

# Today's Martyrs

*Resources for understanding current Christian witness and martyrdom*

## Events – February 2017

**Wednesday February 1, 2017**



### **India: Hyderabad, Telangana state**

Kusuma Anjeneya Swamy (aged 47, husband of Sujatha, father of two daughters, engineering professor, Gideons member, verbally attacked by three Hindus for handing out Bibles on [January 21, 2017](#), dragged to a police station, released without charge, collapsed with a cerebral hemorrhage, hospitalized in a coma; **UPDATE**: reported to have been paralyzed on one side, had been threatened with being burned alive)

Rev Ronald John (State Chairman of the Telangana Christian Joint-Action-Committee; **UPDATE**: reported to have said "This is a very unfortunate incident. The ultra-Hindu nationalists are taking the law into their own hands [which] is unacceptable. This shows how minorities are being treated in this nation")

Rev M Bhaskar (reported to have said that 10,000 Christians wanted to protest against the abuse of Kusuma Anjeneya Swamy but police cancelled the protest, said "It is unfortunate that the police who are supposed to empower the citizens to exercise their right to protest peacefully [stopped the protest] contrary [to the constitution]. They showed unfair bias [against] Christians")

Timothy Ganupalli (reported to have said "We want to hold peaceful protest rally. Having a peaceful protest rally is not against the law of the land, but what prompted the police to deny the permission for the rally? It is our right")

<http://www.persecution.org/2017/02/01/christian-evangelist-in-india-fights-for-life-after-mob-harassment/>



### **Pakistan: Lahore**

Pastor Adnan Prince (aged 29, accused of blasphemy on [October 7, 2013](#) by Muslim clerics who are members of Jamait-ul Dawa [JUD] - an affiliate of al-Qaida - by writing derogatory comments in an Islamic book written by a JUD member; surrendered to police on

November 6, 2013 due to fears of assassination; described on December 16, 2013 being tortured in jail; **UPDATE:** released on bail)

[https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2013/12/article\\_2891083.html/](https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2013/12/article_2891083.html/)



**Iraq: Erbil, Kurdistan**

Archbishop Bashar Matti Warda CSSR (**UPDATE:** unveiled a plan to rebuild Christian homes on the Nineveh Plain that have been destroyed by ISIL)

<http://members4.boardhost.com/acnaus/msg/1485919466.html>



**Russia: Krasnokamensk district, Zabaikalsk region**

Mikhail Ishenin (fined US\$83 for illegal missionary activity)

[http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article\\_id=2306](http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2306)



**Zimbabwe: Harare**

Rev Evan Mawarire (**UPDATE:** arrested upon his return from the United States on charges of subversion for having organized an anti-government demonstration at the UN in New York in September 2016)

<http://www.ecumenicalnews.com/article/zimbabwe-protest-pastor-evan-mawarire-who-fled-to-us-faces-20-years-in-jail/58521.htm>



**Germany: Schnaittach, Bavaria**

Pastor Wilfried Roemischer (presided at a funeral service that was disrupted by a long-time Muslim immigrant, asked the disruptor to stop and that they would converse after the funeral ceremony, asked the funeral home representative to call the police after the disruptor did not completely cease)

<http://www.express.co.uk/news/world/763970/Allah-shouting-Muslim-disturbs-funeral-ceremony-in-church>

**Thursday February 2, 2017**



**Vietnam: Hue**

Fr Phan Van Loi (detained, said “I asked them why they were blocking me from attending church services. I asked if they were police. Of course, I knew they were police because I had previously seen them around my house. We demanded that they show us their IDs, but one man said they were not policemen. I told them that even if they wear plainclothes, they are still Thua Thien Hue province policemen”)

Fr Nguyen Van Ly (arrested in 1977; arrested in 2001; arrested in 2007; **UPDATE**: detained)

Fr Nguyen Huu Giai (detained)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Hue,-plainclothes-police-attack-a-group-of-priests-and-block-prayer-service-39839.html>



**Pakistan: Karachi**

Dr Nazir S Bhatti (**UPDATE**: wrote that the Interior Minister Nisar Ali presented no evidence to back his claim that the blasphemy laws were not being used to target Christians)

**Pakistan: Lahore**

Rev Maurice Shahbaz (Director of Prisons Mission Society of Pakistan, wrote "The Christian community inside the prisons of The Punjab in Pakistan are being persecuted and denied the same religious freedom as other religions. Christian prison missionaries have increasingly limited access to the prisoners, while Muslim religious teachers can preach and teach with no limits")

<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6295>

<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6296>



**Iraq: Erbil, Kurdistan**

Archbishop Bashar Matti Warda CSSR (**UPDATE**: temporarily barred from entry to the United States, Congressional hearing cancelled in response, said "I don't know what the president knows about security risks as they relate to the 'countries of concern' and refugees from them...One other thing: Christians and other minorities have been largely ignored by the American government before now, so even if this step had a bumpy start and required clarification, we in Iraq appreciate that an American administration understands that we are here and wants to help the minorities here who have suffered so much...From my perspective in Iraq, I wonder why all of these protesters were not protesting in the streets when ISIL came to kill Christians and Yazidis and other minority groups. They were not protesting when the tens of thousands of displaced Christians my archdiocese has cared for since 2014 received no financial assistance from the U.S. government or the UN. There were no protests when Syrian Christians were only let in at a rate that was 20 times less than the percentage of their population in Syria. I do not understand why some Americans are now upset that the many minority communities that faced a horrible genocide will finally get a degree of priority in some manner...I would also say this, all those who cry out that this is a 'Muslim Ban' - especially now that it has been clarified that it is not - should understand clearly that when they do this, they are hurting we Christians specifically and putting us at greater risk. The executive order has clearly affected Christians and Yazidis and others as well as Muslims. Here in Iraq we Christians cannot afford to throw out words carelessly as the media in the West can do. I would ask those in the media who use every issue to stir up division to think about this. For the media these things become an issue of ratings, but for us the danger is real. Most Americans have no concept of what it was like to live as a Yazidi or Christian or other minority as ISIL invaded. Our people had the option to flee, to convert, or to be killed, and many were killed in the most brutal ways imaginable. But there were none of these protests then of ISIL's religious test. Our people lost everything because of their faith - they were targeted for their faith, just like the Yazidis and others too. Now these protesters are saying that religion should not matter at all, even though someone was persecuted for their faith, even though persecution based on religion is one of the grounds for refugee status in the UN treaty on refugees...From here I have to say, it is really unbelievable. It is exactly this reasoning, that religion should not be a factor at all in American policy, that has resulted in Christians and other minority communities being overlooked by U.S. and UN aid programs")

<https://cruxnow.com/interviews/2017/02/02/iraq-prelate-backs-preference-minority-refugees-fleeing-genocide/>



**Russia: Chernyshevsk district, Zabaikalsk region**

T V Lipishina (fined US\$83 for illegal missionary activity)

**Russia: Kumertau, Republic of Bashkortostan**

Vitaly Ryazanov (fined US\$83 for announcing the next date for Sunday worship)

[http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article\\_id=2306](http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2306)

**Friday February 3, 2017**



**China: Wenzhou, Zhejiang province**

Pastor Huang Yizi (aged 43, **UPDATE:** ordered to appear at a police station for questioning, messaged "Please pray for me. I will not return if they want me to do something that contradicts the law, the truth, my belief, or my conscience. If I am really sentenced during the New Year, sisters and brothers, please believe that I always have a clear conscience toward God and my fellow men", released after 5 PM that day, reported that the 'issue' was not resolved)

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/02/police-summon-wenzhou-pastor-after-his.html>



**Pakistan**

Aasiya Noreen aka Asia Bibi (aged 52, wife of Ashiq Masih, mother of five including Isham, daughter of Soran Masih, sentenced to death for blasphemy in 2009; **UPDATE:** Supreme Court hearing to be heard in March 2017)

Wilson Chowdhry (Chairman of the British-Pakistani Christian Association, said in [London, United Kingdom](#): "I met with the First Minister at The Pakistan High Commission last Friday and he has informed me that a trial date for Asia's appeal is sure to be fixed before the end of March. We organized the protests across the UK to galvanize support for Asia in the west. Its clear by the huge numbers of protesters calling for her hanging in Pakistan, that most Pakistani's want her dead. Moreover, the last judge retired from his position after refusing to preside over her case in a court debacle when he stated the reason for the adjournment was a conflict of interest. We want Asia to know the world is following her case and supports her freedom so we have collaborated with partners across the UK to make sure her plight is kept in the international spotlight. Our belief is this is the only way to save her from the fundamentalists who wish to see her dead")

