

"Please rejoice for me! Jesus has died on the cross for me. It is my utter joy to be imprisoned for my Lord. This is a reality and not self-comfort nor self-encouragement."
~ Pastor John Cao, who is currently imprisoned in China

PAKISTAN: Pastor Shot in Jaranwala

Sources: Kross Konnection, UCA News, Daily Pakistan, Morning Star News

On August 16th, protests by thousands of angry Muslims in the Christian colony of Jaranwala resulted in damages to hundreds of homes and over 20 churches. For more details on this recent incident, view our [report from August 24th](#) and a very informative [video alert](#).

While the intense violence has been quelled, tensions persist throughout the region, and the anti-Christian sentiment which fuelled the violence remains. Eleazar Sidhu serves as the pastor of the Myong-Sang Naserth Church in Jaranwala, which was one of the many churches attacked in the riots. On August 28th, Islamic slogans were painted on the wall of the church building, including a curse against Pastor Eleazar. This vandalism was reported to the police and the writing has since been painted over.

A few days later, a group of people intercepted Pastor Eleazar and threatened to kill him because he had removed the writing. On September 3rd, the church leader was returning to his home when two unidentified men approached him. Pulling out a pistol, one demanded that Pastor Eleazar recite the *Kalima* (the Islamic declaration of faith). When the pastor instead began reciting the Apostles' Creed, the man shot him in the upper chest and then fled.

Pastor Eleazar was taken to the hospital, where doctors were able to remove the bullet. While he lost a lot of blood, the pastor is now considered to be out of danger and, thankfully, recovering well after surgery. The incident has led to renewed concerns regarding the safety of Christians in the area. Police guards have been deployed at churches, but there is scepticism about whether this will be an effective means of protecting worshippers at risk.

Pray for the complete healing of Pastor Eleazar, asking that this Christian leader and his family members will tangibly sense God's comforting presence throughout his recovery. Praise the Lord that there have been no reported casualties due to the ongoing religious tensions in Jaranwala. Please pray for the Lord's protection over His people in this troubled city, as well as those residing in other areas within the nation of Pakistan. Also ask for His intervention in the affairs of the country so that the blasphemy laws, which are so commonly abused, will be revoked.



Pastor Eleazar Sidhu after his injuries.
Photo: Morning Star News

NIGERIA: Pastor Killed in Kaduna State

Sources: Morning Star News, Vatican News, Legit Nigeria, Punch Nigeria

Violence perpetrated by various terrorist groups has been continuing unabated in Nigeria, particularly against Christians. Even with increased security measures in place, Islamic militants continue to conduct deadly raids on Christian communities. A report released in April indicated that over 50,000 followers of Jesus have died and over 18,000 churches were set ablaze since the Boko Haram insurgency began in 2009. Those numbers continue to rise, particularly with the increasing attacks by Islamic Fulani groups. For more details on the violence against Christians in Nigeria, go to our [country report](#).

On August 23rd, Pastor Jeremiah Mayau from the Tawaliu Baptist Church was shot and killed by unknown assailants while he was working in his agricultural field. At the time of publishing this report, details surrounding the attackers' identities and motives remain unknown. Rev. Joseph John Hayab, who serves as the chair for the Kaduna chapter of the Christian Association of Nigeria, refers to the attack as "barbaric." In his statement addressing the incident, Rev. Joseph called on security agencies to exercise greater vigilance to halt this type



Multitudes of Nigerian Christians have died for their faith since 2009.

of activity in the state.

May God provide greatly needed comfort to the loved ones, friends and church family of Pastor Jeremiah during this time of mourning. Pray that the members of the Tawaliu Baptist Church will remain steadfast in their faith, receiving strength, vigour and encouragement from the Lord as they faithfully reach out to the members of their community with the message of eternal life through Jesus Christ. Additionally, pray that Nigerian authorities would not only bring those responsible for this attack to justice, but that there would also be increased vigilance among the country's security forces in providing protection to our vulnerable Christian brothers and sisters.

CHINA: New Laws Tighten Grip on Churches

Sources: Release International, AnglicanTV Ministries, UCA News

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has released new religious restrictions which took effect on September 1st, bringing added concerns in a country already experiencing increased repressive measures. The new rules require religious venues to submit to the leadership of the CCP and its plans for the "sinicization" of religion.

According to the State Administration for Religious Affairs, all religious activities will be limited to official venues only and religious symbols must not be displayed outdoors. In recent years, more than 1,500 crosses have been torn down from officially recognized churches in the Zhejiang province alone. It is expected that such enforcements will increase under these new rules.

The new regulations also put further stipulations on the preaching taking place in government-approved churches. For example, pastors' sermons must now reflect China's politics and the values of President Xi Jinping, demonstrating their full support for the Communist Party of China and its socialist system. Any clergy members refusing to comply face disqualification from preaching.

While such regulations are specifically aimed at the official Three-Self churches, the policies will undoubtedly be used against underground churches that have refused to be placed under government control. For more details on the persecution encountered by Christians in China, go to our [country report](#).

Prayerfully uphold those who are seeking to share the message of the Gospel in this increasingly repressive nation, asking the Lord to grant them wisdom and discretion. Please also remember our Chinese brothers and sisters in Christ who currently remain imprisoned for their faith, praying that they will be granted divinely appointed opportunities to minister to others around them. Finally, pray that God will work mightily in the hearts of China's leaders, including President Xi Jinping, leading each one to repentance and a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.



Religious symbols have been removed from the exterior of numerous church buildings.

The "Persecution & Prayer Alert" is a ministry of:
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