

Market Drayton Churches Together: Prayer for Persecuted Christians - 16 Oct. 2019

Nigeria

10 Oct: Christian Woman Killed in Kidnapping of Four Baptists in Nigeria - Morningstar News

morningstarnews.org/2019/10/christian-woman-killed-in-kidnapping-of-four-baptists-in-nigeria

Less than a week after Muslim Fulani herdsmen kidnapped six teenage girls from a Christian-run high school in north-central Nigeria, another attack in the same county led to the killing of a Baptist woman and the kidnapping of four others from the same church, sources said.

Muslim Fulani herdsmen killed Ezra Haruna, a member of Godiya Baptist Church in Ungwan Barau village, in an attack on the village near Udawa in Chikun County, Kaduna state, at 4 a.m. on Monday (Oct. 7), a church member told Morning Star News.

Four other church members, including Jummai Ido, the church pastor's wife, were kidnapped in the attack, said Godiya Baptist Church member Joseph Umarau.

"Three others kidnapped also during the invasion are Luka Auta, Sale Auta [brothers] and Yakubu Audu," Umaru told Morning Star News.

He said the armed herdsmen stormed the community and shot indiscriminately into houses, forcing residents to flee into bushes surrounding the village.

On Oct. 3 Muslim Fulani herdsmen kidnapped six Christian female students and two teachers from Engravers' College, a Christian-run high school in Kakau village, also in Chikun County. The eight remain in captivity.

Kaduna Gov. Nasir el-Rufai told media on Friday (Oct. 4) that "bandits," the term used by officials and Nigerian media reluctant to connect the kidnappings to their fellow tribal Fulani, are working alongside elements of Islamic extremist group Boko Haram.

"We have been receiving intelligence some three months ago that the bandits have connected with some elements of Boko Haram, and they will be targeting schools to kidnap children because they know that that is what makes the news," El-Rufai said.

Kakau village lies in the kidnapping belt of the state and is on the route to Kwanti village, where Morning Star News last year reported the displacement of many Christians due to kidnappings by armed Fulani Herdsmen, according to area residents.

7 Oct: Six Girls, Two Staff Members Kidnapped from Christian-Run High School in Nigeria - Morningstar News

morningstarnews.org/2019/10/six-girls-two-staff-members-kidnapped-from-christian-run-high-school-in-nigeria

A day before the Kaduna governor said kidnappers terrorizing the state are working with Boko Haram, Muslim Fulani herdsmen on Thursday (Oct. 3) kidnapped six teenage girls and two staff members from a Christian-run high school in north-central Nigeria, sources said.

Suspected to be herdsmen who have carried out numerous kidnappings and attacks in southern Kaduna state, the armed Fulani at 12:20 a.m. invaded Engravers' College in Kakau Daji village, in Chikun County Local Government Area near Kaduna city, as students and staff members fled into the bushes, the sources said. The eight victims were taken away at gunpoint.

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Shunom Giwa, vice principal of Engravers' College, said that five armed herdsmen appeared at the door of his house and spoke with each other in the Fulani language.

"They asked me to lie down, and I did as instructed," Giwa told Morning Star News by phone. "They then attempted to enter my bedroom and, fully aware that my wife and children were inside, I stood up to distract them, but they asked me to lie down again, which I did."

A few minutes later, he said, another set of the armed Fulani herdsmen appeared at his house with Joel Adamu, the school's vice principal academics, and they ordered his colleague to lie on the floor beside him.

"When I discovered that their attention was on my colleague, I just ran into the bush, and on realizing I was escaping, they shot at me, but fortunately they didn't get me," Giwa told Morning Star News. "They searched for me without success, and when they couldn't get me, they started looking for where the students were."

As the assailants went to the school hostel and forced the door open, Giwa tried to distract them by shouting, "Police, JTF [Joint Task Force] security come, there are kidnappers here!" he said. "On hearing me shouting, they began to shoot at to my direction again. I then ran and jumped over the fence and ran out of the school."

He remained hiding behind the fence until the sound of barking dogs signaled to him that the assailants must be leaving, he said. He headed toward a school official's house where female students had gathered after hearing gunshots.

"When we recovered from the shock of what was happening, we started doing a head count to know which students were missing," Giwa said. "We found that Joel Adamu, the vice principal of academics, the house mistress and six female students were abducted."

