

Rumors About Pastor Youcef Nadarkhani's Execution Refuted

Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW) is refuting claims that Pastor Yousef Nadarkhani has been executed in Iran.

Reports alleging that Nadarkhani had been hanged initially surfaced last week and resurfaced Friday. Pictures purporting to show a man being hanged are being attributed as evidence of the pastor's death. However, the man in these pictures is not Pastor Nadarkhani, and CSW's sources have confirmed, he is still alive.

On Sept. 8, a court in Rasht acquitted Pastor Nadarkhani of apostasy, but sentenced him to three years for evangelizing Muslims. Since he had already spent close to three years in Lakan Prison, the pastor was released after posting bail. He was returned to prison on Dec. 25 on the orders of prison authorities, and released again on Jan. 7.

CSW's Chief Executive Mervyn Thomas said, "While we are relieved to report that Pastor Nadarkhani is alive, we urge caution in circulating rumors which must be deeply distressing for his family, his congregation and for many around the world who continue to pray for him. Given their possible ramifications, it is vital that reports of such a serious nature are stringently verified before dissemination."