

Today's Martyrs

Resources for understanding current Christian witness and martyrdom

Weekly Report – 2018-07-08 through 2018-07-14



China

Fr Sun Linghui (open church member, received a letter from the government which recommended suspension of his ministry license following his leading a pilgrimage, said “Pray for me and the church”)

Date: June 11, 2018

Location: Changan district, Hebei province

Source: <https://www.ucanews.com/news/authorities-seek-to-disqualify-chinese-priest/82777>



Egypt

Amany Magdi (aged 20, college student, abducted on [May 24, 2018](#) while on her way to final exams, police informed her parents that she had converted to Islam and could not be seen by them; **UPDATE:** released, returned home)

Date: June 24, 2018

Location: in or near Benha University

Source: <https://barnabasfund.org/us/news/egyptian-christians-celebrate-the-return-of-abducted-young-woman>

Rasha Khalaf Thabet (aged 18, abducted while travelling to visit her grandfather, forced into an automobile by three men)

Date: April 8, 2018

Location: Beni-Sweif

Source: <https://barnabasfund.org/en/news/egyptian-christian-young-woman-kidnapped>



India

Debjani Chatterjee (wrote a report concerning the arrest of 16 alleged [i.e., unconfirmed] Christians after 25 were held hostage by villagers for illegal conversions)

Date: July 7, 2018

Location: Dumka district, Jharkhand state

Source: <https://persecutionrelief.org/the-police-in-jharkhand-claimed-that-the-16-arrested-were-associated-with-a-christian-organisation/>

Pastor Kontiojam Thumkhong Meetei (received a letter from the local Youth Club ordering him and the 10 families he pastors to stop worshipping Jesus Christ and threatening ostracization if they do not comply)

Date reported: July 11, 2018

Location: Numbrang village, Imphal East district, Manipur state

Source: <https://persecutionrelief.org/christians-ostracized-manipur/>

Event: Over 400 Christians at a worship service were attacked by armed Hindu fanatics, 20 were seriously injured, 10 vehicles were destroyed along with all church instruments and electrical equipment

Pastor Ram Kumar Gautam (aged 43, husband, father, said “I didn’t sleep or eat properly for nearly a week now...The attack on our prayer meeting last Monday has had devastating consequences. Many have serious injuries with their limbs being broken. Also, a false case was booked against six of us under stringent IPC sections”, fled the scene, pursued, escaped)

Pastor Devesh Kumar (described the attack)

Akash (hit in the head with a rod, needed 7 sutures)

Jealal Gautam (beaten, arm broken, 18 year old son hospitalized in critical condition)

Rev Sanjay Robinson (said “There is no Freedom of Religion Act, popularly known as an anti-conversion law, in place in Uttar Pradesh, yet pastors and Christian workers are being frequently harassed by Hindu hardline groups with accusations of forced conversion. The gruesome incident on Christian worshipers in Raikashipur village reflects the pattern and plot of the Hindu hardline groups”)

Date: July 2, 2018

Location: Raikashipur village, Pratapgadh district, Uttar Pradesh state

Source: <https://persecutionrelief.org/blatant-brutal-attack-on-dalit-pastor-congregation-uttar-pradesh/>

and <https://www.persecution.org/2018/07/09/twenty-christians-severely-injured-assault-prayer-gathering-northern-india/>

Event: Three evangelists were attacked by a mob for handing out Bible tracts on **May 22, 2018**, arrested; **UPDATE: released on bail**

Kansiram Meghwai (aged 46)

Sahiram Nayak (aged 34)

Vijender Singh (aged 32)

Date: May 29, 2018

Location: 14 Bd village, Khajuwala Tehsil, Bikaner district, Rajasthan state

Source: <https://morningstarnews.org/2018/07/christians-in-rajasthan-india-harassed-with-false-charges-of-fraudulent-conversion-church-leaders-say/>

Event: Christian leaders responded following the arrest of a nun and orphanage staffer on human trafficking charges

Sr Concilia MC (arrested)

Auxiliary Bishop Telesphore Billung (**UPDATE:** said "The government is targeting our institutions to defame us...We have reports from different parts of the state about government searches. Through these search operations, the government is trying to prove that Christians and their institutions are involved in illegal activities")

Fr Peter Martin (attorney, said the Church will go to court to "end such illegal practice and harassment")

