

Today's Martyrs

Resources for understanding current Christian witness and martyrdom

Events – February 2019

Friday February 1, 2019



Myanmar: Rakhine state

Pastor Tun Nu (aged 41, convert, husband, father of three, abducted from his home by 5 armed men on [January 19, 2019](#); **UPDATE**: reported to have been killed)

<https://www.persecution.org/2019/02/05/kidnapped-pastor-killed-myanmars-rakhine-state/>



Tajikistan: Khujand

Shamil Rasulovich Khakimov (aged 68, widower, pensioner, harassed with repeated phone calls from police on [January 28, 2019](#) after his number was found on the phone of a detained Christian; **UPDATE**: summoned for interrogation at the police station)

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2463

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2484

Saturday February 2, 2019



Syria: Aleppo

Fr Ibrahim Alsabagh OFM (aged 47; **UPDATE**: said of his home "It is a wounded city, with broken wings. Its economy is destroyed and must be rebuilt almost from scratch. There is a widespread feeling of sadness and bitterness. When we are asked how things are, we usually reply that the war has just begun, because now the wounds are beginning to emerge in all their depth...The deepest wounds concern the human being, the heart and

the soul of many children raised during the war which show evident psychological fragility...As Christians we are always threatened with disappearing, in Syria as in the whole Middle East. The community lives suspended between heaven and earth, we are hung on the Cross, in suffering, in bitterness. Eight years ago we entered a tunnel that, even today, it does not seem to have an end..."

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Fr.-Ibrahim:-Syria,-a-football-at-the-feet-of-the-international-powers-46152.html>

Sunday February 3, 2019



India: Ishgar village, Uttar Pradesh state

Fr Rocky Shah (diocesan spokesman, **UPDATE**: condemned an arson attack on a shrine with a statue of Mary the mother of Jesus)

Bishop Basil Bhuriya (said "[I] "visited the Grotto [shrine] around 9.30 pm, the same day, it was very sad to witness the scene, police were guarding the place, I said prayers at the Grotto and consoled our people who were present. There are nearly 4,000 Catholics in this Parish. A case has been registered against unidentified persons")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Statue-of-Mary-set-on-fire-in-Madhya-Pradesh-46195.html>

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/politics-suspected-in-burning-of-marian-statue-in-india/84451>



Ukraine: Gnezdichno village, Ternopil province

Fr Stephan Balan (injured in a brawl led by supporters of the Kiev Patriarchate during a church takeover, beaten by police, said "I think they're waiting for the official registration of the charter, then there will be an official storming. I counted 95 people today — people that never come to church. Our parishioners, who are always in church, numbered more than 60")

<http://orthochristian.com/119124.html>

Monday February 4, 2019



Iran: Esfahan

Sina Moloudian (aged 26, convert, arrested without warrant in his home on [January 23, 2019](#), Bibles and CDs seized; **UPDATE**: released on bail)

<http://mohabatnews.com/en/?p=4156>



Ukraine: Dubno, Rivne province

Bishop Pimen (said that several of his priests had received summons to report to Security service offices for interrogation and that it was clear that they were looking for incriminating information against those who remained loyal to the Moscow Patriarchate)

<http://orthochristian.com/119195.html>

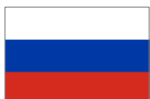
Wednesday February 6, 2019



Pakistan: Cholistan, Wichra Bangla, Bahawalpur

Sadaf Amir aka Sadaf Masih (aged 13, abducted, forced into an Islamic marriage)

<https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/young-pakistani-christian-girl-aged-13-abducted-and-forced-into-islamic-marriage>



Russia: Oryol

Dennis Christensen (aged 46, Danish citizen, husband of Irina, arrested on [May 25, 2017](#) for 'continuing the activities of a banned extremist organization', ordered held for 2 months pending trial; detention extended on [July 20, 2017](#) to November 23, 2017; denied bail on [November 20, 2017](#), detention extended to February 23, 2018; **UPDATE**: convicted, sentenced to 6 years' imprisonment)

Irina Christensen (wife of Dennis Christensen, said "It is terrible, a 6-year jail sentence for believing in God. I couldn't believe that such a thing could happen in Russia")

Yaroslav Sivulsky (said "The sentence causes only great regret. They have convicted a man who has committed no crime. It is sad that in Russia it has again become a crime to read the Bible, to keep its commandments, and to talk about your faith with other people")

<https://www.ecumenicalnews.com/article/jailing-of-jehovahs-witness-triggers-warning-of-a-crackdown-on-russian-minorities/60647.htm>

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2450



France: Nimes

At least 10 churches were desecrated within 2 weeks

Bishop Robert Wattebled (denounced a church vandalism attack in which the tabernacle was opened and consecrated hosts were scattered on the ground, and a cross was drawn on the wall with feces, wrote "The sign of the cross and the Blessed Sacrament have been the subject of serious injurious actions. This act of profanation hurts us all in our deepest convictions")

<https://catholicherald.co.uk/news/2019/02/15/eucharist-desecrated-and-statues-smashed-in-series-of-french-church-attacks/>



