

Today's Martyrs

Resources for understanding current Christian witness and martyrdom

Weekly Report – 2016-04-03 through 2016-04-09



Canada

Dr Nazir S Bhatti (criticized the closure of the government's Commission on Religious Freedom, which had been dedicated to the assassinated Pakistani Christian Shahbaz Bhatti, said “The persecuted communities around globe have no objection if Prime Minister Justin Trudeau personally welcomes Syrian Muslim refugees or wears Pakistani dress to join Muslim prayers or to secure his Muslim vote bank arranges Iftar Parties for them but he must not downplay with human right values which land of Canada upholds from decades that he will turn his back on Religious freedom which is fundamental part of Universal Declaration of Human Rights by member states of United Nation”)

Date: April 6, 2016

Location: Karachi, Pakistan

Source: <http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=5864>



China

Bishop Emeritus Thomas Zeng Jingmu OP (aged 96, **died after suffering a fall and injuring his head**, hospitalized but denied visitors, had spent a total of 23 years in prison)

Date: April 2, 2016

Location: Yujiang

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Chinese-Church-mourns-passing-of-Mgr-Zeng-Jing-Mu,-a-true-witness-of-Christ-37120.html>

Deacon Wang Lu (arrested along with a female organizer at a Bible training class which was raided by the authorities)

Date: March 9, 2016

Location: Changji, Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2016/04/pastors-church-members-detained-in.html>

Senior Pastor Joseph Gu Yuese (husband of Zhou Lian Mei, removed on **January 22, 2016** from his position as leader of the government sanctioned Three Self Patriotic Movement church; was reported on **February 3, 2016** to have been arrested on embezzlement and

corruption charges, sent to a black jail, had written that his church had been experiencing “unprecedented, chilling trials. Everyone must equally rely on the Lord’s grace to confront [this trial] and triumph over it”; **UPDATE**: released, placed under travel and meeting restrictions)

Date: March 31, 2016

Location: Hangzhou, Zhejiang province

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2016/04/authorities-place-new-restrictions-on.html>

Rev Ng Wah (disappeared from [Hong Kong](#) in [July 2015](#); **UPDATE**: reappeared on the mainland, prosecuted on fraud charges along with Lin Jingying)

Lin Jingying (house church organizer, prosecuted along with Rev Ng Wah)

Constant Kim (friend of Rev Ng Wah, said "It is political persecution. Some extreme leftist officials in Guangzhou did this")

Date: February 19, 2016

Source: <http://www.ucanews.com/news/hong-kong-pastor-prosecuted-on-mainland-for-printing-christian-books/75683>



Ethiopia

Abdu Godana (aged 35, convert, wife and children abducted by her family after their conversion, threatened with death)

Date: February 2016

Location: Moyale

Source: <http://morningstarnews.org/2016/04/family-church-buildings-lost-in-predominantly-christian-east-african-countries/>



India

Gornath Chalanseth (father of four, as of [December 19, 2012](#) was still in Orissa state prison after four years, falsely accused of the murder of Hindu leader Laxamananda Saraswati; convicted on September 30, 2013 and sentenced to life imprisonment; **UPDATE**: has been granted bail)

Date reported: April 1, 2016

Source: <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2016/03/4383286/>

Deepak Kumar (Bible college graduate, attacked by ten Hindu militants from the RSS paramilitary organization while preaching about Christ in a street in [Patna, Bihar state](#), beaten for five hours, stripped, given electric shocks, had alcohol rubbed into his wounds,

told he would be left on railroad tracks if he did not insult the name of Jesus, replied “Kill me, but I will not abuse the name of Jesus”)

Date: April 5, 2016

Location: Budhani Chak village, Patna district, Bihar state

Source: <https://barnabasfund.org/news/Hindu-extremists-target-Christians-in-two-separate-attacks-in-state-of-Bihar-East-India>

and <http://www.fides.org/en/news/59768->

[ASIA INDIA A Christian attacked because he proclaimed the Gospel in the street #.VwcLIMIUUfg](#)

