

Egyptian Security Forces Leave Christians Defenseless

Two Christian institutions—a school and a monastery—were attacked by members of the Muslim Brotherhood carrying automatic weapons. In both cases, police and security forces did not protect the Christians.

At 2 a.m. on Saturday, St. Mark and El Tawfik Schools in Minya were raided by militants suspected to be with the Muslim Brotherhood (MB).

“Some MBs armed with automatic guns attacked [the schools]. They attacked the guards, beating them and tying them up,” a teacher at St. Marks, who wishes to remain anonymous for safety, told International Christian Concern (ICC).

“The MB looted the school of all the contents, including 40 computers, two buses, two safes full of teacher’s bonuses and exams, and all the furniture. Then they destroyed the building,” the teacher continued.

Last week, the St. Mary Monastery complex in Minya was completely taken over by pro-Morsi militants. The demolished church was the oldest archaeological church in Egypt.

“They turned one of the churches into a mosque,” said Fr. Ibram Tamesy, a priest of St. Mary and Anaba Ibram Monastery in the village of Delga. “They fully demolished it, turned it into a mosque, and now they are praying in it. I am very sad.”

Christian families remaining in Minya have been hiding in their homes for five straight days.

“They cannot go out because of the absence of the army and armed forces in this village,” said an ICC source. “There is a situation of fear and panic among the Christian families

there. I do not know why the security forces and the army ignore the cries of the Christians in this village.”

Other churches have also been affected by the MB. The Holy Virgin and Anba Abraam Church in the village of Delga, Deir Mawas, Minya; the Al-Anba Moussa al-aswad Church in Minya; and the Evangelical Church in Samalout Center in Minya all were invaded and had “Friday prayers” held by the MB in their church buildings.

Christian individuals have been singled out for attack by the MB in their pro-Morsi campaign as well. Recently, ICC sources report that at least five Christians have been killed for their faith, including Ramy Zakaria, who was killed during the attack on the Church of St. George in Backus, Alexandria governate; Alexander Tus from the village Delga, Deir Mawas, Minya; Bashoy Mikhail from the village of Almrmid in Minya; Mina Raafat Aziz, a taxi driver from Alexandria; and Fawzy Morad Fares from the division of El Geneina, Ezbet El Nakhel, Marg, Cairo, who died after MB members fired shots at his head.

“ICC calls on all sides in Egypt to end the violence that has led to the death of nearly 1,000 people,” says Todd Daniels, ICC’s regional manager for the Middle East. “We particularly condemn the targeting of Christians. In the absence of protection, many Egyptian Christians have died, and their property has been destroyed. We urge for the rights of all Egyptian citizens to be protected and the return of the rule of law.”

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