

Persecution Watch

Venezuela President Gives Missions Group 90 Days To Leave

Venezuela President Hugo Chavez has revoked New Tribes Mission's permission to work in his nation. The Ministry of Justice and Interior published the decree Nov. 14 in the official Gazette of Venezuela, where laws and orders are recorded. The order gave the missionaries 90 days to leave tribal areas, where NTM had been working since 1953. The Florida-based organization came under fire Oct. 12, when Chavez accused its Venezuela workers of spying for the U.S. Some 3,000 tribal Christians protested the order Oct. 28, just two days after a group of Venezuelan evangelical leaders issued a statement supporting Chavez's decision. NTM requested a meeting with Chavez to clarify "misunderstandings," but at press time he had not consented. The organization said it would comply with the order but would also explore its legal options.

British missionary Murdered in Sudan

A British aid worker died in November after gunmen ambushed his jeep in Sudan near the Ugandan border, Compass Direct reported. Roughly 20 militants attacked Collin Lee, his wife and their Sudanese driver Nov. 5 as they traveled to the southern Sudanese town of Yei from Uganda. Lee, 57, had worked with International Aid Services as a trauma counselor for war victims in Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia and Uganda for less than two years. His wife survived the attack. "Collin felt that he had a calling from God, and he had a real sense of urgency to accomplish that goal," Lee's friend and colleague Elias Kamau told Compass. The Ugandan army held the Lord's Resistance Army

responsible for the murder.

Christian Girls Attacked in Indonesia

Unidentified assailants shot two high school students Nov. 8 in Indonesia's Poso district, central Sulawesi, just 10 days after three Christian teenage girls were beheaded on their way to a private Christian school, Compass Direct reported. Ivon, who at press time was being identified only by her first name, and Siti Nuraini, both 17, were admitted to a Poso Kota hospital in critical condition, according to the Jakarta Post. President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono called on security forces to find the perpetrators. However, Indonesians are doubtful they will be found, as many violent crimes in Poso remain unsolved, Compass reported.

Bible College Faces Harassment in Bangladesh

A Bible college in Bangladesh was forced to relocate after facing persistent harassment from Islamic extremists, Christian Freedom International (CFI) reported. In July Grace Presbyterian Bible College moved from Khulna to south Sayabithi, about 15 miles north of Dhaka. "The fanatic groups attacked our school three times, two times this year, one time last year," said principal Peter Khaleque. "They tried to kidnap the girls and kill the men." The 33-student school continues to face opposition in its new location, but Khaleque said classes would continue. CFI is calling on the U.S. government and United Nations to urge Bangladesh to stop the growing persecution of religious minorities, especially Christians.