

VOM-USA Prayer Update for April 27, 2012China--Government Launches New Campaign to Eradicate House Churches

Source: China Aid Association

Isaiah 35:3-4

A secret document obtained by China Aid Association (CAA) details the Chinese government's plan to eradicate house churches within 10 years. The State Administration for Religious Affairs (SARA) issued the document in cooperation with the ministries of Public Security and Civil Affairs. According to CAA, phase one of the strategy involves a thorough investigation of house churches from January to June 2012. Phase two concentrates on "cleaning up" the house churches that have been investigated within two to three years, and phase three aims to eradicate the house churches within 10 years. Strategies for accomplishing these goals include incorporating house churches into government-sanctioned Three-Self churches; banning the words "house church" from all websites, media and documents; and implementing humane law enforcement measures. CAA reports that persecution and suppression of house churches has risen by 20 percent this year. A house church pastor from Hangzhou, Zhejiang province, said, "The situation this year is especially tense." Pray for China's house churches as they proclaim the truth of the gospel. Pray that the Lord will strengthen them in the midst of persecution.

India--First Murder Conviction Related to 2008 Orissa Massacre

Source: Christian Solidarity Worldwide

Psalm 6:8-10

Kartik Paramenika, a leader of the 2008 massacre in Orissa, India, has been sentenced to life in prison for the murder of Ramesh Digal. Paramenika's murder conviction in March was the first conviction related to the widespread mob violence against Christians in Kandhamal, Orissa, in August and September 2008. Kartik led a mob to Petapanga village in 2008, where he killed Ramesh and burned his home. Ramesh worked as a cook in the school where Kartik served as headmaster. In addition to the life sentence, Kartik was also sentenced to five years for arson and was fined 5,000 rupees. Convictions are sometimes difficult to obtain in India because witnesses are often threatened and harassed. John Dayal, a member of the government of India's National Integration Council, said, "Justice remains the critical issue in Kandhamal, where a combination of circumstances, including lacunae [missing information] in investigations and coercion of witnesses, has resulted in a long series of acquittals. This conviction will help begin to rebuild faith in the judicial system. We must also congratulate the public prosecutor for securing this major success."

Bangladesh

VOM Project

Pray for Christian converts in a discipleship program. They are taught to sew as a means of supporting themselves. The worst persecution for Christian converts often begins after they are baptized because baptism is seen as a formal declaration of faith. Many converts are disinherited, forced to leave their parents' homes and even expelled from their villages.