United States – Iowa: Des Moines

Jake Estell (member of the Business Leaders in Christ at the University of Iowa, the organization prevailed in Federal court against the banning of the group by the University, said "We are grateful the court protected our rights today—to let us have the same right as all student groups to express our viewpoints freely on campus")

Kristina Schrock (InterVarsity Graduate Christian Fellowship president, brought suit in Federal Court on **August 6, 2018** against the University of Iowa in **Iowa City** after it decertified all student groups that had restrictions on officers including adherence to an article of faith; **UPDATE**: thanked the court when it ruled in favor of Business Leaders in Christ, her Fellowship's suit is still pending)

<https://catholicherald.co.uk/news/2019/02/11/judge-rules-in-favor-of-christian-club-kicked-off-iowa-campus/>

Thursday February 7, 2019



India: Chapar village, Sultanpur district, Uttar Pradesh state

Prayer service in a home attacked by 25 Hindu radicals, Bibles burned

Ranjeet Kumar Gautam (husband of Bindu, father of Swasti and five others, home attacked, said “Before the Thakurs [high caste members] attacked the worship service, they took two photos of Hindu idols from my neighbor’s house and tore it and threw it in my backyard. They tried to create havoc alleging that we are insulting their gods, but we defended ourselves saying that they must enquire from the villagers about our conduct...They seized each worshipper – men and women – and beat us with wooden sticks, with their legs and fists. They spared nobody except children. Every single Christian was surrounded by five or six men and, taking turns, they ruthlessly beat us. It seemed that the ordeal will never come to an end, and that we will all get killed. The Thakurs forced us to lick their feet with our tongues, threatening to assault us further if we did not comply. Eight of us did what they said, to save ourselves from their brutality. They forced us to say, ‘Jai Shri Ram [Hail, lord Ram],’ to which three Christians complied, but the rest of us refused and said that we would rather die...In their barbarousness, they threw Mukesh [Kumar] into the manhole that was filled with human excrement, and when he struggled to escape, they pulled him back and threw him in again. Then they pulled him up and started to kick him. They tossed him among each, using him like a football with their feet. As a result of the brutal assault, blood began to ooze out of Mukesh’s ears and eyes”, went into hiding, later said “Nearly every day the attackers come and threaten my family, saying that if I register a complaint with police, they will kill me. My family is very scared”)

Bindu (wife of Ranjeet Kumar Gautam, mother of Swasti and five others, home attacked, later unable to find work while her husband was in hiding)

Swasti (aged 19, daughter of Bindu and Ranjeet Kumar Gautam, recently engaged, home attacked, beaten with sticks, slapped, kicked in the abdomen)

Pastor Om Prakash (said “They were not expecting so many of us there and so got busy beating all of us and could not focus on Gautam alone...They snatched our bags, cell phones and collected all the Bibles – about 45 in number, and tore them apart...The assailants chased us away from the hospital. We somehow reached the local police station to report the matter to the police at 10 in the night, and a group of Bajrang Dal [the RSS paramilitary youth wing] people were standing outside the police station. They threatened to kill us if we filed a complaint against them, and we had to flee for our lives”, suffered injuries to his head, shoulder, ribs, and hip, later said "I start to feel dizzy, and my head spins even after a little amount of work. I have developed breathing difficulty and cannot tolerate loud sounds. I am also unable to walk without a back-support belt")

Gyanmati Nishad (aged 35, blind, slapped and punched, later hospitalized)

Mukesh Kumar (aged 26, beaten, pushed into a cesspool, kicked until he bled from eyes and ears, later hospitalized)

Rakesh (seriously injured)

Bhanu Pratap (seriously injured)

Pastor P David (**UPDATE:** later said “It is a matter of shame that peaceful people, meeting and fellowshiping inside their own homes, are attacked by religious extremists. Not only their fellowship is disrupted, but they are beaten mercilessly and are not allowed to get their medical examination nor even allowed to register a police complaint. It is a mockery of law and order, there is chaos in the country”)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Christians-beaten-during-prayer-in-Uttar-Pradesh-46210.html>
<https://morningstarnews.org/2019/03/after-terrifying-attack-in-uttar-pradesh-india-host-of-house-church-in-hiding/>



Ethiopia

Adane (aged 25, alias, convert, police officer, reported to have been arrested after admitting he was a Christian and refusing to return to Islam, dismissed from the police, relocated to another area of the country)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2019/02/ethiopia-ethnic-somali-christian-police-man-forced-to-relocate-after-talking-about-his-faith/>



Egypt: Nawasir village, Esna, Luxor province

Marnia Milad (aged 18, disappeared)

<http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=2338&A=37542>



United States - Alabama

Pastor Alan Cross (criticized the state prison system for not allowing Muslim clergy to attend to a Muslim prisoner who was about to be executed)

United States - New York: Manhattan

Cardinal Timothy Dolan (**UPDATE:** responded to an attack on him by Governor Andrew Cuomo over his criticism of the governor for passage of a new abortion bill)

"Today...Governor Cuomo linked me with the 'religious right'...This is something new from the governor. He did not consider me part of the 'religious right' when seeking my help with the minimum wage increase, prison reform, protection of migrant workers, a welcome of immigrants and refugees, and advocacy for college programs for the state's inmate population, which we were happy to partner with him on, because they were our causes too. I guess I was part of the 'religious left' in those cases...The governor also continues his attempt to reduce the advocacy for the human rights of the pre-born infant to a 'Catholic issue', an insult to our allies of so many religions, or none at all..."

