

# Today's Martyrs

*Resources for understanding current Christian witness and martyrdom*

## Weekly Report – 2017-07-09 through 2017-07-15



### Azerbaijan

Hamid Shabanov (husband of Hinayat Shabanova, home raided by police during a [November 26, 2016](#) worship service, 26 people detained for 5 hours; found guilty in [Zakatala](#) on [December 5, 2016](#), fined US\$993; **UPDATE**: appeal denied)

Date: [June 21, 2017](#)

Location: Sheki

Source: [http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article\\_id=2294](http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2294)



### China

Tang Jingling (civil rights attorney, husband of Wang Yanfang, arrested in [2014](#); sentenced to 5 years' imprisonment on [January 29, 2016](#); **UPDATE**: family concerned for his health, has had chest pains)

Wang Yanfang (wife of Tang Jingling, said “Tang Jingling’s elder brother met with him on June 26. He asked his brother to consult a doctor for possible causes of his chest pain. During the Jasmine Revolution in 2011 [a series of pro-democracy protests that occurred in several cities across China], he was not allowed to sleep for more than 10 days, which caused pain in his chest. The recent occurrence of Liu Xiaobo’s late-stage liver cancer [untreated in prison] has caused us to worry about Tang Jingling’s condition”)

Date: [June 26, 2017](#)

Location: Guangzhou, Guangdong province

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/07/family-fears-for-health-of-christian.html>

Zhang Kai (civil rights attorney, released on [December 29, 2016](#); **UPDATE**: has been detained 12 times and held up to 48 hours without any formal action taken, police have occupied the apartment under his and installed CCTV cameras near his home, is often followed)

Date reported: [July 7, 2017](#)

Location: Hohhot, Inner Mongolia

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/07/christian-human-rights-lawyer-summoned.html>

Chen Yajie (sentenced to 4 years' imprisonment on [April 18, 2017](#); **UPDATE**: appeal denied)

Liu Yan (sentenced to 3 years' imprisonment on [April 18, 2017](#); **UPDATE**: appeal denied)

Wang Lulu (sentenced to 5 years' imprisonment on [April 18, 2017](#); **UPDATE**: appeal denied)

Yang Zhaocun (sentenced to 5 years' imprisonment on [April 18, 2017](#); **UPDATE**: appeal denied)

Zheng Lan (sentenced to 3 years' imprisonment on [April 18, 2017](#); **UPDATE**: appeal denied)

Date: [June 27, 2017](#)

Location: [Changji, Xinjiang](#)

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/07/failed-appeals-leave-five-christians.html>

Xu Yonghai (**UPDATE**: home raided by police during a Bible study, 10 members questioned, police left after he called the national security office and complained)

Date: [July 7, 2017](#)

Location: [Beijing](#)

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/07/police-break-into-bible-study-demand.html>

Pastor Zhang Shaojie (husband of Wang Fengrui; **UPDATE**: health in prison in decline, described as a "bag of bones" and as having dark discolorations under his eyes, when asked if he had been beaten replied "Do you need to be beaten to become like this?")

Zhang Cuijuan (aged 40, wife of Jia Limin, younger sister of Pastor Zhang Shaojie, released from prison on [May 31, 2015](#); **UPDATE**: visited her brother in prison, said "It's painful to see such a good person being persecuted. I don't know how long he can persist")

Zhang "Yunyun" Huixin aka Esther Zhang (daughter of Pastor Zhang Shaojie and Wang Fengrui, U.S. resident; **UPDATE**: said of her father "He's unable to see the sun during the day. He's deprived of sleep for 24 hours at a time. The prison gives him only one steamed bun a day and intentionally starves him. According to people who have been released from that prison, my father is barely alive, suffering both mentally and physically")

Date: [July 7, 2017](#)

Location: [Xinxiang, Henan province](#)

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/07/family-fears-for-barely-alive-chinese.html>

Fr Wang Qingwen (sent a letter to the local Communist Party secretary protesting the closure of a church youth summer camp)

Date reported: [July 13, 2017](#)

Location: [Suqian, Jiangsu province](#)

Source: <http://www.ucanews.com/news/state-security-bans-chinese-parishes-children-program/79749>



## **Cuba**

Pastor Ramon Rigal (sentenced to one year at hard labor for removing his children from government schools to avoid anti-Christian teaching, sentence may be reduced)

Date reported: July 14, 2017

Location: Guantanamo

Source: <http://www.christianpost.com/news/cuban-pastor-punished-1-year-labor-homeschooling-children-191992/>



## Egypt

Nadra Jaber (**killed** in her home, Christian books torn apart, police refused to investigate)

Date reported: July 10, 2017

Location: Ezbet al-Nakhl area, Cairo

Source: <http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=1934&A=31405>

## Egypt

### **Event: Most churches have cancelled summer programs due to government reports of security threats**

Rev Andrea Zaki (**UPDATE**: said "[security] agencies have informed us about the discovery of attack plans")

Fr Bolous Halim (**UPDATE**: said "Due to security concerns raised among churches' officials against any gatherings of Copts in Egypt, the churches affiliated to the Coptic Orthodox Church consulted the main church to coordinate with the Interior Ministry to undertake any action")

Rev Mohsen Naeem (cancelled a church trip to a tourist resort, said "Join in prayer for the security and stability of our country")

