

Armenians flee Azerbaijan assault

The nominally Christian 120,000 Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh – an enclave in the Muslim country of Azerbaijan – have been forced to flee from Azerbaijan’s military takeover of their enclave. There is a mass exodus of Armenians into Armenia, but they have had to leave behind land, homes, farms, businesses and churches that have been theirs for generations. An Armenian leader said, “The fate of our people will go down in history as a disgrace for the Armenian people and the whole civilised world. Those responsible for our fate will one day have to answer before God for their sins.”

Religious Liberty

From Nigeria

“The pastors and teachers of the Word of God in this area came and shared with me their joy of how your books assisted them in their preaching and teaching. Please send me more to distribute, even any second-hand books, because they are valuable materials to us here. Thank you for equipping us with the Word of God for our ministries. I can’t afford to miss you for what you’re doing in my life though your books. More grace to your elbow.”

Bridgeway

Bibles in China

The official printing of Bibles in China (by the government-owned Amity Press) has over the years produced millions of Bibles, though, because of tightening in government policy towards Christianity, the rate of production is reducing. It is estimated that 40% of Christians in China do not have their own Bible. Even Christian materials sent by postal or courier services are labelled ‘contraband’ because they are not government approved. What is more alarming is that the government is selectively changing parts of the Bible to make it align with its own ideology.

Voice of the Martyrs



Philippines’ ‘red-tagging’ policy

When authorities in the Philippines want to silence their critics – whether journalists, conservationists, human rights activists, church leaders or even Christian workers caring for the poor and vulnerable – they will simply ‘red-tag’ them. That is, they will label them as communist recruiters or financiers. People who are red-tagged routinely end up disappeared, imprisoned, tortured or murdered, usually at the hands of security personnel with sweeping powers and guaranteed impunity. The number of church leaders to be red-tagged, both from the majority Catholic religion and from active Protestant churches, is increasing alarmingly. Many have gone into hiding. President Ferdinand Marcos Jr and his vice-president appear determined to continue, and even accelerate, these unjust policies.

Religious Liberty

Jordan’s Camp Gilead

The ministry of Christian Camp work in Jordan has grown much in recent years. This work grew out of the Camp Gilead ministry of regular summer camps to become a year-round comprehensive youth ministry under the name Spark Youth. This includes Bible teaching, gospel outreach, discipleship training, Christian media, worship, music and follow up. Various training sessions have been held to empower and strengthen the 180 volunteers who help in this camp ministry program. The associated ministry of humanitarian aid to refugees from Syria and Iraq continues to be both demanding and fruitful.

Manara

Maintaining the improvements in Egypt

Foundation stones have been laid for two new church buildings in Upper Egypt. Until the country’s president reversed long-standing anti-Christian laws, such building was not possible. The president has also allowed registration of churches that enables them to carry out much-needed repairs on old buildings. So far 3,189 of the 3,730 churches that applied have been registered. The church in Egypt today has more freedom than the church of previous generations.

Barnabas Fund

God's Word in Malawi

A pastor writes: "I am going into the rural regions for an extended church planting mission and I will carry more Bibles. You know this support you sent me to buy Bibles is the first of its kind I have ever received. Many people will be assisted, especially Muslims, who always ask for a Bible when they receive Jesus as their Lord and Saviour. Of course, we want to give them Bibles, but the cost and availability are a challenge. Bridgeway's five Basic Christianity books really help converts to learn the basics of Christianity when they believe. They also help me improve my sermons to be easier to understand when I preach.

"Please can we have more Bridgeway Bible Commentaries and Bridgeway Bible Dictionaries to give to more evangelists, pastors and teachers. Books are very hard to buy in Malawi. But first people must have a Bible before they can read Bible study books."

[Six months later] "Three new churches all with some Muslims have been planted and we are receiving more invitations from churches in other parts of the district. Our biggest problem now is how we can get Bibles to the new believers as they can hardly afford. They struggle even to buy a kilo of maize."

Bridgeway

Germany's missionaries

In contrast to many countries, Germany has seen the total number of Protestant missionaries increase over the past fifty or more years. This is due to the growth of evangelical missions, which account for 90% of Germany's Protestant mission force.

Within Germany itself, good things are also happening, and in an increasingly anti-Christian environment. Some of the large-scale outreach events and programs have been giving young people a sense of excitement and belonging, while at the same time imparting good teaching and exhortation. Hundreds of thousands in Germany and beyond are impacted. Campus ministries are also doing well, with more than 70 groups in universities and 800 groups in secondary schools.

Operation World

Cuba: Communists and Christians

The communist regime in Cuba is not tolerant of any dissenting voices or any entities other than the Communist Party gaining influence or power. The church falls into both of these categories and, as a result, Christians experience persecution from the authorities. Those who speak out against corruption can be arrested and subjected to arbitrary fines, close surveillance, denials of licenses, loss of religious visas and physical abuse.

Open Doors

The Christians of Iran

Iran is ruled by an increasingly strict Islamic regime that views the existence of house churches as an attempt by Western countries to undermine Islam. State surveillance is on the rise and government authorities are tightening their grip on daily life and activities. When people from Muslim backgrounds become Christians (and there have been thousands of them in recent years), they can only meet in secret house churches. They risk being monitored, harassed, arrested and prosecuted for 'crimes against national security.' They may also lose opportunities for education and employment.

Open Doors

Coups in Africa

Several presidents of African countries are rearranging their senior military lineups to protect themselves against another coup in the region. There were no coup attempts in all of Africa between 2007 and 2018, but Gabon's recent coup was the eighth since 2020. In all there have been 13 revolts against governments across the continent in the past four years. Military rule doesn't always lead to national security, and while Christians are often caught in the crossfire, uncertainty in the general populace does create gospel opportunities.

Mission network News

A mission in Mongolia

The nation Mongolia, wedged between China to the south and Russia to the north, has a population of 3.42 million, 30% of which is nomadic or semi-nomadic. Currently there is a combined effort by 200 Christians from 18 churches and five organisations to reach 87,000 nomadic herders in the country's western regions. In June about 7,000 people came to a stadium tent ministry where over a thousand professed commitment to Christ and are now participating in discipleship classes. From these it is hoped to start new churches, to add to the hundreds already established.

New Life