Sajan K George (**UPDATE:** reported on a prayer meeting attack by Hindu extremists in which worshippers were threatened and Bibles seized)

Date: April 3, 2016

Location: Kawardha district, Chhattisgarh state

Source: <http://www.fides.org/en/news/59752->

[ASIA INDIA Intrusion during a Christian assembly faithful threatened Bibles confiscated#.VwccgsIUUfh](#)



Kenya

Leonard Rotich (survivor of the [April 2, 2015](#) terror attack on [Garissa University College](#), said “I lost my closest friends in that attack and I never want to go back to Garissa University again. Many of those that died were the first in their family to go to university, only to return home in caskets. Most families are still traumatized”)

Date: April 2, 2016

Source: <http://www.persecution.org/2016/04/06/one-year-after-garissa-suffering-kenyan-christians-can-teach-us-all-a-lesson-of-faith/>

Event: Christians and others commemorated with a candlelight service the first anniversary of the Garissa University College terror attack in which 147 were killed

James Kazungu (survivor, former Christian Union vice chairman, said “Lighting the candles is our show of love towards our heroes of faith as we reflect back on what happened. We also light the candles to acknowledge the sovereignty of God – He is our light”)

Purity (survivor, said “This time last year I was eight month pregnant and lying under a bed, not daring to move and begging God to save my baby. He did! Though I lay on my belly under the bed for 12 hours, my son survived. I named him Kiama [Miracle]”)

Margie (survivor, said of the murder of two dear friends “God showed me that indeed [they] went into eternal safety with Him in heaven...But I am sad because they left me here, alone”)

Victor (survivor, said “You never said goodbye, you were gone before I knew it...If love alone would have saved you, you never would have died”)

Pastor Boniface O Odhiambo (said “It is always hard to accept the will of God when something terrible and bigger occurs in our lives. Know this: God will remain God in every situation”)

Date: April 2, 2016

Location: Moi University, Eldoret

Source: <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2016/03/4383144/>



Nepal

Pastor Chari Bahadur Gahatraj (**UPDATE**: criticized the government's repeal of Christmas as a legal holiday and its statement that Christian government employees will be granted leave, said "Christians do not just work for the government. If Christmas is not a national holiday, the workers of the private sector will not be able to celebrate it. The Government recognizes 83 festivities for Hindus and other communities, but none for Christians", also criticized a new anti-conversion law “Article 156 deliberately targets Christian priests by stating that the government may imprison Christian priests who perform conversions”)

Date reported: April 4, 2016

Location: Kathmandu

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/-Nepal-cancels-Christmas-as-a-public-holiday;-Christians-retort-that-Hindus-have-83-37122.html>



Nigeria

Event UPDATE: Church prayer camp attacked by gunmen on March 21, 2016, church leaders abducted, ransoms demanded)

Rev Dr Emmanuel Dzigau (president of the church, abducted; **UPDATE**: released)

Rev Iliya Anto (deputy president of the church, abducted, released due to illness; **UPDATE**: had been released into the wild, **died**)

Rev Yakubu Dzarma (retired church leader, abducted; **UPDATE**: released)

Date: March 30, 2016

Source: <http://morningstarnews.org/2016/04/one-kidnapped-pastor-in-nigeria-dead-two-others-released/>



Pakistan

Event: A suicide bomber attacked children's carnival rides in a public park killing 78 and injuring 350, the terrorist group claimed it was targeting Christians

Junaid Masih (aged 16, son of Imran Masih, **killed**)

Salamat Masih (son of Yousaf Masih, **killed**)

Tahir Masih (son of Javed Masih, **killed**)

Wasif Amanat (aged 17, son of Amanat Masih and Zubaida Amanat, **killed**)

Sharoon Patras (aged 15, son of Patras Masih and Fouzia Patras, brother of Irfan Patras, **killed**)

