

# Today's Martyrs

*Resources for understanding current Christian witness and martyrdom*

## Weekly Report – 2017-11-19 through 2017-11-25



### Algeria

Rev Mahmoud Haddad (**UPDATE:** criticized government closure of a church as “unfounded” and that the government's statement was full of “anomalies and falsehoods”: “Firstly, this community is indeed affiliated to the Protestant Church of Algeria, which has been officially recognized by the government since 1974 and is accredited with both the Ministry of the Interior and the local government. Also there is no printing activity of Gospels or Christian publications inside these premises”)

Youssef (board member, said of the church closure “I am very saddened by this injustice and persecution we are facing in Algeria. The notification of the Prefect is based on false motives”)

Date: November 9, 2017

Location: Ain Turk

Source: <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/11/algerian-church-closed-illegally-printing-bibles-material-intended-evangelism/>



### Central African Republic

Fr Frederico Trincheri OCD (**UPDATE:** wrote "The war seemed to be over, but unfortunately it is not over everywhere. The relatively quiet situation in Bangui - where there have recently been episodes of violence - is apparently misleading. In the inland areas of the country the picture is quite different. Since May, groups of rebels - not always identifiable with regards to their origin and targets - resulted in hundreds of deaths, houses burned, and thousands of refugees in several cities and villages. This state of affairs has been dragging on for too long. There is a risk of getting used to war, as if it were inevitable...Two unequivocal data express, more than any other analysis, the dramatic situation in which Central Africa finds itself. Eighty percent of the territory is, in fact, still occupied, or in any case controlled, by rebel groups who dictate law in place of the State. The absence of the State in areas far away from capital was one of the reasons that triggered the war in 2013. Ignoring it may not be a good strategy. The election of a new president, the massive presence of the United Nations, the interest and

copious contributions from the international community seemed a propitious opportunity to turn page. The results have disappointed expectations. We have not been able to move forward...The second point is about poverty. According to the latest UN report, Central Africa is now ranked 188th out of 188 countries in the Human Development Index. We are therefore the poorest Country in the world")

Date: November 20, 2017

Location: Bangui

Source: <http://www.fides.org/en/news/63255->

[AFRICA CENTRAL AFRICA 80 of the country in the hands of rebels a missionary We are the poorest State in the world#.WhLxPVWnGM8](http://www.fides.org/en/news/63255-)



## China

Jiang Tianyong (aged 46, human rights attorney, abducted by police on [November 22, 2016](#); charged with 'subversion of state power' on [May 31, 2017](#); **UPDATE**: sentenced to 2 years' imprisonment)

Date: November 20, 2017

Location: Changsha, Hunan province

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/11/christian-human-rights-lawyer-receives.html>

and <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Christian-lawyer-Jiang-Tianyong-condemned-to-two-years-prison-for-'subversion'--42373.html>

Pastor Wang Yi (husband of Jiang Rong; **UPDATE**: prevented from travelling to Indonesia to attend a celebration of the Reformation)

Date: November 13, 2017

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/11/speakers-call-for-action-amid.html>

Zhai Lili (detained along with 12 others who were worshipping in her home)

Date: November 5, 2017

Location: Jingmen

Source: <http://www.chinaaid.org/2017/11/christian-post-13-christians-detained.html>



## Congo, Democratic Republic

Cardinal Laurent Monsengwo Pasinya (**UPDATE**: accused by government officials of conducting a 'black mass' after he met with local artists in the cathedral, the officials appear to be responding to widespread discontent with their postponement of elections)

Date: November 10, 2017

Location: Kinshasa

Source: [http://www.fides.org/en/news/63243-AFRICA\\_DR\\_CONGO\\_Cardinal\\_Pasinya\\_accused\\_of\\_black\\_masses\\_when\\_politics\\_exploits\\_religion#.WhL0QVWnGM8](http://www.fides.org/en/news/63243-AFRICA_DR_CONGO_Cardinal_Pasinya_accused_of_black_masses_when_politics_exploits_religion#.WhL0QVWnGM8)



## Egypt

Mariam Fahmy (aged 19, disappeared after calling her husband and stating she would be home in 10 minutes)

Date reported: November 24, 2017

Location: Assiut

Source: <http://www.copts-united.com/English/Details.php?I=2033&A=33129>



## India

**Event: A Hindu man beat his entire family and then as of September 25, 2017 disowned them for converting to Christianity; UPDATE: the father fabricated evidence that they beat him and attempted to forcibly convert him, the family has three times been questioned by police**