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/10/opinion/alabama-domineque-ray-death-row.html>
<http://cardinaldolan.org/index.php/hiding-behind-labels/>

Friday February 8, 2019



India: Jharkhand state

Pastor Girish Chander Marandi (attacked after he and other pastors confronted a neighbor over his attacks on Christians the previous day)

India: Jharkhand state

Fr Alphonse Aind SJ (middle school principal, arrested on [June 22, 2018](#) on fabricated charges of organizing the abduction and rape of five social activists by six Pathagadi tribal gunmen after the gunmen had seized his automobile, denied bail; **UPDATE**: still in jail)

India: Musiri village, Tiruchirappalli district, Tamil Nadu state

Pastor Edwin Joseph (church damaged in an arson attack, said "At around 4:50 in the morning, we saw burning fire inside the church. From the foul smell of kerosene oil all around and a long wooden stick lying there, we came to know that a cloth tied to the wooden stick was dipped in the fuel and was thrown inside through the open space, causing the fire")

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/indian-priest-bailed-in-rape-case-must-stay-in-jail/84475>
<https://morningstarnews.org/2019/03/churches-deprived-of-their-worship-buildings-in-tamil-nadu-india/>
<https://morningstarnews.org/2019/04/food-deprivation-beatings-and-jail-as-christians-suffer-in-jharkhand-india/>



Pakistan: Lahore

Senator Kamran Michael (**UPDATE**: arrested on corruption charges)

<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/head-line-news-details/7038>



Syria: Damascus

Patriarch Ignatius Ephrem II (aged 55, targeted by a suicide bomber dressed as a priest during a [June 19, 2016](#) Pentecost [Eastern calendar] commemoration of the Assyrian genocide in [al-Wusta district, Qamishli](#), escaped injury when the bomber was stopped by security and set off his bomb, 3 security guards were killed and 5 wounded; **UPDATE**: reported to have held a reception for diplomats who have been returning to re-open their embassies)

Cardinal Mario Zenari (apostolic nuncio [Vatican ambassador]; **UPDATE**: reported to have attended the reception)

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/65535->

[ASIA SYRIA Embassies re open in Damascus Cardinal Zenari good sign](#)

Saturday February 9, 2019



Pakistan: Lahore

Pakistan: Lahore Shafaqat Emmanuel (aged 40, husband of Shagufta Bibi, father of two, handicapped, arrested on [July 27, 2013](#) for allegedly sending a blasphemous text message; confessed sending the blasphemous text message after being tortured and told by the police that his wife would be tortured; moved to the jail hospital with multiple bed sores which are reportedly more than 3 inches deep, will require surgery if he survives; found guilty at trial on [April 4, 2014](#), sentenced to death; **UPDATE**: still imprisoned on death row)

Shagufta Kauser (aged 40, wife of Shafaqat Emmanuel, mother of two, school worker, arrested on [July 27, 2013](#) for allegedly sending a blasphemous text message; forced along with her children to watch the torture of her husband by the police; found guilty at trial on [April 4, 2014](#), sentenced to death; **UPDATE**: still imprisoned on death row)

Pakistan: Rawalpindi

Zafar Bhatti (aged 49, husband of Nawab Bibi, unemployed due to health reasons, illiterate, arrested on blasphemy charges on [July 23, 2012](#) for allegedly sending 3 blasphemous text messages to extremist Islamic cleric Molvi Abrar Ahmed; convicted in Rawalpindi on

May 3, 2017, sentenced to life imprisonment; **UPDATE:** appeal underway, said "I've been suffering in jail for over 5 years for something I did not do. The isolation and hardship of jail has caused me to develop diabetes. I was arrested under questionable circumstances, and despite there being no evidence found against me I am still in the jail...There are many security concerns within jail but I still stand firm in the faith. I believe God will provide justice to me soon")

Nawab Bibi (aged 70, wife of Zafar Bhatti, housemaid, abused by her employer, hospitalized due to poor health, released)

<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/head-line-news-details/7039>

<https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/falsely-accused-zafar-bhatti-awaits-appeal-of-life-sentence-for-blasphemy>



Uzbekistan: Tashkent

Umida (convert, wife, mother of a daughter and a 2 year old son, **killed when her husband slit her throat** at the airport when she tried to flee the country, had previously been locked in her home after her husband discovered her conversion)

<https://barnabasfund.org/us/news/uzbek-woman-killed-by-husband-because-of-her-christian-faith>



Madagascar: on the road between Soanavela and Mahitsy

Fr Nicolas Ratodisoa (shot twice in the back by robbers while returning home after a communion call, hospitalized)

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/65593->

[AFRICA MADAGASCAR Church s strong position for the death of Fr Nicolas victim of a road ambush after bringing the Eucharist to a sick person](http://www.fides.org/en/news/65593-)



Nigeria: Angwan Barde village, Kajuru county, Kaduna state

John Abbah (**killed**)

Moses Kabiru (**killed**)

