



## **Eritrea: Three Christians Dead**

Since October, three Christians imprisoned for their faith have died in Eritrean military prisons, according to Compass Direct News.

Mehari Gebreneguse Asgedom died on Jan. 16 from torture and diabetes while in solitary confinement at the Mitire Military Confinement Center. Asgedom's death followed the revelation in January that another Christian died in the same prison, Compass reports. Mogos Hagos Kiflom was said to have died as a result of torture he endured for refusing to recant his faith, but the exact date of his death was unknown.

In October, Teklesenbet Gebreab Kiflom died while imprisoned for his faith at the Wi'a Military Confinement Center. He reportedly died after prison commanders refused to give him medical attention for malaria.

These latest deaths reflect the Eritrean government's harsh treatment of believers. The Eritrean government targets Christians, often placing them in metal containers that are extremely hot during the day and cold during the night. Nearly 1,800 Eritrean Christians are believed to be under arrest because of their religious beliefs, held in police stations, military camps and prisons in 12 known locations across Eritrea. It is believed more than 28 clergymen are being held.

Jailed Christians are routinely subjected to physical beatings and severe psychological pressure to deny their religious beliefs. Police and military authorities continue to demand the prisoners return to one of the three "official" Christian denominations recognized by the government. But even the legally recognized denominations — the nation's historic Orthodox, Catholic and Lutheran churches — have come under government disfavor in recent years, incurring threats and even jailing by security police officials.

The Voice of the Martyrs provides assistance and encouragement to persecuted believers in Eritrea. VOM supports the families of martyred believers through our Families of Martyrs fund. VOM encourages you to pray for Christians in Eritrea. Pray for the families of the deceased believers. Ask God to encourage other Christians suffering for Christ's sake in Eritrean prisons.

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