Sunita (convert, wife of Ramesh Kumar, mother of Neeraj, Sapna, Pardeep, and Gaytari)

Neeraj (aged 23, convert, son of Sunita and Ramesh Kumar, lost his employment due to his father's allegations)

Sapna (aged 19, convert, daughter of Sunita and Ramesh Kumar, student, unable to afford school expenses)

Pardeep (aged 17, convert, son of Sunita and Ramesh Kumar, student, unable to afford school expenses)

Gaytari (aged 15, convert, daughter of Sunita and Ramesh Kumar, student, unable to afford school expenses)

Pastor Ramesh (under threat of arrest for converting the family)

Date: November 15, 2017

Location: Haryana state

Source: <https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/hindu-patriarch-beats-family-and-throws-them-out-of-his-home-for-converting-to-christianity>  
and <http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6687>

Sajan K George (**UPDATE:** described the November 15, 2017 arrest of a Christian in Balod district, Chhattisgarh state, the November 19, 2017 arrest of 19 Christians in Damoh

district, Madhya Pradesh state, and fallout from the October 23, 2017 incident in which Christian children were pulled from a train by Hindu radicals: "It is really encouraging that the Madhya Pradesh High Court has rebuked the police and ordered the opening of an investigation into the case of children who were attacked")

Date: November 20, 2017

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Sajan-K-George:-arrested-Christians,-India%E2%80%99s-vulnerable--42367.html>

Auxiliary Bishop Theodore Mascarenhas SFX (**UPDATE**: criticized Chief Minister [state governor] Yogi Adityanath for rejecting secularism and equating the government of Prime Minister Modi with a Hindu deity)

Date: November 13, 2017

Location: Uttar Pradesh state

Source: <https://www.ucanews.com/news/bishop-criticizes-politicians-for-branding-indias-secularism-a-lie/80848>

Archbishop Thomas Ignatius Macwan (**UPDATE**: issued a letter to various communities regarding the upcoming elections: "The forthcoming legislative elections in the state of Gujarat will affect the future of our country. We are aware that the secular and democratic fabric of our country is at stake, where human rights are violated and constitutional rights trampled. There are episodes in which churches are attacked, ecclesiastical staff, faithful or institutions are affected. There is growing sense of insecurity among minorities. Nationalist forces are about to conquer the country. The election results of the State Assembly of Gujarat can make a difference...The Bishops of the State of Gujarat invite you to organize prayer liturgies in your parishes and convents, hoping that the people who are elected will remain faithful to our Indian constitution and respect every human being without any discrimination")

Date: November 24, 2017

Location: Gujarat state

Source: [http://www.fides.org/en/news/63289-ASIA\\_INDIA\\_The\\_Bishops\\_of\\_Gujarat\\_In\\_the\\_elections\\_the\\_secular\\_and\\_democratic\\_fabric\\_of\\_our\\_Country\\_is\\_at\\_stake#.Whg5nFWnGM8](http://www.fides.org/en/news/63289-ASIA_INDIA_The_Bishops_of_Gujarat_In_the_elections_the_secular_and_democratic_fabric_of_our_Country_is_at_stake#.Whg5nFWnGM8)

Fr Nicholas Barla SVD (said that an animist religious group's threat to protest Christmas celebrations was fostered by the ruling Hindu BJP party in an attempt to divide the tribal vote in upcoming elections)

Nabore Ekka (said that the BJP opposed Christian support of tribal people who had seen their land seized)

Gladson Dungdung (**UPDATE**: said that the Hindu BJP party has succeeded in dividing the tribal electorate into two factions)

Date: November 24, 2017

Location: Jharkhand state

Source: <https://www.ucanews.com/news/indias-indigenous-people-threaten-to-protest-against-christmas/80884>

**Event: Six Christians were arrested and jailed for a month after praying for a sick Hindu woman**

Sajan Majhi (aged 25, beaten)

Kalender Majhi (aged 20, beaten)

Dasrath Karketta (aged 35, cancer survivor, said “The police hit Sajan Majhi and Kalender Majhi repeatedly. They didn’t give us a chance to speak. If they inquired of us, we could have explained what happened exactly, but they didn’t, instead, they scarred the face of Kalender Majhi. He bled also...We spent one month in jail joyously – we sang hymns, read the Bible, prayed and worshipped together in jail. We shared the gospel with other inmates in the district jail. There also, people came to Christ. We strongly felt the Lord was using us for His work and were happy about it”)

James Ba (aged 30)