Philemon Gomna (**killed**)

Samaila Jonathan (killed)

Maria Abbah (killed)

Ladi Samaila (killed)

Mairo Daniel (killed)

Marvelous Daniel (killed)

John Samaila (killed)

Joseph Samaila (killed)

Ja'afaru Samaila (aged 21, said "We heard gun shots, and this forced me and my family to remain in our bedrooms as it was difficult for us to run out of the house. The Fulani gunmen surrounded our house and were shooting and shouting, 'Allahu akbar [God is greater].' They killed my father, mother, two brothers, and one of my sisters-in-law")

Daniel Audu (aged 48, village head, said "We have never had any misunderstanding with the Fulani herdsmen, so I don't know why they attacked our village. Ten members of my community, including a pregnant woman, were killed during the attack, thus making the unborn child to be the eleventh victim")

<https://morningstarnews.org/2019/02/at-least-40-christians-killed-in-two-attacks-in-kaduna-state-nigeria/>



France: Dijon, Cote-d'Or

At least 10 churches were desecrated within 2 weeks

Fr Emmanuel Pic (church vandalized, tabernacle opened and consecrated hosts scattered, altar cloth stained, missal book torn, said "Nothing of value has been broken, but it is the intent that is very shocking. This is what characterizes profanation...[The damage attacked the] heart of the Catholic faith")

<https://catholicherald.co.uk/news/2019/02/15/eucharist-desecrated-and-statues-smashed-in-series-of-french-church-attacks/>



Colombia: Caucasia, Antioquia state

Pastor Leider Molina (aged 24, shot dead while leaving his church after a service)

<https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2019/02/another-colombian-pastor-killed-leaving-the-church-terrified/>

Sunday February 10, 2019



Iran: Rasht

Pastor Matthias Haghnejad (husband of Anahita Khadeimi; **UPDATE**: arrested by Revolutionary Guards while leading a worship service)

<http://www.aina.org/news/20190313234623.htm>

Monday February 11, 2019



India: Raigarh Tehsil village, Nabarangapur district, Odisha state

Anant Ram Gand (aged 40, convert, husband of Sukbati, father of five including Purno, **beheaded** by Maoist guerrillas at the instigation of radical Hindus)

Purno (aged 6, convert, son of Sukbati and Anant Ram Gand, witnessed his father's murder)

Sukbati (aged 38, convert, widow of Anant Ram Gand)

Shibu Thomas (Persecution Relief; **UPDATE**: said of the murder of Anant Ram Gand "Being a Christian today in India means being harassed every day: if you pray in the family you are beaten, if you pray in a domestic church you are beaten, in the streets you are beaten...I ask the prime minister and the Chief minister of the State to please order a probe. The government should provide compensation to the family and five small children. They should speak clearly against persecution of Christians and to protect freedom of worship. Enough is enough!")

<http://persecutionrelief.org/another-gruesome-murder-odisha/>

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Orissa,-a-Christian-beheaded-for-his-faith-46300.html>

Tuesday February 12, 2019



India

Dr. John Dayal (All India Christian Council; **UPDATE**: reported that the government has cancelled the licenses of 15,000 foreign charity NGOs since 2014, said "Every Indian government, but especially the current one led by the Hindu nationalist BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party], has been hostile to international organizations and media scrutiny...[because they investigate the] real situation, such as extreme poverty, suicides among farmers, rape, human rights violations and civil liberties, and above all religious freedom...India does not usually grant a visa to United Nations special envoys to investigate human rights. It is very hostile to them. This is especially true when Western governments raise questions about the treatment of Christians, Muslims and Dalits...[this] weakens the voice of India's own human rights community, which needs access to domestic and international media to amplify its voice, [but] the truth in the end will come to the fore and the human rights community will find alternative ways to speak out and put the spotlight on what is happening...the lives of millions of beneficiaries who receive aid from the West are at risk. What started as mere suspicion towards groups headquartered in New York or Europe has morphed into full blown paranoia")

India: Kohkameta village, Chhattisgarh state

Munglu Ram Nureti (aged 45. convert, husband of Minka, father of five including Dinesh and Divya Nureti, store looted by Maoist guerrillas, **shot dead** while attempting to escape)

Minka (convert, widow of Munglu Ram Nureti, mother of five)

Dinesh Nureti (aged 25, son of Munglu Ram Nureti Minka)

Divya Nureti (convert, aged 18, daughter of Munglu Ram Nureti Minka, tried to prevent her father's murder)

Pastor Prem Sagar (said "It seems they [the Maoist guerrillas] came for me also. I had developed severe pain in my legs and had to cancel my visit")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Since-2014-the-Modi-government-has-cancelled-the-licence-of-15,000-foreign-NGOs-46231.html>

<https://morningstarnews.org/2019/02/two-christians-killed-in-separate-states-in-india/>



Ukraine: Kulchin village, Volyn province

Archpriest Oleg Tochinsky (diocesan secretary; **UPDATE**: described an attack on a church by members of the Kiev Patriarchate in which a police seal was broken and doors removed)

