

# Today's Martyrs

*Resources for understanding current Christian witness and martyrdom*



## Azerbaijan

Adalat Sariyev (aged 45, home in [Nizami district, Gyanja](#) raided by police during a [January 28, 2018](#) worship service attended by 100 including 40 children, detained, schools of the children present were notified)

Akif Babaev (detained without charge on [May 17, 2012](#) for distributing Christian literature in [Mujuk](#), later released)

Amid Zohrabov (conscripted into the army on [July 23, 2012](#) despite being a conscientious objector, set home to [Lokbatan](#) on [August 7, 2012](#))

Anar Huseynov (arrested in a police raid on a religious service in a private home in [Gyanja](#) on [January 11, 2014](#), charged with "violating legislation on holding religious meetings, marches, and other religious ceremonies", fined US\$2,295 on [January 23, 2014](#))

Arzu Ibrahimova (told that an administrative offense would be put in her file for 'failing her parental responsibilities' for attending or allowing her child to attend the [January 9, 2016](#) worship service in [Mingachevir](#))

Asif Jafarov (arrested in a police raid on a religious service in a private home in [Gyanja](#) on [January 11, 2014](#), charged with "violating legislation on holding religious meetings, marches, and other religious ceremonies", fined US\$2,295 on [January 23, 2014](#))

Asim Mammadov (convicted on [July 18, 2012](#) in [Gyanja](#) on a charge of "failure to fulfill an official's order in connection with a court decision" for being unable to pay a massive fine for worship without state registration, sentenced to three days' imprisonment, released)

Aziz Aliyev (husband of Havva Aliyeva, father of Jeyhun Aliyev, [Aliabad](#) home raided by police during a [September 21, 2013](#) worship service while he was away, fined US\$1,900 on [November 26, 2013](#);

conviction and fine upheld on appeal on [December 23, 2013](#) in [Sheki](#))

Fr Demetre aka Levan Tetrushvili (Georgian citizen, denied permission on [June 21, 2015](#) to re-enter the country at [Balakan](#), no reason given, parishioners now denied the Divine Liturgy and other mysteries [sacraments])

Eldar Aliyev (home in [Mingachevir](#) raided by police during a [January 9, 2016](#) worship service, literature including Bibles seized, charged with holding an unapproved religious meeting) convicted on [March 3, 2016](#), fined US\$1,000; appeal denied in [Shaki](#) on [April 22, 2016](#))

Elgiz Aliyev (arrested in a police raid on a religious service in a private home in [Gyanja](#) on [January 11, 2014](#), charged with "violating legislation on holding religious meetings, marches, and other religious ceremonies", fined US\$2,295 on [January 23, 2014](#))

Elyar Bakirov (arrested in a police raid on a religious service in a private home in [Gyanja](#) on

January 11, 2014, charged with "violating legislation on holding religious meetings, marches, and other religious ceremonies";  
fined US\$2,295 on January 23, 2014)

Emil Mehdiyev (aged 18, conscientious objector, case charging him with evasion of military service opened in Barda on January 5, 2018;  
trial begun on May 7, 2018;  
motion to dismiss denied on May 23, 2018;  
found guilty on July 6, 2018, sentenced to one year's imprisonment, sentence suspended;  
appeal filed on August 27, 2018)

Emin Tahmazov (conscientious objector, case referred to prosecutors in Baku on July 9, 2018 after he refused military service)

Fakhraddin Mirzayev (sentenced in Gyanja on September 25, 2012 to one year in prison for refusing military conscription, as of October 15, 2012 has appealed;  
conviction upheld on appeal on November 21, 2012 in Gyanja;  
has been released on May 22, 2013 under an amnesty)

Farid Mammedov (convicted of evading military service despite his declaration of conscientious objection, as of February 10, 2014 has lodged a case with the European Court of Human Rights)

Fatmakhanim Huseynli (arrested during a March 2, 2014 police raid a prayer meeting in a private home in Lankaran without warrant, convicted on May 13, 2014 of attending an illegal religious meeting, issued an official warning)

Gamar Aliyeva (wife of Vaguf Aliyev, present during the September 21, 2013 police raid at the Aliabad home of Havva Aliyeva, detained several hours by police, threatened by police with the loss of her teaching position, fined US\$1,900 on November 26, 2013;  
conviction and fine upheld on appeal on December 23, 2013 in Sheki)

