

## Dear Friends and Supporters.

The **January 2022 Caucus Newsletter for the Persecuted Church** and other religious minorities is now available from [c.v.r.blacker@btinternet.com](mailto:c.v.r.blacker@btinternet.com). As we pass through another commemorative Holocaust Day and watch programmes relating to genocides in the past let us take warning from them and not forget the genocides that are taking place in the *present* – on our watch! Raising awareness of these, and of the mounting persecution generally, is an important first step towards each of us being able to do something about it.

The newsletter ends with a list of heroic Aid and Advocacy NGOs who are actively supporting the victims of this persecution and through whom you can make donations, sign petitions, or write letters of support to the victims' families.

This edition opens with the annual World Watch List produced each year by Open Doors which identifies, in rank order, the various countries where persecution is prominent. It confirms the increasing trend, year on year, and reveals that over 360 million Christians worldwide — that's 1 in 7 – now live under persecution.

Their conservative estimate is that last year 5898 Christians were killed for their faith, 5110 Churches and other Christian buildings were attacked or torn down, 6175 believers were detained without trial, arrested, sentenced or imprisoned...and 3829 were abducted.

This is followed by the Release International Report on the situation, globally. Both reports identify that Afghanistan has become the No1 hotspot and there are a number of appeals out to assist Afghan minorities who are stuck in Kabul or sitting in tents as refugees in Pakistan Iran Turkey Greece and elsewhere.

In India, encouraged no doubt the new anti-conversion laws and pre-existing prejudices towards the lower-caste Dalits, a series of attacks on Christians and their churches are carried out by Hindu nationalists.

In Pakistan, the longest-serving Christian victim of the draconian Blasphemy Laws – Zafar Bhatti – is given a death sentence. Meanwhile, *Qamar Rafiq* discusses the plight of religious minorities in Pakistan seen through the lens of ongoing rape abduction and forced conversions / marriages.

From China, an Uyghur intellectual who was incarcerated and tortured by the Chinese Community Party describes the horror that goes on in their 'killing fields'. A Christian book-seller is sentenced to 7 years in prison despite appeals and protests from NGOs and the West. The CCP now bans the sharing and promotion of religious literature on the internet. There then follows is a chilling report on how Human Rights are defined in China and which are widely divergent with the rest of the civilised world. Finally, Human Rights Lawyer Nina Shea shows how the CCP attempt to cover up Religious Genocide and Repression.

From Kenya come reports of further Islamist killings of Christians – and a brave woman who stood up to them and called them out.

From Nigeria come reports of more killings of Christians by Fulani Militants whilst Government forces look on and do absolutely nothing.

In Iran a convert from Islam begins a 4 year prison sentence. Three Christian guys record a song on behalf of the persecuted minorities there.

And in France a Catholic religious procession is subject to Islamist death threats and insults.

Do feel free to pass on this newsletter to friends and colleagues. If anyone not yet in receipt of the newsletter and who would like to receive it please invite them to contact me for inclusion in the confidential (GDPR compliant) mailing list.

All best wishes

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