Balmuni Kumari (aged 19, university student, arrested illegally as Indian law required female detainees to be processed by female police after dark, beaten, family threatened with expulsion from their village, later said “No female police constable came for me. I was the only woman, and it was frightening. I trusted the Lord...Even in the prison, I prayed and worshipped with other Christians. Every Sunday believing sisters from outside visited us and led us in prayer and worship”)

Jagdish Majhi (aged 50)

Date: September 16, 2017

Location: Gondi village, Simdega district, Jharkhand state

Source: <https://morningstarnews.org/2017/11/christians-india-praise-god-spice-police-brutality-month-jail/>



**Indonesia**

**Event: Christians on college campuses met to counter Islamic extremism**

Br Heribertus Sumarjo (organized the meeting)

Adrianus Meliala (professor of criminology, said "Extremism is a huge threat to this country, and it is more worrying if students as future leaders have a radical mindset. Catholic lecturers cannot remain silent but must make concerted efforts to clean universities of radical-minded people")

Fransisco Budi Hardiman (philosophy school lecturer, said "It's not only against radicalism, lecturers should also play an important role in fighting against moral ills, such as casual sex and drugs")

Date: November 18, 2017

Location: Jakarta

Source: <https://www.ucanews.com/news/indonesian-lecturers-unite-to-take-on-radical-students/80840>



## Iran

Naser Navar Gol-Tapeh (aged 46, convert, arrested on [June 24, 2016](#); sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment on [June 22, 2017](#); **UPDATE**: appeal denied)

Bahram Nasibov Alkan Oglu (aged 38, Azeri citizen, husband, father, detained in a [June 24, 2016](#) police raid on a Tehran engagement party; released on bail on [October 29, 2016](#); left the country on [November 6, 2016](#); sentenced *in absentia* on [June 22, 2017](#) to 10 years' imprisonment; **UPDATE**: appeal denied)

Eldar Gurbanov (aged 49, Azeri citizen, husband, father, same account)

Yusif Farhadov Talt Oglu (aged 53, Azeri citizen, husband, father, same account)

Date reported: November 24, 2017

Location: Tehran

Source: <https://www.worldwatchmonitor.org/2017/11/iran-christian-convert-loses-appeal-10-year-sentence-missionary-activities/>



## Kazakhstan

**Event: Five conscientious objectors were excused from military service after the government reversed itself and accepted their status as church ministers**

Abylai Kopzhasarov

Date: [May 8, 2017](#)

Tlek Zhumagazinov (**UPDATE**)

Date: [July 30, 2017](#)

Location: Oskemen

Stanislav Stompel

Date: [August 31, 2017](#)

Location: Almaty

Adilzhan Iskakov (**UPDATE**)

Date: [September 3, 2017](#)

Location: Semei

Dmitry Vedyakin (**UPDATE**)

Date: September 19, 2017

Location: Oskemen

Kaken Dostayev (conscientious objector, pretrial investigation underway as of September 22, 2017; **UPDATE:** case not forwarded to police)

Date: November 17, 2017

Source: [http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article\\_id=2333](http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2333)

**Event: A worship service in a meeting hall was raided by police, each parishioner was later fined US\$339**

Pastor Aleksei Asetov (husband of Tatyana Asetova, **UPDATE:** later fined US\$678)

Tatyana Asetova (wife of Pastor Aleksei Asetov)

Vasiliy Bunyak

Sofya Bunyak (**UPDATE**)

Aleksandr Neyman (husband of Tatyana Neyman)

Tatyana Neyman (wife of Aleksandr Neyman)

Vladimir Sergazin (husband of Tatyana Sergazin)

Tatyana Sergazin (wife of Vladimir Sergazin)

Olesya Kuvayeva

Nadezhda Raseva

Kamil Safarov

Roman Andrienko (husband of Anastasiya Andrienko)

Anastasiya Andrienko (wife of Roman Andrienko)

Dmitri Martynenko

Andrey Proshina (husband of Liliya Proshina)

Liliya Proshina (wife of Andrey Proshina)

Lyubov Andrienko (husband of Tatyana Andrienko)

Tatyana Andrienko (wife of Lyubov Andrienko)

Vladimir Boinov

Tatyana Savchuk

Date: October 29, 2017

Location: Ekibastuz, Pavlodar region

Source: [http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article\\_id=2334](http://www.forum18.org/archive.php?article_id=2334)



## Kenya

Joseph Otworu (church elder, church destroyed in an arson attack)