<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6297>



## United Kingdom: Derbyshire

Susan Preston (magistrate, reported to have been removed from hearing family cases after declining to hear a case involving same sex parenting)

<http://www.christianconcern.com/our-concerns/adoption/magistrate-disciplined-for-not-hearing-same-sex-parenting-case>

Saturday February 4, 2017



## Thailand: Bangkok

**A Pakistani refugee family who fled their home in December 2013 has been approved for immigration to the U.S. but their resettlement is now on hold for 120 days, are afraid they might be incarcerated for overstaying their visa**

Cyril Kamran (husband of Samina, father of two aged 17 and 9, said "...the health condition of me and my wife is not good, my left hip joint is artificial and from last one year I feel severe pain. In my last medical examination at Bangkok Christian Hospital arranged by IOM, they identify that the joint is loose and that I need surgery again but the surgery needs time so that's why they advise me that we will refer your case to U.S. for surgery. Due to that pain I am unable to lay on the even on a comfortable bed so how can I spend one week on the floor of IDC...My daughter is 17 years old and we are unable to take risk to send her to IDC because in past, we heard so many sexual harassment cases in IDC")

Samina (wife of Cyril Kamran, mother of two aged 17 and 9, has suffered from Autoimmune Hemolytic Anemia, steroid use has affected her heart and immune system, has been afraid of incarceration)

<http://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/trump-policy-and-thai-avarice-leaves-approved-pakistani-asylum-seeker-family-in-limbo>



## Pakistan

Sana John Shahid (aged 13 when abducted on November 9, 2015 while on her way to school in [Haji Pura, Sialkot, Punjab province](#), forcibly converted to Islam and forcibly married to her abductor, family filed a police report but the police have taken no action, family has received death threats; **UPDATE**: still missing)

Prof Anjum James Paul (**UPDATE**: wrote to the National Commission on Human Rights to demand the return of Sana John Shahid to her family)

<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6298>

**Sunday February 5, 2017**



### **Philippines**

Archbishop Socrates Villegas (**UPDATE**: the pastoral letter ***For I Find No Pleasure in the Death of Anyone Who Dies***, which protested the 7,000 extrajudicial killings of persons involved in the illegal drug trade since mid-2016, was read in all Catholic churches in the country, had signed the letter on behalf of the bishop's conference on **January 30, 2017** "We in the Church will continue to speak against evil even as we acknowledge and repent of our own shortcomings. We will do this even if it will bring persecution upon us because we are all brothers and sisters responsible for each other. We will help drug addicts so that they may be healed and start a new life...Let us not allow fear to reign and keep us silent. Let us put into practice not only our native inner strength but the strength that comes from our Christian faith")

<http://www.cbcnews.com/cbcnews/?p=91162>



### **Indonesia: Bogor, West Java**

Bona Sigalingging (GKI Yasmin Church spokesman; **UPDATE**: said that his church has accepted a proposal that would allow the building to be re-opened after 9 years in exchange for the building of a mosque next door on church land, said "We are glad and support the initiative")

Edward (aged 23, church member, said "We support the Bogor mayor's plan so this case should be resolved soon")

Rev Sony Dandel (said in a homily that the fight for equal rights should continue, said "We hope the problem for our church and also of other churches with similar problems will end soon")

<http://www.ucanews.com/news/indonesian-protestants-reach-church-compromise/78313>



**Kazakhstan: Oral, West Kazakhstan region**

Serkali Kumargaliyev (sentenced to 3 days' imprisonment on [January 31, 2017](#); **UPDATE**: fined by police for attending an unregistered worship service)

[http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article\\_id=2281](http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2281)



**Egypt**

Demiana Amir (aged 14, wounded in the [December 11, 2016](#) suicide bombing in Sts Peter and Paul church in [Cairo](#), hospitalized; **UPDATE**: reported to have **died from her injuries**)

<http://www.copticsolidarity.org/2017/02/05/demiana-14-becomes-29th-victim-of-attack-on-st-peters-church-in-cairo/>

**Monday February 6, 2017**



**Kazakhstan: Oral, West Kazakhstan region**

Serkali Kumargaliyev (sentenced to 3 days' imprisonment on [January 31, 2017](#); fined by police on [February 5, 2017](#) for attending an unregistered worship service; **UPDATE**: fined US\$328 for distributing religious literature, was unaware of the charges or court hearing)

[http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article\\_id=2281](http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2281)

**Tuesday February 7, 2017**



**Pakistan: Kasur**

Nabeel Masih (aged 16, arrested on blasphemy charges in [Dina Nath village, Kasur district, Punjab province](#) on [September 18, 2016](#) after accused of posting a photo of the Kabaa in



Mecca on his Facebook page near a photo of a pig, family fled their home;  
**UPDATE:** denied bail)

<http://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/16-year-old-blasphemy-boys-appeal-for-bail-rejected>



#### **Iran: Evin prison, Tehran**

Amin Afshar Naderi (aged 28, convert, arrested without warrant by MOIS agents while fishing and picnicking with his wife in [Firuzkuh](#) on [August 26, 2016](#), beaten when he asked to see the arrest warrant; **UPDATE:** still incarcerated without trial, has threatened to begin a hunger strike)

Hadi Askary (arrested without warrant by MOIS agents while fishing and picnicking with his wife in [Firuzkuh](#) on [August 26, 2016](#); **UPDATE:** still incarcerated without trial, has threatened to begin a hunger strike)

<http://mohabatnews.com/en/?p=3336>



#### **Russia: Oryol**

V S Sidorov (fined US\$82 on [December 26, 2016](#) for handing out religious literature; **UPDATE:** appeal successful due to the statute of limitations)

[http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article\\_id=2306](http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2306)



#### **Ukraine: Lyadova**

Archimandrite Anthony Netrebin (reported on the burglary of his monastery and theft of an icon which was later found in the snow stripped of decorations)

<http://orthochristian.com/100886.html>



#### **Central African Republic: Bangui**

Pastor Jean-Paul Sankagui (aged 67, husband, father of 12, **killed**, church destroyed)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/02/4927187/>



#### **Mail: Koutiala**

Sr Gloria Cecilia Narvaez Argoti (Colombian citizen, abducted)

Fr Edmond Dembele (spokesman for the Episcopal Conference of Mali; **UPDATE**: reported on the abduction of Sr Gloria Cecilia Narvaez Argoti, said "The area where the religious woman was kidnapped is a quiet area and that is what is surprising. That area of the Country has not yet been touched by the insecurity that affects other areas")

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/61691->

[AFRICA MALI A Colombian nun kidnapped#.WJtFkW8rKM8](http://www.fides.org/en/news/61691-)

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/61788->

[AFRICA MALI Bogota sends a special anti kidnapping team to investigate the kidnapping of the Colombian nun#.WK51228rKM8](http://www.fides.org/en/news/61788-)

**Wednesday February 8, 2017**



#### **Pakistan: Patoki, Kasur**

Shahzad Masih (aged 25, rickshaw driver, fiancé of Samina, brother of Tariq Masih, **shot dead** after taking two Muslims to a Sufi shrine, police ruled the death a suicide, forced the family to bury the body)

Samina (fiancee of Shahzad Masih)

Tariq Masih (said "I am totally demoralized by the lack of impetus shown by the police. They seem determined to label my brother's death as a suicide but he was the most successful of us and was to be married in a few weeks. I am a simple sewage worker earning very little, Shahzad was earning good money and hoped one day to run his own business. We were all so proud of him we are devastated by news of his death")

<http://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/christian-rickshaw-driver-shot-dead-police-refuse-investigation-and-force-family-to-bury-corpse>



**Uzbekistan: Sergeli district, Tashkent**

Alijon Khatamov (husband of Natalya Khatamov, home raided by police, religious literature and hard drive seized)

Natalya Khatamov (wife of Alijon Khatamov)

[http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article\\_id=2268](http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2268)

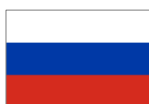


**Azerbaijan: Baku**

Irina Zakharchenko (aged 57, 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](#); convicted on [January 28, 2016](#) of illegally distributing one religious booklet, fined US\$4,391, fine suspended due to time served, released; **UPDATE**: acquitted on appeal by the Supreme Court, no written verdict issued)