Gamid Shabanov (spouse of Ginayat Shabanov, home in Aliabad village raided during a November 27, 2016 prayer meeting, arrested with 30 Christians, 26 taken for questioning, 22 released that day, 24 told they would be fined;  
released on November 28, 2016)

Ginayat Shabanov (spouse of Gamid Shabanov, home in Aliabad village raided during a November 27, 2016 prayer meeting, arrested with 30 Christians, 26 taken for questioning, 22 released that day, 24 told they would be fined;  
released on November 28, 2016)

Givi Khusishvili (home in Gakh raided by police during a March 23, 2016 worship service, 56 attendees detained for hours, religious items including Bibles seized;  
fined US\$1,108, 25 other attendees of his worship service also fined between July 28 and August 1, 2016)

Goderdzi Kvaratskhelia (Georgian citizen, detained after a police raid at April 9, 2015 worship service in a private home in Lokbatan, outside Baku, questioned, released, ordered deported on July 6, 2015)

Gulara Huseynova (aged 47, detained in Gakh on May 27, 2014 for possession of an Old

Testament, case dismissed;  
detained in [Gakh](#) for distributing religious literature on [April 11, 2016](#);  
acquitted on [May 12, 2016](#))

Gulbahar Guliyeva (arrested at a [March 23, 2016](#) private worship service in [Gakh](#)

Gulgaz Novruzova (detained on [July 24, 2016](#) for speaking about the Bible in a public park in [Baku](#), questioned as to why she did not read the Quran, released)

Gulnaz Israfilova (fined US\$1,166 on [November 17, 2016](#) in [Goranboy](#) for Bible discussions;  
fines upheld in [Gyanja](#) on [January 5, 2017](#) without a hearing)

Gulsira Akchurina (suit against the government restriction on the importation of religious literature dismissed on appeal on [November 1, 2012](#) in [Baku](#))

Hamid Shabanov (husband of Hinayat Shabanova, arrested in [Aliabad](#) on [June 20, 2008](#) on false illegal weapons charges;  
convicted in Zakatala on [February 11, 2009](#), sentenced to 3 years' imprisonment in a labor camp, sentence suspended;  
home in [Aliabad, Zakatala district](#) raided by police on [November 7, 2012](#), religious books seized, detained without charge and released;  
home raided by police during a [November 26, 2016](#) worship service, 26 people detained for 5 hours;  
found guilty in [Zakatala](#) on [December 5, 2016](#), fined US\$993, no written decision issued, fine not assessed;  
appeal denied in [Sheki](#) on [June 21, 2017](#);  
as of [October 19, 2017](#) has filed an appeal with the Constitutional Court, as a native Georgian he was legally required to have translations from Azeri in his appeal proceedings but was denied them)

Havva Aliyeva (wife of Aziz Aliyev, mother of Jeyhun Aliyev, [Aliabad](#) home raided by police during a [September 21, 2013](#) worship service, arm twisted when police took her house key, religious literature seized, suffered an epileptic seizure while on the way to police detention, hospitalized, fined US\$1,900 on [November 26, 2013](#);  
conviction and fine upheld on appeal on [December 23, 2013](#) in [Sheki](#))

Hinayat Shabanova (wife of Hamid Shabanov, fined one year's minimum wage on [March 29, 2013](#) for holding religious meetings in [Aliabad](#) in her husband's place while he was in Russia for their grandchild's surgery;  
fine overturned on appeal on [April 25, 2013](#) due to delayed prosecution)

Ilgar Mamedov (detained without charge on [May 17, 2012](#) for distributing Christian literature in [Mujuk](#), later released)

Ilham Hasanov (attacked by a small mob of 20 in [Barda](#) on [September 27, 2013](#), not seriously injured, religious literature torn, called police who then arrested him, convicted in [Barda](#) on [October 7, 2013](#), appeal rejected in [Gyanja](#) on [November 7, 2013](#))

Pastor Ilya Zenchenko (protested the [April 25, 2012 Baku](#) court ordered 'liquidation' of a church that had been legally registered for 19 years - the first such liquidation under the harsh 2009 Religion Law - and the subsequent banning of its members from any religious activity;

on [January 17, 2013](#) described how the Baptist Union is trying to obtain the return of an historic [Baku](#) church that had been confiscated in 1930;

wrote to the government on [November 26, 2013](#) to request permission to print Azeri translations of the New Testament, as of [May 6, 2014](#) no reply has been given, also expressed concern and outrage over the inclusion of the Azeri translation of the Old Testament on the banned book list;

announced on [July 3, 2014](#) that the government had approved the new Azeri translation of the New Testament, is resisting government pressure to limit the printing to 1,000 copies;

said in [Baku](#) "He [State Committee Deputy Chair Heydarov] told us [on [October 16, 2014](#)] he wanted to help and said we would finally get registration in November 2014. But when we brought our documents again they said we would have to liquidate ourselves as an existing community, form a new community and apply anew. At first we were positive – we rejoiced, but now we're uncertain")