Pastor Saeed Awad (has refrained from organizing church trips to religious sites for the past three years, said "We [in Ismailia] are on the front lines. We are the first city ISIL would come to")

Date: July 14, 2017

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Threat-of-attacks-forces-Evangelical-and-Coptic-Churches-to-shut-down-activities-41285.html>

and <http://www.aina.org/news/20170713141353.htm>

and <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/07/terrorist-threat-forces-egyptian-christians-to-cancel-summer-activities/>



## India

Archbishop Filipe Neri Ferrao (**UPDATE**: condemned the desecration of 40 crosses and several graves in a cemetery with heavy machinery, appealed to people of "all faiths to refrain from taking any retaliatory action or fanning the flame of religious hatred")

Mario Britto (said "If the police are really serious about unraveling the mystery of the desecration, they ought to start investigating the [government] ministers' links with fundamentalists organizations")

Date: July 10, 2017

Location: Goa

Source: <http://www.ucanews.com/news/crosses-vandalized-graves-desecrated-in-go/79748>

Fr Leo D'Souza (aged 56, school principal, arrested on child abuse charges involving an eighth grade student who had been accepted at the school only 10 days earlier, no preliminary police investigation was performed prior to the arrest)

Bishop Gerald Almeida (**UPDATE**: said that Hindu radicals have created trouble for Christians: "Such hatred could be one reason for this heinous charge")

Richard James (**UPDATE**: said "police are hand in glove with the right-wing Hindu activists...[they] have been unleashing a reign of terror against minority groups, especially Christians")

Date: July 10, 2017

Location: Dindori district, Madhya Pradesh state

Source: <http://www.ucanews.com/news/indian-priest-arrested-for-child-abuse/79736>



## Iran

**Event UPDATE: Four Christians were each sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment**

Mohammad-Reza Yohan Omidi

Saheb Fadaie

Yasser Mosayebzadeh

Pastor Youcef Nadarkhani

Date: June 24, 2017

Location: Rasht

Source: <http://mohabatnews.com/en/?p=3605>



## Niger

Jeffery Woodke (aged 56, missionary, U.S. citizen, husband of Els Woodke, abducted in [Arcata](#) on [October 14, 2016](#) by armed men who forced him to strip to his underwear, guard and housekeeper killed; **UPDATE**: whereabouts unknown but believed to have been moved to Mali)

Els Woodke (wife of Jeffery Woodke, released a video that noted her husband's absence on the [July 1, 2017](#) al-Qaeda video of captives in Mali, asked for information about him)

Date: July 11, 2017

Source: <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/07/us-hostages-wife-asks-his-african-captors-to-contact-her/>



## Pakistan

### Event UPDATE

Daud (aged 10, son of Catherine Bibi, brother of Saiba Masih aged 3, told by a Muslim neighbor to buy cigarettes when he was supervising his sister, returned to find she had been raped, tried to comfort her until their mother arrived, has felt guilty for leaving her)

Date: December 17, 2016

Location: Chishtian, Bahawalnagar district

Source: <http://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/christian-mother-calls-for-prayers-to-help-get-justice-for-3-year-old-daughter-who-was-raped-by-neig>

**Event: Three Christian sewer workers died from toxic fumes, had been denied protective equipment and training**

Saleem Masih (aged 50)

Danish Masih (aged 20)

Nadeem Masih (aged 18)

Date: July 8, 2017

Location: Ara Basti, Bhawalpur

Source: <http://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/three-christian-sewage-workers-killed-by-toxic-fumes-while-working-without-ppe>

Akhtar Masih (aged 53, husband of Rubina, father of six, grandfather, farmer, preacher, stabbed outside his home on [May 22, 2017](#), hospitalized; **UPDATE**: died)

Rubina (widow of Akhtar Masih)

Date: May 28, 2017

Location: Sargodha district

Source: <http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6539>



## Turkey

Kuryakos Ergun (**UPDATE**: said after the appeal against the government's seizure of 2 monasteries and 20 churches was denied "Our churches and monasteries are what root Syriacs in these lands: our existence relies on them. While the country should be protecting this heritage, we instead see our culture is at risk")

Date reported: July 9, 2017

Source: <http://www.foxnews.com/world/2017/07/09/turkeys-assyrians-fear-annihilation-after-government-seizes-church-properties.html>



## United Kingdom

Charlie Gard (aged 11 months, son of Chris Gard and Connie Yates, terminally ill, hospitalized, denied access to experimental treatment, denied access to clergy)

Rev Patrick Mahoney (U.S. citizen, denied access to pray over Charlie Gard by the hospital, said "First they said they would have to check. Then they said we couldn't go. Then they gave permission and then when we were going with his mother into the room, they denied us. And then we sent the news release out [regarding the hospital's actions]" after which the hospital finally granted permission)

Date: July 8, 2017

Location: London

Source: <https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/hospital-wont-let-clergy-visit-charlie-gard-to-pray-for-him>

Andrew Frost (charged in [March 2017](#) with harassment of a homosexual couple when street preaching; **UPDATE**: acquitted)

Rory Green (testified that the couple had harassed Andrew Frost)

Date reported: July 13, 2017

Location: Nottingham

Source: <http://www.christianconcern.com/our-concerns/mike-overd/another-street-preacher-cleared-of-all-charges>

## Today's Martyrs

For more information please visit our web site at <http://todaysmartyrs.org/>

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