Valida Jabrayilova (aged 41, 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](#); convicted on [January 28, 2016](#) of illegally distributing one religious booklet, fined US\$4,391, fine suspended due to time served, released; **UPDATE**: acquitted on appeal by the Supreme Court, no written verdict issued)

[http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article\\_id=2278](http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2278)



**Russia: Nizhny Tagil**

Anna Kosharnova (church fined US\$842)

**Russia: Ulyanovsk**

Pastor Vitaly Shmidt (fined US\$496 on [December 30, 2016](#) for distribution of unapproved religious literature; **UPDATE**: appeal denied)

[http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article\\_id=2306](http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2306)

**Thursday February 9, 2017**



### **United States - Ohio**

Elizabeth Johnson (mother of 10, suspended from Facebook after posting Biblical passages on homosexuality)

<http://www.christianpost.com/news/facebook-apologizes-for-suspending-christian-mom-over-post-on-homosexuality-175779/>

**Friday February 10, 2017**



### **India: Jadhua village, Bihar state**

Pastor Sikandar Kumar (aged 45, attacked along with his congregation by Hindu radicals)

<http://morningstarnews.org/2017/05/pastor-india-loses-hearing-assault-hindu-extremists/>



### **Russia: Vilyuchinsk district, Kamchatka**

Sergei Seleznyov (acquitted of illegal missionary activity, judge ruled there was no evidence he was at the meeting)

[http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article\\_id=2306](http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2306)



### **Germany: Berlin**

Shorena Tetrushvili (personal secretary of Georgian Orthodox Church Patriarch Ilia II, victim of an attempted murder via poison, was present in the country while the Patriarch received gall bladder surgery, alleged perpetrator was a priest of the church who was arrested with cyanide while leaving Georgia)

<http://www.pravoslavie.ru/english/101717.htm>



### **United States – Indiana: Indianapolis**

Pastor Brad Flaskamp (reported on the beheading of a statue of Jesus)

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2017/feb/21/jesus-statue-decapitated-twice-outside-indiana-chu/>

**Saturday February 11, 2017**



### **Sudan: Khartoum**

Rev Yahya Abdelrahim Nalu (**UPDATE**: described a government order to demolish 25 churches in the capital area “This is not an isolated act but should be taken with wider perspective”)

Rev Mubarak Hamad (said that mosques were spared from demolition order)

<http://morningstarnews.org/2017/02/sudan-orders-demolition-least-25-church-buildings-christian-leaders-say/>

**Sunday February 12, 2017**



### **Egypt: el-Arish, Sinai**

Bahgat William Zakher (husband of Fawzia, father of Marcos, veterinarian, **shot dead** after refusing to renounce his faith)

Fawzia (widow of Bahgat William Zakhar, later described her husband's murder by ISIL “They didn’t even run [after shooting him]. They did not care about being caught by security forces. They were extremely confident. They killed my husband in broad daylight and walked off”, later fled her home)

Marcos (aged 17, son of Bahgat William Zakhar, received a phone call days after his father's murder from ISIL threatening his life, fled his home)

<http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/news/2017/02/16/coptic-christian-teacher-shot-dead-in-egypt/>  
<http://www.copticsolidarity.org/2017/04/03/they-called-my-husband-an-infidel-and-killed-him/>



## **Venezuela**

### **Pro-government militants invade and stop a Mass**

Luis Arias (aged 67, catechism teacher, said “Some people were scared, obviously, but no one was hurt. They [the demonstrators] said ‘Because the priests have spoken about politics, we have the right too’”)

Archbishop Diego Rafael Padron Sanchez (**UPDATE:** said “There must be a line, an order, to intimidate the Church, to lower its discourse, to [silence it]”)

<http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/news/2017/02/16/socialist-militants-storm-mass-in-venezuela/>

**Monday February 13, 2017**



## **Vietnam: Dong Thanh, Vinh Long province**

### **Christian, Buddhist, and Cao Dai religious leaders from an interfaith organization that opposed persecution were detained, questioned, and released**

Pastor Nguyen Manh Hung (**UPDATE:** detained, questioned, released)

Fr Anton Le Ngoc Thanh CSSR (**UPDATE:** detained, questioned, released)

<http://www.ucanews.com/news/members-of-interfaith-council-detained-in-vietnam/78414>



## **Malaysia: Petaling Jaya**

Pastor Raymond Koh Keng Joo (aged 62, husband of Susanna, father of Jonathan Koh, questioned in 2011 for converting Muslims to Christianity, case dropped for lack of evidence; **UPDATE:** abducted by 5 armed and masked men, police initially refused to file a report despite witness accounts of the abduction)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/02/4943875/>



### **Pakistan: Lahore**

Suneel (injured in the suicide bombing of the Punjab Assembly, hospitalized)

Archbishop Joseph Coutts (**UPDATE**: said following the suicide bombing of the Punjab Provincial parliament that killed 14 that it is difficult to understand and to predict the Taliban "It depends on what they think, how they interpret the enemy and link things. They are very slippery like a snake in the grass. They can make anything out of a visiting army officer in a Church or a police guard on duty during Sunday Mass. It is a different kind of guerrilla warfare and we have to learn to protect ourselves")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Taliban-attackers-warn-churches-that-they-can-be-targets-if-they-back-the-government-39960.html>

<http://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/pakistan-is-under-seige-another-bomb-detonation-rocks-lahore>



### **Egypt: el-Arish, Sinai**

Adel Shawqy (aged 57, laborer, **shot dead**)

<http://www.copticsolidarity.org/2017/03/03/coptic-exodus-from-al-arish/>



### **Turkey: Ankara**

David Byle (aged 47, Canadian-U.S. citizen, husband of Ulrike, father of five, detained without charge in **Istanbul** on **April 6, 2016** for 30 days pending deportation, labelled 'a danger to public order' by the Interior Ministry; released from detention on **April 15, 2016**, deportation still pending; deportation still pending as of **October 14, 2016** due to the post-coup arrests of judges and prosecutors; **UPDATE**: deportation stopped by the Constitutional Court pending evidence justifying the deportation)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/02/4923497/>



### **Greece: Gerakas**

Fr Hierotheos Kamitsis (**found dead** in his apartment, had been tied to his bed and suffocated)

<http://www.pravoslavie.ru/english/101111.htm>

**Tuesday February 14, 2017**



**China: Tianshui**

Bishop Casimir Wang Milu (aged 74, arrested in 1983, sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment;

**UPDATE: died of natural causes**)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Mgr-Casimir-Wang-Milu,-retired-bishop-of-Tianshui,-has-died-39937.html>



**Vietnam: Nha Trang**

Bishop Paul Nguyen Van Hoa (aged 86, **died of natural causes**, had been questioned by police and prohibited from pastoral duties for over a decade following the 1975 reunification of the country)

<http://www.ucanews.com/news/vietnamese-catholics-remember-humble-bishop/78447>



**India: Kubuaa village, Palamu district, Jharkhand state**

Bartu Urawn (aged 50, convert, husband, father of Beneswar, **died after he and his wife were forced into a cold pond overnight for 17 hours** by 15 Hindu extremists, repeatedly said "I will not deny Christ...I will continue to believe till my last breath", wife survived)

Beneswar (forced to watch his parents' torture in the cold pond, said "The villagers kept asking my father if he was ready to forsake Christ. Every time, he said 'I will not deny Christ'")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Jharkhand,-a-Christian-dies-a-martyr%E2%80%99s-death-for-refusing-to-recant-and-return-to-tree-religion-39936.html>





### **Pakistan: Pakpattan district, Punjab province**

Mary Ashma Javed (wife of Javed Sahotra, teacher with 28 years' seniority, accused in [November 2015](#) by one parent of teaching Christianity to Muslim students and beating them when they did not agree, denied the charges; **UPDATE**: object of an attempt by fellow Muslim teachers to force her from the school, the teachers said “She is non-Muslim and non-Muslims are Satan, Satan and Satan” and "let us kick this Christian teacher from the school because we are all Muslim teachers and she is Christian Satan teacher”)

<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6332>



### **Turkmenistan Boldumsaz district**

Vepa Bahromovich Matyakubov (aged 19, brother of Dovran Matyakubov, conscientious objector, forcibly taken to a military conscription office on [November 3, 2016](#), released; **UPDATE**: sentenced to 2 years' corrective labor, will serve his sentence at home, 20% of his salary will be withheld)

[http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article\\_id=2318](http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2318)



