

Today's Martyrs

Resources for understanding current Christian witness and martyrdom

Weekly Report – 2018-01-07 through 2018-01-13



Chile

Event: Four churches were attacked with explosive devices, one was defused by police

Fr Fernando Ibanez (said young people shouted obscenities at his church hours before the attack, added “I heard the dog bark, and from my window I saw the flame. I woke up and told the parish priest, Father Cristian. The neighbors were screaming, shouting at us, and all I could do is bring the hose out and begin to put the fire down”)

Date: January 12, 2018

Location: Santiago

Source: <https://cruxnow.com/global-church/2018/01/12/bomb-threats-issued-pope-francis-ahead-chile-visit/>



China

Pastor Lou Yuanqi (**UPDATE**: detained for 10 hours after neighbors complained of his church's festivities the night before)

Date: December 25, 2017

Location: Yining, Xinjiang province

Ma Huichao (sentenced to 3 years' imprisonment for 'gathering a crowd to disturb public order')

Date: December 21, 2017

Location: Xinjiang province

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2018/01/christian-held-for-10-hours-for.html>

Bishop Wu Qinjing (**UPDATE**: issued a letter calling for local officials to apologize after they demolished a church)

Date: December 27, 2017

Location: Zhifang village, Lauyu district, Xian city, Shaanxi province

Source: <https://www.ucanews.com/news/chinese-catholics-protest-demolition-of-church/81181>

Rui Yue (church building owner, church raided by police, heat turned off, road blocked by police cars)

Guo Zhongqiang (homily on Jesus and the Bible interrupted by police who accused him of preaching without a permit, replied "I'm not preaching! I am a host. I am hosting a program!", police took control of the podium and made speeches, the congregation sang Psalms)

Date: December 25, 2017

Location: Puyang, Henan province

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2018/01/christians-sing-hymns-over-police.html>

Yang Rongli (sister of Pastor Yang Xuan, arrested on September 24, 2009 while guarding her church construction site, later sentenced to 7 years' imprisonment and fined US\$4,392; released from prison in 2016, placed under police surveillance; **UPDATE**: said "the police surrounded the Golden Lampstand Church. Patrol wagons guarded the church. Workers smashed the church's glass. At this point, excavators are digging into the church, but we are not allowed to enter or watch. The village head and the police from the local police station warned all the believers against entering the church. Now, we really have no idea what is going to happen", the church was then demolished in a controlled explosion)

Date: January 9, 2018

Location: Linfen, Shanxi province

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2018/01/bomb-destroys-persecuted-church.html>

and [http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Linfen:-Christians-in-tears-watching-destruction-of-their-church-\(video\)-42807.html](http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Linfen:-Christians-in-tears-watching-destruction-of-their-church-(video)-42807.html)

and <https://www.ucanews.com/news/chinese-officials-demolish-yet-another-church-in-shanxi/81225>



Egypt

Adly Younan Riad (aged 48, jeweler, **shot dead** in his car in front of his home, jewelry taken)

Date: January 9, 2018

Location: Biba, Beni Suef

Source: <http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=2062&A=33550>

and <https://www.copticsolidarity.org/2018/01/14/coptic-jeweler-killed-in-beni-sweif/>



Eritrea

Fr Mussie Zerai (spoke on the government's enforcement of laws banning private medical and social work "Beyond the economic damage to individual religious confessions those who pay a high price is the population who no longer has serious and efficient structures to turn to. In Xorona, for example, they closed the only dispensary in operation that was run

by Catholics. In Dekemhare and Mendefera, the authorities have banned the activity of Catholic medical centers by stating that they were a duplication of state ones. In reality, public facilities do not work: they do not have medicines, they cannot operate because they do not have suitable equipment and often not even electricity")

Date reported: January 12, 2018

Location: Rome, Italy

Source: http://www.fides.org/en/news/63552-AFRICA_ERITREA_Clinics_and_schools_closed_the_regime_prohibits_Christian_social_activities



India

Event UPDATE: Two Christians who were arrested in 2009 for the murder of Hindu leader Laxamananda Saraswati returned to prison after having been granted a two week Christmas parole, the other five were not granted parole

