

Azadi (Freedom)

January 2012

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Iran Update

Farsi Christian News Network (FCNN) reports:

“Christian activists and house-church members across the country have been ordered to present themselves to the local State Security offices of their respective towns and cities. Christian sources from different cities in Iran, report a sharp increase of activities against Christians prior to Christmas celebrations by State Security organs of the Islamic Republic. These reports show that a num-

ber of Christians in Tehran and six other cities have been ordered to the State Security Centers, interrogated at length, been allowed home with a warning that they will be recalled, and they better obey the order.

The many and varied police organizations across the country have started collecting and collating information about Christian-owned businesses. A senior General of the Islamic police in Tehran, explaining and excusing this illegal information

gathering, said, “We must be on guard to find out the reasons behind this massive and country-wide distribution of The Bible, it is obvious that this illegal act could not have been done without the help and cooperation of Christian businessmen, and we are looking for proof of their involvement”.

Also: Christian sources in the city of Mash-had report Mr. Ehsan Behrouz a young Christian convert student has been re-arrested.

<http://fcnn.com/>

Galatians 5:1
It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.

Attack on the Church in Ahvaz

FCNN also reports:

“On Friday 23rd Dec. 2011 at 11:00 local time, during the weekly service in the Church of The Assembly of God in the city of Ahvaz, the center of oil rich prov-

ince of Khuzestan situated about 900 Km south-west of Tehran, a large number of State Security agents surrounded the building and raided the church, situated in Kianpars 3th street.

All those present, including children attending their Friday school, were arrested, mobile phones confiscated, and church building thoroughly searched by the plainclothes agents who



Rev. Farhad Sabok-Rooh

OUTREACH IN AFGHANISTAN

Kingdom Co-workers on the field write:

“Though the government of Afghanistan claims to uphold the UN charter guaranteeing freedom of religion, it also claims to uphold Sharia Law, which imposes the death penalty on those who would convert from Islam. All Afghans are assumed to be Muslim under law.

Some Afghans who have declared themselves to be Christians want to claim persecution to seek asylum in a western country, others want a job working with

westerners, some are curious, some are Islamists who are spying out the church, others are sincerely seeking Christ.

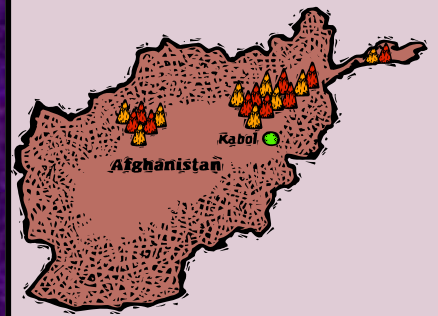
Christian meetings are problematic. Not trusting the others, communication becomes superficial or non-existent. People with sincere motives can be pressured to become informants in Afghanistan’s highly coercive atmosphere.

In our years here, The Lord has given us many local Christian friends. We hold no “gatherings” though our

home gives the impression of being a gathering center.

We believe that God wishes to extend the church first along family lines and it is not His will that we would introduce otherwise unconnected families at this time.”

-Anonymous



ABC'S OF OUTREACH

Reaching out to love and witness to internationals

One of my introductory lessons on reaching internationals (specifically Iranians) here in the US came from Dr. William M. Miller who had been a missionary in Iran for 40 years.

I visited Dr Miller in his home in Philadelphia, PA in 1991. He was 98 years old at the time.

In my short visit I learned great lessons in hospitality, a listening ear, a love for people and a focus on Christ. Dr Miller wrote an interesting booklet called “Your Muslim Guest: A Practical Guide

in Friendship and Witness for Christians Who Meet Muslims”. (available through PWO)

Dr. Miller was encouraging his nephew and wife who lived in city in the US with a growing international population. He urged, “... become friends with these men and womenyou will learn much from them about their various countries, their cultures, and their religion. They in turn will probably ask you many questions about your country, its customs and religions. Very likely you will have opportunities to tell these guests what you believe and what Jesus Christ means to you. I am

sure you will be ready for this and will let your conversation come naturally.”

Dr Miller summed up this opportunity to develop relationships with internationals wisely and lovingly. Keys to building relationships:

Invite internationals to your home.

Visit them.

Show them the love of Christ.

They need a brother sister mother father.

They need a helping hand.

They need a friend. So do you.

-PWO Representative

MUTUAL ENCOURAGEMENT

When non-Persian Christians come to visit the Persian Churches, it encourages the Iranian & Afghan believers.

Recently, we received an email reaffirming that the effects are mutual.

Pat Ross, Mission Committee Coordinator, Deerfield Presbyterian Church, Deerfield, NJ wrote the following regarding a trip to the Afghan Iranian Christian Fellowship in VA:

“It was so great to see you yesterday. What a day!!