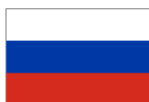
### **Iran: Evin prison, Tehran**

Amin Afshar Naderi (aged 28, convert, arrested without warrant by MOIS agents while fishing and picnicking with his wife in [Firuzkuh](#) on [August 26, 2016](#), beaten when he asked to see the arrest warrant; still incarcerated without trial as of [February 7, 2017](#), has threatened to begin a hunger strike; **UPDATE**: stopped his hunger strike after receiving promise of medical care and legal action)

Hadi Askary (arrested without warrant by MOIS agents while fishing and picnicking with his wife in [Firuzkuh](#) on [August 26, 2016](#); still incarcerated without trial as of [February 7, 2017](#), has threatened to begin a hunger strike; **UPDATE**: stopped his hunger strike after receiving promise of medical care and legal action)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/4916336/>

**Wednesday February 15, 2017**



**Russia: Nizhnevartovsk, Khanty-Mansiysk Autonomous Region**

O M Rakhimkulov (fined US\$88 for illegal missionary activity)

[http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article\\_id=2306](http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2306)

**Thursday February 16, 2017**



**Pakistan: Sehwan**

**A suicide bombing of a Sufi shrine killed at least 75 including 20 children and wounded more than 200**

Fr Paulus Gill (prayed for the victims "We are losing human values. What we are witnessing is the result when religion combines with politics...Shrines have relatively low security due to round the clock visitors. Only dialogue can bring peace with religious fundamentalists, the extremism has crept in our society especially after Islamization by General Zia ul Haq who introduced religious and gender biases in Pakistan's laws. Now we are drowning and it will be long before peace prevails in Pakistan")

Fr Abid Habib (**UPDATE:** said "We are getting messages and churches will be attacked now. The terrorists may be based in Afghanistan but they are being funded by Saudis. They follow Wahabi ideology which lauds the concept of jihad and urges hatred of infidels. Visiting shrines to them is idol worship")

Archbishop Joseph Coutts (**UPDATE:** said "It is sad that a Muslim shrine has been attacked in a Muslim country. We feel so helpless. The scourge of terrorism has spread like a cancer. It has long roots in our society. The government or army alone cannot fight it alone. The whole nation should stand united, without discrimination of faith, use all peaceful methods and reject these terrorists. Terrorists lie when they claim to target only government departments and spare public or religious places. Attacks on shrines is a wider problem emerging from sectarianism, terrorism has no borders")

Fr Qaiser Feroz (**UPDATE:** said "shrines are being targeted simply because they are crowded and people of all faiths visit them especially to listen to devotional songs. The religious fundamentalists only want bloodshed, there is no faith motivation")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Pakistan's-Catholic-Church-strongly-condemns-Sufi-temple-attack--39967.html>



### **Egypt: el-Arish, Sinai**

Gamal Tawfiq (aged 50, father of Youssef Tawfiq. teacher, **shot dead** while on the way to school)

Youssef Tawfiq (son of Gamal Tawfiq, said "I feel like I am carrying a mountain over my shoulders. We loved our country but our country doesn't love us")

[http://staging.hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/M/ML\\_EGYPT?SITE=AP&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT&CTIME=2017-02-24-02-52-34](http://staging.hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/M/ML_EGYPT?SITE=AP&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT&CTIME=2017-02-24-02-52-34)

<http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/news/2017/02/16/coptic-christian-teacher-shot-dead-in-egypt/>

**Friday February 17, 2017**



### **India: Kerala state**

Fr Paul Thelakkat (**UPDATE:** reported on activities by the RSS paramilitary organization "The RSS presence in Kerala is widespread, strong and active. Based on their ideology, they are a fascist organization. However, they are not in direct conflict with other communities, except in Kannur district where they are in a violent conflict with Marxists...relations between the RSS, Christians and Muslims have always been peaceful. Kerala has a long tradition of cordial relations between the various religions...The RSS does not want to disturb this model. I think the BJP [the RSS political wing] in this state is different from that in northern India. Here, its political leaders do not offend other religions. Kerala could become a model for the national party. India's future will depend on how the RSS is willing to accept democratic values and respect all religions. Even the Marxist Party, whose ideology was not at all democratic, has changed its attitude over the years and is open to democratic values. This could also happen to the BJP and the RSS")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Hindu-ultranationalists-growing-in-Kerala-with-more-than-5,000-meetings-a-day-39969.html>



### **Kazakhstan: Satpayev, Karaganda region**

Fariza Iskakova (indicted for distributing religious literature)

Karlygash Zholomanova (indicted for distributing religious literature)

[http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article\\_id=2281](http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2281)

**Saturday February 18, 2017**



**Congo, Democratic Republic: Malole, Kananga, Central Kasai**

Fr Richard Kitenge (said of an attack on a seminary "The militias systematically broke the doors of the rooms and destroyed everything that was inside. They entered the teachers' rooms and burned their luggage")

Bishop Felicien Mwanama Galumbulula (denounced "exceptional violence and unimaginable atrocities against the population")

Fr Richard Muembo (seminary rector, described the attack on the seminary "We never thought that we would become the target of attacks. It happened because militia loyal to the late tribal leader Kamwina-Nsapu wanted to set up their headquarters on the premises of the seminary. We declined and tried to find a peaceful solution through dialogue. Unfortunately, the local authorities chose a military solution to end the conflict. This led the rebels to attack our seminary on Saturday, 18th February. Thankfully, since we had noticed that the situation was becoming very dangerous, we had already gotten the seminarians out. The 77 seminarians, ranging in age from 21 to 27 and originally from seven different dioceses in the country, have suffered terribly. They had to flee for two days, taking only what they were wearing with them. They were taken in by families and had to stay with them for three weeks until they could be moved, which, in some cases, was only possible with the help of the UN mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo [MONUSCO]. The media was informed of this")

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/61766->

[AFRICA DR CONGO A seminary in central Kasai and a parish in Kinshasa ransacked#.WK52dW8rKM8](http://www.fides.org/en/news/61766-)

<http://members4.boardhost.com/acnaus/msg/1492645937.html>



**United States – Indiana: Indianapolis**

Pastor Brad Flaskamp (reported on the beheading of a statue of Jesus on [February 10, 2017](#);

**UPDATE:** reported on the second beheading: "It makes me sad that somebody would do something like that. I was hoping it was just a random act to destroy it in the first place. I can tell you that I don't think it's kids. It would have to be a kid that can wield a

sledgehammer...I'd say we love you, we'd love to have the statue head back and we'd love to have you in our church. We'd welcome them, we'd forgive them")

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2017/feb/21/jesus-statue-decapitated-twice-outside-indiana-chu/>

**Sunday February 19, 2017**



**China: Korla, Xinjiang province**

Kong Lingrong (home invaded by police during a worship service, taken to a police station, questioned)

Mei Yunhua (home invaded by police, no one was home, told to stop meeting, utilities turned off)

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/03/officials-raid-house-churches-ask.html>

**Monday February 20, 2017**



**India: Kurla district, Mumbai**

Sajan K George (**UPDATE**: condemned the decapitation of a statue of Mary the mother of Jesus)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Mumbai,-a-statue-of-the-Virgin-Mary-vandalized-and-decapitated-39983.html>



**Iran: Urmia, Western Azerbaijan province**

Anousheh Reza-bakhsh aka Veronika (convert, mother of Soheil Zargarzadeh Sani, arrested, whereabouts unknown)

Soheil Zargarzadeh Sani aka Augustine (convert, son of Anousheh Reza-bakhsh, senior psychology university student, arrested, whereabouts unknown)

<http://mohabatnews.com/en/?p=3381>



#### **Sudan: Omdurman**

**Four Christians were arrested when a Muslim businessman called police and claimed ownership of his school property and that they had destroyed a sign he had erected**

Rev Sidik Abdalla Anglo

Himeda Kandr (church elder)

Daud Musa (teacher)

Majdi Juma (teacher)

<http://morningstarnews.org/2017/02/christians-sudan-arrested-tussle-evangelical-school-omdurman/>



#### **Nigeria: Ashim, Mif, Zilang, and Bakin Kogi villages, Attakar district, Kaduna state**

**Fulani Muslims attacked four Christian villages, killing 26 and wounding 19**

Godfrey F (said “I got ready and set out for school. I met the fiercely looking Fulani on the way and ran back. I met my father on the way and warned him that it was not safe. We ran into the grass, but they set the grass on fire. It burnt me on my back. I ran out to the other side of the village, but they trapped and attacked me multiple times with machete. They asked me who had a gun in the village and I told them no one had. They set the bush on fire, burning my father in it. They also killed my brother. I started running, and met some boys and told them. I ran and saw my younger sister and held her hand to run. The Fulanis pushed her down into the fire. Help later came and we were eventually taken to the hospital. I was on oxygen in the ICU for a week, but got better and moved to the regular ward”)