The school, which is open to both Christian and non-Christian students, has a secular curriculum in accordance with Nigeria's Ministry of Education but includes a Christian perspective, and students take Christian Religious Knowledge as a subject, an official told Morning Star News.

The school has a student population of 100, with rampant insecurity in the state compelling some parents to withdraw their children from the school, Giwa said.

The kidnappers have contacted school officials with their demands for ransom, he said. Initially they demanded 30 million naira (£65,000) per student before negotiating lower, according to local reports.

"We are trusting God for the protection of the captives and hoping they would be released without being hurt," Giwa said.

Cont/...

Dates of next meetings: 20 November, 11 December 2019 & 15 January 2020

30 Sep: Boko Haram Executes Two Christian Aid Workers in Nigeria - Morningstar News

morningstarnews.org/2019/09/boko-haram-executes-two-christian-aid-workers-in-nigeria

JOS, Nigeria (Morning Star News) – Islamic extremist group Boko Haram released a video last week showing the execution of two Christian aid workers in Nigeria, sources said.

Lawrence Duna Dacighir and Godfrey Ali Shikagham, both members of the Church of Christ in Nations (COCIN) in Plateau state, are shown kneeling while three masked, armed men stand behind them in a video posted Sept. 22 on Boko Haram's Amaq news agency site. The two young men, who had gone to Maiduguri to help build shelters for people displaced by Islamic extremist violence, are then shot from behind.

Speaking in the Hausa language, the middle one of the three terrorists says in the video that they have vowed to kill every Christian they capture in revenge for Muslims killed in past religious conflicts in Nigeria. Dacighir and Shikagham, originally from Plateau state's Mangu County, were captured by Boko Haram, now called the Islamic State in West Africa Province (ISWAP), as they carried out their work in displaced persons camps.

Ethnic and religious tensions resulted in large-scale clashes between Muslims and Christians in Jos in 2001 and 2008.

It is not clear from the video, temporarily posted on YouTube, when the two men were executed. Their identities were confirmed by a relative, the Rev. John Pofi, a COCIN pastor.

Pastor Pofi, a cousin of the two executed Christians, told Morning Star News in a text message statement also shared with others that the two Plateau state natives had gone to Maiduguri from Abuja.

"Lawrence and Godfrey left Abuja for Maiduguri in search of opportunities to utilize their skills for the betterment of humanity and paid with their lives," Pofi said. "We will never get their corpses to bury. The community will have to make do with a makeshift memorial to these young lives cut short so horrifically."

If the federal government had created economic opportunities for those tempted to join extremist groups and had returned security to the country, his cousins would not be dead now, Pastor Pofi said.

"We must ask ourselves if this is the kind of country we want where young men who are earning an honest living are brutally killed while those who abduct and kill others are invited to dialogue with government and paid handsomely," he said.

Cont/...

27 Sep: Ransom Paid, but Kidnapped Pastor's Wife Is Killed in North-Central Nigeria - Morningstar News

morningstarnews.org/2019/09/ransom-paid-but-kidnapped-pastors-wife-is-killed-in-north-central-nigeria

Fulani herdsmen this month kidnapped and killed a pastor's wife in north-central Nigeria's Kaduna state three days after suspected herdsmen killed a Baptist pastor in another part of the state, sources said.

Unaware that Esther Ishaku Katung had been killed after being kidnapped in Bagoma, 122 kilometers (75 miles) west of Kaduna City on Sept. 14, her family paid a 250,000 naira (£550) ransom before discovering her body, said the Rev. Joseph Hayab, chairman of the Kaduna state chapter of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN).

Her husband, the Rev. Ishaku Katung of the Evangelical Church Winning All (ECWA) congregation in Bagoma, escaped but was wounded by gunfire when the herdsmen broke into their home

on church premises at 11:30 p.m. as they slept, Pastor Hayab said.

"Information we got from some of the kidnapped victims who escaped from the herdsmen's enclave shows that Esther Katung and two other victims had escaped from the herdsmen's captivity, but she was recaptured by them," Pastor Hayab told Morning Star News. "She attempted to escape with two others after they were kidnapped by the herdsmen; this infuriated the herdsmen, leading them to kill her. They broke her legs in order to prevent her from escaping and smashed her head too. This led to her death."

The kidnappers dumped her corpse in the bush, he said.

"After they had killed her, they were still demanding the ransom without telling her family that they had killed her," Pastor Hayab said. "It was only after the ransom was paid that it was found by her family that she had been killed by her abductors."

