

VOM-USA Prayer Update for February 22, 2013

The Voice of the Martyrs USA: www.persecution.com

INDONESIA—Islamic Hard-Liners Attack Five Churches

Source: VOM Sources, Jakarta Post

1 Chronicles 28:20

Islamists attacked churches in South Sulawesi with Molotov cocktails on Feb. 10 and again on Feb. 14, for a total of five attacks. The churches attacked included the Makassar Indonesian Church, Panakkukang Toraja Klasis Church, Toraja Klasis Tallo Church, the Tiatira Church and the Toraja Mamasa Church. Several buildings sustained damage, but no injuries were reported. Police determined that all five attacks were carried out by the same group. Closed-circuit televisions at one of the churches recorded video of four people on two motorcycles hurling homemade bombs at the church. Members of the Islamic Defenders Front visited the Damai Kristus Catholic church on Friday, Feb. 15, and warned them of similar consequences if they continued to meet. All of the attacked churches held services on Sunday, Feb. 17, despite the threats. The Jakarta Christian Communications Forum has reported an increase in the number of threats against churches since 2009. There were 75 cases reported in 2012, up from 64 the previous year.

LAOS—Three Pastors Arrested for Making Copies of Christian Movie

Sources: VOM Contacts, Human Rights Watch for Lao Religious Freedom

Psalm 27:12–13

Police in Savannakhet province have held three pastors since Feb. 5 on suspicion of “spreading Christianity” because the pastors made copies of a Christian movie at a local duplication shop. After making three copies of the movie, the shop owner tested one of the DVDs and ended up watching the entire video along with the three pastors. A policeman who saw what they were watching reported them to the local police lieutenant, and the pastors and shop owner were arrested. The shop owner was later released, but authorities insist that the pastors were spreading the Christian religion portrayed in the movie. The pastors, who lead three different churches in the area, say the copies were for personal use. The movie is available in shops throughout Laos.

ERITREA—Number of Christians Arrested in January Rises to 50

Source: Release International

Genesis 39:20b–21

The number of Christians arrested in Asmara, the Eritrean capital, last month is now up to 50. All of the believers, detained since mid-January, are still being held, and most are church leaders. Thirty believers were arrested on Jan. 20 at a worship meeting of the Philadelphia church held in a private home. One of those arrested was an 85-year-old woman, who was also accused of hosting Bible study groups in her home. The raids were described as “well-planned and targeting Bible study leaders.” The imprisoned Christians are being held in the notorious Karchele security prison in Asmara.

AFGHANISTAN—VOM Project

Pray for radio broadcasts of dramatized New Testament readings in the Dari language. According to our partners, radio is the best tool for mass evangelism and discipleship in Afghanistan.