Indira Abbasova (home in [Sumgait](#) raided by police on [April 27, 2012](#), 150 religious books seized)

Irada Huseynova (arrested in a police raid on a religious service in a private home in [Gyanja](#) on [January 11, 2014](#), charged with "violating legislation on holding religious meetings, marches, and other religious ceremonies", fined US\$2,295 on [January 23, 2014](#))

Irina Zakharchenko (aged 54, widow, disabled, cited for distributing religious literature door to door in [Pirallahi](#) on [December 5, 2014](#), detained in [Baku](#) by the NSM secret police on [February 17, 2015](#) for a pretrial detention of three months', facing possible five years' imprisonment;

pretrial detention extended another two months on [May 7, 2015](#);

detention extended on [July 4, 2015](#) to September 17, 2015;

pretrial detention extended another three months on [September 4, 2015](#);

convicted on [January 28, 2016](#) of illegally distributing one religious booklet, fined US\$4,391, fine suspended due to time served, released;

acquitted on appeal by the Supreme Court in [Baku](#) on [February 8, 2017](#), no written verdict issued;

awarded US\$5,742 in damages against the government in [Baku](#) on [August 8, 2017](#))

Jaarey Suleymanova (detained in [Baku](#) on [April 22, 2016](#) for talking with a neighbor about their faith, ordered to return to the police station the next day;

returned to the police station on [April 23, 2016](#), subjected to further verbal abuse, told to leave her faith;

fined US\$1,166 on [November 17, 2016](#) in [Goranboy](#) for Bible discussions;

finer upheld in [Gyanja](#) on [January 5, 2017](#) without a hearing)

Jamila Gurbanova (detained on [August 4, 2016](#) for handing out state-approved religious literature on a bus on the road [between Barda and Yevlakh](#), released)

Jeyhun Aliyev (son of Aziz Aliyev and Havva Aliyeva, [Aliabad](#) home raided by police during a [September 21, 2013](#) worship service, detained several hours by police, threatened by police with sexual assault, fined US\$1,900 on [November 26, 2013](#);

conviction and fine upheld on appeal on [December 23, 2013](#) in [Sheki](#))

Kamila Mammadaliyeva (suit against the government restriction on the importation of religious

literature dismissed on appeal on [November 1, 2012](#) in [Baku](#))

Kamran Mirzayev (aged 18, convicted in [Goychay](#) on March 12, 2013 for refusing military service and sentenced to nine month's imprisonment, appeal heard in [Sheki](#) on [May 14 2013](#), verdict due the following day;  
has been released on [June 20, 2013](#) under an amnesty)

Kamran Shikhaliyev (inducted into a military unit in [Lankaran](#) despite his declaration of conscientious objection, subjected to physical abuse, verbal humiliation, psychological pressure, four months confinement, then charged with "fraudulently evading military service", trial in [Jalilabad](#) to begin [February 13, 2014](#);  
convicted of "fraudulently evading military service" on [April 16 2014](#), sentenced to one year in a disciplinary military unit on [May 6 2014](#), has filed an appeal;  
appeal denied on [July 16, 2014](#);  
as of [February 12, 2015](#) has completed one year in captivity but has been transferred to a new military unit [Salyan](#))

Khayala Jafarova (detained in [Baku](#) on [April 22, 2016](#) for talking with a neighbor about their faith, ordered to return to the police station the next day;  
returned to the police station on [April 23, 2016](#), subjected to further verbal abuse, told to leave her faith)

Klara Shirinova (arrested during a [March 2, 2014](#) police raid a prayer meeting in a private home in [Lankaran](#) without warrant, convicted on [May 13, 2014](#) of attending an illegal religious meeting, fined US\$1,900)

Konul Guliyeva (arrested at a [March 23, 2016](#) private worship service in [Gakh](#))

Levani Otarashvili (conscientious objector, case referred to prosecutors in [Qakh](#) on [July 25, 2018](#) after he refused military service)

