



8.24.2012

LAOS | Detained Christians released after six weeks in prison without charge

Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW) has learned that four Christians arrested in Luang Namtha province in Laos in June this year have now been released.

In June, CSW reported that the four Christians had been arrested and had their personal belongings confiscated after being caught explaining the Bible to a Lao man in the home of a local Christian. The men, two of whom were of Thai nationality, were detained for six weeks but no formal charges were brought against them. After the police had finished their investigation, the four were required to pay a small fine and were subsequently released.

CSW's Chief Executive Mervyn Thomas said, "CSW welcomes the release of these four men; however we are concerned that their arrest is part of a pattern of religious repression that continues to occur in many parts of the country. In Luang Namtha province alone, Christians in at least 15 villages have reported similar cases of harassment by the Lao authorities. We urge the Lao authorities to adhere to international standards on religious freedom both at the national and provincial level."