

Persecution Watch

Indonesian Christians Attacked, Murdered

Four members of a church in Poso, Indonesia, were beaten to death during attacks by Muslims on Nov. 16, The Barnabas Fund reported. Oranje Tadjodja, 58, treasurer of Central Sulawesi Christian Church, and his nephew, Yohanes Tadjodja, 26, were ambushed in their car as they drove between two Muslim villages near Poso. Dennis Lingkuliwa and a fourth church member identified only as Bowo were murdered in separate incidents in the city. The attacks were reportedly spurred by attempts to arrest Muslim suspects believed to be responsible for anti-Christian violence in October that left at least 10 Christians dead.

Turkish Believer in Coma After Assault

A new Turkish Christian was left in a coma after being severely beaten for distributing New Testaments. Yakup Cindilli, 32, was attacked Oct. 23 by three men in his hometown of Orhangazi, in the country's northwestern region. Cindilli had faced opposition from his family after becoming a Christian about two years ago, Compass Direct reported. Recently he had visited Bursa Protestant Church in Orhangazi, asking church leaders for some New Testaments for distribution. Among three people arrested in connection with the assault was the president of a local chapter of a militant political party accused of violent, "neo-fascist" activities during the 1970s and historically linked with an Islamic version of nationalism, Compass said.

Police Arrest Egyptian Converts From Islam

More than 20 Egyptian Christians, many of them secret converts from Islam, were arrested in late October in a crackdown on those leaving their Muslim faith. Some of those taken into custody were beaten, interrogated and tortured, and charged with falsifying official identity cards and papers, The Barnabas Fund said. Although Egypt has no law against conversion, former Muslims who turn to Christ are routinely targeted by police who try to force them to return to Islam. A Christian who converts to Islam can receive new identity papers with an adopted Muslim name within 24 hours, but it is impossible for Muslims who become Christians to change to a Christian name, The Barnabas Fund said.