John Masih (**killed** along with his family)

Amir Masih (son of Mungal Masih, **killed**)

Arsalan Masih (aged 18, son of Parvaiz Masih, **killed**)

Nauman Paul (aged 18, son of Daniel Paul, **killed**)

Rehmat Masih (daughter killed)

Sagar Masih (aged 17, son of Ashraf Masih, **killed**)

Aman John (aged 12, son of Sohail John, **killed**)

Shan Masih (aged 17, son of Mangal Masih, **killed**)

Tahir Masih (aged 19, son of Javed Masih, **killed**)

Adnan Masih (aged 17, son of Guddu and Samina, injured, hospitalized in critical condition with shrapnel in his brain, parents told he likely will not survive)

Irfan Patras (aged 17, son of Patras Masih and Fouzia Patras, brother of Sharoon Patras, injured, hospitalized in critical condition, said "I saw a bearded man who looked overweight. He suddenly started to shout loudly in Arabic I did not understand it all but knew it to be in Arabic. I and my friends knew what was going to happen next but it was too late for us to get far away, we started shouting to no avail the incendiary device around the man's waist was set off. We all fell down before the force of the blast it took a few moments for me to recover. I saw Sharoon had collapsed next to me he was badly injured. I helped get him into a rickshaw with other people in the area we also helped an unknown girl get into the same rickshaw. Everyone was intent on getting the injured to hospital so they could get treated quickly. I got into the rickshaw last I was injured and bleeding too and must have collapsed before I got to the hospital as my last memory is waking in the ward")

Patras Masih (aged 40, husband of Fouzia Patras, father of Irfan and Sharoon Patras, laborer)

Fouzia Patras (aged 32, wife of Patras Masih, mother of Irfan and Sharoon Patras, homemaker)

Amanat Masih (aged 45, husband of Zubaida Amanat, father of Wasif Amanat, government employee, said "These murderers have killed my son, for no other reason than his love for the true and living God. I know my son is in heaven today and I know that God will take care of him. He was a kind gentle boy who loved all people. I do not know why

Muslim people hate Christians? We do them no harm. One day they will have to answer for their crimes before God they will then rue the crimes they committed")

Zubaida Amanat (aged 42, wife of Amanat Masih, mother of Wasif Amanat)

Guddu (aged 38, husband of Samina, father of Adnan Masih)

Samina (aged 35, wife of Guddu, mother of Adnan Masih)

Fr John Tanveer (said "Hearing the blast, I immediately ran to the place of the tragedy...Daytime in Pakistan is very hot and most families go for a walk with their children in the evening and that is when tragedy struck")

Date: March 27, 2016

Location: Lahore

Source: <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2016/03/4378009>

and <http://theorthodoxchurch.info/blog/news/?p=46687>

and <http://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/we-dont-know-why-we-are-targeted-say-christians>

Komal (alias, said "I do not remember the exact date, but it was almost middle of June, the hottest month of 2015, when my misery started. I am 15-years-old, the youngest daughter of my elderly parents who work at a brick-kiln factory. They did not have enough of income for my education, therefore I have never been to school, although I wished. I was sleeping along with my mother on a single bed during a power-cut time in my house yard. Around midnight, five armed men with masks climbed over the boundary wall and entered into house. The armed men brutally beat the entire family and threatened them severe consequences if they shouted for help. Then, the kidnappers dragged me from my mother's lap to their car in the street. My eyes and mouth were covered with a piece of cloth and they took me to unknown place where five of them raped me in front of each other, taking turns. I think it was a neighboring city from where they kidnapped me...Burning my female parts with cigarettes was a routine exercise for them. The kidnappers often teased Christians, especially disrespecting Christian women. Almost for two months they beat me every day for nothing and did not give enough food to eat...After almost two months of inhuman treatment and humiliation, they took me to a courthouse and forced me to put my thumb impression on a document that declared me the wife of a Muslim. I did not want this to happen, however, I had no other option because they threatened to kill my parents if I did not obey. Therefore, they forcefully married me to a Muslim and converted me to Islam. Without my wish they changed my religion, my identity and even my name. My new husband, who continued to rape me for the next two months, then moved to another city. This man already had two wives at his house...At this stage, I experienced the worst agony of all. I felt like dying every day when my husband forced me to have [relations] with other visitors for earning money. I had become a forced prostitute. He even hired a watchwoman to keep an eye on me almost round the clock. I spent the next six months in captivity. However, I had faith that Jesus would get me out of this hell. In February, I had a golden opportunity to escape. Before sun rose, I managed to sneak away from the house to an urban area after walking for about five hours. I begged for money from the people there to cover a bus fare and was able to reach my home after sunset on the same day...I am thankful for this mercy and the miracle of rejoining my parents now. I couldn't stop crying when I hugged my