<http://orthochristian.com/119323.html>



Sweden: Uppsala

Pastor Micael Grenholm (wrote against the government asylum test 'Am I a Christian' which only 60% of Swedish citizens could pass, one application was denied asylum because he could not explain Halloween, another was deported over a minor mistranslation of the Our Father, wrote in particular “Most people agree that the questions converts face are too hard and do not really say anything about whether someone's faith is genuine or not. Several questions display a secular bias and an ignorance of what true Christian faith is about...This is a full-blown catastrophe. Genuine Christians are being deported to countries where Christians are persecuted simply because Swedish government officials are incompetent and hostile towards Christianity”)

<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/regional-news-details/1132>



Nigeria: Shuwa, Madagali county, Adamawa state

Ruth Gauje (aged 32, said “I saw a man who I know to be a Christian and a member of the Church of the Brethren in Shuwa, my home town, shot to death. Also, Bulama, a community leader in Madagali, was shot dead alongside many Christians”)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2019/02/killing-of-christians-continues-in-run-up-to-national-elections-in-nigeria/>

Wednesday February 13, 2019



Egypt: Nawasir village, Esna, Luxor province

Marnia Milad (aged 18, disappeared on [February 7, 2019](#); **UPDATE**: returned home by police)

<http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=2338&A=37542>



Ukraine: Boryspil Airport, Kiev

Archimandrite Gideon Kharon (U.S. citizen, forgave the arsonists who attacked his monastery on [January 25, 2018](#); issued a statement on [February 3, 2018](#) regarding ultranationalist threats against the Tithes Monastery of the Mother of God, Kiev; **UPDATE**: detained upon re-entry to the country after returning from the United States where he had testified to Members of Congress on the situation in the country, passport seized and then declared lost, denied access to attorneys, Members of Parliament, and medication, stripped of his Ukrainian citizenship and deported under armed escort, said "They didn't let me into Ukraine, arguing that my citizenship has been canceled, that it's invalid, although just 15 days ago I flew out without any problems or any kind of court decision...It's just such religious and political pressure and lawlessness that's happening in Ukraine today")

<http://orthochristian.com/119347.html>

Thursday February 14, 2019



India

Sr Concilia Baxia MC (arrested along with an orphanage staffer on human trafficking charges in [Ranchi, Jharkhand state](#) on [July 5, 2018](#); **UPDATE**: still in jail, has been denied bail)

Auxiliary Bishop Theodore Mascarenhas SFX (**UPDATE**: visited Sr Concilia Baxia in jail, said "It was an emotional heartbreaking visit...The poor sister suffers from diabetes and varicose veins. Uprooted from her daily routine, left to suffer alone, all of us, her co-sisters, Superiors, Bishops, priests and all who know her and are convinced of her innocence can only look up to heaven in helplessness and hope, as every attempt to even get bail for her has been brusquely rejected by our judiciary at various levels sometimes in a matter of minutes...Many like her are languishing in jail as under trials waiting for the slow churning of the wheels of justice which often appear to be spun by money power, political clout, massive media propaganda and even blatant manipulation of evidence")

http://www.fides.org/en/news/65564-ASIA_INDIA_A_sister_of_Mother_Teresa_in_prison_the_Church_calls_for_justice



Madagascar

Fr Nicolas Ratodisoa (shot twice in the back by robbers [on the road between Soanavela and Mahitsy](#) while returning home on [February 9, 2019](#) after a communion call, hospitalized;
UPDATE: died of his injuries)

http://www.fides.org/en/news/65593-AFRICA_MADAGASCAR_Church_s_strong_position_for_the_death_of_Fr_Nicolas_victim_of_a_road_ambush_after_bringing_the_Eucharist_to_a_sick_person

Friday February 15, 2019



China: Chengdu, Sichuan province

Family members of Christians who had been detained were reported to have been arrested on charges of 'illegal gathering' after they had assembled outside a police station to get information about their loved ones

Xu Miaozhuang (wife of Elder Su Bingsen, detained)

Xiao Hongliu (wife of Deacon Tan Defu, detained)

Lu Lingzhi (wife of Dai Zhichao, detained along with her child)

Shen Bing (husband of Li Xiaofeng, detained)

<https://www.chinaaid.org/2019/02/spouses-child-of-arrested-house-church.html>



India: Sarwada, Jharkhand state

Fr Masih Prakash Soy (reported on Hindu demands that a bust of a German missionary who had advocated for tribal peoples be removed from in front of a church: "The controversy is a ploy of the ruling BJP to divide tribal people")

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/hindus-oppose-german-missionarys-statue-in-indian-parish/84523>



Burkina Faso: on the road from Lome

Fr Antonio Cesar Fernandez SDB (aged 72, **shot dead** in a jihadist attack, two other priests escaped)

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/65583->

[AFRICA BURKINA FASO The Rector Major of the Salesians May the blood of Fr Antonio Cesar be the seed of Christians faithful followers of Jesus and of young vocations at the service of the Kingdom](#)



United States - District of Columbia

Faith McDonnell (Christian persecution researcher, personal Facebook page deleted after she posted a photo of the 21 Coptic martyrs on the four year anniversary of their murder by the Islamic State [ISIL], appeal denied, further communications unanswered)