#### **Nigeria: Zilan village, Kaura local government area, Kaduna state**

Josephine (aged 35, mother of Nathaniel, **killed** by Fulani insurgents)

Nathaniel (aged 5, son of Josephine, **killed** by Fulani insurgents)

Enoch Andong (found the body of Josephine while searching for survivors “Apparently Josephine had escaped from the village and sought safety in the grass. The attackers then set the grass ablaze and left her for dead”)

Most Reverend Nicholas Oko (called for the disarming of the Fulani)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/02/4956331/>  
<http://www.persecution.org/2017/10/05/icc-provides-medical-assistance-to-victims-of-fulani-radicals-in-south-kaduna/>

**Tuesday February 21, 2017**



### **Philippines**

Senator Leila de Lima (aged 57, former human rights attorney, accused President Duterte of being a "sociopathic serial killer")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Duterte%E2%80%99s-harsh-critic-Leila-De-Lima-arrested-40029.html>



### **Sudan: Omdurman**

**Four Christians were arrested on February 20, 2017 when a Muslim businessman called police and claimed ownership of his school property and that they had destroyed a sign he had erected; UPDATE: released on bail**

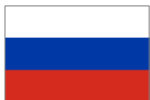
Rev Sidik Abdalla Anglo

Himeda Kandr (church elder)

Daud Musa (teacher)

Majdi Juma (teacher)

<http://morningstarnews.org/2017/02/christians-sudan-arrested-tussle-evangelical-school-omdurman/>



### **Russia: Kirov**

O L Grinishina (fined US\$16 in Kirovo-Chepetsk, Kirov region on December 8, 2016 for posting an online link to a banned web site; **UPDATE:** appeal denied)

[http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article\\_id=2287](http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2287)



**Congo, Democratic Republic: Kinshasa**

Cardinal Laurent Monsengwo Pasinya (said "We have learned with indignation, Saturday, February 18, of the fire of part of the Major Seminary of Malole by uncivilized people who later spread terror at the nearby Carmelite sisters in Kananga", added that in another attack a "group of about twenty spiteful young people...knocked over the tabernacle, looted the altar, broke benches, and tried to set fire to the church. The community of the Oblate Fathers was not spared")

[http://www.fides.org/en/news/61777-AFRICA\\_DR\\_CONGO\\_Cardinal\\_Monsengwo\\_denounces\\_Acts\\_of\\_vandalism\\_against\\_the\\_Church#.WK52KW8rKM8](http://www.fides.org/en/news/61777-AFRICA_DR_CONGO_Cardinal_Monsengwo_denounces_Acts_of_vandalism_against_the_Church#.WK52KW8rKM8)

**Wednesday February 22, 2017**



**China: Liaoyang, Liaoning province**

**Five Christians arrested in June 2016 for buying and selling “officially forbidden Christian devotional books” have been convicted and sentenced to prison**

Pastor Li Dongzhe (husband of Piao Shunnan, sentenced to seven years' imprisonment, fined US\$14,500)

Piao Shunnan (wife of Pastor Li Dongzhe, sentenced to seven years' imprisonment, fined US\$14,500)

Zhao Chunxia (church accountant, sentenced to five years' imprisonment, fined US\$10,200)

Li Yuan (church secretary, sentenced to five years' imprisonment, fined US\$10,200)

Shi Jinyan (sentenced to three years' imprisonment, fined US\$7,300)

[http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/02/christians-sentenced-for-buying-and\\_26.html](http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/02/christians-sentenced-for-buying-and_26.html)  
<http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/03/more-information-released-on-case-of.html>



**Egypt: el-Arish, Sinai**



Saad Hana (aged 65, father of Medhat, **shot dead**)

Medhat Saad Hakim Hana (aged 45, son of Saad Hana, **shot dead**, body burned)

Nabila Fawzi Hana (aged 65, widow of Saad Hana, mother of Medhat Saad Hakim Hana and Abeer, witnessed their murders, said “At about 10.30 pm, when we were falling asleep, I heard a loud knocking at the door. It made me tense. My son, Medhat, left his room to see who was there. He opened it and two masked men came into the hall. Without asking any questions, one of them shot my son in the head, instantly killing him. When I heard the gunshots I rushed out of my room barefoot and found him lying on the ground, bleeding from his forehead and nose. I screamed, asking them why they shot him. They told me to leave the house and pulled me outside, telling me to not to speak to anyone or go back inside. I noticed another two masked men were waiting inside a grey car near our house...The men went back inside to find my husband. I heard him plead, ‘I’m a sick old man,’ but they didn’t respond. They shot him twice in the head. Then they came out and asked me if I am a Christian. I said I was, then they asked me what my relationship was to the two men. ‘They are my son and husband,’ I told them. They asked their names and I answered. One of them was holding a list of many names and when I gave their names, he looked at the list and ticked them off with a pen...They looted the house and put the stolen things in their car before setting the house on fire. They took about 40 minutes. We’re the only Christian family on the street. I was alone - none of the neighbors helped me - they heard the gunshots but were afraid to come out. I didn’t know what to do. I went back inside and saw the bodies of my son and husband. It was horrific...There isn’t a security plan to protect Christians. The men took 45 minutes. Where were the police while they did this? And the vet, Bahgat William Zakhar, who was killed in front of people during the busy hours of the day, while those who killed him walked 300 meters down the street shouting ‘Allahu akbar’ [Allah is the greatest]. Where was the security? The security failure in North Sinai made those militants target us”)

<http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/news/2017/02/22/militants-kill-two-christians-in-egypts-sinai/>  
<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/5029259/>



### **United States – Louisiana: Metairie**

Michael Sprague (state chaplain, booed during his opening prayer at a town hall meeting, a veteran who led the Pledge of Allegiance was also booed, said “I’ve never been shouted down throughout a time of prayer like that. I’ve never been in a situation like that. It’s sad there wasn’t honor and respect for God...People ask me all the time if I am mad at the people seemingly speaking out against God and Jesus. My answer is that I’m not mad, but I am sad that it has come to this in our country...We need to remember that Jesus has been booed many, many times and He will be booed again”)

<http://christiannews.net/2017/02/28/unhinged-town-hall-attendees-shout-down-louisiana-chaplain-praying-in-the-name-of-jesus/>

**Thursday February 23, 2017**



**Philippines: Quezon City**

Senator Leila de Lima (aged 57, former human rights attorney, accused President Duterte of being a "sociopathic serial killer" on [February 21, 2017](#); **UPDATE**: arrest warrant on drug trafficking charges issued, took refuge in her Senate office)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Duterte%E2%80%99s-harsh-critic-Leila-De-Lima-arrested-40029.html>



**Egypt: el-Arish, Sinai**

Abeer (daughter of Saad Hana and Nabila Fawzi Hana, husband and children escaped their home hours before ISIL gunmen appeared)

Kamel Youssef (aged 40, plumber, **shot dead** in front of his wife and children after the ISIL gunmen failed to find the husband of Abeer, home set on fire)

<https://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2017/02/24/Egyptian-Coptic-Christian-killed-house-torched.html>

[http://staging.hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/M/ML\\_EGYPT?SITE=AP&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT&CTIME=2017-02-24-02-52-34](http://staging.hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/M/ML_EGYPT?SITE=AP&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT&CTIME=2017-02-24-02-52-34)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/5029259/>



**United States - Ohio**

Elizabeth Johnson (mother of 10, suspended from Facebook on [February 9, 2017](#) after posting Biblical passages on homosexuality; **UPDATE**: reinstated)

<http://www.christianpost.com/news/facebook-apologizes-for-suspending-christian-mom-over-post-on-homosexuality-175779/>

**Friday February 24, 2017**



### **Philippines: Quezon City**

Senator Leila de Lima (aged 57, former human rights attorney, accused President Duterte of being a "sociopathic serial killer" on [February 21, 2017](#); arrest warrant on drug trafficking charges issued on [February 23, 2017](#), took refuge in her Senate office;

**UPDATE:** surrendered to police, said “It is my honor to be imprisoned for the things I am fighting for. Please pray for me...As I have been saying all along, I am innocent. There is no truth to the charges I benefited from the drug trade, that I received money and that I coddled drug convicts. The truth will come out at the right time. They will not be able to silence me and stop me from fighting for the truth and justice and against the daily killings and repression by the Duterte regime”)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Duterte%E2%80%99s-harsh-critic-Leila-De-Lima-arrested-40029.html>



