



Media Release for 18.11.2022

Report shows persecution of Christians is getting worse

Jihadists and nationalists are driving increased persecution of Christians around the world – according to a report unveiled.

In countries around the world, the Catholic charity Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) launched *Persecuted and Forgotten? A Report on Christians oppressed for their Faith 2020-22*.

The report, which was launched on 16 November includes information from ACN and other local sources, provides first-hand testimony, compilations of incidents, case studies, and country analysis on the extent to which Christians are targeted around the world.

Amid growing alarm about the increasing violence in parts of the country, Bishop Arogundade said ahead of the event that “no-one seems to pay attention to the genocide” taking place in swathes of Nigeria’s Middle Belt. “The world is silent as attacks on Churches, their personnel and institutions have become routine. How many corpses are required to get the world’s attention?”

Persecuted and Forgotten? found that in 75 percent of the 24 countries surveyed, oppression or persecution of Christians has increased.

Africa saw a sharp rise in terrorist violence from non-state militants – with more than 7,600 Nigerian Christians reportedly murdered between January 2021 and June 2022.

In May 2022 a video was released showing 20 Nigerian Christians being executed by Islamist terror group Boko Haram/ISWAP.

In Asia, state-authoritarianism led to worsening oppression, which *Persecuted and Forgotten?* found was at its worst in North Korea, where religious belief and practice are routinely and systematically repressed.

Religious nationalism has triggered increasing violence against Christians in the region, with Hindutva and Sinhalese Buddhist nationalist groups active in India and Sri Lanka respectively. Authorities have arrested believers and stopped Church services.

India saw 710 incidents of anti-Christian violence between January 2021 and the start of June 2022, driven in part by political extremism.

During a mass rally in Chhattisgarh in October 2021, members of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) applauded as right-wing Hindu religious leader Swami Parmatmanand called for Christians to be killed.

The report found that in the Middle East a migration crisis threatened the survival of some of the world's oldest Christian communities.

In Syria, Christians plummeted from 10 percent of the population to less than 2 percent – falling from 1.5 million just before the war began to around 300,000 today.

While the rate of exodus is slower in Iraq, a community that numbered around 300,000 before the 2014 invasion by Daesh (ISIS) had halved to 150,000 by Spring 2022.

Persecuted and Forgotten? also found that in countries as diverse as Egypt and Pakistan, Christian girls are routinely subject to systematic kidnapping and rape.

Report author John Pontifex said: “Persecuted and Forgotten? provides first-hand testimony and case studies proving that in many countries Christians are experiencing persecution – let us do all that we can to show that they are not forgotten.”

[A full copy of the report can be ordered here.](#)

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