

Today's Martyrs

Resources for understanding current Christian witness and martyrdom

Weekly Report – 2016-04-10 through 2016-04-16



Bangladesh

Rev Sushil Jibon Talukdar (wife raped by four 'land grabbers', police refused to file a report, said "[I] arrived just in time. The four brutes were attacking my wife and trying to kill her. But we heard her cries and saved her. Her clothes were all torn up...We just want justice for my beloved wife")

Rosaline Costa (**UPDATE**: said "I strongly condemn the attack and rape. As members of a minority, they have become victims. The police refused to file the complaint, saying that they would consult the victim after local elections, months from now. That is totally unethical. [They] are working for the criminals and violating human rights. I condemn the attitude of the local police")

Date: April 8, 2016

Location: Boronala village, Khagrachhari district

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Wife-of-Protestant-minister-raped-to-seize-their-land-37193.html>



Chile

Events: Churches built by the Mapuche people have been destroyed by a Mapuche succession movement

Bishop Hector Eduardo Vargas SDB (said after the arson attacks on two chapels "On the one hand there is a historical debt with the Mapuche people. On the other hand, acts of violence increase and spread, with all the problems that this entails")

Dates: March 31 and April 5, 2016

Location: Quepe, Freire municipality, Araucania region

Source: <http://www.fides.org/en/news/59748#.VxH74sIUUfh>

Bishop Hector Eduardo Vargas SDB (**UPDATE**: said after the burning of a chapel "the burned churches are found in the Mapuche communities, these churches were built by them. The Mapuche, such as the group of 'loncos', are the first animators of the community. People

now are scared. These attacks affect not only the Church, but the same local communities")

Date: April 12, 2016

Location: Canete, Biobio district, Araucania region

Source: <http://www.fides.org/en/news/59810->

[AMERICA CHILE Church fires do not stop the solution is in dialogue#.Vw8QO8IUUfh](http://www.fides.org/en/news/59810-AMERICA_CHILE_Church_fires_do_not_stop_the_solution_is_in_dialogue#.Vw8QO8IUUfh)



Eritrea

Patriarch Abune Antonios (disappeared in 2007, reportedly detained by the government in a darkened room, diabetic condition requires medical attention; **UPDATE**: still under house arrest)

Pastor Ogbamichael Teklehaimanot (arrested on January 9, 2005 after participating in a wedding; released in 2011, rearrested six months later; **UPDATE**: still in prison)

Pastor Kidane Weldou (husband, father of four, vehicle found abandoned in 2005, assumed to have been arrested; **UPDATE**: believed to still be in prison)

Rev Haile Naigzhi (arrested on May 23, 2004; wife and three children fled the country under threat of arrest in 2013; **UPDATE**: still in prison)

Pastor Kiflu Gebremeskel (former professor of mathematics, husband, father of four, arrested in May 2004; **UPDATE**: believed to still be in prison)

Pastor Meron Gebreselasie (anesthesiologist, arrested June 3, 2004; **UPDATE**: still in prison)

Fr Futsum Gebrenegus (psychiatrist, arrested in November 2004; **UPDATE**: still in prison)

Fr Gebremedhin Gebregorsis (theologian, arrested in November 2004; **UPDATE**: still in prison)

Fr Tekleab Menghisteab (physician, arrested in November 2004; **UPDATE**: still in prison)

Date: April 13, 2016

Locations: Asmara or Barentu

Source: <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2016/04/4407264/>



India

Pastor Ram Prakash (aged 52, hut attacked by 25 Hindu radicals, ordered to leave the village, threatened with loss of his land, brother and sister-in-law beaten, hut set afire, roof and furnishings destroyed, brother hospitalized; chased by Hindu radicals on three

motorcycles, run off the road, leg injured when he fell off his motorcycle, beaten, hospitalized)

Pastor Santosh Kumar (said of Pastor Ram Prakash's attackers "The accusation they levied against the pastor is completely untrue")

Dates: [March 9 and March 24, 2016](#)

Location: [Karoate village, Sultanpur, Uttar Pradesh state](#)

Kisna Sarel (aged 37, husband, father of two aged 7 and 5, locked with his family in their home by Hindu radicals for 12 hours, dragged out and beaten, hospitalized, said "I am not worried about anything. I have Jesus, and even if they take my life, I will still follow Jesus")

Bahadur Chand Sarel (church leader, reported on the attack on Kisna Sarel "They blocked the village entry and harassed the Christian family. They told him never to go to the church again but to perform all the Hindu poojahs [offerings to gods] and rituals, and then beat him up")

Date: [March 6, 2016](#)

Location: [Gurudpal village, Paschim Medinipur district, West Bengal state](#)

Source: <http://morningstarnews.org/2016/04/hindu-extremists-on-motorcycles-chase-down-pastor-in-northern-india/>



Indonesia

Remita Sinaga (aged 60, publicly whipped 28 times for selling alcohol under Islamic [sharia] law despite assurances that sharia would apply only to Muslims)

Rev Betty Manurung (said "Our concern is that the law isn't in line with the national penal code. What we understood is that Shariah law is only supposed to be for Muslims")