Luka Khususshvili (aged 14, daughter of Tarana Khususshvili, detained in [Gakh](#) on [May 27, 2014](#) for possession of an Old Testament during door-to-door evangelization, no case filed;  
detained in [Gakh](#) on [May 15, 2016](#) after speaking about the Bible;  
acquitted on [June 9, 2016](#))

Matanat Qurbanova (sister of Saadat Muradhasilova, arrested in [Zakatala](#) on [November 9, 2014](#) for distributing religious literature on a street, fined US\$1, 425 on [May 15, 2015](#);  
arrested at a [March 23, 2016](#) private worship service in [Gakh](#))

Matti Sirvio (said that his [Baku](#) church liquidation is being done to appease Muslims who are also being subjected to government crackdowns)

Mechti Suleymanov (elder of a church in [Baku](#) which has been ordered by the government on [April 25, 2012](#) to be "liquidated")

Mehman Agamemedov (arrested during a raid on a [November 27, 2016](#) prayer meeting in [Aliabad village](#) at the home of Gamid and Ginayat Shabanov, 30 Christians arrested, 26 taken for questioning, 22 released that day, 24 told they would be fined;  
released on [November 28, 2016](#);  
detained at the home of Hamid and Hinayat Shabanov in [Aliabad, Zakatala district](#) during a [November 26, 2016](#) worship service;

- found guilty in [Zakatala](#) on [December 5, 2016](#), fined US\$993, no written decision issued, fine not assessed)
- Mushfiq Mammedov (convicted of evading military service despite his declaration of conscientious objection, as of [February 10, 2014](#) has lodged a case with the European Court of Human Rights)
- Nadezhda Ryzhkova (detained without charge since [June 23, 2012](#) for distributing Christian literature in [Khachmaz Region](#))
- Nunka Balaev (wife of Zaur Balaev, religious service at her home in [Aliabad](#) raided by police on [November 7, 2012](#) while she was in Moscow undergoing cancer treatment, religious books seized)
- Pyotr Byakov (charged on [September 21, 2012](#) with smuggling religious literature into the country via [Yalama, Khachmaz district](#))
- Rahim Karimov (detained in [Gakh](#) on [May 15, 2016](#) after speaking about the Bible; acquitted on [June 9, 2016](#))
- Rakhila Shukurova (detained on [July 24, 2016](#) for speaking about the Bible in a public park in [Baku](#), questioned as to why she did not read the Quran, released)
- Ramiz Osmanov (present in the home of Nunka and Zaur Balaev in [Aliabad](#) when it was raided by police on [November 7, 2012](#), detained without charge, photographed, questioned, and released)
- Rashad Niftaliev (aged 28, convicted on [July 5, 2012](#) in [Gyanja](#) on a charge of "failure to fulfill an official's order in connection with a court decision" for being unable to pay a massive fine for worship without state registration, released with a written warning;  
worship service in [Gyanja](#) raided on [November 14, 2015](#), nine worshippers fined US\$1,910 each, arrested on [November 19, 2015](#) for not paying his fines which now totaled US\$4,730, has been paying the fines in small installments, released on [December 14, 2015](#) after serving 25 days imprisonment)
- Rasmiyya Karimova (detained in [Gakh](#) for distributing religious literature on [April 11, 2016](#); acquitted on [May 12, 2016](#))
- Rauf Agayev (husband of Samira Agayeva, present during the [September 21, 2013](#) police raid at the [Aliabad](#) home of Havva Aliyeva, detained several hours by police, fined US\$1,900 on [December 3, 2013](#);  
conviction and fine upheld on appeal on [January 10, 2014](#) in [Sheki](#))
- Rza Babayev (attacked by a small mob of 20 in [Barda](#) on [September 27, 2013](#), not seriously injured, religious literature torn, called police who then arrested him, convicted in [Barda](#) on [October 7, 2013](#), appeal rejected in [Gyanja](#) on [November 7, 2013](#))
- Saadat Muradhasilova (sister of Matanat Qurbanova, arrested in [Zakatala](#) on [November 9, 2014](#) for distributing religious literature on a street, fined US\$1,425 on [May 15, 2015](#))
- Safiya Ahmed Abdul Razzaq Wahed (aged 41, convert, wife of Wahed Abdul, mother of Warda and Saif, Pakistani citizen, fled the United Arab Emirates with her family after her conversion was discovered and her husband's business license was revoked when he refused to divorce her, applied for asylum in Canada, husband remained Muslim but came to support her conversion, reported on [September 6, 2019](#) to have said in [Baku](#) "I know that Christianity is not easy life but still my faith is much stronger than these problems. My parents are dead, and my brothers and sisters are not with me but still I trust In Jesus")

