

Islamic Radicals Set Fire to Christian Church, Bibles

Islamic radicals set fire to a church and burned Bibles and artifacts in another, according to reports.

The Free Apostolic Church in Baath, Pakistan, was set ablaze after alleged arguments between Muslims and Christians last week, according to "Vatican Radio."

A Christian lawyer told "Vatican Radio" the fire was set after the church refused to shut off their loud speakers during the Muslim call to prayer.

The day before, members of Victory Church in Kasur, Pakistan, arrived to find a 26-year-old Muslim man burning Bibles during the Pakistani celebration for the new year. Suspect Akba Azhar was caught and brought to police, but they let him go.

Pastors and Christians from both villages are pleading with police to intervene, yet so far, the accused have been able to slip through custody.

"This latest attack and the ease within which the felon, Mr. Azhar, was allowed to escape justice, underlines the low worth of Christians in Pakistan," said Wilson Chowdhry, the chairman of the British Pakistan Christian association.

"Pakistan has a well-documented, extremely poor human rights record, especially toward minorities living there, yet still receives massive foreign aid from America and Britain. The ongoing pariah status of minorities in Pakistan is a concern big enough to warrant cessation of all U.S. and U.K. funding. Their choice to continue is dangerous considering that festering hatred toward the West in Pakistan has led to the export of terrorism," Chowdhry said.

A resident living next to the burnt church said he told police the details, but they just ignored him.

Another resident says that as persecution escalates, so, too, does their fear.

“Most of the Christians are bonded labourers and earn their living through modern day slavery in different sectors including local brick kilns and carpet making factories. This recent attack has caused great fear in all the local Christians,” BPCA reporter Shamim Masih said.