Gornath Chalanseth (returned to prison)

Bijay Kumar Sanseth (returned to prison)

Durjo Sunamajhi (not granted parole)

Bhaskar Sunamajhi (not granted parole)

Budhadeb Nayak (not granted parole)

Munda Badamajhi (not granted parole)

Sanatan Badamajhi (not granted parole)

Date: January 6, 2017

Source: <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2018/01/india-kandhamal-christians-back-in-jail-after-temporary-christmas-release/>

Sajan K George (Global Council of Indian Christians president, **UPDATE:** objected to an RSS paramilitary leader's condemnation of Christianity as responsible for environmental destruction because it has no "reverence for nature", said "The GCIC considers as irresponsible Gorumurthy's comments against Christianity, which is instead deeply committed to giving voice and caring for God's creation")

Date: January 10, 2018

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Hindu-radical-accuses-Christianity-of-destroying-the-environment-42794.html>

Event: Three Nepali Christians were arrested on charges of insulting religious beliefs

Indra Bahadur Tamad

Shukra Rai

Mekh Bahadur

Date: January 10, 2018

Location: Shahjahanpur, Uttar Pradesh state

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Three-Nepali-Christians-arrested-in-Uttar-Pradesh-for-spreading-Christianity-42816.html>



Kenya

Esther Boniface (teacher, said “This is the second Sunday we are remaining indoors and worshiping from our homes. The churches are closed and nobody is allowed to gather in any public place. The tension is even too high for non-locals who live in rented houses. These houses have been a target for al-Shabaab because most of the non-locals who have come here to work are Christians...Many schools have also closed down with others merging and having police officers guarding day and night to make sure that nobody plants improved explosive devices [IEDs] in the school compound or inside classes”)

Pastor John (alias, said “Christians are a minority group here and the head of security has warned us of meeting in churches. There are escalating fears that the Somali terror group is planning to attack churches in Ijara, after the recent raiding of police stations. We have been avoiding our church premise for two weeks now for fear of being attacked and this is a big discouragement to us”)

Date: January 7, 2018

Location: Ijara

Source: <http://www.persecution.org/2018/01/11/fear-and-tension-in-garissa-remain-after-al-shabaab-attack/>



Nigeria

Solomi Pugu (daughter of Pugu Yah, abducted by Boko Haram from [Chibok, Borno state](#) on [April 14, 2014](#); **UPDATE**: escaped from captivity, rescued by the Nigerian military)

Date reported: January 5, 2018

Location: Sambisa Forest, Borno state

Source: <http://www.persecution.org/2018/01/05/chibok-girl-rescued-from-sambisa-forest/>

Event: Fulani Muslims attacked several villages

Evangelist Kwaghkighir Ukende

Iana Kpenger (**killed**)

Mnenge Ayaibo (**killed**)

Date: January 6, 2018

Location: Channel One settlement, Tswarev district, Logo local government area

Verinumbe Jam (killed)

Pinega Mbavuur (killed)

Date: January 6, 2018

Location: Toradi village, Logo local government area

Kwaghve Baaki (aged 70, killed)

Terhemen Kwaghve (killed)

Suushater Kwaghve (aged 7, killed)

Ioryue Tsehemba (killed)

Zahemen Tsavkuleve (killed)

Ahemba Shaku (killed)

Cephas Hough (said “The herdsmen went from house to house, shooting sporadically and killing six Christians”)

Date: January 6, 2018

Location: Tse-Kimbir village, Logo local government area

Mlahaga (killed)

Terhile Tyozho (killed)

Joseph Anawa (reported on the killings)

Richard Nyajo (LGA chairman, said that the casualty figure is higher than reported as many women and children are missing and unaccounted for: “Thousands of people have been displaced. Corpses of those killed have been evacuated to morgues in hospitals in Katsina Ala and Gboko. We are still taking records of the victims”)

Date: January 6, 2018

Location: Logo local government area

Source: <https://morningstarnews.org/2018/01/muslim-fulani-herdsmen-launch-large-scale-attacks-benue-state-nigeria/>

Yohanna Kukah ('traditional ruler', brother of Bishop Matthew Hassah Kukah and Samuel Kukah, abducted from his home)

