

Iranian Christians face 80 lashes in communion case



Iran (MNN/MEC) ? Four Iranian Christians are being charged with threatening national security in Iran.

According to a press release from Middle East Concern, ?Yasser, Saheb and Mohammadreza were arrested on 13th May 2016 with their pastor, Yousef, as they were celebrating communion.? In addition to the charges of threatening national security, Miles Windsor of Middle East Concern says the former three men ?have been charged and sentenced with 80 lashes for drinking communion wine.?

Yet, Windsor also adds, ?For Christians in Iran, it is legal for them to drink communion wine.? So why the charges? ?The issue is they don't recognize these men as Christians; they recognize them as Muslims.?

Sadly, this isn't the only case of persecution against Muslim converts. ?They are the ones largely facing this kind of pressure and this kind of persecution, and we'd certainly appreciate prayer.?

In fact, charges against Christian meetings, public and private, are nothing new. ?It can seem as if [officials] have this paranoia that any gathering, any meeting of those who stand contrary to the political and religious nature of the Islamic Republic of Iran can be seen as a threat.

?My experience with Iranian believers is that they're extraordinarily bold and they're extraordinarily faithful,? Windsor says. ?They persevere in the full knowledge of the situation that could become them for living as believers in Iran.?

In a recent hearing, ?the local court officials had been unable to reach a verdict,? according to the Middle East Concern press release. Windsor explains, ?During the hearing, the judge informed the men that within 20 days the court would issue a verdict relating to the charge of ?acting against national security' which has been made against them.?

In the meantime, keep these men in your prayers as they await a verdict this week. With strong pressure on the court system to convict them, now is the time for believers to stand in solidarity through prayer.

?We have a God who is sovereign and has authority even in Iran, so we'd appreciate prayer that a just verdict would be given and that these men would be allowed to go free,? Windsor says. He asks that we pray that ?Iran would change and open up. Pray there would be opportunities for freedom for Christians and other religious minorities so they would have the freedom to live as Christ and honor God with their lives.?

Source : Mission Network News