

Today's Martyrs

Resources for understanding current Christian witness and martyrdom

Daily Report – 2019-05-05 through 2019-05-11



Bangladesh

Event: Church security has increased after the Sri Lankan Easter church attacks

Fr Kamal Corraya (said "In the past there were three agents in front of the main door of the church, now there are ten. After the massacres in Sri Lanka, we gathered with the members of the parish council and decided to increase surveillance, especially during Sunday masses", parishioners have been asked to not bring large bags to church)

Date: May 8, 2019

Location: Tejgaon, Dhaka

Fr Jermon D'Rozario (said of steps taken at the cathedral "In addition to policemen, there are sometimes agents of the [elite] Rapid Action Battalion to guarantee our security")

Date: May 8, 2019

Location: Chittagong

Fr Loton Gomes (attended a meeting of about 92 clergy with law enforcement, said "there are many small Protestant congregations in the area, in addition to the Catholic churches. Police gave us some useful tips, like installing video surveillance cameras, increasing the number of guards and avoiding large bags. We must be suspicious of people we do not know and who might try to avoid the request for identification by the agents")

Date: May 8, 2019

Location: Narikelbari

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Increased-security-around-Bangladeshi-churches-following-Sri-Lanka-attacks-46962.html>



India

Fr Alphonse Aind SJ (aged 48, middle school principal in [Kochang village, Jharkhand state](#), arrested on [June 22, 2018](#) on fabricated charges of organizing the abduction and rape of five social activists by six Pathagadi tribal gunmen after the gunmen had seized his automobile, denied bail; **UPDATE**: convicted on conspiracy charges, church officials continue to insist the charges are fabricated)

Date: May 7, 2019

Location: Khunti

Source: <http://mattersindia.com/2019/05/jesuit-priest-5-others-convicted-in-gang-rape-case/>

Pastor Anil Juit (aged 45, historic church found on Easter to have been entered and subjected to an arson attack, a pro-Hindu slogan was found painted on the wall, said “It is evident from the slogan that this is the work of some Hindu radicals. Nothing was stolen from inside the church, but a burnt heap of Bibles, religious books, drums, tambourine, banners, mats, etc. was found”)

Date: April 21, 2019

Location: Arrah, Bhojpur district. Bihar state

Source: <https://morningstarnews.org/2019/05/05/fire-at-historic-church-building-on-easter-stuns-but-does-not-stop-worshippers-in-india/>



Netherlands

Chen Yan (Chinese citizen, asylum applicant, detained in an immigration facility [on or before April 2, 2019](#) after documenting Chinese persecutions, at risk of deportation to China; **UPDATE:** released)

Date: May 6, 2019

Source: <https://www.chinaaid.org/2019/05/dutch-officials-release-human-rights.html>



Nigeria

Sunday Adi (aged 45, **killed** by Fulani Muslims)

Jonathan Joseph (aged 29, **killed** by Fulani Muslims)

Nuhu Ako (aged 42, church youth leader, described the killing of Sunday Adi and Jonathan Joseph “We were returning to Dong village after the day’s work at Nzerivoh village, our former village where we were displaced last year, and we heard gunshots. We decided not to proceed with our movement and remained where we were. A few moments afterwards, two people riding on a motorbike came to where we were and told us that they saw two corpses not far from the spot where we were standing. We immediately phoned soldiers of the Special Task Force [STF] and informed them about our findings. They told us to wait for them at the spot. We waited for them and they never showed up. We left the spot and returned to our homes at Dong, until the following morning, which was Sunday, 28 April, before the soldiers came to the spot and left without picking the two corpses”)

Date: April 27, 2019

Location: Dong village, Plateau state

David Musa (aged 26, **killed** by Fulani Muslims)

Nuhu Ako (aged 42, church youth leader, **UPDATE**: described the killing of David Musa “We heard the sound of gunshots around the stream west of Dong village, where you’re now talking to us. We rushed there to find out what happened and found again the killing of a member of our community...We are farmers and have not been able to continue with our vocation because of these attacks. We and our elders and church leaders have met several times with these herdsmen to understand what is prompting them to attack us without finding any real reason for such acts against us. [T]hey would impress it on their people to end such attacks on us, but it appears they only do this in order to perfect their plans to attack us the more...The destruction of our houses [in Nzerivoh] was carried out right in the presence of soldiers who were brought to the village to protect us. Instead, we have been forced to escape to Dong community, and here, too, the herdsmen are now attacking this community. We do not know where to run to since the whole of this area is under attack”)

