agenzia fides
Organo di informazione delle Pontificie Opere Missionarie
http://www.fides.org
Fondata nel 1927

ASIA/LAOS - "Too charismatic, too many conversions": A Christian Pastor arrested

Luang Namtha (Agenzia Fides) - A Christian leader was arrested in Laos. The Christian Pastor Asa Sing, 53 years of age, head of a Protestant Christian Church in the village of Peeyeur in the district of Sing, within the province of Luang Namtha (in the northwest of Laos), was arrested by the police in a completely arbitrary manner on June 6. The arrest is totally unjustified as the Pastor, a meek, benevolent and innocent person, is not accused of any crime. His "fault", explain sources of Fides, is only that of "being too charismatic, for having attracted a lot of people to the Christian faith." Immediately after his arrest, the provincial authorities ordered the transfer to the provincial prison of Luang Namtha, about 50 miles from his home village, where 115 inhabitants of the Christian faith live, just to pull him away from his local community. According to procedures, in fact, the investigation of possible crimes takes about three days, during which the person remains in custody in the local police station. Instead, in the case of Pastor Asa, his transfer to the provincial prison took place immediately, without any investigation.
Pastor Asa leads some tribal Christian communities, belonging to the tribe akka. In the districts of Sing and Rong, in the Luang Namtha province, there are about 15 Christian churches of the akka tribal communities which the Pastor coordinated. The Pastor had already been arrested two years ago and forced to sign an "affidavit" in which he declared he would not have carried out any form of proselytizm. However, in 2012 many people have accepted the Christian faith, and requested to become Christians, thanks to his testimony. As the NGO "Human Rights Watch for Lao Religious Freedom" (HRWLRF) report in a statement sent to Fides, on June 7 Pastor Khamla, provincial leader of the Christians of Luang Namtha, went to the police to inquire about the reason of Pastor Asa's arrest and learned that the authorities accused him of "leading people to accept the Christian faith."
According to some Christian leaders, local civil authorities in the province of Luang Namtha want to eliminate Christianity from the province. The NGO HRWLRF urges the central government to enforce in all provinces, religious freedom and ordered the provincial authorities to allow Christians to express their faith and their religion, as guaranteed by the Loatian Constitution. (PA) (Agenzia Fides 09/06/2012)

I contenuti del sito sono pubblicati sotto Licenza Creative Common - http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/deed.it