

6 Christians Arrested While Preparing for Worship Service

The social hammer continues to fall on Christians throughout the continent of Asia, as a group of six Christians, including their pastor, were arrested as they prayed prior to a worship service the following day.

According to Sirikoon Prasertsee, director of Human Rights Watcher for Lao Religious Freedom (HRWLRF): "The arrests took place on Saturday at Mr. Mum's home while they were meeting for prayer in preparation for Sunday morning worship on the following day. They are currently being imprisoned in Xaibouathong District prison."

In the wake of a new village chief coming to power, Pastor Mum's home church has been targeted for persecution due to his Christian faith.

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"Others in Tahae village and nearby villages also have exercised their right to religious freedom to accept the Christian faith," Prasertsee said. "The new main village chief was appointed to govern Tahae village, and the crackdown on Christian freedom and practices became severe that led to the arrest of Mr. Mum and five Lao believers."

Laos and other southeast Asian countries have a history of persecuting Christians, and the country is listed at #21 on the Open Doors World Watch List.

The main religion in the country is Buddhism, and believers in Jesus can expect to experience three main types of persecution according to Open Doors:

- Communist and post-Communist oppression
- Clan oppression
- Dictatorial paranoia

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As reported by Open Doors, "Converts to Christianity carry additional vulnerabilities. Because they are seen as traitors to their communities who have angered the spirits, they can face pressure and violence from their families and local authorities. Families have been known to stir up the local community, who often expel converts from their homes and villages."

During trying seasons like this, we must lift up our brothers and sisters in Christ who experience persecution, jail and in some cases even death, just as our Lord Jesus did on earth.

Pray that they have the strength to persevere in the face of persecution and that their persecutors see the light of Jesus in them and in turn find their own salvation.

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