Date: November 15, 2017

Location: Jogoo area, Kisii town

Source: <http://allafrica.com/stories/201711170249.html>



## Kuwait

Rev Shibu Mathew (aged 42, Indian citizen, husband, father of four, arrested for defending Christianity in an ecumenical debate, trial verdict expected)

Date: November 19, 2017

Location: Mangaf

Source: <https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/indian-pastor-arrested-in-kuwait-faces-judgement-sunday>



## Malaysia

Archbishop Julian Leow (**UPDATE**: wrote that a proposal for a government agency to translate the Bible into the Malay language [Bahasa Malaysia] to be a violation of the constitution: "The Holy Bible, and the Al-Kitab in Bahasa Malaysia, form part of the sacred patrimony of Christians, and any attempt by any person not authorized by the Christian churches to provide an authoritative version will be firmly rejected...This is not just an outrage to Christians and their sensibilities. It will be a most heinous form of offence against what all Christians believe to be divinely inspired scriptures, the word of God")

Date: November 17, 2017

Source: <https://www.ucanews.com/news/bible-translation-proposal-riles-malaysian-christians/80835>



## Mexico

Archbishop Emeritus Felipe Arizmendi Esquivel (**UPDATE**: denounced violence over a disputed border between two municipalities)

Date: November 19, 2017

Location: San Cristobal de las Casas



Source: [http://www.fides.org/en/news/63254-AMERICA MEXICO War among the poor continues#.WhLzBFWnGM8](http://www.fides.org/en/news/63254-AMERICA_MEXICO_War_among_the_poor_continues#.WhLzBFWnGM8)



## Nicaragua

Bishop Silvio Fonseca (commented following a massacre of six peasants including two minors "The army must immediately clarify this situation, it must save its honor. If it was not one of them, then someone must tell us who he was, but this situation needs to be clarified as soon as possible. The army runs a serious danger, unless it clarifies this episode, it can be defined as an army of assassins...There are two serious aspects: first the crime that cries out to heaven, and then the silence, not only on behalf of the army but also by other state institutions that should be immediately ready to clarify the crime. This raises concern in the country, because it means we are insecure")

Date: November 2, 2017

Location: San Pablo 22, La Cruz de Rio Grande municipality, South Caribe

Source: [http://www.fides.org/en/news/63276-AMERICA NICARAGUA Mgr Fonseca Massacre of peasants the army and institutions must clarify#.WhbjXIWnGM8](http://www.fides.org/en/news/63276-AMERICA_NICARAGUA_Mgr_Fonseca_Massacre_of_peasants_the_army_and_institutions_must_clarify#.WhbjXIWnGM8)



## Nigeria

Pastor Ayo Oritsejafor (past president of the Christian Association of Nigeria; **UPDATE:** "If there has ever been a time for the unity of the church, it's now. We can't afford to stay away from each other because the church is one...Jesus in John Chapter 17 mentioned 5 times 'That we all be one'. If something is mentioned several times in one chapter in the Bible, then it is serious...We do things that we shouldn't do to each other in the name of religion but what we don't seem to realize is that we are weakening the church. We use all sorts of media platforms including social media and available means to write and pull down each other even to the extent of destroying each other. Looking at all these, I wonder, if we don't read Bible anymore...With all these, we don't have the strength to face the challenges that are coming against the church. The church is getting weaker every day")

Senator and retired General Ike Nwachukwu (said "It's high time we wake up to our responsibility as a church and embrace love for one another. People are more concerned about building structures and forget about evangelizing. If all Christians fail to pay heed to the call, we will soon lose our identity as Christians in the country. We need to remember that God is one and we can influence our brothers from other denominations to worship with us by our character and attitude")

Date: November 23, 2017

Location: Lagos

Source: <http://allafrica.com/stories/201711230273.html>



## Pakistan

Maryam Khalid (aged 16, abducted and forced into an Islamic marriage, police took no action)

Date: August 19, 2017

Location: Faisalabad

Source: <http://www.pakistanchristianpost.com/detail.php?hnewsid=6689>



## Philippines

### **Event: Church leaders have come under internet attack by supporters of the government's extrajudicial murders**

Fr Luciano Ariel Felloni (Argentine citizen, said "By using social media to explain that our work has no political color, and that it is our contribution to the war against drugs, people change their opinion, they understand...Ignore the trolls, it's obvious that they are fake")

Bishop Pablo Virgilio David (**UPDATE:** said of his social media efforts "As a church leader, I would feel amiss in my leadership if I allow the consciences of people to die...If you don't react to these statements, soon they become like Gospel truth. Truth has become a more serious concern in the context of so much untruth in things that we hear or read...God works also through social media. That's also a forum for truth and empathy. That's what empathy is also about. It leads to compassion")

