

Prayer Diary: Civil society

4-10 June 2023



Mercy Tarfa with children of Du Merci orphanages

‘Obviously any democracy thrives when the press is allowed to do their job. That has become an extremely dangerous mission in India over the last few years.’ – Madhu*, Indian journalist

Civil society is the space where social movements are organised, where governments can be held to account, and where people can support issues such as freedom of religion or belief. That’s why we’re so concerned when there’s a crackdown on civil society, as is happening in India right now.

Read more about what civil society means and why it’s important on p.10 of the April 2023 issue of Response.

Sunday 4 June

Thank God for Madhu’s courage as she continues to report on human rights violations in India despite the very real danger this brings in a country where journalists are being arrested on false charges, prevented from travelling abroad, or even killed.

Monday 5 June

Thousands of civil society organisations in Nicaragua were stripped of their legal status in 2021 and 2022. This includes faith-based groups and non-profit organisations, many of whom supported vulnerable communities. Pray that this vital work will be able to resume without hindrance or government interference.

Tuesday 6 June

Faith-based organisations, such as the Du Merci orphanages in Nigeria, are a key part of civil society, often providing vital services that the state cannot provide. Yet governments sometimes see this as a threat, and try to shut them down. Pray that this attitude would change.

Wednesday 7 June

We rejoice that Professor Tarfa, the co-founder of the Du Merci orphanages, was acquitted of all charges this January after three years in prison. But 16 Du Merci children are still in the state-run orphanages they were forcibly taken to while the professor was in prison, where they continue to face pressure to convert. Pray urgently for their safe return.

Thursday 8 June

‘Whoever oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker, but whoever is kind to the needy honours God.’ (Proverbs 14:31) Thank God for the work of civil society organisations which expose and hold to account those who oppress the poor and needy.

Friday 9 June

Ask God to protect members of civil society all over the world as they carry out their crucial work. Their work upholds and defends human rights, including everyone’s right to freedom of religion or belief, but often makes them a target for their government.

Saturday 10 June

Lord, we recognise that the work of civil society is your work – it is bringing your Kingdom of justice, of peace, of love and compassion on earth. Uphold, strengthen and protect these brave people we pray. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

*Name changed for security reasons