### **China: Beijing**

Pastor Jin Tianming (as of [September 21, 2012](#) has been fighting the police suppression of the Shouwang Church, which cannot obtain a meeting place and whose congregants have been arrested more than 1600 times including 22 this past Sunday and lost more than 60 jobs; **UPDATE:** still under house arrest, church still without a meeting place)

### **China: Xinjiang province**

#### **Police raided the homes of several Christians without warrants and destroyed religious literature**

Chen Daihu

Peng Zuorong

Liu Shouqun

Zhao Jinhong

Jia Qiuyue

Fu Qun (said “The police officers searched every corner of the [home] church. They took away the offering box, the books, the crosses, basically anything. They removed the crosses and the posters on the walls of every household”)

Zhou Jianhua

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/02/pastor-under-extreme-surveillance.html>

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/03/churches-seven-christian-homes-raided.html>



### **Thailand: Bangkok**

Chen Guiqiu (wife of imprisoned human rights attorney Xie Yang, 14 year old daughter detained and released in China, fled China and illegally entered the country)

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/05/abc-news-ap-exclusive-china-lawyers.html>



### **Pakistan: Lahore**

Kamran Chaudhry (journalist, wrote on the increase of incitement to religious violence in the country's media)

<http://www.ucanews.com/news/pakistans-dangerous-media-war/78415>



### **Kazakhstan: Astana**

Asaf Gadzhiaga ogly Guliyev (aged 43, husband, Azeri citizen, arrested on [January 18, 2017](#) for sharing his religious beliefs with KNB secret police informants; **UPDATE**: sentenced to 5 years' restricted freedom)

[http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article\\_id=2262](http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2262)



### **Israel: Holot refugee camp, Negev desert**

Tesfabrhan (Eritrean refugee, reported to have said “I left Eritrea because of religious persecution. I have been in Israel for over five years. I am now persecuted by two governments that have failed to protect me: the Eritrean government that forced me to leave my country and my family, and the Israeli government that ignores my asylum request and treats me like a criminal by putting me in Holot...I am a Sunday school teacher and preacher. I preach in the prison. But it is difficult, I am continuously treated unfairly by the prison guards”, Christian religious practice and prayer gatherings are prohibited in the camp)

<https://barnabasfund.org/news/Holot-A-forgotten-persecution>



### **Egypt: Ismailia**

Mina Thabet (**UPDATE:** said that about 75 Christian families totaling hundreds of persons have fled the Sinai following the recent murders of several Christians, some had received phoned death threats from Islamic militants)

[http://staging.hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/M/ML\\_EGYPT?SITE=AP&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT&CTIME=2017-02-24-02-52-34](http://staging.hosted.ap.org/dynamic/stories/M/ML_EGYPT?SITE=AP&SECTION=HOME&TEMPLATE=DEFAULT&CTIME=2017-02-24-02-52-34)

**Saturday February 25, 2017**



### **China: Wusu, Xinjiang province**

#### **Six women were detained for 15 days and fined US\$145**

Chen Xiangyan (said “We believe in Jesus wholeheartedly. What just happened was not fair. We did not cause trouble. We did not bother the neighbors. All we did was study the Bible. [The police] said that we might be controlled by bad people, but I promised him that we knew what we were doing, because we believed in Jesus, not someone bad. They would not listen to me and directly transferred us to the detention center. They fined each of us 1,000 Yuan [US\$146]”)

Zhu Xiaohua

<http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/03/arrests-and-detentions-sweep-across.html>



### **Egypt: Ismailia**

Michel Antoune (church leader, said in response to Sinai Christians fleeing killings “The state allowed hate speech to flourish, and over time that has turned into action. This the natural result of state indifference”)

<http://www.copticsolidarity.org/2017/02/25/targeted-by-isis-egyptian-christians-flee-violence/>



**Ukraine: Kynakhivtsi village, Ternopil region**

Fr Vitaly Gurev (described how his parishioners stayed overnight in their church to prevent it from seizure by members of another church)

<http://www.pravoslavie.ru/english/101456.htm>



**United Kingdom: Bristol**

Adrian Clark (arrested along with Michael Overd and Michael Stockwell while street preaching on July 6, 2016; **UPDATE**: charges dismissed)

<http://www.christianconcern.com/our-concerns/freedom-of-speech/street-preachers-convicted-for-quoting-bible-in-modern-day-heresy-tri>

**Sunday February 26, 2017**



**Uganda: Kabuna village, Budaka district**

Hassan Muwanguzi (convert; **UPDATE**: arrested on abduction and human sacrifice charges after a convert from Islam [Namusisi Budadu Birye] took refuge with him in 2015 after her father beat her, said “I brought Namusisi into my house after receiving messages that she was badly beaten, and that she needed support due to her newly founded faith in Christ. But now I am falsely charged and being threatened by many Muslims who want to kill me because of the message that has gone all over that I am kidnapping and sacrificing people’s lives in the name of converting them to Christianity”)

<http://morningstarnews.org/2017/03/evangelist-uganda-arrested-on-false-kidnapping-human-sacrifice-claims-he-says/>



**Sudan: Khartoum**

Petr Jasek (aged 53, Czech citizen, arrested in [Khartoum](#) in [December 2015](#) for making a video for Voice of the Martyrs on Christian persecution and financially aiding a wounded Christian; convicted in [Khartoum](#) on [January 29, 2017](#) of 'waging war against the state, violating restrictions in military areas, spreading rumors to defame the state, and inciting strife between communities', sentenced to 23 and a half years' imprisonment; **UPDATE:** pardoned by President Omar Bashir during a visit from the Czech Foreign Minister, returned to Prague aboard the Foreign Minister's aircraft)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/01/4874643/>



### **United Kingdom: Oxford**

Shahriar Ashrafxhorasani (aged 33, convert from Islam, graduate student in theology, Church of England ordinand, reported to have been prohibited from asking questions during a university lecture on Islam, said “The lecture was at best a very poor Islamic apologetic, and at worst academically dishonest and misleading. While the government is rightly concerned about Islamophobia, there is no concern whatsoever for Christianophobia”, has filed a complaint with the university)

<http://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/apostate-accuses-oxford-university-of-islamic-bias>

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/christian-accuses-oxford-of-bias-g8mss9w02>

**Monday February 27, 2017**



### **Malaysia: Kuala Lumpur**

Pastor Raymond Koh Keng Joo (aged 62, husband of Susanna, father, questioned in [2011](#) for converting Muslims to Christianity, case dropped for lack of evidence; abducted by 5 armed and masked men in [Petaling Jaya](#) on [February 13, 2017](#), police initially refused to file a report despite witness accounts of the abduction; **UPDATE:** no word of his whereabouts)

Susanna (aged 61, wife of Raymond Koh Keng Joo, said “I don’t know what is happening. I appeal to whoever has taken him not to harm him. He is a good husband, father and pastor, who helps the poor. My husband has been involved in Harapan Komuniti, a community work project which he set up more than 10 years ago and which involves giving free tuition classes to children and English lessons to adults...My children and I are very anxious ... But I am very thankful and overwhelmed by the love and generosity

of God's people. So many messages of support and encouragement have come in. God is good. He is faithful. Please continue to pray for his early release in a safe condition. Pray also pray for my and my children's safety. Let us persevere in prayer for the prayers of the righteous avails much. Let us continue to love God and do good to our neighbors. Raymond would be very happy today if he knows not only Malaysia is praying for him but also the whole world”)

Rev Dr Eu Hong Seng (**UPDATE:** wrote “Members of the community pray the authorities would be able to locate Koh... We ask the authorities to conduct a quick and thorough investigation into this incident and bring to justice its perpetrators. We pray for the success of law enforcement and investigating officers to locate the missing pastor and bring him to safety. The work of people of faith in such communities must be free from threats of violence and intimidation”)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/02/4943875/>



#### **Kazakhstan: Satpayev, Karaganda region**

Karlygash Zholomanova (indicted on [February 17, 2017](#) for distributing religious literature; **UPDATE:** fined US\$728)

[http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article\\_id=2281](http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2281)



#### **Iran**

Robert Biglarian (Member of Parliament, reported to have said “Recently, a group of extremist Muslims destroyed an Armenian church in Sava near Marivan County. Armenians have voiced their concern over this issue and officials are investigating to find those responsible”)