parents and family for the first time. One can hardly imagine the painful situation which I and my parents experienced. It was like rising from the dead. When I returned home, I was five months pregnant. I am confused about what to do with my unborn baby. What will the future of my child be if I give birth to him or her? I want justice, but do not want to put my parents into danger. Those people are very rich and influential and therefore we cannot go into the legal process against them. I just want to be divorced and try to plan a happier life”)

Date of escape: February 2016

Source: <http://www.persecution.org/2016/04/05/forever-scarred-by-persecution-victim-of-forced-conversion-in-pakistan-shares-her-testimony/>



Palestine

Metropolitan Swerios Malki Murad (arrested without charge, released on bail after a few hours)

Bishop Atallah Hanna (said the treatment of Metropolitan Swerios Malki Murad was "degrading, unjustified and unacceptable")

Date: April 2, 2016

Location: al-Khader

Source: http://www.fides.org/en/news/59763-ASIA_HOLY_LAND_The_Syriac_Orthodox_Church_the_arrest_of_Metropolitan_Swerios_is_offensive_and_humiliating#.VwcN-sIUUfg

Fr Ibrahim Nairouz (protested the destruction of the archeological remains of a 1,500 year old Byzantine church for a shopping mall, wrote "If they had found the remains of a mosque or a synagogue or any other ancient structure would they have handled the situation in the same way?")

Date: April 8, 2016

Location: Gaza

Source: http://www.fides.org/en/news/59778-ASIA_HOLY_LAND_In_Gaza_the_ruins_of_an_ancient_Byzantine_church_destroyed_by_bulldozers_to_make_way_for_a_shopping_center#.VwiV0MIUUfh



Philippines

Bishop Ciriaco Francisco (threatened with legal action including church closures for 'harboring' illegal demonstrators, the demonstrators were farmers who had blocked a highway to ask for government aid to survive a drought, also condemned the use of live ammunition on the farmers)

Bishop Ephraim Fajutagana (called on clergy to "open cathedrals and churches to shelter farmers who suffer state persecution")

Auxiliary Bishop Broderick Pabillo (called for those who used force to disperse the farmers to be punished)

Fr Edu Gariguez (later said "If real justice should be served, those found guilty should be penalized")

Sr Susan Bolanio (later said she did not agree with the blocking of the highway but "the violence that erupted must be thoroughly investigated")

Date: April 1, 2016

Location: Kidapawan, Cotabato province

Source: <http://www.ucanews.com/news/philippine-church-threatened-for-harboring-protesters/75664>

and <http://www.ucanews.com/news/religious-order-chiefs-urge-solidarity-with-hungry-farmers/75688>



Turkey

Event: Six churches have been expropriated by the government

Gafur Turkey (convert [family had accepted Islam during the Armenian genocide to survive], said the government has not said when the churches will be returned)

Fr Yusuf Akbulut (church attacked with rocket propelled grenades during a [January 28, 2016](#) fight between Turkish and Kurdish forces, sheltered his family in the church residence, escaped, later falsely charged by the media with caching ammunition for Kurdish forces; **UPDATE:** has been negotiating for the return of his 1,700 year old church)