Baptist Pastor Slain

In Jema'a County about 230 kilometers (142 miles) south of Kaduna City, suspected Muslim Fulani herdsmen shot a Baptist pastor dead on Sept. 11, sources said.

The Rev. Alhamdu Mangadus, pastor of Nasara Baptist Church in Asso, was killed while working on his farm at about 1 p.m., said the Rev. Danladi Boyis Hassan of the ECWA church in the Ungwan Kadara area of Kaduna City.

Given the high level of killings and kidnappings by Muslim Fulani herdsmen in southern Kaduna in recent years, Christian leaders suspect herdsmen killed the pastor. Pastor Hassan, a native of the slain pastor's village, visited the area after the killing and was told that the assailants were Muslim Fulani herdsmen.

"Pray along with the church and family as they mourn the barbaric act by Fulani terrorists," Pastor Hassan told Morning Star News.

Pastor Hayab of the CAN also said Fulani herdsmen were behind the killing.

"He was shot dead on his farm, and the attackers injured another fellow from Tanda," he said. "The corpse of the pastor was taken away by the Fulani herdsmen but was eventually recovered in the bush after a frantic search by our brethren in the area."

Pastor Hayab said the killing of the pastor was one too many for Christians in violence-wracked Kaduna state.

"We are going back to the era of senseless killings. When will people be safe to go out and seek food to feed their families?" he said.

18 Sep: New report reveals that Nigeria has highest number of missing people - Open Doors UK

www.opendoorsuk.org/news/stories/nigeria-190918

A new report from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has revealed that Nigeria is the country with the highest number of missing people in the world. Many of those who are missing have been kidnapped because of their faith, or displaced by faith-based attacks.

The report was published on 12 September, showing that 22,000 Nigerians have been registered with the ICRC as missing since 2013. This number is just those who are still missing, and does not include those who have subsequently been found or released.

"Every parent's worst nightmare"

Children are particularly vulnerable. Almost 60 per cent of those missing were minors when they went missing. Their parents still don't know whether their children are alive or dead.

"Every parent's worst nightmare is not knowing where their child is," said ICRC President Peter Maurer at the report's launch in Abuja.

"This is the tragic reality for thousands of Nigerian parents."

Other Countries

Algeria

1 Oct: Another church closed while government orders investigations to be 'strengthened with all harshness' - Open Doors UK

www.opendoorsuk.org/news/stories/algeria-190917

More churches are closing in Algeria, as the country's authorities have ordered officials to clamp down harshly on 'subversive' Protestant churches in the country.

The closure of a Protestant church in Boghni, in northern Tizi Ouzou Province, is the eighth church to be sealed belonging to l'Église Protestante d'Algérie (EPA), an umbrella group for 45 Protestant churches. The church building is home to two congregations, and the closure affects about 380 Christians.

Earlier this month, police in neighbouring Béjaïa Province sealed the Church of the Prince of Peace, an EPA-affiliated church that has been waiting since 2013 for its re-registration to be approved. In August, officials close another Protestant church in Tizi Ouzou Province.

EPA churches have struggled to obtain registration in accordance with a 2006 law that requires all non-Muslim places of worship to be licensed.

Cont/...

26 Sep: Christians in Algeria Hit with More Church Closures - Morningstar News

morningstarnews.org/2019/09/christians-in-algeria-hit-with-more-church-closures

Authorities today sealed shut a church building in Tizirt, Algeria, two days after shutting another building serving two churches without prior notice, sources said.

Acting on orders from the governor of Tizi-Ouzou Province, eight police officers arrived at 11:45 a.m. on Tuesday (Sept. 24) at the Church of Boghni building and sealed the doors and windows of the Protestant church building in Boghni, 35 kilometers (21 miles) southwest of the city of Tizi-Ouzou, pastor Tahar Chergui said.

"I was surprised when one of the police officers contacted me to meet them at the site where our church is," Pastor Chergui told Morning Star News. "I had not received any notice; they went straight to proceed with the closure by sealing. They could have warned us before; why didn't they?"

Cont/...

India

10 Oct: Pastor's family in hiding after beating and false accusations - Release International

releaseinternational.org/india-pastors-family-in-hiding-after-beating-and-false-accusations

A retired pastor and his family in northern India have been badly beaten and forced into hiding after police took sides with their attackers.

