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Muslims in Uganda burn home where boys threatened with violence took refuge

Separately, 27 Christians injured in attack on food project.

Morning Star News (03.11.2016) - <http://bit.ly/2fCLqw6> - Muslims in a village in eastern Uganda on Sunday (Oct. 30) gutted the home of a Christian family for housing two boys threatened with violence for leaving Islam, sources said.

Stephen Muganzi, 41, told Morning Star News that the two teenaged boys sought refuge with him on Oct. 16 in Kobolwa village, Kibuku District after their parents earlier in the month learned of their conversion, began questioning them and threatened to kill them. The two boys, ages 16 and 17, had secretly become Christians nearly seven months before.

An area pastor told Morning Star News that Muganzi appeared terrified when he showed up at his church building with his family after fleeing the enraged mob.

"The life of my family is at stake," Muganzi told the pastor, he said. "Where am I going to take them? I have lost everything that was in the house."

After the boys had fled their homes and the parents began searching for them, Muganzi had begun receiving threats, he said.

"I started receiving threatening messages in my phone accusing me of converting the boys to Christianity, as well as housing them in my house without the parents' permission, but I did not take it very seriously," Muganzi said.

The boys' fathers (names withheld, like those of the boys, for security reasons) organized a group of *sharia* (Islamic law) vigilantes to punish them for apostasy, and the mob, including the boys' fathers, set fire to Muganzi's house, he said.

"At around 6 p.m., I saw a group of people moving towards my house and immediately recalled the warning, and I signaled my family to take refuge," he said. "As the attackers drew nearer, I noticed that some of the people wore Islamic attire. There and then I also ran for my life. After 20 minutes, we saw fire coming out of my homestead. I then knew that the Muslims had burned my house."

The church sent one of the elders to check on the extent of damage, who reported, "The loss is enormous." Muganzi and the boys have sought shelter elsewhere.

The elder discovered leaflets left behind by the attackers.

"Be informed that we are not yet finished with you," one read. "Expect more, worse things are on the way."

Food project attacked

Also in eastern Uganda in predominantly Muslim Nalidi village, Pallisa District, a mob of armed jihadists recently injured 27 Christians working at a food-producing project because people were coming to Christ through the outreach, sources said.

As they harvested rice, 16 of the 27 wounded Christians were seriously injured when the Islamists, invoking jihad in Arabic, descended on them at 10:30 a.m. on Oct. 6, an area source said.

"The Muslims attacked us while shouting in Arabic, "We are fighting for the cause of Allah," survivor John Supete said from his hospital bed.

An imam identified only as Akiimu led the group in the attack, sources said. The Christians suffered deep cuts on their heads, faces and hands, as well as back injuries, as the assailants struck them with long, metal knives used for cutting firewood, among other objects.

"The Muslims beat us using clubs, sticks and metallic objects, and several of us were injured," said another survivor, Kirya Mbulambago, adding that most of the victims had serious cuts.

At this writing, 12 of those attacked were still receiving hospital treatment. Police arrived at the site, arrested several Muslims and opened a case against them (Reference No. SD/4/8/10/2016) at the Pallisa police station. The victims were admitted to Butebo health center.

The rice plantation project, a joint effort by churches from three denominations, began in March. Part of the production was designed to help the community through periods of food shortfalls, while other amounts were sold to help pay school fees for needy families.

Though the project, 21 Muslims put their faith in Christ over six months, sources said. Muslims started issuing threats to the Christians, with one leaflet warning, "We have discovered your hidden agenda, and be warned that soon you will reap what you have sown in changing our members to Christianity."

Muslims angered by conversions to Christianity had issued threats to Christians, and mosque leaders had cautioned during Friday mosque prayers that those who converted would be treated harshly as taught in the Koran, sources said.

Muslim in Eastern Uganda kills Christian wife for leaving Islam, relatives say

Five children narrowly escape death.

Morning Star News (30.05.2016) - <http://bit.ly/1sYpBMQ> - A Muslim in eastern Uganda strangled his wife to death this month for leaving Islam, relatives and neighbors said.

Awali Kakaire, 34, early in the morning on May 8 killed Mariam Nakirya for embracing Christianity in Mbaale village, Imanyiro Sub-County, Mayuge District, the area residents told Morning Star News. She was 30.

Kakaire, who has fled the area, began to suspect his wife was a Christian a month prior, after the local imam questioned him as to why his wife and children had not been attending mosque prayers, nor his children attending the madrassa (Islamic school). Kakaire questioned his children about it, said one of his sons, whose name is undisclosed for security reasons.