Fr Paulus Christian Siswantoko (secretary of the Indonesian Bishops' Conference's Commission for Justice, Peace and Pastoral for Migrant-Itinerant People; **UPDATE**: said "Jakarta has allowed Aceh to implement Shariah law. But never force this law down the throats of other religions")

Woro Wahyuningtyas (**UPDATE**: called for the national government to review Aceh's implementation of sharia, said "discriminative bylaws are against the constitution")

Date: [April 12, 2016](#)

Location: [Central Aceh district](#)

Source: <http://www.ucanews.com/news/christians-criticize-caning-of-first-non-muslim-in-aceh/75778>



Norway

Ezekiel Bodnariu (aged 13 months, son of Marius and Ruth Bodnariu, Romanian national, returned to his parents, had been taken on [November 16, 2015](#) and placed in foster care after his older siblings were caught singing Christian songs at school and the government decided they were "radical Christians who were indoctrinating their children" in concepts such as sin)

Date reported: [April 15, 2016](#)

Source: <http://www.pravoslavie.ru/english/92530.htm>



Pakistan

Sonia Gill (illegally told that her 7 year old nephew could not attend a school because he was Christian)

Date: [March 11, 2016](#)

Location: Rawalpindi

Source: <http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=5870>

Nazeer Masih (aged 55, disabled real estate agent, son of Nazeer Masih, , husband of Rasheeda Bibi, father of three including Iqbal and Patris Masih, **stabbed to death** by Muslims for a real estate dispute or a dispute over illegal drug sales to Christian youth [accounts vary], body mutilated, Muslim coworker also stabbed but survived, police refused to file a report)

Rasheeda Bibi (widow of Nazeer Masih)

Patris Masih (aged 35, son of Nazeer Masih, identified his father's body)

Iqbal Masih (son of Nazeer Masih, attempted to file a police report)

Pastor Alfred Azam (said "This is not the first incident of persecution of Christians in our village, local Muslims are always creating problems for our Christian community. Before and after our church services Muslim drug dealers swarm around our church trying to sell drugs to our vulnerable youth. Some drug pushers move around in Christian residential areas and beat young Christians forcing them to take drugs in an attempt to get them addicted. When our older men tell these criminals to leave our young people alone they get killed")

Date: [April 6, 2016](#)

Location: Shekhupura district, Punjab province

Source [warning - graphic]: <http://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/christian-man-butchered-like-an-animal-for-stopping-muslim-drug-pushers->

and <http://www.christiansinpakistan.com/we-have-finished-the-infidel-a-handicapped-christian-brutally-butchered-by-three-men/>
and <http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=5868>

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

Ashir Paul (aged 18, brother of Nauman Paul, seriously injured, hospitalized, inconsolable after informed of the death of his brother)

Pari Paul (aged 17, said "Nauman was very caring I owe him so much. I cannot stop crying. I remember him how he was, young energetic and passionate - not the dead body that was shown to us after his murder. He was expecting so much on completion of his beautician course but will never experience the joy of a career he deserved. I will always miss him."

Paul Masih (aged 62, father of Nauman, Ashir, and Pari Paul, disabled)

Asia James (mother of Nauman, Ashir, and Pari Paul, said "He was forced to leave school early when his father became ill and for this he has struggled with so many difficult and painful jobs, but he never complained. He never gave up on life and was strong and resolute and always stayed optimistic he built up my confidence when I was down too. Nauman was very active with church and he loved his brother and both sisters more than anything, an example that they all have followed. I have failed my son, his life has been taken away before he could experience marriage and the joy that that brings and all he has known is hardship. I hope God will forgive me and that he will treasure my son who loved Him so much")

Date: March 27, 2016

Location: Lahore

Source: <http://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/mother-weeps-as-she-buries-19-year-old-breadwinner-son-after-heartless-suicide-bomb-attack>



Philippines

Rolando Del Torchio (aged 57, former priest and missionary, abducted on October 6, 2015 in Dipolog City, Zamboanga del Norte, Mindanao; **UPDATE:** released)

Date: April 8, 2016

Location: Sulu Island

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/PIME-missionaries-happy-for-Del-Torchio's-release-37180.html>



Sudan

Fr Gabriel El Anthony (reported to have been abducted by unknown persons)

Bishop Elia (superior of Fr Gabriel El Anthony)

Date: April 14, 2016

Location: Nyala

Source: <http://theorthodoxchurch.info/blog/news/?p=46874>



Sweden

Ellinor Grimmark (aged 39, wife of Carl Johan, mother of two, refused employment as a midwife because she refused to perform abortions, as of [March 6, 2014](#) has filed a discrimination complaint; reported on [November 30, 2015](#) to have lost her employment appeal in a Swedish court, the court ruled in effect that her rights had been violated but that the maternity clinics right to provide abortions superseded her rights, has been forced to work as a midwife in Norway; **UPDATE:** has appealed the lower court decision, has been ordered to pay all court costs for the defendant - a municipal maternity clinic - which total approximately US\$100,000, will be forced to sell her home if her online fundraising fails, said “Maybe what I consider being the most unfair part is the fact that even though I have never asked for job positions that require abortion-related work, I'm also being banned from working as a midwife in clinics that do not deal with abortions. This fact has been ignored in a major part of the media debate, by the employers, and ultimately by the court...It's considered a problem when somebody disagrees with the current consensus regarding abortion and doesn't want to perform abortions because of his/her conscience. Others may feel questioned about their own actions by this and it creates strong reactions...Freedom of conscience is so important. In the future it will otherwise be difficult for certain groups, e.g. religious, to work within health care. The debate about euthanasia is growing in Sweden [it is not allowed yet] and, just like with abortion, it should be unthinkable to not allow freedom of conscience if this becomes a part of our society...My faith is of course a strong source of courage and strength in this situation. I truly believe in my heart that life is sacred and given by God. This is the view of most Christians worldwide and it needs to be respected”)

