

"Even the traumas we endure as we seek to serve Christ, He receives as our worship."

~ Rev. Dr. Eric Foley

RUSSIA: Strict Opposition to Missionary Activity

Source: Forum 18

In July 2016, Russia passed religion laws restricting "illegal missionary activity" by either citizens or foreigners. This activity could involve speaking to people about religion, or the distribution of either printed, audio or video materials. Between January and June of this year, there have been 42 known prosecutions, resulting in 36 convictions. All those who were convicted received fines.

Most of the recent convictions had not involved religious organizations but rather individuals who were sharing their faith. Those charged were convicted because they did not notify the authorities of the existence of their "religious group," even though they were acting as individuals.

These issues do not only affect Christians but also Muslims and citizens belonging to other religious groups. According to Russia's current laws, individuals or groups engaging in missionary or evangelistic activities of any kind could possibly be subjected to stiff opposition. The *Forum 18* news agency has compiled a list of known prosecutions that have taken place within the first six months of 2020. [This webpage](#) provides more details.

Prayerfully uphold our brothers and sisters in Russia who are presently encountering opposition for sharing their faith. Ask the Lord to provide for those who have received fines so they will have the resources required to pay the penalties. Pray that the government will respect its citizens' rights for religious freedom by honouring Russia's constitutional guarantees for such privileges. In the meantime, may God's people be encouraged to not "grow weary of doing good" but rather look with an expectant hope to His promises of vindication and abundant spiritual harvest (Galatians 6:9).



NIGERIA: Ongoing Atrocities in Kaduna State

Sources: AllAfrica, Morning Star News



Godwin Jonathan Bakoshi
Photo: Morning Star News

Christians residing in Nigeria's Kaduna State have faced a series of attacks by gunmen in recent weeks, resulting in numerous deaths, in addition to kidnappings. While the exact numbers vary, the victims include children, youth and adults.

On August 5th, four villages in the Zangon Kataf region were attacked by armed Fulani militants. In the rampage, at least 22 people have been killed and many homes burned to the ground. According to witnesses, gunmen entered the villages at night and began shooting at random. These attacks follow similar raids that took place in the same area this past July, resulting in more than 20 dead and several wounded.

On August 16th, four Christians were travelling through Kajuru County when they were stopped by militants. While their driver was kidnapped, the Christian passengers – which included three men

and an elderly woman – were killed instantly. One of those killed, Rev. Adalchi Usman, was a pastor from the village of Unguwan Madaki.

On August 17th, the body of Godwin Jonathan Bakoshi was recovered. This young man had been missing since July 29th. On August 18th, Fulani herdsmen attacked the village of Unguwan Gankon, killing a 16-year-old student, Takama Paul, as well as Kegas Malachy, a father of three. The attackers fled when neighbours came to the rescue.

These reports are only a few examples of the alarming atrocities that have taken place in recent weeks at the hands of Fulani militants. For more information on the ongoing violence perpetrated against Nigeria's Christian communities, go to our [country report](#).

Please continue to pray for our suffering Christian brothers and sisters in Nigeria who are facing ongoing threats of violence. Ask God to especially minister to all those who have tragically lost loved ones, homes and/or experienced injury due to the attacks. Intercede for an urgently needed resolution to the horrendous crimes of the Fulani militants, and for firm action to be taken by the Nigerian authorities to ensure the safe rescue of the abducted and put an end to the senseless violence. May the many victims of these crimes receive greatly needed healing, comfort, peace, and the hope of a brighter future.

REPORT UPDATE

CHINA: Video Visit for John Cao

Source: VOM USA

In March 2017, Cao San-Qiang (John Cao) was detained and accused of "organizing illegal border crossings" between Myanmar and China. Pastor Cao, who is married to an American citizen, has been a long-time resident of North Carolina. Well known for his humanitarian work among the poor in Myanmar's Wa State, he has built 16 schools that serve 2,000 impoverished children.

Pastor Cao was arrested and detained, along with a co-worker, for almost a year without charges. He was eventually sentenced to seven years in prison. In July of last year, his latest appeal was rejected based solely on written submissions.

A few days ago, Pastor Cao was finally allowed to meet with his mother via a video link, rather than in person, due to pandemic restrictions. His mother reports that he looks well and is presently not doing any field work, allowing him time to read and interact with other inmates. Pastor Cao also told her that he is praying daily for his brothers and sisters in Christ, as well as everything that is taking place in the world.



John Cao
Photo: Ben Cao

More information on Pastor Cao's case can be [reviewed here](#). For reports on other cases of persecution, go to our [China Country Report](#).

Please continue to lift up Pastor Cao in your prayers, asking God to provide him and other imprisoned believers renewed strength as they eagerly await their deliverance. In the interim, may their interactions with fellow inmates be mightily used to lead more people to a saving faith in Christ. Praise God for the encouraging report that Pastor Cao is in good health. Pray for his wife Jamie and their two sons, Benjamin and Amos, who are living in the United States, and also for his dear mother.

If you would like to post a prayer of praise or petition on behalf of our persecuted family around the globe, visit [VOMC's prayer wall](#).

The Persecution & Prayer Alert is a ministry of:
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