Kadzai Prince Peter (catechist, said “We have tried to embrace all these Fulani people, to live with them. We’ve been kind to them: we gave them our land to stay on and to graze their cattle. Unfortunately, they’ve been killing our members. The way they attack us is terribly bad. We tried to make peace with them, but this has not worked as they keep attacking us. They still kill our members. So, we don’t know what else to do. We as Christians see the herdsmen as our brothers and cannot send them away, but, unfortunately, these Fulani herdsmen do not appreciate our hospitality and are killing us and forcing us out of our lands. We just buried one of our members killed by the herdsmen a moment ago”)

Silas Jacob (aged 42, catechist, described a Muslim attack in Nzehrivoh village, Plateau state on October 13, 2017; **UPDATE**: later said “...last Saturday [April 27], the herdsmen ambushed two of our people and killed them. And just while we were still mourning the two, one of us was again killed yesterday [May 2] in an ambush again by the herdsmen. This is very disheartening. These attacks on us are being carried out in the presence of soldiers, and yet the Nigerian government has not done anything to end these unprovoked attacks on us...We have parishioners who have no places to sleep, food to eat, and even medical supplies for health needs. Truly, those of us who have survived these attacks are suffering”)

Date: May 2, 2019

Location: Dong village, Plateau state

Source: <https://morningstarnews.org/2019/05/three-christians-killed-in-ambush-attacks-near-jos-nigeria/>



Pakistan

Aasiya Noreen aka Asia Bibi (aged 48, wife of Ashiq Masih, mother of five including Isham, daughter of Soran Masih, convicted in 2009 of blasphemy; the Supreme Court on October 31, 2018 issued a ruling that overturned her conviction on the grounds that she had been denied presumption of innocence, ordered her immediate release; **UPDATE:** left the country for Canada)

Date: May 8, 2019

Source: <https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/asia-bibi-is-free-at-last>

Fr James Channan OP (**UPDATE:** condemned the terror attack on a Sufi shrine "This is another sad example of religious terrorism. The terrorists are doing everything to create fear among the faithful and block them in living their religious practices. This explosion in the holy month of Ramadan is terrible. In this month of fasting, mosques and shrines are always crowded with faithful. We want to express our solidarity with the government, the security forces and the families of the victims")

Date: May 8, 2019

Location: Lahore

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Lahore:-At-least-9-dead-and-24-wounded-in-attack-on-a-Sufi-shrine-46954.html>



Sri Lanka

Event UPDATE: Nine explosive devices targeted three churches and three hotels, among other locations, killing 257 and wounding at least 500

Ramesh (husband, father of two, questioned the suicide bomber, pushed him outside the church, **killed**)

"Kamala" (convert, wife, mother, disobeyed her husband to attend the Easter service, 'grievously' wounded, later received a message in the hospital from her husband that she is to never return home or see her baby again)

Date: April 21, 2019

Location: Batticaloa

Source: <https://barnabasfund.org/us/appeals/easter-explosions---please-help-christian-victims-in-sri-lanka-for-whom-violence-is-all-too>



Sweden

Gorgis Gecizi (church treasurer, church damaged in an arson attack, said the church had received threats, added "I have no words, this is so emotional. Such a shame")

Date: August 5, 2018

Location: Norrköping

Source: <https://www.almasdarnews.com/article/syrian-orthodox-church-set-ablaze-in-arson-attack-swedish-police/>

and <https://www.svt.se/nyheter/lokalt/ost/fullt-utvecklade-brand-i-kyrka-i-norrkoping> - with translation



Switzerland

Dabrina Bet-Tamrez (Iranian citizen, daughter of Shamiram Isavi and Pastor Victor Beth Tarmez, sister of Ram-eil, has been working with the UN Human Rights Council to overturn the Iranian conviction of her parents and brother on national security and illegal religious activities charges, recently had to move after Iranian MOIS agents published her Swiss address and photo on social media and encouraged Iranian men in Switzerland to 'visit' her)

Date: May 5, 2019

Source: <https://www.gatestoneinstitute.org/14164/iran-targeting-christians>



United States - Pennsylvania

Archbishop Charles Chaput (**UPDATE:** released the following statement: "Over the past few days, videos have gone viral on social media featuring State Representative Brian Sims aggressively harassing young and elderly women who were peacefully praying outside of a Planned Parenthood Clinic in Philadelphia. These videos, which Representative Sims took himself, have rightly sparked broad outrage and garnered much attention in the press. His actions were unbecoming of an elected official...There is much bitter irony that he claims to be a champion for the rights of all women yet he trampled on the rights of others and disgracefully shamed them in public. It was particularly disdainful that he offered a bounty for the identity and home addresses of three young ladies in order to encourage protests at their homes...Representative Sims spoke often of shame and there was plenty of that to be found in his actions, which demonstrated a complete disregard for civility and basic human decency...")

Date: on or before May 2, 2019

Source: <http://archphila.org/statement-of-archbishop-charles-j-chaput-o-f-m-cap-regarding-harassment-of-prayerful-protesters-outside-planned-parenthood-clinic/>

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