"Our father questioned us why we have stopped attending the madrassa, but we told him that we were busy with school work as our mother had instructed us," he told Morning Star News. "Our mother told our father that she has been busy instructing us on school homework. This made my father to cool down his tempers."

As Kakaire frequently traveled to Malaba on business, sometimes for a month at a time, the rest of the family was often able to attend a nearby church on Sundays.

On May 8 Kakaire awoke at 6 a.m., and after his Islamic cleansing ritual woke his wife for her to join him in morning Islamic prayers, their son said.

"Our mother refused, and our father started strangling her as she cried for help," he said.

Kakaire left the house after killing her, and then returned two hours later and forced his five children, ages 5 to 12, into a hole he had dug in a nearby garden, his son said.

"We resisted and began screaming, and neighbors arrived immediately, but he had already dumped us into the hole that he had dug," he said. "Seeing the neighbors, he tried to flee but he was overtaken and then began to be questioned by those who surrounded him."

Kakaire's brother, Michael Kirunda, told Morning Star News he and others were awakened by loud screaming from the house.

"Neighbors rushed to their home and found the children dumped into a hole," Kirunda said. "He wanted to escape, but he could not find a way, hence we started questioning him about the children. 'My family has no respect for Islam,' he said in a loud outburst. We then proceeded into the house and found his wife dead."

Muslim and Christian relatives of the deceased, along with some Christian neighbors, sought to lynch Kakaire, but some Muslims showed support for him. Police arrived with tear gas, guns and batons and brought calm.

"They dispersed us, and we left," Kirunda said. "That evening some of the Muslims hurriedly buried Mariam."

Nakiryra had come to Christ in August 2015 after a series of visits from a door-to-door evangelist from a nearby church.

"The absence of the husband doing business away from his home for a length of time gave me good accessibility to ministering the Good News to Nakiryra's family," the evangelist, whose name is undisclosed, told Morning Star News.

Relatives of Nakiryra tried to ambush Kakaire several times before he fled. The couple's two oldest children, ages 12 and 11, are with their grandmother, and the youngest three are with Kirunda.

The grandmother, identified only as 80-year-old Efulansi, said the children need food, educational and psychological support.

"The children are still traumatized and are crying for their mother," she said.

About 85 percent of the people in Uganda are Christian and 11 percent Muslim, with some eastern areas having large Muslim populations. The country's constitution and other laws provide for religious freedom, including the right to propagate one's faith and convert from one faith to another.

Imam arrested in killing of Christian convert in Eastern Uganda

Mosque leader detained after issuing threat.

Morning Star News (10.02.2016) - <http://bit.ly/1V3ijzc> - An imam who threatened a convert from Islam in eastern Uganda has been arrested in connection with the killing of the 28-year-old Christian, sources said.

Laurence Maiso's body was found at his house, his head in a pool of blood, on Jan. 27 at around 5 p.m. in Numuseru village, Naboa Sub-County in Budaka District.

Four days earlier, Imam Kamulali Hussein had met him and his wife on a local road. According to Maiso's wife, the imam told him, "You have refused to join us. Do you know that Allah does not want us to have a kafir [infidel] neighbor? And you should know that Allah is about to send to you the Angel of Death in your house. Please prepare to meet him at any time."

Hussein departed. Four days later, Maiso's wife went to see a friend in nearby Lupada village. She returned to find her husband dead on the floor. Her cries brought several neighbors to the house.

Police rushed to the site, and the next day they arrested Hussein, well-known in the area and dubbed "the malaria of Christianity," at Nampangalle village. The case is registered at Naboa police post with a reference number of CRB Ref: 28/2016.

"We found the villagers at the scene of the incident, and immediately we removed the body from the house and took it to the police station, then to the mortuary in Budaka," said a police officer who requested his name be withheld. "The following day we carried out an intensive search, and from a lead from a villager we managed to arrest Hussein at Nampangalle village. We took him to Chief Magistrate Three at Kalaki court, and he was later remanded to Kamuge prison in Palissa District."

The officer said police were still looking for other suspects as they interrogated Hussein.

Maiso lived in a predominantly Muslim area. On several occasions Muslims had confronted him, demanding that he recant his Christian faith, but he remained firm and continued as a member of the Naboa Church of Uganda, sources said.

A neighbor told Morning Star News that on the day of the murder, Jan. 27, she saw eight men coming out of Maiso's house at 4 p.m., including Hussein, and that some of them were dressed in traditional Islamic attire. Another neighbor said he spotted Hussein's uncle and other Muslims in the area around the same time.