<http://mohabatnews.com/en/?p=3365>



#### **Uzbekistan: Almalyk**

Zinaida Brislavsky (wife of Pyotr Brislavsky, home raided by police with a warrant to search for illegal drugs, CDs, DVDs, and religious literature including an 1895 book on Russian monasticism seized, no questions were asked about drugs)

Pyotr Brislavsky (husband of Zinaida Brislavsky)



[http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article\\_id=2268](http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2268)



## Uganda

Namusisi Budadu Birye (aged 22, beaten by her father after converting on [November 12, 2015](#) to Christianity from Islam, rescued by her neighbors in [Nandere village, Kadama sub-county, Kibuku district](#); **UPDATE**: found by police, testified “My father mistreated me when I converted to Christianity. I was beaten badly and then sent away from home, and Hassan Muwanguzi housed me”)

<http://morningstarnews.org/2017/03/evangelist-uganda-arrested-on-false-kidnapping-human-sacrifice-claims-he-says/>



## Sudan

Petr Jasek (aged 53, husband of Wanda, Czech citizen, arrested in [Khartoum](#) in [December 2015](#) for making a video for Voice of the Martyrs on Christian persecution and financially aiding a wounded Christian; convicted in [Khartoum](#) on [January 29, 2017](#) of 'waging war against the state, violating restrictions in military areas, spreading rumors to defame the state, and inciting strife between communities', sentenced to 23 and a half years' imprisonment; pardoned by President Omar Bashir during a visit from the Czech Foreign Minister, returned to Prague aboard the Foreign Minister's aircraft on [February 26, 2017](#); **UPDATE**: spoke in [Prague, Czech Republic](#) about his experiences after his arrest “The first two months were probably the most severe for me because I was placed in a cell together with members of the Islamic State, who humiliated me as a Christian. It then escalated into humiliation and physical beatings, and psychological torture and humiliation”, had been moved five times between "terrible" prisons, once was placed in a refrigerated cell)

Abdulmonem Abdumawla Issa Abdumawla (convert; **UPDATE**: still in captivity despite his conviction as an accomplice of the now-pardoned Petr Jasek)

Rev Hassan Abdelrahim Tawor (husband; **UPDATE**: still in captivity despite his conviction as an accomplice of the now-pardoned Petr Jasek)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/02/4944112/>



## Egypt: el-Arish, Sinai

Mina Magdy (Sinai University dentistry school student, has been living in a Coptic church with 70 other Christian students after the recent increase in the murder of Christians began, said "They [university officials] kept reassuring us that the situation is safe and ignoring our demands [to transfer]. Now, we're too scared to go. What are we supposed to do? I only have one semester to go, but others still have two or three years left until graduation. What are they going to do?")

### **Egypt: Ismailia**

Fr Kirillus Ibrahim (confirmed that more than 100 Coptic families have fled the Sinai due to recent killings)

Sefein Morkos (aged 89, fled his home after receiving death threats, said: "What a shame. After 55 years in Arish, I leave it fleeing with nothing but the clothes on my back and my cane. I can't believe it. I can't believe it...I lived in Arish for 12 years under Israeli occupation. They never did anything to us. Now this is happening to us, and the government is silent and unable to protect us! I have been through a lot in my lifetime, and I fought for Egypt. But what I'm experiencing at the end of my life is unfair. I can't live anywhere but Arish. It is my land")

Angele Attia (widow of Attia Shehata, mother, fled her home in el-Arish after receiving death threats)

Said Sameh Adel Fawzy (aged 35, plumbing supply salesman, nephew of Saad Hanam, described his uncle's and cousin's murder)

Wafaa Fawzy (sister-in-law of Saad Hanam, said "They're thirsty for the blood of any Christian. They were pretty clear when they said they won't leave any Christian in peace. They want an Islamic state")

Maher Fayeze (nephew of Saad Hanam, said "My uncle and cousin were killed in their house. After they killed them, they burned the house and left. All of these killings occurred in 10 days, and the targeting of Copts is constant. We want to be able to live. The country is shutting us up so that the government doesn't look bad and seems to be in control. Any talk of security control is lies...At first, they [the police] would say that they [the Islamists] are outside of the city. How were these extremists, most of whom are young men in their 20s, able to enter the heart of the city which is studded with military, police and intelligence? And how are the weapons passed to them?")

Sameh Mansour (civil servant, son-in-law of Saad Hanam, fled his home in el-Arish after receiving death threats, said "Now that the killing has become daily, the media has taken notice...Since the January 25 revolution, we've been dying slowly. We can't go to our jobs or live a normal life with our kids. We can't sleep or eat", told that his request for a transfer to a less dangerous location would not be approved by the government)

Nermeen (aged 9, sister of Nancy, relative of Saad Hanam, fled her home with her mother)

Nancy (aged 7, sister of Nermeen, relative of Saad Hanam, fled her home with her mother)

Awatef (said to a priest "No, your holiness. This suffering is too much and we are tired. Which god would allow this torture? Enough with the talk that doesn't mend the wounds! Our children and men are being killed in front of us. We fled our homes and you're still repeating that God is consoling us, and then you return to your homes and your churches

away from us....Where is the [Coptic] Pope? And where is our Bishop Kosman [the bishop of the North Sinai dioceses] who shut the door of the cathedral on our faces when we asked to hide there or at least put our children there. We see Syria and Iraq on television, but we see no coverage of Sinai, except for lies”)

Ezzat Yacoub Ishak (blacksmith, fled with his two sons, said “The security forces, they’re all hiding and scared for their lives, scared to confront those people. There is no security. Yes, there are military and police at the check points, but for my protection as a human there is nothing”)

Mina Misak (aged 20, son of Misak Nasrallah Misak, father shot dead in 2016 as he left his hospital, said “It tore me to pieces when I found out, and now it’s even worse - there’s no reason to stay. It’s difficult to do anything. Most of my friends and family have left. And Muslims are scared too, of course”)

Nabil (fled his home, said “In el-Arish, there are seven checkpoint buildings lining the road to town, but inside, you hardly see a soldier. Whenever there’s an attack they come after we telephone them, sometimes days later, and ask for descriptions of the killers. But that’s all”)

Reda (parent, grandparent, civil servant, said: “I don’t want to stay there and die as a casualty in the war that has hit el-Arish. If they allow us we will stay here until the terrorism is over and the government makes peace”)

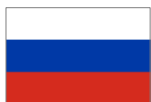
Fayez (shop owner, fled his home, said “Hopefully we’ll find a home and be able to stay here, but I don’t know how I would move my business. Daily life looks normal in el-Arish, until you hear about terrorists shooting people in their own homes”)

Nabil Shukrallah (church worker, said that more than 100 Christian families have fled the Sinai, said “They’re exhausted, with urgent needs for food and children’s clothing. They’re terrified of the violence and brutality”)

<http://www.copticsolidarity.org/2017/02/27/egypts-christians-flee-terror-in-north-sinai-security-void-2/>

<http://www.copticsolidarity.org/2017/02/27/egypts-christians-flee-terror-in-north-sinai-security-void/>

<https://sputniknews.com/middleeast/201702281051098231-egyptian-christians-flee-sinai/>



#### **Russia: Tver**

Pastor Sergei Merkulov (case dismissed)

[http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article\\_id=2306](http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2306)



## **Niger**

Jeffery Woodke (aged 55, husband, missionary, U.S. citizen, abducted on [October 14, 2016](#) from [Arcata](#) by armed men who forced him to strip to his underwear, guard and housekeeper killed; **UPDATE**: still in captivity)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2016/10/4688386/>

**Tuesday February 28, 2017**



### **India: Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh state**

Avnish (wedding to a Hindu by the name of Anukampa was interrupted by Hindu radicals who invaded her church, police refused to intervene, Anukampa's statements that he was not converting to Christianity were ignored, agreed to move her wedding to a Vedic temple at a later date)

Sajan K George (**UPDATE**: said "With this [current anti-conversion] law the fascist forces oppress and humiliate the tiny Christian population, even during a special event such as marriage...What is more serious is that the police are saffronized and collaborate with Hindu extremists")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Madhya-Pradesh,-Hindu-radicals-interrupt-a-mixed-marriage-in-a-church-40079.html>



### **Uzbekistan: Uchtepe district, Tashkent**

Andrei Li (husband of Tursuna Li, home raided by police, Bibles and personal electronics seized)

Tursuna Li (wife of Andrei Li)

[http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article\\_id=2268](http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2268)



