

H. H. Patriarch Antonios of Eritrea Was Briefly Hospitalized

(Voice of the Persecuted Church in Eritrea)

The patriarch of the Eritrean Orthodox Church was briefly taken to a hospital this week due to complications arising from his high blood pressure and diabetes. Informed sources in Eritrea report that he was “treated” and sent back to his house-arrest.

Abune Antonios, as he is endearingly known by his people, was deposed as a patriarch because of his firm stand against the flagrant interference of the government of Eritrea in the affairs of the church, the closing of certain churches and his demand that the number of clergy that were imprisoned without trial either be given their day in court or released.

He was subsequently put under the most severe house-arrest in an undisclosed location. No one has had access to him since. The 83 year-old Pontiff is known to suffer from hypertension and diabetes, and has been denied medical attention. A highly respected figure, his uncanonical removal has remained a rallying-cry to all Eritreans irrespective of religion.

The Eritrean government is one of the most brutal regimes, known for its denial of the most basic human and democratic rights to its citizens. Many evangelical churches and sects were shut down in May 2002 with their pastors imprisoned. The Eritrean Orthodox Church, the oldest and most ubiquitous religious institution is, for all intents and purposes, nationalized. It is estimated that between 3000-4000 people are languishing in Eritrea’s notorious dungeons and prisons. Tens of thousands young people continue to flee the nation’s forced conscriptions.

Please help publicize the casue of Eritrea’s persecuted church.

"Remember those who are in prison,
as if you were their fellow prisoner.
Remember those who are suffering
as if you were suffering with them..." (Heb. 13:3).

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