Pastor Patram Mangala, his wife Sarla and their two sons suffered multiple injuries when a mob of up to 40 people attacked them with sticks and rocks.

When the extremists accused the family of 'rioting' and 'trying to take Hindu land', police registered a case immediately. When the family tried to file a complaint against their attackers, police took a week to respond.

Cont/...

3 Oct: Christian Family in Hiding after Hindu Extremist Mob Assaults Them in India - Morningstar News
morningstarnews.org/2019/10/christian-family-in-hiding-after-hindu-extremist-mob-assaults-them-in-india

A retired pastor, his wife and their sons are in hiding from police after a Hindu extremist mob injured them in a gruesome assault in northern India, sources said.

Patram Mangala, retired Church of North India pastor now helping to run St. John School in Sohna, Gurugram District in Haryana state, sustained injuries to his nose when he was hit with a spade in the face, and his 28-year-old son Abhishek Mangala lost four front teeth and ruptured blood vessels in his eye in the Sept. 22 attack.

Pastor Mangala's 65-year-old wife Sarla Mangala sustained an injury under her right eye apart from internal injuries to her body, and their son Raj Kumar Mangala, 40, sustained internal injuries in the attack, which appeared to be rooted in a recent court judgment against the Hindus in their attempt to erect a Hindu idol on the property, the retired pastor said.

Cont/...

29 Sep: Indian Church demolished by local council within month of opening - BPCA

www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/church-demolished-after-1-month-opened

Pastor Newton Das, (35), began the purchase of a 600sq yard plot of land for a church in Sirsa, Haryana, in December 2017. After completing payments for the land amounting to 9 Lakh rupees (£10,300) in August 2018, Pastor Newton began to develop the land. To save costs he hired local contractors at 3 Lakh rupees (£3,440) and drew on substantial help through congregational members who volunteered, eager to begin worship in a designated church building.

The new church building became usable in August 2019 after the basic infrastructure including a main hall and washroom facility where built. Over 200 believers attended 'Church of Jesus Anointing' at its launch on 7th August and new visitors began to attend the church. However, by the second week the church received a letter from the local municipal authority asking them to cease any use of the building because the appropriate planning permission had not been applied for...

A week later a further letter than arrived and Pastor Newton decided to obtain a solicitor. The latest letter did not express that any physical action would be taken by the local council so there was no rush to get things in place with a legal counsel. Only days later 31st August 2019 however Pastor Newton was shocked to the core when he was advised that a force of police, military officers and Municipal officials had turned up at the partly constructed church and were demolishing the building. Though this was deeply upsetting especially as it had taken so long to pay for the land and to build the church Pastor Newton stayed away from the demolition after being warned by church members that the agents involved in the demolition were being very aggressive.

A JCB vehicle was brought to the church and was used to demolish the church boundary wall and building. The main hall and washroom facility were flattened, and a water cooler and the church sound system were broken beyond repair.

Cont/...

A PDF version of these notes will be available for download from the P4PC section of the MD Churches Together website:
churchestogether-marketdrayton.org.uk/p4pc - then follow the link to "Recent Reports"

For more information contact about these sessions Randall Hardy - Tel:01952-540970 or p4pc@amen.org.uk

26 Sep: Praying for someone could mean a jail sentence for Indian Christians - Open Doors UK

www.opendoorsuk.org/news/stories/india-190926

India's Himachal Pradesh State has passed a new bill against 'forced conversion'. This requires anybody seeking to convert to another religion to inform a district magistrate a month in advance that they are doing so of their own will. The priest performing a conversion ceremony will also have to give a month's notice. But local Christians are worried that the new law will be misused.

Part of the bill prohibits the 'offer of any temptation in the form of any gift or gratification or material benefit, either in cash or employment, free education in a reputed school run by any religious body, easy money, better lifestyle, divine pleasure or otherwise'.

Indian Christians are concerned that this will be used to target them. An Open Doors local partner said: "This now means that anyone praying for others' healing will be accused as someone who is enticing people by offering them a better lifestyle, divine pleasure or otherwise."

Cont/...

25 Sep: Police Help Hindu Extremist Efforts to Shut Down Christian Worship in India - Morningstar News

morningstarnews.org/2019/09/police-help-hindu-extremist-efforts-to-shut-down-christian-worship-in-india-sources-say

Hindu extremists and police in eastern India this month ordered jailed Christians to stop gathering for worship, with the extremists threatening to bring a venomous snake to bite a pastor's wife, sources said.