Date reported: April 15, 2016

Source: <https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/exclusive-swedish-pro-life-midwife-appeals-ruling-that-she-must-perform-abo>



Syria

Patriarch John X aka Youhanna Yazigi (aged 61, brother of Archbishop Boulos al-Yazigi; **UPDATE:** spoke on the third anniversary of the abduction of his brother and of

Archbishop Yohanna Ibrahim, said "We hope that the bishops are alive, but unfortunately, the world is silent and nobody has provided physical evidence")

Date reported: April 15, 2016

Source: <http://theorthodoxchurch.info/blog/news/?p=46894>



Turkey

David Byle (aged 46, Canadian-U.S. citizen, husband of Ulrike, father of five; **UPDATE:** detained without charge for 30 days pending deportation, labelled 'a danger to public order' by the Interior Ministry)

Ulrike Byle (wife of David Byle, said "I think the reason he is being held is because of his evangelistic activities")

Date: April 6, 2016

Location: Istanbul

Source: <http://morningstarnews.org/2016/04/u-s-evangelist-in-turkey-detained-ordered-to-be-deported/>

David Byle (aged 46, Canadian-U.S. citizen, husband of Ulrike, father of five, detained without charge on April 6, 2016 for 30 days pending deportation, labelled 'a danger to public order' by the Interior Ministry; **UPDATE:** released from detention, deportation still pending)

Date: April 15, 2016

Location: Istanbul

Source: <http://morningstarnews.org/2016/04/u-s-evangelist-in-turkey-detained-ordered-to-be-deported/>



Uganda

Ntende Hawa (aged 38, convert from Islam, mother of four aged 10, 6, 4, and 2, attacked by her estranged husband with a machete, forced him to drop the machete, strangled, rescued by her brother-in-law, in hiding with her children, said "My marriage with him is now over. I cannot go back to Islam. The burden to raise up the children is on my shoulders. I need prayers at this difficult moment")

Date: April 4, 2016

Location: Kachomo village, Budaka district

Source: <http://morningstarnews.org/2016/04/muslim-in-uganda-attacks-threatens-to-kill-wife-for-becoming-christian/>



Uzbekistan

Malika Khidirova (home raided by police, Bible and New Testament seized)

Date: February 7, 2016

Location: Okdarya district, Samarkand region

Marifzhon Mamazhanov (brother of Pastor Latifahon Mamazhanov (home illegally searched by police, computers and books seized)

Murot Turdiyev (found with a Christian book in his car on [August 31, 2013](#) in [Andijan City](#), detained and pressured on [October 9, 2013](#) to become a police informant; arrested on [May 8, 2015](#) at a traffic stop at the border between [Samarkand region](#) and [Navoi region](#), taken to [Karmana district](#) police station, beaten into unconsciousness; **UPDATE:** drove to the prosecutor's office to protest the arrest of Pastor Latifahon Mamazhanov, denied entry to the office by police, automobile seized for unspecified traffic violations)

Date: March 12, 2016

Location: Fergana

Event: Christians in an unregistered church were fined for storing religious materials and for unauthorized religious education

Malika Khidirova (home raided by police on [February 7, 2016](#), Bible and New Testament seized; **UPDATE:** fined US\$900)

Munis Oblakulov (fined US\$2,700)

Sanobar Aripova (fined US\$450)

Khudoyor Muhamadiyev (fined US\$450)

Date: March 22, 2016

Location: Okdarya district, Samarkand region

Pastor Latifahon Mamazhanov (home illegally searched by police on [March 12, 2016](#), arrested, whereabouts unknown, sentenced to 15 days' imprisonment for 'not submitting to authorities'; **UPDATE:** released, had been held in a cell designed for two with seven others, fed poor food once a day, cell contained lice and bedbugs, two prisoners with tuberculosis were deliberately placed in the cell)

Murot Turdiyev (drove to the prosecutor's office on [March 12, 2016](#) to protest the arrest of Pastor Latifahon Mamazhanov, denied entry to the office by police, automobile seized for unspecified traffic violations; **UPDATE:** tried on charges of 'failure to carry out the lawful demands of a police officer or other persons carrying out duties to guard public order', court issued him a warning, automobile returned)

Date: March 28, 2016

Location: Fergana

Source: http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2167

Today's Martyrs
2490 Black Rock Turnpike #455
Fairfield CT 06825-2400
<http://todaysmartyrs.org/>

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