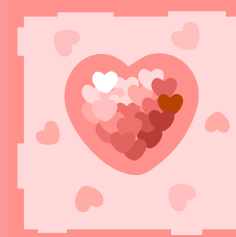
We loved being there and joining in your service and fellowship. You have a very vibrant, loving congregation.

The music was beautiful, the sermon was excellent and moving, and the people were warm and caring.

It was such a wonderful day for us and I think an encouragement to everyone. I'm so thankful that we were finally able to

make the trip happen. I will be encouraging more people to come the next time.

Thank you so much for your graciousness in having us. I look forward to visiting again. Love to you and your congregation.”



...THE CHURCH IN AHVAZ (CONTINUED)

(Continued...)

refused to identify themselves.

A number of computers, all Audio-Visual equipment, and hundreds of copies of Christian books, were seized and removed; Church attendees were relieved of their mobiles and on two buses taken to an unknown destination.

A number of armed State Security agents of the Islamic Republic stayed on who continued their search for a considerable time afterwards.

FCNN reports that almost all detainees, after a thorough searched and considerable verbal abuse, were released a few hours later.

However, Rev. Farhad Sabok-

Rooh, his wife Shahnaz, and two other Christians workers named David and Naser have not been released but are held in an unidentified prison.

The released Church attendees have been told to be ready to be summoned back, and if it is deemed not to be harmful to the security of the Islamic Republic, their mobiles maybe returned then.

Whereabouts of Rev. Farhad, his wife Shahnaz, and the other two Church workers is as yet unknown, and the “authorities” have thus far not given any reason for their vehement Anti-Christian activities in Ahvaz.”

See: www.fcnn.com

Matthew 16:

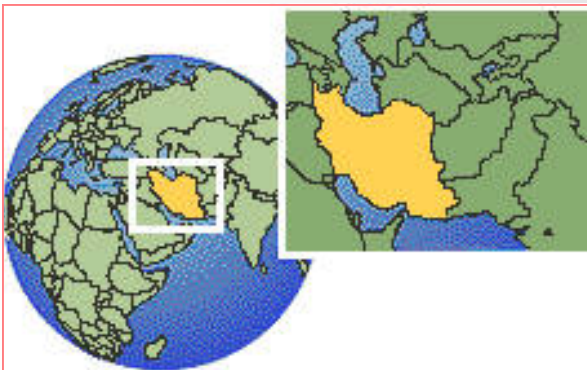
¹⁶Simon Peter said, "You're the Christ, the Messiah, the Son of the living God."

¹⁷⁻¹⁸Jesus came back, "God bless you, Simon, son of Jonah! You didn't get that answer out of books or from teachers.

My Father in heaven, God himself, let you in on this secret of who I really am....

This is the rock on which I will put together my church, a church so expansive with energy that not even the gates of hell will be able to keep it out

(The Message)



Persian World Outreach, Inc.

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We are on the web:
www.persianwo.org

Persian World Outreach, Inc.

is an indigenous mission that is reaching out to meet the physical and spiritual needs of Persian-speaking people (Afghans, Iranians and Tajik) worldwide through:

- Leadership Training,
- Mobilizing & Equipping Workers,
- Church Planting,
- Bible & Literature Distribution,
- Humanitarian Relief, and
- Networking & Partnering.

PWO thanks churches and individuals that support the vision for indigenous missions.

Please use this newsletter as a prayer guide.



Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep..." "I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me— just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd. The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father." (John 10: 11-18-NIV)

PERSIAN RESOURCES

We hear many reports of increasing stress and persecution of Christians in Iran.

PWO continues to receive internet contact from Christians there.

The commitment to Christ of our brothers and sisters inspires and strengthens us.

Many of the Christians there are serving Christ sacrificially.

A sister in Tehran recently contacted PWO. She is serving the Lord through a local church but she wants to do more.

She has offered to type Persian Christian resources that will be distributed in Iran and worldwide.

She expressed a heart cry in one communication that the Iranian Christians that have left Iran are needed back home.

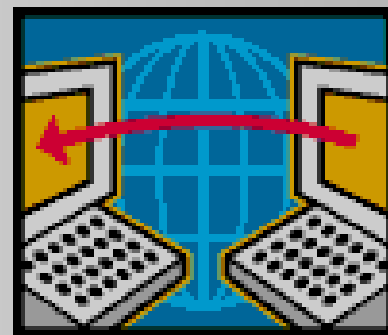
PRAY

Please pray with us:

-for our Christian brothers and sisters in Afghanistan, Iran, & Tajikistan

-for the churches

-for seekers to find the Lord Jesus Christ.



Partnering Worldwide