Samuel Kukah (described his brother's abduction)

Date: January 2, 2018

Location: Anchuna village, Kaduna state

James Hamman (killed by Fulani Muslims, four others injured)

Date: December 28, 2017

Location: Tamboh Jimoh village, Gerei local government area, Adamawa state

Danbaki Talami (killed by Fulani Muslims, four others injured)

Date: December 25, 2017

Location: Gerei local government area, Adamawa state

Source: <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2018/01/nigerias-new-year-begins-with-attacks-on-christians/><https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2018/01/nigerias-new-year-begins-with-attacks-on-christians/>

Bishop Matthew Hassah Kukah (**UPDATE**: decried in a homily the “cries of shrill Islamization across the land...These cries arise when those in power use religious affiliation and blatant nepotism as means of access to power”)

Date: January 8, 2017

Location: Sokoto

Yohanna Kukah ('traditional ruler', brother of Bishop Matthew Hassah Kukah and Samuel Kukah, abducted from his home in [Anchuna village, Kaduna state](#) on [January 2, 2018](#); **UPDATE**: released)

Date: January 11, 2018

Source: <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/nigerian-bishop-condemns-cries-of-shrill-islamization-26987>

Event UPDATE: Six nuns abducted on November 13, 2017 were freed

Sr Veronica Ajayi EHJ (aspirant, released)

Date: January 6, 2018

Sr Roseline Isiocha EHJ (released)

Sr Aloysius Ajayi EHJ (released)

Sr Frances Udi EHJ (released)

Date: January 7, 2018

Source: http://www.fides.org/en/news/63528-AFRICA_NIGERIA_Kidnapped_religious_sisters_released



Pakistan

Aleeza Ashraf (aged 18 months, daughter of Ashraf Masih and Shamim Bibi, injured with shrapnel in her abdomen and left foot during the [December 17, 2017 Quetta, Balochistan church attack](#); **UPDATE**: developed multiple gangrene infections, left foot amputated, transferred to a hospital in Karachi, in danger of death)

Shamim Bibi (mother of Aleeza Ashra and Rimla Ashraf, injured with shrapnel in the abdomen during the [December 17, 2017 Quetta, Balochistan church attack](#), hospitalized; **UPDATE**: still hospitalized, unable to travel to care for Aleeza Ashraf, said "Aleeza is innocent, she has done no wrong. She does not have the ability to speak or to cause anyone any harm. At such a young and vulnerable age she has lost her right foot and has suffered pain that no child should have to go through. Aleeza was born healthy and in a

loving family and we will support her whatever condition she ends up in. However at the moment unless she survives through this terrible time we may not see her alive for much longer. Please pray for her and ask our great God to save her life")

Rimla Ashraf (aged 18, sister of Aleeza Ashraf, travelled to Karachi with her sister to care for her in the hospital)

Dates: January 5 & 7, 2017

Location: Quetta, Balochistan

Source [warning - graphic]: <https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/Quetta-Church-bomb-survivor-of-one-year-needs-urgent-care-to-save-life> and <https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/aleeza-arrives-safely-at-gha-khan-hospital-and-begins-treatment>

Sidra Masih (aged 26, daughter of Shamim Masih, beautician, told her employer in Faisalabad on September 11, 2017 of the employer's brother's sexual harassment and his demands she convert to Islam, her employer told her she should convert and marry him, resigned her position the next day; visited at her home on September 17, 2017 by her employer, her brother, and three imams who demanded she convert, family threatened with false blasphemy charges and death by arson; abducted by three men on September 20, 2017 while on the way to a job interview, raped, forced under threat of death to convert, released, police refused to take any action, placed in a safe house by her pastor; received a threatening phone call on December 12, 2017; **UPDATE**: fled the country for Sri Lanka)

Shamim Masih (aged 69, mother of Sidra Masih)

Date: December 19, 2017

Source: <https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/sri-lankan-airport-officials-hold-pakistani-christian-rape-victim-fleeing-forced-conversion-in-detention>

Event: Christian leaders responded to the abduction, rape, and murder of 7 year old Zainab and to police inaction following her abduction