Abraham Mathai (said "It is not surprising that those malicious elements have resurfaced yet again to get the nuns arrested on dubious charges...Charging the nuns with child trafficking is wildly absurd, unreasonable and nonsensical [it is] engineered by malicious motives to bring the admirable work of Missionaries of Charity to shame and disrepute both at home and abroad")

Date: July 5, 2018

Location: Ranchi, Jharkhand state

Source: <https://www.ucanews.com/news/witch-hunt-claim-after-mother-teresa-nuns-arrest-in-india/82783>

Prathiba Stephen (wife of Pastor Stephen Paul, attacked by 4 Hindu radicals while leading a prayer service in her home in her husband's absence with at least 4 elderly Christians, all were beaten, dragged into her bedroom, at least partially stripped of her clothing and molested, beaten again later than night by the original perpetrators joined with 20 more radicals after her husband returned and again after she was dragged from an ambulance, fled on a motorbike to a nearby village for hospital treatment, followed to the hospital by the radicals who demanded that the hospital not treat the Christians but rather them for their injuries, refused hospital treatment, fled 75 kilometers to another hospital for treatment, the Hindu radicals later filed a criminal complaint against the Christians to counter the Christians' complaint)

Pastor Stephen Paul (same account)

Date: July 8, 2018

Location: Paguthampalayam village, Erode district, Tamil Nadu state

Source: <https://persecutionrelief.org/trespass-molestation-and-assult-tamil-nadu/>



Nepal

Pastor De Vera Richard (husband of Rita Gongga, Philippine national, restaurant operator, deported for religious conversions, banned from the country for a year)

Pastor Rita Gongga (wife of De Vera Richard, Indonesian national, restaurant operator, deported for religious conversions, banned from the country for a year)

Pastor Tanka Subedi (**UPDATE**: spoke on the deportation of Pastors De Vera Richard and Rita Gongga “This decision of deportation of the couple is too much, especially when it comes from the government in a democratic country like Nepal. The government allows them to do business in our country, and because they are Christians, they will certainly attend a church and participate in the community. But objections are raised by the government when they practice their faith. We have many Indian *pujaris* [Hindu temple priests] and a lot of Thai monks in Nepal, the government seems to have no problems with them, but only with Christians”)

Date: July 6, 2018

Source: <https://www.persecution.org/2018/07/10/two-christians-deported-nepal-forced-conversion-allegation/>
and <https://morningstarnews.org/2018/07/pressure-on-christians-heats-up-in-nepal/>

Pastor Isak Tamang (arrested on forcible conversion charges)

Pastor Dip Rai (arrested on forcible conversion charges)

Pastor Kuber Gurung (said that the charges came from their praying over the husband of a parishioner with a drinking problem and their attempt to restrain him when he became violent)

Pastor Tanka Subedi (**UPDATE**: said that the pastors could not pay the US\$4,507 fine)

Date: July 2, 2018

Location: Taplejung district

Dinesh Subba (aged 28, arrested on May 9, 2018; **UPDATE**: acquitted)

Ashish Subba (aged 22, arrested on May 9, 2018; **UPDATE**: acquitted)

Dipak Subba (aged 28, arrested on May 9, 2018; **UPDATE**: acquitted)

Manatula Dhital (aged 44, arrested on May 9, 2018; **UPDATE**: acquitted)

Barshiya Dhital (aged 40, Indian citizen, arrested on May 9, 2018; **UPDATE**: acquitted)

Pawan Rai (aged 33, Indian citizen, arrested on May 9, 2018; **UPDATE**: acquitted)

Pastor Tanka Subedi (**UPDATE**: said of their release “This has shown us that the legal system and court is trustworthy, but the police are not trustworthy. The way these Christians were arrested and kept in custody for 15 days is frustrating.”)

Date: July 9, 2018

Location: Tehrathum district

Source: <https://morningstarnews.org/2018/07/pressure-on-christians-heats-up-in-nepal/>



Nicaragua

Event: Bishops were beaten by pro-government paramilitaries

Bishop Silvio Jose Baez Ortega (aged 60, **UPDATE**: punched in the stomach, arm lacerated, pectoral cross ripped from his person)

Cardinal Leopoldo Jose Brenes Solorzano (aged 69, roughed up, wrote "We were attacked with a brutal force...We have never seen anything like this in Nicaragua and it is really sad. With violence we walk along a dead end road, problems are resolved with reason and dialogue")

Archbishop Waldemar Stanislaw Sommertag (Apostolic Nuncio [Vatican Ambassador], roughed up)

