

**"...pray also for us, that God may open to us
a door for the word, to declare the mystery of
Christ, on account of which I am in prison."**

~ Colossians 4:3 ESV

NIGERIA: Continued Violence Against Christians

Sources: World Watch Monitor, Nasoweseem Online, Christian Post

A pregnant mother was killed in the village of Ancha, Plateau State, on July 15th. Margaret Wakili, 27, was bringing food to her husband in the field when eight men, who are believed to be Fulani herdsmen, suddenly initiated an attack. The husband heard them shout, "Allahu Akbar, we have killed an infidel, and we need to kill more." That day, an elderly woman from the same village was also attacked and killed.

Prior to the two fatal tragedies in Ancha, another senseless attack had taken place in the village of Tafigana. On the evening of July 14th, Thomas Wollo was returning from choir practice with his seven-year-old son Nggwe when they were both killed and beheaded.

These alarming reports represent only a small sampling of the terrible violence that is gripping the hearts of Christians in Nigeria due to the unwarranted attacks of Fulani militants, as well as those perpetrated by members of the Boko Haram terrorist group. As a result, the organization, Jubilee Campaign, has petitioned the International Criminal Court to indict Boko Haram for genocide. The same report also documents more than 50 attacks committed by Fulani herdsmen during the first six months of 2019 alone.



The aftermath of an attack in an undated photo.
Photo: World Watch Monitor

Nigeria's government has been criticized by Amnesty International for its inaction. The disproportionate number of Christians being killed in Nigeria demonstrates the religious nature of the violence. Rev. Gideon Para-Mallam states that the violence has led to a "virtual abandonment of missions and evangelism in some affected areas." Left unchecked, he writes, "the death of the church (in Nigeria) could be a matter of years away." For more information on the suffering of Nigeria's Christians, go to our [country report](#).

Please prayerfully remember the great number of grieving families and friends now suffering the loss of innocent loved ones who have been ruthlessly slaughtered in Nigeria for their faith. Pray that Christians throughout the region will have God's protection and wisdom in order that they be equipped to properly handle the ongoing violence. May the government and military leadership of Nigeria take the necessary steps to bring this violence to an end. For an even greater lasting solution, may the hearts of the militants involved be radically transformed spiritually by God's overpowering presence, truth and love.

IRAN: Christian Woman Sentenced to Prison

Source: Middle East Concern



Photo: Middle East Concern

Mahrokh Kanbari, 65, was summoned to the Karaj Islamic Revolutionary Court on July 27th to face charges of "propaganda against the system." She had also been ordered to go to a religious leader for "instruction," where she was directed to return to Islam.

Mahrokh was originally charged in December 2018 after three agents raided her home, confiscating mobile phones, Bibles and other Christian materials. Around that time, she was forced to endure ten days of intense interrogation before being released on bail.

When she appeared before the court, the ruling judge, who was characterized as being "very rude," attempted to humiliate Mahrokh for disagreeing with him. The trial resulted in the accused senior woman being sentenced to one

year in prison; a verdict that she can appeal. For more information on the persecution of Christians in Iran, [click here](#).

Pray that Mahrokh's appeal will be successful and that all charges against her will be dropped. In the meantime, ask the Lord to grant her physical and emotional strength as she faces imprisonment, and needed favour during the appeal process. May all those around her witness the love and grace of Christ being exemplified through her countenance, encouraging them to acknowledge Him as their Saviour as well.

PRISONER UPDATES

CHINA: Updates on Pastors John Cao and Wang Yi

Sources: ChinaAid, Mission Network News

It was recently reported that the appeal hearing for American/Chinese pastor John Cao had been cancelled, for the court was to instead make its decision based solely on written submissions (see [this report](#)). On July 25th, the outcome of the court's decision was to uphold the original seven-year sentence. Due to a heavy police presence, only Pastor John Cao's elderly mother and sister, along with his lawyer, were allowed to hear the verdict.

Pastor Wang Yi of the Early Rain Covenant Church faces up to 15 years in prison on charges of "inciting subversion of state power." He remains in prison following his arrest in December 2018 ([read more](#)). To further compound his legal situation, he has now been accused of conducting "illegal business activity," due to claims that the church had sold Bibles and books without a proper license. According to ChinaAid, Pastor Wang Yi has been unable to confer with his lawyer since his initial arrest.



There was a strong police presence at John Cao's trial.
Photo: ChinaAid

Please uphold these two unjustly charged church leaders, as well as the many other believers in China who are facing imprisonment for their faith. Pray that the courts will allow them proper legal representation and that God's justice will ultimately prevail in each of their situations. May every Christian facing opposition, uncertainty and fear in this Communist-governed country receive the ministry of God's abiding presence, peace, help and hope.

If you would like to post a prayer of praise or petition on behalf of our persecuted family around the globe, visit [VOMC's prayer wall](#).

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