

***"For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong."***

~ 2 Corinthians 12:10 ESV

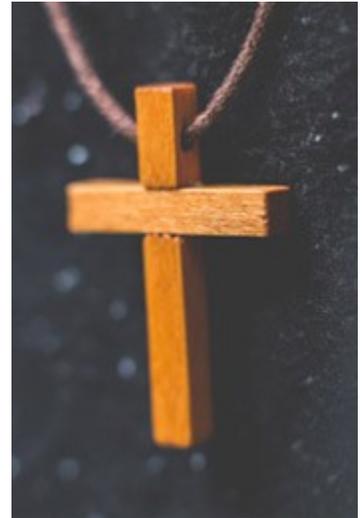
### **BURKINA FASO: Attack Leads to Further Assassinations**

Source: Open Doors USA

On the evening of June 27th, unidentified militants entered the village of Bani in northern Burkina Faso looking for Christians. After ordering everyone to lie on the ground, each villager was asked their name. The attackers then proceeded to search for anyone wearing Christian insignia, such as a cross.

Four men were found wearing crosses: Theophile Ouedraogo, Ernest Kassoaga, and brothers David and Philippe Zoungrana. Upon this discovery, the four were taken aside and executed. Before leaving the village, the attackers burned a shop owned by David. They then moved on to another village, Pougrenoma, where they warned residents against calling the authorities, indicating that they would return. This latest attack brings the total number of Christians, all of whom were assassinated in a similar manner, to 27 since February.

***Please remember the grieving families and friends of these slain believers in your prayers. Pray that the surviving Christians throughout the country will continue to stand firm in the face of increasing danger. May those responsible for this year's attacks be brought to justice, with hopes they will respond to God's forgiveness and saving grace by acknowledging Jesus' sacrificial death on the cross for their sins...and by receiving the gift of eternal life as presented through His glorious resurrection.***



### **INDIA: Christians Forced to Reconvert**

Source: Morning Star News



A forced reconversion ceremony.  
Photo: Morning Star News

Christians who had been worshipping privately in their homes were dragged before local village leaders and forced to participate in a "reconversion" rite on June 14th. The action follows a pronouncement two days earlier that 12 Christian families in Mahuatoli would be banished if they did not return to the tribal Sarna religion. As a result of the threats, most have fled the village.

According to an area pastor, threats are common in the Gumla District of Jharkhand, where Hindu militants have joined together with tribalists to revolt against the growth of Christianity. In this instance, a mob of 20 villagers broke into the home of Jogiya Munda, forcing him and his widowed mother to bow before an idol. Buckets of water were poured on them to symbolize the purification rite.

The two victimized Christians have since fled the village after receiving threats on their lives if they were again found to be praying. However, the members of two other families, who were also forced against their wills to undergo the ritual, have decided to remain in the village.

On June 17th, the Christian families went to the police in Bharno to file a complaint, but officers refused to file the case. The officials instead told them to arrange a compromise. They then filed their complaint online. However, officials at the Bharno police station claim they were never approached. The officer in charge states, "There are no religious issues in Mahuatoli village and everyone is living in peace." For more details on some of the persecution issues facing Christians in India, go to our [country report](#).

**Pray that those who've been forced to flee the village will find homes and jobs in a community where they can live in harmony and peace. Remember the members of the two remaining Christian families who, for undisclosed reasons, are staying behind. In addition to receiving God's protection, may these remaining families also have the faith and courage to stand for Christ despite the threats. Intercede for the official in charge and his officers who failed to respond appropriately to the believers' complaints, praying that they will take their policing responsibilities seriously by properly defending villagers whose lives are in danger.**

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## PRAISE REPORT

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### IRAN: Christian Prisoner Conditionally Released

Sources: Middle East Concern, Church in Chains, Steadfast Global

Despite being a member of the Armenian Orthodox Church, which is permitted in Iran due to its long history, Sevada Aghasar has faced numerous challenges for his faith. After being initially arrested in August 2013, but never officially charged, he served six months in prison (see [this report](#)).

Then, in April 2015, Sevada was sentenced to five years in prison for "acting against national security through house-church activities" ([read more](#)). He began serving this sentence two years ago after losing his appeal.

We are thankful to report the recently received good news that on July 21st, Sevada was granted an early conditional release. While the conditions of his release are not known, they likely include a prohibition on evangelism. For more information on the persecution of Christians in Iran, read the [country report](#).

***Praise God for the release of Sevada! At the same time, please remain mindful to pray for the many Christians in Iran who are still imprisoned because of their faith. Despite the opposition posed against the country's followers of Christ, may the phenomenal church growth that's taking place continue with great fervour. And to accommodate the resulting spiritual needs, pray that helpful resources will be made available to disciple and train this great influx of new believers who have chosen to follow "the Way, and the Truth, and the Life" (John 14:6).***



Photo: "Free Savada Aghasar" / Facebook page

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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The Persecution & Prayer Alert is a ministry of:  
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For information on additional ways to support members of the persecuted church overseas, review this [listing of options](#).