

AG Pastor Dragged, Beaten in Sri Lanka

A national Assemblies of God pastor and his wife were viciously attacked by a mob in Sri Lanka after being accused of “spreading Christianity.”

According to reports, the pastor, who is also a regional presbyter, and his wife went to visit a church member. On their way home, they were suddenly cut off by an SUV, and a mob of about 40 people surrounded them. Grabbing the pastor, they dragged him along the ground and beat him, accusing him of spreading Christianity.

The pastor and his wife were then dragged to the home they had just left. The angry mob demanded the church member and her daughter tell how much the pastor paid them to convert to Christianity. Despite the family’s adamant claims that they had been a Christians a long time and made the decision voluntarily, the mob beat the pastor again.

Although the pastor and his wife managed to escape and alert authorities, their ID cards and the pastor’s mobile phone, Bible and other documents were stolen during the assault. Several church members whose phone numbers were stored on the pastor’s phone have since received calls from a person pretending to be the pastor, asking them to meet him at various locations. The ID cards have been returned, but the phone and Bible are still missing.

“Dreadful scenes like this are tragically becoming all too common in many areas of the world,” says Omar Beiler, AG World Missions regional director for Eurasia. “This pastor, his wife, their children and their entire church family are in desperate need of our **prayers.**”

This was not the first attack on the pastor and his family.

Unknown assailants attacked the pastor's home Aug. 1, using clubs to smash all the windows. Although no one was injured, the incident left the couple's children, ages 14, 10 and 8, traumatized and fearful, and glass fell on the 10-week-old baby's bed while the child slept.

Greg Mundis, AG World Missions executive director, says that about 500 Christians are in that area of Sri Lanka, but Christians throughout the country—as well as in other areas of the world—are also being **persecuted**.

“We are receiving reports more frequently of believers who are being persecuted and even killed in many countries of the world,” Mundis says. “We must respond to the suffering of our brothers and sisters in Christ who are being persecuted for the sake of the **gospel**. It is both our responsibility to **pray** for them and advocate on their behalf.”