Pastor Ahmet Guvener (convert; **UPDATE:** has been considering suing the government to recover his church, said "The government didn't take over these pieces of property in order to protect them. They did so to acquire them", also complained of the expropriation being done while the country has been building taxpayer-funded mosques in the United States)

Date: late March 2016

Location: Diyarbakir

Source: <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2016/04/4392638/>



Uganda

Event: Church leaders opposed a government proposal to require that churches register with the government

Bishop John Baptist Kauta (said "If what we are doing is good, then why should we be registered? Why should a faith that has been in existence for centuries need an operation license?")

Bishop Macleord Baker Ochola (said "Why should a child tell a father how to lead a family? We have been here for decades. What is the logic behind registering well known religions?")

Date: April 6, 2016

Location: Kampala

Source: http://www.fides.org/en/news/59764-AFRICA_UGANDA_Churches_are_opposed_to_the_proposed_registration_of_religious_denominations#.VwcM4MIUufg



Ukraine

Archpriest Anatoly Bogdanov (described the actions of members of the Kiev Patriarchate who locked members of the Moscow Patriarchate in their church without food and water, church members released after three days and replaced with volunteers)

Dates: March 30 and April 2, 2016

Location: Pticha village, Rivne region

Source: <http://www.pravoslavie.ru/english/92244.htm>



United Kingdom

Victoria Wasteneay (occupational therapist in East London, disciplined on [July 1, 2014](#) for praying for the health of a Muslim co-worker despite the co-worker agreeing to her prayer and despite a witness testifying he was pressured into making a statement against her; the Employment Tribunal in London ruled on [April 8, 2015](#) in her employer's favor, said that giving a Christian book to her co-worker constituted "harassing and bullying"; **UPDATE:** appeal against the Employment Tribunal denied, the judge ruled that the Tribunal had acted reasonably, said "What the Court clearly failed to do was to say how, in today's politically correct world, any Christian can even enter into a conversation with a fellow employee on the subject of religion and not, potentially, later end up in an Employment Tribunal. If someone sends you friendly text messages, how is one to know that they are offended? I had no idea that I was upsetting her. For example, I was sent the following text message by the Muslim complainant: - 'Hope your okay Victoria, your am amazing manager and a wonderful person, I hope you never feel otherwise!! Anyone that can't see that is an idiot, see you tomorrow xx' - I believe the NHS singled me out for

discipline because Christianity is so disrespected. Previously a Christian worship service that I set up for patients was closed down, but accommodation for Muslims to practice their faith wholly facilitated and encouraged")

Date: April 7, 2016

Source: <http://www.christianconcern.com/our-concerns/employment/christian-nhs-worker-loses-appeal-over-freedom-to-talk-to-a-muslim-colleague>



United States - Virginia

Pastor Dave Janney (stabbed by his 19 year old son, hospitalized in stable condition)

Date: April 4, 2016

Location: Purcellville

Source: <http://www.wusa9.com/news/local/virginia/pastor-of-va-church-stabbed-in-his-home/120977531>



Vietnam

Fr Le Nam Cao (described an attack by troops against his church in which three parishioners were injured and decorations torn down, said "It was noon time and most of the men were at work, so only old women and children were at home. Parishioners told me of the crackdown. I told them that I would not go out and they should go home and just let them do whatever they wanted because we had no weapons, so it was not good for us. Some people did not agree, so they fought back against the troops including policemen and soldiers who were well equipped with tear gas, bullets and batons...One parishioner was looking at the scene, and he was detained and beaten by the police while some people got tear gas in their eyes, but they were not in danger. I heard the ones that were seriously injured were treated in the hospital, and the rest just went home. The parishioners took care of bruises and bleeding")

Date: April 6, 2016

Location: Houng Phuong village, Quang Binh province

Source: <http://www.rfa.org/english/news/vietnam/clash-at-church-04072016135448.html>

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