<https://stream.org/328684-2/>

Saturday February 16, 2019



Tajikistan: Khujand

Shamil Rasulovich Khakimov (aged 68, widower, pensioner, harassed with repeated phone calls from police on **January 28, 2019** after his number was found on the phone of a detained Christian; summoned for interrogation at the police station on **February 1, 2019**;
UPDATE: arrested)

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2463

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2484

Sunday February 17, 2019



Pakistan: Karachi

Haroon Masih (aged 14, son of Irfan Masih, student, rag picker, beaten and stabbed by a Muslim classmate who was jealous of his academic achievements, hospitalized, lost a kidney in surgery)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/In-Karachi,-Christian-boy-stabbed-by-jealous-classmate-loses-a-kidney-46313.html>

<https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/muslims-classmates-viciously-stab-christian-boy-in-a-murder-attempt-that-left-his-kidney-severed>

Monday February 18, 2019



Pakistan

Kashmala Munawar (aged 23, legs injured in the [September 22, 2013](#) bombing of All Saints Church in [Peshawar](#), right leg became infected and was amputated, told as of [October 20, 2013](#) that she needs treatment in a Western hospital; flown to Australia on [February 23, 2014](#) for treatment in the hope that her remaining leg can be saved; **UPDATE**: cannot walk without excruciating pain, requires a new prosthetic leg but cannot have any more corrective surgery, will be eligible for Australian citizenship in 11 months)

<https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/church-bomb-survivor-and-refugee-needs-a-new-prosthetic-leg-as-she-suffers-a-long-wait-for-appropriat>



Tajikistan: Khujand

Shamil Rasulovich Khakimov (aged 68, widower, pensioner, harassed with repeated phone calls from police on [January 28, 2019](#) after his number was found on the phone of a detained Christian; summoned for interrogation at the police station on [February 1, 2019](#); arrested on [February 16, 2019](#); **UPDATE**: placed in pre-trial detention for two months, health in jail good despite high blood pressure and a recent leg surgery, denied a Bible)

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2463

http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2484



Ukraine: Malinkovka and Slavyansk

Archbishop Mitrophan (**UPDATE**: detained at a police checkpoint on 'suspicion of separatism', denied an attorney, released after a crowd had gathered in support at the police station)

<http://orthochristian.com/119413.html>



Colombia: Tierra Buena neighborhood, Kennedy

Fr Carlos Ernesto Jaramillo (aged 65, **stabbed to death** in an apparent robbery attempt)

<http://www.fides.org/en/news/65589->

[AMERICA COLOMBIA A priest who helped Venezuelan refugees has been killed](#)

Tuesday February 19, 2019



Philippines: Bacolod

Alex Yao (aged 54, husband of Maria Theresa, **shot dead** inside a religious shrine after leaving a prayer meeting)

Maria Theresa (widow of Alex Yao, survived the attack)

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/philippine-bishop-condemns-church-killing/84575>



Pakistan: Chanan village, Gujrat district

Shazia Bibi (wife of Bashir, mother of eight, domestic worker, employer reported to have pressured her to convert to Islam, quit her employment, employer assaulted her and her husband in their home and abducted four of her children and placed them in a madrassah [Islamic school] to be converted, joined her children, told they would not be released unless they converted, released after an approximate payment of US\$1,430 was made to the employer)

Bashir (husband of Shazia Bibi, father of eight)

Pakistan: Farooq-e-Azam district, Karachi

Four Christian women were arrested after accused of blasphemy, the accuser admitted to fabricating the charge in retaliation for her eviction, all four went in hiding, 200 Christian families were displaced

Sophia Amjad (aged 18)

Soneha Amjad (aged 14)

Sunaina Amjad (aged 22)

Sophia Qamar (aged 30)

<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/head-line-news-details/7043>

<https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/200-pakistani-christian-families-displace-after-4-falsely-accused-of-desecrating-the-quran-by-disgr>



Syria: Aleppo

Dr Nabil Antaki (testified "all the armed rebel groups are now amassed in the province of Idlib. Al-Nusra, the local emanation of al-Qaeda, recognized as a terrorist group by the UN and the international community, is in the process of eliminating or engulfing all other movements, of Islamic inspiration, with the force of weapons. For months, the Syrian army has wanted to launch an offensive to free the latter province from the hands of terrorists, 30 thousand of them foreigners, but the Western powers, through the intermediation of Russia and Turkey, are preventing it. The reason given: The risk of a serious humanitarian crisis. The real reason, as has emerged from some voices of Western leaders: what to do with all the foreign terrorists who would flee to Europe, in case the offensive was launched...On the other hand, a war is unfolding on our territory and it is the one that pits Turkey against the Kurdish militias. Finally, the Americans who illegally established two bases in a sovereign nation, today want to withdraw following the decision of President Donald Trump. But his administration, like Congress, are incapable of reaching agreement on this strategy and try to sabotage it by all means possible...We are angry at the sanctions imposed by the European Union and the United States against Syria, which only exacerbate the humanitarian situation without having any impact on the end of hostilities and the establishment of peace. The exodus of the Syrians, especially the Christians, continues. Moreover it seems to have increased beyond the levels of the dark hours of the war. The apostolic nuncio to Syria, Card. Mario Zenari, said during a congress in Hungary that Christians are now no more than 2% of the total population. That is half a million, out of a total of 23 million citizens. We knew this, but it is the first time that these figures have been revealed in public. My city, Aleppo, which had a population of about 150/200 thousand Christians in 2011, before the war, today does not count more than 25 thousand, at most 30 thousand. Syria, the cradle of Christianity, is emptying of its Christian population...")

