 4:8-9 (NKJV)

Prayer Calendar November 2022

1 (TUE) AFGHANISTAN Pray for the Taliban government to fulfill their promises to the people when they came into power.

2 (WED) AFGHANISTAN Pray for the protection of residents as the security situation in Afghanistan continues to deteriorate.

3 (THU) AFGHANISTAN Pray the Christians will be a source of encouragement to unbelievers

4 (FRI) PAKISTAN An anti-Taliban wave is gaining momentum in northwest Pakistan. Pray that militant groups will not regain a foothold. Pray for peace to reign in this region.

5/6 (SAT/SUN) IDOP International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted church. Let us join Christian denominations worldwide to pray for persecuted churches.

7 (MON) SRI LANKA 110 pastors and leaders from east Sri Lanka graduated from our Basic School of Workers for the Harvest (SowH) course last September. Pray that they will become effective workers in their churches and communities.

8 (TUE) SRI LANKA According to the World Food Program, four out of ten Sri Lankan households are hungry. Pray for the nation's situation not to deteriorate further.

9 (WED) CHINA Five Protestant Christians from ethnic minority communities of Nu and Lisu were reportedly detained for allegedly refusing to join a state-sponsored church body in Yunnan province. Pray for their unconditional release.

10 (THU) CHINA Many Nu people from Fugong county, Yunnan have

converted to Christianity. Pray for them to be strengthened in faith.

11 (FRI) KAREN BORDER COMMUNITIES Pray for God's protection and provision upon the Karen Internally Displaced People. There are 300,000 of them hiding in the jungle since December 2021 because of the war.

12/13 (SAT/SUN) KAREN BORDER COMMUNITIES Pray for God's strength and wisdom upon Pastor Robert, Chairperson of the Karen Refugee Committee, as he helps the Karen refugees.

14 (MON) BANGLADESH Pray for leaders of the Bangladesh Prayer Movement as they discuss plans to move forward to become more significant, not only to their communities, but to the entire nation.

15 (TUE) BANGLADESH Pray for leaders to make the right decision to sustain the nation's economy.

16 (WED) MYANMAR It has been reported that Shwe Kokko New City in southeast Karen State has become a people-trafficking hub. Pray against this heinous crime.

17 (THU) MYANMAR Pray for healing and restoration for those exploited through human trafficking.

18 (FRI) BHUTAN Pray that more opportunities will be available for businesses connected to tourism as the country opens its borders.

19/20 (SAT/SUN) NEPAL Pray that the general election result will usher in the people's desire for change.

21 (MON) NORTH KOREA Despite the risk of owning a Bible, secret believers clamor for copies to be sent to them. Pray as Christians from free countries find ways to bring Bibles for them.

22 (TUE) NORTH KOREA Citizens are forced to attend propaganda lectures to promote the recently passed "Nuclear Forces Policy Act." Pray for the government to focus on providing basic needs for their people rather than propaganda.

23 (WED) VIETNAM The country is facing mounting pressure as prices of food and energy rise across the world. Pray for people to manage their resources wisely.

24 (THU) VIETNAM Several child abuse cases have shocked the nation recently. Pray for every hurting and neglected child. Pray for those who are mistreated and abused by their own family members.

25 (FRI) CAMBODIA Gambling activities are mushrooming in the country's communes. Pray that authorities will put an end to illegal gambling.

26/27 (SAT/SUN) CAMBODIA Cambodia and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) claim that one in ten Cambodian children was subjected to online sexual abuse and exploitation in 2021. Pray for protection of these children and end to the abuse and exploitation by perpetrators.

28 (MON) LAOS Sanxay District of Atapeu province, where believers are intensely persecuted, has been flooded. Pray for them.

29 (TUE) LAOS Pray for our two Bru co-workers as they travel to remote villages in southern Laos to share the vision of the harvest among the Bru tribes.

30 (WED) NE INDIA Pray for new converts and churches established during pandemic, to remain strong and relevant to their communities.