Samir Huseynov (convicted of evading military service despite his declaration of conscientious objection, as of [February 10, 2014](#) has lodged a case with the European Court of Human Rights)

Samira Agayeva (wife of Rauf Agayev, present during the [September 21, 2013](#) police raid at the [Aliabad](#) home of Havva Aliyeva, detained several hours by police, fined US\$1,900 on [December 3, 2013](#);  
conviction and fine upheld on appeal on [January 10, 2014](#) in [Sheki](#))

Stepanida Sheludyakova (detained without charge since [June 23, 2012](#) for distributing Christian literature in [Khachmaz Region](#))

Tarana Huseynova (arrested during a [March 2, 2014](#) police raid a prayer meeting in a private home in [Lankaran](#) without warrant, convicted on [May 8, 2014](#) of attending an illegal religious meeting, fined US\$1,900)

Tarana Khususshvili (mother of Luka Khususshvili, detained in [Gakh](#) on [May 27, 2014](#) for possession of an Old Testament during door-to-door evangelization, no case filed)

Pastor Telman Aliev (fined, arrested in [December 2011](#), [Neftechala](#) church seized)

Telman Yarmetov (detained without charge on [May 17, 2012](#) for distributing Christian literature in [Mujuk](#), later released, automobile confiscated)

Timofei Aparshev (detained without charge since [June 23, 2012](#) for distributing Christian literature in [Khachmaz Region](#))

Vaguf Aliyev (husband of Gamar Aliyev, present during the [September 21, 2013](#) police raid at the [Aliabad](#) home of Havva Aliyeva, detained several hours by police, fined US\$1,900 on [November 26, 2013](#);  
conviction and fine upheld on appeal on [December 23, 2013](#) in [Sheki](#);  
arrested at a [March 23, 2016](#) private worship service in [Gakh](#))

Vahid Gunduz oglu Abilov (aged 19, conscientious objector, indicted for evasion of military service on [July 9, 2018](#);  
sentenced in [Quzanli](#) on [September 6, 2018](#) to one year's imprisonment, sentence suspended, appeal planned)

Valida Jabrayilova (aged 38, cited for distributing religious literature door to door in [Pirallahi](#) on [December 5, 2014](#), detained in [Baku](#) by the NSM secret police on [February 17, 2015](#) for a pretrial detention of three months', facing possible five years' imprisonment;  
specific charges still not made against her, request on [April 10, 2015](#) to be transferred from the NSM headquarters in [Baku](#) to house arrest denied, three Muslim prisoners with similar allegations granted house arrest;  
pretrial detention extended another two months on [May 7, 2015](#);  
detention extended on [July 4, 2015](#) to September 17, 2015;  
pretrial detention extended another three months on [September 4, 2015](#);  
convicted on [January 28, 2016](#) of illegally distributing one religious booklet, fined US\$4,391, fine suspended due to time served, released;  
acquitted on appeal by the Supreme Court in [Baku](#) on [February 8, 2017](#), no written verdict issued;  
awarded US\$4,832 in damages against the government in [Baku](#) on [August 8, 2017](#))

Yevdokiya Sobko (conviction and fine upheld on appeal on [December 23, 2013](#) in [Sheki](#);  
arrested at a [March 23, 2016](#) private worship service in [Gakh](#))

Warda (aged 16, convert, daughter of Safiya Ahmed Abdul Razzaq Wahed and Wahed Abdul,  
reported on [September 6, 2019](#) to have tweeted from [Baku](#) “Now we also have problems in  
our life but we will not leave our faith because we never felt what we feel now and  
whenever we pray calling his name 'Jesus Christ' we feel that he will do for us because he  
knows what's better for us because he saved us till now together")

Pastor Zaur Balaev (husband of Nunka Balaev, arrested on false charges on [May 20, 2007](#);  
released [March 19, 2008](#) in an amnesty;

religious service at his home in [Aliabad](#) raided by police on [November 7, 2012](#) while he  
was in Moscow, religious books seized;

wife suffering from cancer, fined one year's minimum wage on [March 29, 2013](#) for holding  
religious meetings;

fine overturned on appeal on [April 25, 2013](#) due to delayed prosecution)

Ziyad Dadashov (fined US\$865 on [December 2, 2016](#) in [Goranboy](#) for speaking of his faith and  
offering Bible literature to 4 men;

fine upheld in [Gyanja](#) on [January 5, 2017](#) without a hearing)