

## **VOM-USA Prayer Update for March 9, 2012**

### **Nigeria--Suicide Bombers Attack Jos Church**

*Source: VOM Contacts, The Sun News (Nigeria), The Nation (Nigeria), Compass Direct*

**Luke 6:28-30**

Boko Haram terrorists bombed a large church in Jos on Sunday, Feb. 26, killing a church member and a baby, along with themselves. Church security guards prevented the suicide bombers from reaching the church auditorium, where a service was in progress. Claiming responsibility for the attack, a Boko Haram spokesman said, "We have just started." The suicide bombers arrived at the Church of Christ in Nigeria (COCIN) compound shortly after the 7 a.m. Hausa language service began. A security guard suspected of collaborating with the terrorists opened the gate for their Volkswagen vehicle packed with explosives. But other security guards, who noticed the unusual activity, shot one of the car's occupants and managed to stop the vehicle before it reached the main church building. The car bomb exploded in the parking area at about 7:20 a.m., killing church usher Grace Daniel, a baby that died later at the hospital and the two bombers. At least 38 others were injured in the bombing. Pray for the families of those who died, and pray that believers in Jos will be able to respond to the constant violence in a way that honors God.

### **India--Hindu Activists Beat Pastor and Family Over Land Dispute**

*Sources: Global Council of Indian Christians, Compass Direct News*

**Exodus 11:10; 12:31**

Hindu activists recently beat a pastor, his daughter and the pastor's brother after a disagreement over a piece of property. The dispute arose when a neighbor demanded part of Pastor John Chidambaran's church land in Tamil Nadu state. After the two quarreled, the neighbor broke one of Chidambaran's water pipes and Chidambaran filed a police complaint. In retaliation, the neighbor returned with 10 Hindu activists. They beat the pastor and accused him of forcing people to convert to Christianity (a punishable offense in some parts of India). They also beat his 27-year-old daughter, who had to be taken to the hospital. Police promised to help the pastor resolve the matter with his neighbor, but before they could take action, the neighbor and a Hindu extremist leader attacked and beat the pastor's brother, Sahayam Chidambaran. They accused him of forced conversions and had him arrested. VOM partners are hopeful that Sahayam will be released in a few days. Pray that God will soften the hearts of the attackers and that Sahayam will be released soon.

### **Belarus--Officials Visit "Unlawful" Church Meetings**

*Sources: Forum 18 News Service*

**2 Chronicles 1:9-11**

Government authorities visited three worship services in January, putting two pastors at risk of being charged with holding unlawful meetings. Although the meetings were in different parts of

Belarus, all three were part of the Pentecostal Church. In Ogarevichi village, authorities observed the Sunday service of 10 disabled believers who meet because it is difficult for them to walk to a registered church service. Officials told them their meeting was illegal and that they should "stop violating the law." The same day, authorities visited Pastor Yatskevich's church in Lasitsk village. "They get complaints from Orthodox believers and have to respond," he said. Another pastor, in the village of Kovnyatin, was issued an official warning on the same Sunday for leading worship. Unregistered religious activity is illegal in Belarus, punishable by up to two years in prison. Thank God that no one has yet been prosecuted for unregistered religious activity, and ask him to give leaders wisdom in their response to threats or arrests.

### **West Africa**

#### *VOM Project*

Pray for a group of Christian converts from Islam who operate a VOM-supported taxi business. The taxi generates support for these believers, who have been rejected by society and their families in a severely restricted country.