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ASIA/PAKISTAN-Appeal for an Anglican Pastor who has disappeared, a victim of radical groups

Islamabad (Fides Service) - A strong appeal for the salvation of a Christian Anglican pastor who has disappeared for more than a month comes from the Pakistani Christian community on the occasion of "Day of Prayer for Pakistan", celebrated on Sunday, June 19 across the country in response to the violence affecting the faithful, especially in the Punjab province. (see Fides 18/06/2011),.

The Pastor of the Anglican Church Robin Javed was kidnapped in the town of Attock (North Punjab) on May 14 and, despite the complaint presented to the police, there has been no news of the Pastor for over a month. The local community is extremely concerned for his life, because Islamic fundamentalist groups, linked to the Taliban, which infest the area and do not hesitate to eliminate Christians, are suspected of kidnapping the pastor. A local Christian told Fides: "we do not know the reason why he was kidnapped, nor have we been asked for a ransom. This silence worries us greatly. We are sorry for Pastor Robin Javed ". On Sunday, June 19 Christians in Attock publicly demonstrated in the streets, demanding more effort in research by the local police who "seem reluctant to carrying out serious investigations".

The Catholic Bishop of Islamabad-Rawalpindi, Mgr. Rufin Anthony, has condemned the kidnapping, launching an appeal for the release of the Pastor and has asked the civil authorities to ensure safety and security of religious minorities. During a moment of prayer for the Day of Prayer for Pakistan, organized by " The Masihi Foundation," the Bishop said: "We want to pray to our Heavenly Father to protect our land, to enlighten the government and security force. We pray especially for all the marginalized and we raise our voices for them".

(PA) (Agenzia Fides 21/06/2011)

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