Date: July 9, 2018

Location: Diriamba

Source: <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/church/news/2018-07/nicaragua-church-cardinal-bishop-nuncio-attack.html>

and <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/bishops-attacked-by-pro-government-mob-at-basilica-in-nicaragua-71862>

and http://www.fides.org/en/news/64494-AMERICA_NICARAGUA_Cardinal_Brenes_bishops_and_priests_attacked_inside_the_church_Never_seen_anything_like_this_in_Nicaragua



Nigeria

Pastor Pam Chollom (reported: "Fulani people attacked our members who attended the burial of the father of one of our clergy...The armed Fulani ambushed the sympathizers on their way back from the burial, attacked and killed 34 persons from Began village, 39 others from Kufang, and 47 from Ruku Village")

Date: June 30, 2018

Location: Gashish district, Plateau state

Rev T Y Danjuma (Christian Association of Nigeria, quoted President Buhari as stating at a recent meeting that the Fulani Muslims - the tribe to which the President belongs - are not known to carry guns)

Date reported: July 6, 2018

Source: <https://www.persecution.org/2018/07/09/massive-attack-shows-true-horror-fulani-crisis/>

Bishop Augustine Obiora Akubeze (signed a statement *Shameful Inversion of Values: The Plateau Massacre* from the Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria: "...the latest horrendous massacre of scores of innocent Nigerians, especially women and children,

especially pregnant women, in Plateau State, by the same rampaging and murderous terrorists who now seem to be spreading without any hinderance in the Middle Belt and other parts of Nigeria...a group who clearly seem to be above the law in our country and who, by their words and actions, have insisted that human lives are worth less than the lives of cattle. This shameful inversion of values portrays our country as barbaric and our society as brutish...it can no longer be regarded as mere coincidence that the suspected perpetrators of these heinous crimes are of the same religion as all those who control the security apparatus of our country, including the President himself. Words are no longer enough for the President and his chiefs to convince the rest of the citizens that these killings are not part of a larger religious project...Once again we ask President Muhammadu Buhari to please save this country from further pain and considerable chaos, anarchy, and doom..."

Bishop Camillus Raymond Umoh (signed the statement *Shameful Inversion of Values: The Plateau Massacre* from the Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria)

Date: June 29, 2018

Source: <http://cbcn-ng.org/docs/g33.pdf>



Philippines

Archbishop Jose Palma (**UPDATE**: residence forcibly entered by a gunman, absent in Manila at the time, the gunman was shot dead)

Auxiliary Bishop Dennis Villarojo (said "Let the [police] process take its course")

Fr Joseph Tan (said "We enjoy everyone to pray for the soul of the deceased even as we ask the public to refrain from forming any speculations relating to this incident pending investigation by the police")

Date: July 10, 2018

Location: Cebu

Source: <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/gunman-shot-and-killed-by-police-at-filipino-archbishops-residence-83654>

and <https://www.ucanews.com/news/cebu-prelate-appeals-for-calm-following-fatal-shooting/82784>

and <https://www.ucanews.com/news/gunman-shot-dead-at-bishops-residence-in-cebu/82778>



Sudan

Pastor Philemon Hassan (worship music composer, church building in [Khartoum](#) seized by the government in [August 2014](#); arrested without charge in [North Khartoum](#) on [March 14](#),

2016, released that night, rearrested the next day by the NISS secret police; **UPDATE:** church building returned, likely under foreign pressure, led his congregation in prayers of thanks to God)

Date: on or before July 8, 2018

Location: Khartoum

Elder Nouh Manzoul Musa (vehicles seized by NISS secret police in 2013; arrested on November 25, 2014 for opposing the demolition of the parishioner's North Khartoum church, hundreds of church members have acted as human shields protecting the remaining buildings; **UPDATE:** summoned to NISS headquarters and interrogated after he filed a lawsuit for the recovery of his vehicles, later wrote on Facebook "I am safe, thank God for the brethren who supported me")

Amer Kodi (later replied on Facebook "May the Lord be with you and give you grace and wisdom and strength to make you climb all mountains easily")

Date: July 1, 2018

Location: Khartoum

Source: <https://morningstarnews.org/2018/07/sudan-returns-church-building-closed-four-years-ago/>



Uganda

Pastor Maseruwa Budallah (aged 55, convert, husband, father of eight, sent his children to a boarding school after they received death threats)

Date reported: July 13, 2018

Location: Mazuba village, Namutumba district

Event: Four church leaders were injured with stones thrown during a debate on the incarnation of the Son of God in which an unprepared imam left embarrassed

