



ASIA/PAKISTAN - Christian pastor wounded "for preaching salvation in Christ"

Lahore (Agenzia Fides) - It is an attack on the religious freedom that the state should be protecting: this is what sources of Fides commented on the recent attack in Pakistan suffered by Pastor Emmanuel Beshir, of the "Pentecostal Church of the Holy City." The pastor leads a community and preaches the Christian message in the area of Kasur, south of Lahore, in Punjab.

According to a note sent to Fides by International Christian Concern – an organization that monitors violence against Christians in the world – on September 13, at 9 pm, the pastor was returning from the village of Bahmani Wala, when five men stopped him and asked him: "Why do you preach that Jesus Christ is Lord and that no one can be saved without him?". The pastor replied: "We will never stop preaching the Lord Jesus Christ to all nations." At these words, the five men attacked and beat the pastor, causing him to fracture his right hand along with other injuries. Pastor Beshir is currently being hospitalized at Farooq Hospital in Lahore. "I could not identify the attackers to the darkness," he said, asserting that "those who preach the Gospel encounter difficulties and persecutions."

In the Christian settlement of Bahamani Wala, faithful have already been victims of attacks since June 2009, when over 600 Muslim extremists attacked the residents of the village using false accusations of blasphemy, destroying houses, shops, and properties. (Agenzia Fides 09/17/2010)