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Aleppo,-Blue-Marists:-Wests-cynicism-fuels-conflict-and-Christian-exodus-46293.html>



United Kingdom: London

Liz Parsons (Head of Advocacy for the prolife group Life, reported to have said after a court ruled that the July 2018 closure of the group's exhibit at a municipal fair constituted an illegal breach of contract: “Lambeth’s agreement to settle this matter through a payment of damages is a victory for common sense and freedom of expression...In a climate where the prolife voice is being shut down by local authorities across the country, we want to be clear that we are going nowhere...For almost five decades we have stood firm in our provision of support for women and advocacy for the life of the unborn...The stall at Lambeth sought to educate people about the unborn baby and advertise our care services for pregnant women, including those who are homeless or in need of emotional and practical support...We must, and will challenge any organization which tries in any way to impede this important work”)

<https://catholicherald.co.uk/news/2019/02/19/london-council-pays-damages-to-pro-life-charity/>

Wednesday February 20, 2019



China: Xinxiang, Henan province

Pastor Li Juncai (arrested along with three other parishioners while protesting the government's removal of a cross from the roof of their church)

Ban Yun (arrested, later released on bail)

Ma Yanfang (arrested, later released on bail)

Wu Raoyun (arrested, later released on bail)

<https://barnabasfund.org/us/news/chinese-pastor-arrested-for-protesting-as-church-cross-demolished-replaced-with-flagpole>

<https://www.chinaaid.org/2019/11/the-elderly-mother-of-pastor-li-juncai.html>



India

Cardinal Oswald Gracias (**UPDATE**: issued a statement: "All of us gathered here strongly condemn the cowardly terrorist act that took the lives of 40 of our young soldiers last week in Pulwama [Kashmir] on Thursday Feb 14...We salute the brave young men who have given their lives for us. When they entered the armed forces and specially when they were being taken to this particular mission, they were aware of the great risks involved. They gave their lives to protect us...we pray for these Jawans who have died and for strength to their families in this moment of sorrow. May God bless India!")

Date: February 20, 2019

Location: Mumbai

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Card-Gracias-condemns-cowardly-attack-against-soldiers-in-Kashmir-46303.html>

Saturday February 23, 2019



Iran: Rasht

Babak Hosseinzadeh (arrested at a worship service)

Behnam Akhlagh (arrested at a worship service)

Mehdi Khatibi (summoned to a police station, arrested)

<http://www.aina.org/news/20190313234623.htm>



United Kingdom: London

Oluwole Ilesanmi (retired dentist, street preacher, **UPDATE**: arrested by police after a Muslim complaint, told by police "No one wants to hear that", taken over 5 miles away, 'de-arrested', and left in an isolated location)

<https://www.christianconcern.com/our-issues/freedom/video-of-christian-street-preacher-arrest-goes-viral>

<https://www.christianconcern.com/our-issues/freedom-of-speech/police-caught-out-by-street-preacher-evidence>

Sunday February 24, 2019



Philippines

Bishop Pablo Virgilio David (**UPDATE**: disclosed he had received death threats, said “No threat or intimidation can stop me from carrying on with my spiritual and pastoral duties as a bishop”)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Death-threats-against-Filipino-bishop-wont-stop-him-46364.html>



China: Chengdu, Sichuan province

Tang Chunliang (husband, arrested along with his wife and 42 others at a home worship service, released the next day)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Eleven-children,-including-a-two-month-baby,-from-the-Early-Rain-Covenant-Church-arrested-in-Chengdu-46438.html>



India: Vairichettipalayam village, Tiruchirappalli district, Tamil Nadu state

Pastor Raju (Bible study in a private home invaded by Hindu radicals on [February 17, 2019](#), said “One after the other, [Hindu radical] Ramachandran and his group started shouting at Christian women, ‘Have your husbands left you to prostitution, that you are following this pastor’s instructions? Today, you are calling him brother and he is sweetly calling you sister – soon he will make you all mother. When one sister tried to videotape all this, they started threatening us that we will be killed”, police restored order; **UPDATE**: worship service monitored by a Hindu radical, said “Since the church members are aware that they are keeping a close watch on us, they are too frightened to attend the services”)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2019/03/churches-deprived-of-their-worship-buildings-in-tamil-nadu-india/>

Monday February 25, 2019



Pakistan: Iqbal town, Islamabad

Saima Iqbal (aged 35, wife of Naveed Iqbal, mother of Mikael, Danish, and Qamar, abducted at gunpoint and forced into an Islamic marriage, police refused to file a report for over a week)

Naveed Iqbal (aged 37, husband of Saima Iqbal, father of Mikael, Danish, and Qamar, said after his wife's abduction "I was living here very happily for the past 18 years until on the night of 25 February 2019 when the mother of my children was kidnapped at the gun point by Pathan Khalid Satti who is part of criminal gang...As soon I came to know what happened to my wife, on the 26th February I reported the incident but the police refused to file my complaint and delayed the registration")