Date: November 21, 2017

Location: Manila

Source: <https://www.ucanews.com/news/deadly-philippine-drug-war-wages-on-social-media/80829>

Fr Alvin Platon (said "We hope and pray that Christians being persecuted through social media will stand in their faith and not give up their being Christian")

Archbishop Socrates Villegas (**UPDATE:** said of social media "Whenever we [in the church] call for respect of human life and dignity, we are tagged as an enemy and become targets of trolls")

Date: November 22, 2017

Source: <https://www.ucanews.com/news/filipino-catholics-facing-persecution-on-social-media/80867>

Bishop Edwin de la Pena (spoke on the aftermath of the fighting in his city which included hundreds abducted and missing "As a pastor, it is incumbent on me to look for my own people, find them and their state of life")

Date: November 23, 2017

Location: Marawi, Mindanao

Source: <https://www.ucanews.com/news/catholic-bishop-leads-search-for-missing-marawi-christians/80863>



## Sudan

**Event:** Five church leaders were arrested on [October 22, 2017](#) after refusing a police order to stop a worship service, all were released that evening; **UPDATE: the arresting officer again failed to appear in court**

Pastor Ayoub Tilian

Rev Ali Haakim Al Aam

Pastor Ambrator Hammad

Evangelist Habill Ibrahim

Elder Abdul Bagi Tutu

Date: November 21, 2017

Location: Omdurman

Source: <https://morningstarnews.org/2017/11/accuser-five-church-leaders-sudan-fails-appear-court-hearing/>



## Thailand

**Event: An entire family of Pakistani Christian refugees were detained and incarcerated**

Asif Hasro (aged 46, husband of Aneela, father of Eliasaph, Elias, Rebecca, and Jasmine)

Aneela (aged 43, wife of Asif Hasro, mother of Eliasaph, Elias, Rebecca, and Jasmine)

Eliasaph (aged 25, son of Aneela and Asif Hasro)

Elias (aged 23, son of Aneela and Asif Hasro)

Rebecca (aged 22, daughter of Aneela and Asif Hasro)

Jasmine (aged 20, daughter of Aneela and Asif Hasro)

Date: November 21, 2017

Location: Bangkok

Source: <https://www.britishpakistanichristians.org/blog/family-of-6-pak-christian-asylum-seekers-arrested-in-thailand>



## Turkey

Kuryakos Ergun (**UPDATE**: thanked the government for the impending return of the legal ownership of the 1,600 year old Mor Gabriel Monastery to its community)

Date: November 23, 2017

Location: Tur Abdin, Mardan province

Source: <http://www.aina.org/news/20171123112928.htm>



## United Kingdom

Bishop Angaelos (UK resident, Egyptian national; **UPDATE**: enthroned as the Coptic Bishop of London)

Date: November 18, 2017

Location: Stevenage, London

Source: <http://theorthodoxchurch.info/blog/news/bishop-angaelos-enthroned-as-the-first-coptic-orthodox-bishop-of-london/>



## Vietnam

Rev Nguyen Trung Ton (husband of Nguyen Thi Lanh, arrested on [July 30, 2017](#), charged with 'carrying out activities with the purpose of overthrowing the Peoples' administration'; **UPDATE**: still imprisoned)

Nguyen Thi Lanh (wife of the Rev Nguyen Trung Ton, wrote to the UN concerning her husband's imprisonment, detained after withdrawing money to pay family medical bills, money seized, accused of being funded by terrorists, said "My husband is an honest man and loves the people and motherland more than his life")

Date: November 3, 2017

Source: <https://www.ucanews.com/news/jailed-pastors-wife-asks-for-un-intervention/80794>



## Yemen

Bishop Paul Hinder (**UPDATE**: described the desecration of a Christian cemetery including the graves of the nuns murdered in March 2016 "This is not the first time that such a thing happens, but the damage to a cemetery is a serious thing. Of course, such episodes of violence do not only affect Christians, but they confirm the ongoing difficult situation and violence...One of the main problems is represented by the [Saudi] blockade that prevents aid, whether food or medicines, from entering. We need to act to provide humanitarian assistance, which is vital for the survival of the population")

Date: November 20, 2017

Location: Aden

Source: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/-Yemen-disaster:-Aden%E2%80%99s-Christian-cemetery-desecrated,-Vicar-of-Arabia-says-42390.html>

## Today's Martyrs

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

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