The killing is the latest in a series of attacks on Christians in eastern Uganda. On Dec. 23, 2015, a pastor in eastern Uganda was hacked to death as he and other church members resisted an effort by Muslims to take over their land in Nansololo village near Mazuba, in Namutumba District, area church leaders said. Pastor Bongo Martin is survived by a widow and two children.

In another area of eastern Uganda, five underground Christians in a predominantly Muslim village, including a pregnant mother, died from a pesticide put into their food after a Bible study on Dec. 18, area sources said. The Bible study took place in Kachomo village, Kachomo Sub-County, Budaka District at the home of Hajii Suleiman Sajjabi, a convert from Islam who had begun the study with eight family members who had come to faith in Christ under his influence.

Sajjabi was unconscious after someone put a pesticide into the food the group ate after the study, and four of his relatives have died, according to area sources. A doctor at Mbale Regional Hospital said a postmortem test showed a substance known as Malathion, a low-toxicity pesticide, in those who had died. Though low-level toxic, Malathion when ingested quickly metabolizes into highly toxic Tomalaoxon.

Islamic extremists in eastern Uganda on Dec. 8 set a deadly trap for a Christian policeman who had left Islam, and the next day other hard-line Muslims kidnapped three children from another convert in a nearby village. More than 20 Muslim extremists in the Komodo area of Kadama Sub-County, Kibuku District, killed officer Ismail Kuloba at about 4 p.m. after he responded to an urgent call to intervene in a supposed land dispute between warring parties, an area Christian told Morning Star News. Kuloba was 43.

One of the assailants, Mudangha Kasimu, threw a stone that hit Kuloba in the forehead. Kasimu then shot him twice in the head, and he died as other Muslims were shouting, 'Allah Akbar [God is greater],'" sources said.

About 12 miles east in Kabuna, near Budaka in Kaderuna District, a group of Muslim men from Palissa on Dec. 9 kidnapped three children of Madengho Badir, a Christian convert from Islam, sources said. Badir, 42, arrived at his home in Kabuna Sub-County, Kabuna parish, at 10 p.m. to find 5-year-old Nabukwasi Shakira, 7-year-old Gessa Amuza and 10-year-old Wagti Musitafa missing.

An area source said a 14-year-old boy from Kabuna, Karami Hassan, was with Badir's three children when they were abducted near their home. The boy said a group of Muslims from Palissa were looking for Badir, and the boy led them to Badir's children.

Outside of Kabeshai, near Palissa, a Christian father of five who supported 10 children whose families had disowned them for leaving Islam was killed on Dec. 2. One of three men who attacked Patrick Ojangole reproached him for failing to heed a warning to cease his Christian activities before the Christian was killed, said a witness who was with Ojangole and escaped. Ojangole was 43.

On Nov. 12, the father of a young Muslim woman in east Uganda tried to beat her to death after she became a Christian, but community leaders intervened and limited him to disowning her, sources said. Kibida Muyemba learned that his 21-year-old daughter, Namusisi Birye, had put her faith in Christ at an evangelistic campaign held that day in Nandere village, Kadama Sub-County, Kibuku District, 41 kilometers (25 miles) west of Mbale, church leaders told Morning Star News. Birye and a man in the traditional dress of an imam confessed openly to receiving Christ, they said, and angry Muslims cut the event short.

On Oct. 19, 2015, Muslims in Kalampete village, Kibuku District who were angry at a Christian for leaving Islam killed his wife, a month after his brother was killed for the same reason.

Mamwikomba Mwanika, mother of three adult children and five others ranging in age from 17 to 9, died en route to a hospital after Muslims unknown to her dragged her from her home at about 9 p.m. and assaulted her, survivors said.

Her husband's brother, Samson Nfunyeku, was killed in the village on Sept. 23 after flaring tempers cut short a religious debate he'd had with Islamic scholars.

In Nsinze village, Namutumba District, a Muslim beat and left for dead his wife and 18-year-old son on Aug. 11 after learning they had converted to Christianity, area sources said. Issa Kasoono beat and strangled his wife, Jafalan Kadondi, but she survived, said a source who requested anonymity. He said other relatives joined Kasoono in beating her and their two sons, Ibrahim Kasoono, 18, and Ismael Feruza, 16, though the younger son managed to escape with only bruises on his arm.

The wife of a former sheikh was poisoned to death on June 17, 2015 after she and her husband put their faith in Christ in Nabuli village, Kibuku District. Namumbeiza Swabura was the mother of 11 children, including a 5-month-old baby.

In Kiryolo, Kaderuna Sub-County, Budaka District on March 28, five Muslims gang-raped the 17-year-old daughter of a pastor because the church leader ignored their warnings that he stop worship services, she said.

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