Mikael (aged 4, son of Saima Iqbal and Naveed Iqbal)

Danish (aged 8, child of Saima Iqbal and Naveed Iqbal)

Qamar (aged 13, child of Saima Iqbal and Naveed Iqbal)

<https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/pak-christian-mother-of-three-kidnapped-at-gunpoint-and-forced-into-fake-islamic-marriage-husband-hi>
<http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/head-line-news-details/7064>



Ireland: Dublin

Archdeacon David Pierpoint (reported on the vandalism of a church crypt in which human remains were desecrated)

<https://www.intoleranceagainstchristians.eu/index.php?id=12&case=2781>

Tuesday February 26, 2019



Nigeria: in and around Maro including Karamai village, Kajuru county, Kaduna state A Fulani Muslims attack killed at least 32. many unaccounted for

Mercy Musa Swanta (wrote on Facebook "The villagers stood against the Fulani who came fully clothed in military uniform. But they had to withdraw due to high number and superior

firepower of the Fulani. Mobile policemen came but also retreated, one operation Yaki [police] vehicle burnt. Military now engaging the Fulani. Battle still going on. Casualties unknown but could be high”)

Paulina Irimiya (confirmed that at least 32 Christians were killed in a Fulani Muslim attack on a church service)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2019/02/at-least-40-christians-killed-in-two-attacks-in-kaduna-state-nigeria/>

<https://morningstarnews.org/2019/03/another-10-christians-killed-in-kaduna-state-as-carnage-continues-in-nigeria-sources-say/>

Wednesday February 27, 2019



Australia: Melbourne, Victoria state

Cardinal George Pell (aged 77, charged with multiple child sex abuse crimes in [June 2017](#), the police had opened a case against him a year before a complainant was found, most charges were then dismissed for "fundamental defects in evidence"; reported on [December 11, 2018](#) to have been convicted on five counts despite the trial having been held in secret, a previously unreported trial had ended in mistrial after 10 jurors voted to acquit, trial witnesses anonymously reported extensive prosecutorial misconduct, U.S. based reporters were threatened with extradition and imprisonment for having released news of the conviction on the internet; **UPDATE**: verdict announced after prosecutors decided to drop the remaining charges, taken into custody)

<https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/cardinal-pell-awaits-sentencing-in-police-custody-52501>



Philippines

Bishop Felixberto Calang (**UPDATE**: reported to have been 'red-tagged' when his name was added to a public list of alleged communist sympathizers, said "We fear for our lives and liberty knowing that we are on this list...When the police and military can just plant evidence against innocent people they claim are 'enemies of the state,' that is lawlessness")

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/more-philippine-church-leaders-rights-workers-on-red-list/84603>



India: New Delhi

Dr Christo Thomas Philip (aged 36, U.S. citizen of Indian birth, deported on [April 26, 2016](#) for 'evangelical and subversive activities', had been forcibly separated from his wife and three children, spent 24 hours in detention in Turkey after deportation; High Court in Delhi ruled on [January 8, 2019](#) he has a right to practice his faith by providing pro bono medical services; **UPDATE**: returned to resume his medical and charitable work)

<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Christian-doctor-back-in-India-after-three-years,-has-the-right-to-engage-in-mission-46370.html>

Thursday February 28, 2019



Indonesia: Medan, Sumatra

Agung Kurnia Ritonga (aged 22, student, arrested on [October 25, 2018](#) on a charge of insulting Islam for having applauded the burning of the flag of a banned Islamic organization; **UPDATE**: reported to have been convicted, faces up 18 month's imprisonment and a \$715 fine)

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/indonesian-student-faces-jail-for-islam-insult/84615>



China: Henan province

Jiang Tianyong (aged 47, husband of Jin Bianling, son of Jiang Lianghou, human rights attorney, abducted by police in [Changsha, Hunan province](#) on [November 22, 2016](#); charged with 'subversion of state power' on [May 31, 2017](#); sentenced to 2 years' imprisonment on [November 20, 2017](#); as of [June 27, 2018](#) has been forced to take an unidentified medication in prison and has shown a memory deficit as a possible result, legs appear to have been injured due to torture or shackles, has been denied access to clothing and money sent by his family; **UPDATE**: released from prison, disappeared, father and sister disappeared)

<https://www.ucanews.com/news/chinese-rights-lawyer-missing-after-prison-release/84629>

February 2019, date unknown



India: Thiruneermalai, Tamil Nadu state

Pastor Vetri (forced to vacate his church and residence by Hindu radicals in the [week prior to February 13, 2019](#), said “They told me that there should not be any Christian prayers in the area...The property owner gave in to the pressure from police and the Hindu Makkal Katchi and asked us to vacate the place. We shifted to the town now and are continuing to assemble for prayers”)

<https://morningstarnews.org/2019/03/churches-deprived-of-their-worship-buildings-in-tamil-nadu-india/>

Today's Martyrs

2490 Black Rock Turnpike #455

Fairfield CT 06825-2400

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

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