Bishop Joseph Arshad (**UPDATE**: said the church "condemns the rape and murder of Zainab, a seven-year-old girl...the prevalent mindset cannot be beaten by academic education alone. People should be re-educated about human dignity")

Fr Morris Jalal (**UPDATE**: wrote "the cancer of pedophilia is spreading fast, it is not a new phenomenon. Media has only focused on this evil recently. Easy availability of porn on internet has further aided such mindset. Children attending private tuition of Quran in neighborhood are soft targets. Suffocation in society has created psychos")

Rojar Noor Alam (Caritas program director, said "people in Pakistan are shocked and grieved. Every parent can see their child in the eyes of this child, whose innocence was violated, beyond redemption. Ignoring abuses in madrassas helps produce deranged rapists...I hope one day to see all madrassas in Pakistan transformed into happiness centers, with libraries for children, where dancing, painting, and music are taught. We should let children know that the True God lives here and that God is but unconditional love and happiness")

Michelle Chaudhry (president of the Cecil & Iris Chaudhry Foundation; **UPDATE**: said she was "beyond horrified...[we must] ensure the safety and protection of our

children...accountability is essential, those responsible must be punished in order to prevent such incidents from recurring...We at The CICF stand for a terror-free society, where every child is safe and protected, where childhood is allowed to evolve into progressive adulthood”)

Date: January 11, 2018

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Pakistani-Church-condemns-the-'brutal'-rape-and-murder-of-a-7-year-old-girl-42802.html>
and <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/For-Pakistani-activists,-a-%E2%80%9Crape-culture%E2%80%9D-places-no-value-in-children-42806.html>

Event: Christian leaders reacted to the January 4, 2018 placement of their country on a religious persecution watch list by the U.S. government

Bishop Leo Paul (said "I am not sure if this measure by the U.S. would actually help Pakistani minorities, or if it could create more problems for them")

Nadeem Anthony (attorney, said “Religious minorities of Pakistan are ‘with’ their country. If Pakistan puts its best and sincere efforts to change this, then we can get our name off this list. The only issue is sincere effort. If we want it, then this would happen. We have seen more than 100 houses of Christians set on fire on a mere accusation, and not a single person is convicted. If that would remain the same, then how can we stop other countries accusing us of human rights violations?”)

Date reported: January 11, 2018

Source: <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2018/01/pakistans-place-us-watch-list-create-problems-minorities/>



Sri Lanka

Sidra Masih (aged 26, Pakistani citizen, refugee, daughter of Shamim Masih, beautician, detained at the airport on December 19, 2017 for deportation to Pakistan; **UPDATE:** released after officials evaluated her mental state, hospitalized for three days, applied for asylum)

Date: December 20, 2017

Source: <https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/sri-lankan-airport-officials-hold-pakistani-christian-rape-victim-fleeing-forced-conversion-in-detention>



Syria

Archbishop Samir Nassar (**UPDATE**: bedroom destroyed by a mortar shell, had just left the room prior to the impact, wrote in an email “Thank you Lord for this new beginning. My life belongs to you”)

Date reported: January 12, 2018

Location: Damascus

Source: <http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/news/2018/01/12/syrian-archbishop-avoids-death-by-seconds-after-bomb-lands-on-bed/>



Uganda

Nafamba Bongo Madina (convert, widow, mother of five aged 5 to 14, poisoned by her Muslim neighbors in retribution for holding worship services in her home, hospitalized, released)

Date: December 25, 2017

Location: Gayaza village, Kabuna sub-county, Budaka district

Mulangira Ibrahim (aged 27, convert, former Islamic teacher, converted after being temporarily struck blind on [October 4, 2015](#) when he attempted to question a Christian pastor regarding a vision of his conversion, beaten that day by local Muslims; ambushed near a church on [November 16, 2017](#) and beaten, treated at a clinic; **UPDATE**: suffocated by an intruder in his home, hospitalized with chest and abdominal pain)

Date: December 7, 2017

Location: Jaguzi Island, Mayuge district

Source: <https://morningstarnews.org/2018/01/christian-widow-uganda-poisoned-christmas-day/>

Today's Martyrs

For more information please visit our web site at <http://todaysmartyrs.org/>

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