Pastor Tom Palapande (aged 38, injured, hospitalized, later said "This is not the first time when Muslims attacked us, especially when they lost debates in Nasenye, Nabiganda and Bumadanda. I was beaten up, and it was falsely reported in a local newspaper as well as the local radio station that I am disrespecting the religion of Islam. This is a calculated move to tarnish my name. The perpetrators of this heinous crime must be found and punished to the fullest extent of the law")

Moses Balabye (injured)

Agrey Gibenya (injured)

Milton Magezi (injured)

Date: June 21, 2018

Location: Butaleja district

Source: <https://morningstarnews.org/2018/07/islamist-violence-against-christians-in-uganda-injures-pastors-stops-church-services/>



United Kingdom

Pastor Richard Smith (forced to resign as mayor after outrage over his posting of Biblical statements on his Facebook page, issued a statement: "Over recent weeks I have been subjected to unprecedented levels of adverse publicity. Whilst the instigators are very much in the minority, as evidenced by the widespread messages of support I have received, I realize that my ability to serve the people of Ferryhill in the manner I would have wished will always be subject to disruption and intimidation. To be denied the opportunity to hold personal views was never my expectation when I undertook the role of mayor, and it is a matter of sincere regret to me that those personal views have been so tragically and outrageously twisted and reported on in order to discredit both myself and my faith")

Date: July 4, 2018

Location: Ferryhill

Source: <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-tees-44716795>

Canon Tom White (spat upon by Protestant members of the Orange Order and lunged at by a man with a pole after Mass, parishioners verbally abused as 'Fenian bastards' and other epithets)

Archbishop Philip Tartaglia (**UPDATE:** stated "Our problem is not so much sectarianism but anti-Catholicism")

Date: July 7, 2018

Location: Glasgow, Scotland

Source: <http://catholicherald.co.uk/news/2018/07/09/catholic-priest-spat-on-at-protestant-march-in-scotland/>

Dr David Mackereth (aged 55, fired from the National Health Service for claiming that gender has a biological basis, said "Firstly, we are not allowed to say what we believe. Secondly, as my case shows, we are not allowed to think what we believe. Finally, we are not allowed to defend what we believe. By stating what has been believed by mankind for centuries - namely that gender and sex are determined at birth - you can come under ferocious attack. If we are no longer allowed to say that you believe sex and gender are the same and are determined at birth, everyone who holds my views can be sacked on the spot under this Act. I'm not an isolated case")

Date reported: July 8, 2018

Location: Dudley, West Midlands

Source: <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2018/07/08/government-drops-doctor-says-gender-given-birth/>



United States - Arizona

Event: Two Christian artists filed suit in [May 2016](#) to block a municipal ordinance that would require them to cater to same sex weddings; the court ruled against them in [September 2016](#); the court ruled again against them in [October 2017](#); an appellate court ruled against them in [June 2018](#); **UPDATE: filed an appeal to the state supreme court**

Breanna Koski

Joanna Duka

Date: [July 9, 2018](#)

Source: <https://www.christianpost.com/news/artists-ask-arizona-high-court-for-protection-from-law-forcing-them-work-same-sex-weddings-225899/>

United States - Wisconsin

Dr John McAdams (professor of political science at [Marquette University, Milwaukee](#), suspended on [December 16, 2014](#), banned from campus, and under formal investigation for defending a student's defense of traditional Christian morality on his blog; told in a letter from the university president in [March 2016](#) to retract his defense of the student who defended Christian morality, refused; brought suit against the university on [May 2, 2016](#); **UPDATE:** prevailed in a Wisconsin Supreme Court decision which stated 'The undisputed facts show that the University breached its contract with Dr. McAdams when it suspended him for engaging in activity protected by the contract's guarantee of academic freedom...we reverse the circuit court and...order the University to immediately reinstate Dr McAdams with unimpaired rank, tenure, compensation, and benefits')

Date: [July 6, 2018](#)

Source: <https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/breaking-prof-fired-by-catholic-university-for-defending-marriage-has-huge>



Venezuela

Fr Iraluis Jose Garcia Escobar (aged 38, **shot** in an apparent robbery, hospitalized, **died**)

Date: [July 8, 2018](#)

Location: Santa Isabel neighborhood, Barquisimeto

Source: http://www.fides.org/en/news/64499-AMERICA_VENEZUELA_Priest_killed_to_rob_his_van

Today's Martyrs

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