### **Palestine: Gaza**

Fr Mario da Silva (Brazilian citizen, pastor of the only Latin-rite Catholic church in Gaza, said of his 350 families "The situation in Gaza is hard. After the [2014] war, we received international aid. However, six months later they forgot about us, as if everything had been resolved. Instead, problems remain, like the lack of jobs, gas, water, and electricity. On some days, there is electricity only for three hours. It's cold here and people do not know how to heat their homes. We have no drinking water because what comes out [of the tap] is salty, hence, we have to buy bottled water...People here are starting to think seriously that it would be better to get into another war because then at least there would be aid. It is a sad and terrible thought but it shows how tragic things are. The world pays attention to us only when there is a war...The young people who were authorized to visit the holy sites in Jerusalem and Bethlehem last Easter did not return. They remained in the city where Jesus was born and found a job, laying the foundations for a new life. That is why, here, people want to leave...Christians live mainly with debts, buying on credit from the supermarket and promising to pay later. Christian charities help out by paying off the debts. The jobless are forced to beg and count on the generosity of others...Preserving the Christian faith is the foundation of our social work. We have to give them a decent life. Our attention goes to the sick, the suffering, those in difficulty with this spirit...preserving the integrity of the faith, defending it, and teaching Christians how to live amid hardships and a Muslim majority...upholding Christian values like forgiveness, charity, and fraternal love is hard. That is why Christians here are heroes. They know how to keep the faith in a hostile environment and stand more and more as an example for those, even in the West, who experience dimly and superficially their Christian faith")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/For-Gaza-priest,-a-forgotten-people-sees-hope-in-war-to-receive-aid-40063.html>



## Sudan

Rev Yat Michael (**UPDATE:** said in [Juba, South Sudan](#) "In 2014, I travelled back to Khartoum to take up a new assignment with the South Sudan Evangelical Presbyterian Church. Little did I know that Sudan had declared war against Christians. So, I was arrested the second day after preaching in a certain church in Khartoum. That is when I was put in jail that lasted me nine months...[the government fears] that they [Christian ministers] can easily reach out to the Muslims and win them to Christ. They do not allow pastors to reach out to Muslims in Khartoum, Darfur and the Nuba mountains. These are strictly Muslim dominated areas")

<http://www.christianpost.com/news/sudan-fears-muslims-will-be-led-jesus-declares-war-against-christians-pastor-176175/>



## **Russia**

Donald J Ossevaarde (U.S. citizen, husband of Ruth, convicted on [August 14, 2016](#) on illegal missionary charges after hosting prayer meetings and Bible study in his home, fined US\$700; appeal denied [September 30, 2016](#); second appeal denied on [November 15, 2016](#); Supreme Court appeal denied on [January 20, 2017](#); **UPDATE**: Constitutional Court appeal denied)

[http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article\\_id=2306](http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2306)



## **United Kingdom Bristol**

**Two street preachers arrested on [July 6, 2016](#) were convicted of public order offences, the prosecutor stated "To say to someone that Jesus is the only God is not a matter of truth. To the extent that they are saying that the only way to God is through Jesus, that cannot be a truth", the judge stated that quoting parts of the King James Bible in the context of modern British society "must be considered to be abusive and is a criminal matter"**

Michael Overd (**UPDATE**: fined £2016 - US\$2495)

Michael Stockwell (fined £2016 - US\$2495)

<http://www.christianconcern.com/our-concerns/freedom-of-speech/street-preachers-convicted-for-quoting-bible-in-modern-day-heresy-tri>

**February 2017, date unknown**



## **Vietnam: Ba Don, Quang Binh province**

**Two ministers were abducted at the airport by undercover security men in [late February 2017](#), stripped, beaten, robbed**

Rev Nguyen Trung Ton (arrested in [2011](#); **UPDATE**)

Rev Nguyen Viet Tu

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Two-Protestant-clergymen-abducted-and-beaten-40098.html>



### India: Chhattigarh state

Raghuram Mandavi (son of Bagathram Mandavi, said he would convert to Hinduism in [September 2016](#) to ensure that his father would be buried; **UPDATE:** home demolished by Hindu radicals, said "we don't have freedom to live as we want, all our movements are tracked closely by the Hindu radicals. Now that our homes are demolished, we do not have a place to live in the village, all our belongings including utensils and clothes became unusable. We are in this situation for no crime, except practicing the religion we like")

<http://www.persecution.org/2017/03/15/chhattisgarhs-christians-face-challenges-on-multiple-fronts/>



### Sri Lanka

Fr Michael Lapsley (aged 67, expelled from [South Africa](#) in [September 1976](#); injured in [May 1990](#) in [Zimbabwe](#) by a letter bomb sent by a covert branch of the South African apartheid security forces, seriously burned, lost both hands and the vision in one eye; **UPDATE:** met with Christians and Buddhists in [late February 2017](#) to discuss healing the victims and perpetrators of violence, said "After a war or national crisis we can provide water, housing, electricity and other facilities to the people but if there is hatred and bitterness we cannot create a better society...We cannot turn the page of history without reading it. If we want to live in peace, we have to accept the damage done to each other")

<http://www.ucanews.com/news/anti-apartheid-priest-advises-sri-lankans-on-healing-after-war/78544>



### Pakistan: Faisalabad

Mehwish Masih (aged 15, daughter of Babar Masih and Ruqiya Bibi, domestic worker, arrested on [December 8, 2016](#) on allegations of theft of her employer's property after she took unauthorized time off from work for appendicitis, held in house arrest at her employer's home; **UPDATE:** released on bail in the [first week of February 2017](#), returned home, trial pending)

Babar Masih (aged 48, husband of Ruqiya Bibi, father of Mehwish Masih, arrested on [December 8, 2016](#) on allegations of theft of his daughter's employer's property; **UPDATE:** released on bail in the [first week of February 2017](#), trial pending)

Shahid Anwar, diocesan coordinator for Justice and Peace, said "Very often this kind of allegations is levelled against Christian domestic workers by rich home owners because they belong to minorities and marginalized groups. Most of the time, the charges are unfounded. Employers do not want their employees to free themselves from their bondage. The daughter was held at the Tariq home and her father was kept behind bars for many days without due process. This family is innocent and very poor. We are providing them with legal aid, and managed to get interim bail at the High Court in Lahore, but we hope that on March 6 the bail will be confirmed. We stand by these poor victims and shall fight until justice is done")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/-Christian-father-and-daughter-arrested-on-false-charges-of-theft-in-Faisalabad-40089.html>



#### **Somalia: Afgol**

Faduma Osman (aged 35, convert, wife of Suleiman Abdiwahab, mother of four including Ahmed Suleiman, **shot dead on or near February 10, 2017**)

Ahmed Suleiman (aged 11, son of Suleiman Abdiwahab and Faduma Osman, **shot dead on or near February 10, 2017**)

Suleiman Abdiwahab (aged 38, convert, husband of Faduma Osman, father of four including Ahmed Suleiman, shot **on or near February 10, 2017**, hospitalized)

<http://morningstarnews.org/2017/03/islamic-extremists-somalia-kill-secret-christian-son-wound-husband-sources-say/>



#### **Egypt: Cairo**

Ebtehaj Alsanosi Altejani Mostafa (aged 42, convert, wife of a pastor, fled **Sudan** in **2005** after five arrests for converting from Islam; **UPDATE**: abducted by 2 Sudanese, beaten, tortured, repeatedly raped, said "I will not go back to Islam – I hate Islam", awoke on a street after her last beating)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2019/01/kidnapping-torture-in-egypt-of-christian-woman-from-sudan-highlights-convert-pressures/>



#### **Nigeria: Bomo, Zaria, Kaduna state**



Christiana Jacob Abimaje (aged 15, abducted, forcibly converted to Islam)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2020/04/nigerias-kano-state-governor-converts-christian-under-age-girl-to-islam/>



### **United Kingdom: London**

Noushin (convert from Islam, Iranian citizen, granted asylum)

<http://www.christianconcern.com/our-concerns/international-persecution/iran-was-my-egypt-christian-convert-from-islam-finds-asylum-i>



### **Spain**

Archbishop Francisco Javier Martínez (criminal complaint filed after he spoke against gender theory in a homily “There is a pathology behind that. There is a short-sightedness and lack of intelligence...We are equal in dignity but we are not interchangeable”)

<http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/news/2017/08/09/spanish-prosecutor-dismisses-hate-crime-complaint-against-archbishop/>

## **Today's Martyrs**

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<http://todaysmartyrs.org/events/>

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