The house-church pastor, his family and other Christians had been arrested in Jharkhand state after the hardline Hindus disrupted their worship, beat the pastor and live-streamed hostile commentary on Facebook, with one passerby telling the Hindu extremist leader the Christians "should be sacrificed alive."

Cont/...

Stop Press, 12 Oct: Church Leaders in India Condemn Misquoting of the Bible by Hindu Nationalist Leader

www.persecution.org/2019/10/12/church-leaders-india-condemn-misquoting-bible-hindu-nationalist-leader

Pakistan

10 Oct: Pakistan's Christians Concerned by New Reports of Discrimination - ICC

www.persecution.org/2019/10/10/pakistans-christians-concerned-new-reports-discrimination

Recent reports of religious discrimination have many Christians in Pakistan concerned about their future status in the country. In villages and small towns, separating eating utensils for Christians, refusing to provide barber services for Christians, and advertising sanitation jobs for Christians only have been very common practices. Human rights organizations have highlighted these issues for decades with little efforts from the government to change discriminatory attitudes.

Now, however, reports of anti-Christian discrimination in new sectors of life in Pakistan have many concerned.

Last month, a biased advertisement was displayed on the main wall of the Machiyara Residency Building in Karachi. That advertisement stated, "Selling or renting out any apartment in this building to the non-Muslims is prohibited." Reports of this biased ad alarmed local minority communities.

Cont/...

27 Sep: 15 Y/O Girl kidnapped and raped while paying monthly payment to debt collectors enters safe house funded by BPCA

www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/baca-fund-legal-team-and-safe-house-for-teenage-gang-rape-victim

24 Sep: 14-year-old Christian girl abducted from school and forced into Islamic Marriage to be set free by courts due to tender age

www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/15-year-old-christian-girl-abducted-and-forced-into-muslim-marriage

Egypt

10 Oct: Christian Man Fatally Beaten - Voice of the Martyrs Canada

www.vomcanada.com/eg-2019-10-10.htm

On September 25th, Maged Fathi passed away after being beaten the previous day by at least six Muslim militants in a village of the Assiut Governorate. According to a neighbour who witnessed the incident, Maged's son was carrying dead chickens when he accidentally dropped one beside the house of Ebrahim Abo Zaid.

In a rage of anger, Ebrahim grabbed the chicken and hit the boy in the face with it. When Maged came to his son's defense, the perpetrator hit him in the head with a club and then stabbed him. As the beating continued, Ebrahim's son and other men joined in the attack. When Christians began gathering, the attackers then turned on them, injuring five others and damaging vehicles.

Cont/...

10 Sep: Muslim Family Kills Son Over Christian Conversion - ICC

www.persecution.org/2019/10/09/muslim-family-kills-son-christian-conversion

A Muslim-background believer (MBB) living in Egypt, Hussein Mohammed, was killed on Sunday after his family discovered that he had converted from Islam to Christianity.

The MBB, who preferred to be called by his baptismal name George, had posted several photos to his Facebook account. His family had known of his conversion prior to these posts, and his uncle had made complaints to the Directorate of Security. However, these Facebook posts were a public acknowledgement of his conversion. It included a photo of a cross tattoo which George had obtained on his wrist, a practice pursued by Egyptian Coptic Orthodox Christians.

Sri Lanka 10 Oct: Assaults on Christians Seeking to Worship - Voice of the Martyrs Canada

www.vomcanada.com/lk-2019-10-10.htm

Burkina Faso 3 Oct: Christians Told to Convert or Leave - Voice of the Martyrs Canada

www.vomcanada.com/bk-2019-10-03.htm

Belarus 9 Oct: New Fines for Unregistered Worship - The Voice of the Martyrs Canada

www.vomcanada.com/by-2019-09-26.htm

West Papua 9 Oct: Islamic Radicals Want to Send Jihadis to Christian Majority - ICC

www.persecution.org/2019/10/09/islamic-radicals-want-send-jihadis-christian-majority-west-papua

Uganda 2 Oct: Christian Loses Children, Mother and Stepfather to Islamist Attack, Sources Say - Morningstar News

morningstarnews.org/2019/10/christian-in-uganda-loses-children-mother-and-stepfather-to-islamist-attack-sources-say