

Iran’s internal unrest

Iran recently celebrated the 45th anniversary of the Islamic Revolution. Iran’s government is behind many of the Islamic terror groups in the region – Hamas, Hezbollah, Houthi – and uses its outside conflicts to keep its own people fearful and dependent on it for security. Many Iranians are opposed to their rulers but are powerless to do anything to change things. Widespread dissatisfaction is one reason why people are turning to Christianity. This causes the government to be not only hateful of Christianity but also afraid of it. Christianity in Iran has one of the highest growth rates in the world, but the government’s only answer to it is increasing violence.

Mission Network News

From an evangelist in Kenya

“My ministry is growing every day and people are coming to Christ almost daily. In one district I opened three churches and next week I have invited 20 pastors and 23 evangelists to attend the teaching I will give from your book Let the Bible Speak for Itself. These books are like gold in the hands of those who get them. Each carton can help turn a whole community to Christ as the church is strengthened to spread the gospel with the right knowledge. Thank you so much and please keep us on your list for books and Bibles.

Bridgeway

Christians in Buddhist Bhutan

In the Buddhist-majority South Asian nation of Bhutan, Christians are not allowed to meet publicly for worship. Churches are not officially recognised and cannot own property or conduct outreach activities. Despite this, Christians can usually worship in private without fear of arrest by authorities or attacks by extremists.

The plight of Sudan

Sudan’s civil war has created one of the world’s most severe humanitarian crises. Thousands have died in the conflict, and famine and disease have followed. International experts reported 28,000 cases of cholera and 836 deaths in one recent 4-month period. Pray for an end to the conflict, that the people of Sudan will get the assistance they need and that the Lord will sustain our brothers and sisters in this time of hardship. Christian aid agencies are providing vital food and practical aid, especially to the hundreds of Christian families displaced by the conflict. Thousands of civilians have taken refuge on the border between Sudan and South Sudan, a country that nominally is majority-Christian.

Barnabas Aid

Christians in Myanmar’s ongoing conflict

There is still no end in sight to the civil war in Myanmar that began after the 2021 coup. Civilians and targeted ethnic groups, especially those known as Christian (about 6% of the population), have paid the price. More than 5,300 people have been killed and over 3 million displaced, among them tens of thousands of Christians. But hope remains and the church moves forward.

Despite the brutality of the Buddhist nationalist military government, especially in the hill tribe regions, resilient local Christians, including large numbers of young people, hand out physical resources to villagers attacked by government forces. When one groups of Christians, who were engaged in Bible translation, found an abandoned ambulance, they put mattresses in it for soundproofing and are using it as a ‘studio’ to make recordings. The Christians of Myanmar never give up, but keep praying and working.

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Faeroe Islands

The Faeroe Islands is an archipelago of 18 rugged islands between Iceland and Scotland. It is a self-governing region of Denmark and, in contrast to Denmark itself, it has a lively church scene. About 30% of the people are evangelical in belief and practice. Though having a population of only 50,000, the islands have sent more than 100 missionaries to more than 20 countries. Pray that the Spirit of God will continue to impact the church and that believers will be wise in dealing with secular attitudes that increasingly challenge the Bible and Christian belief.

Operation World

Filling the vacuum in Bangladesh

Since the overthrow of the former, long-standing government and the subsequent flight of political leaders, Bangladesh has been in political turmoil. Christians and other religious minorities, particularly Hindus, face violence from radical Islamists who see the political vacuum as an opportunity to gain power. Church leaders have written to the interim Prime Minister asking that ethnic and religious minorities face no deprivation, injustice or oppression.

Ask the Lord to bring an end to the chaos for the sake of all the poor and vulnerable, especially our Christian brothers and sisters. Conditions have been made worse by monsoonal floods that have left thousands of Christians impoverished.

Openings in Uzbekistan

Praise God that after an extended time of oppression, conditions in Uzbekistan have changed and the church is growing. There is still discrimination against Christian converts from radical Muslims, but a recent five-day seminar that brought together 50 church leaders has lifted the hopes of all. With better connections and enhanced biblical knowledge, they can better respond to the needs of the growing Christian community.

Barnabas Aid

From a Bible teacher in Zimbabwe

“Ever since first receiving books from you, I look back on my ministry with a smile. I find myself very rich, extraordinarily rich. I don't enter the podium to waffle but have solid, substantial and abundant instruction, not discourses that are threadbare. From your writings and instructions and the many other rich and resourceful books you have sent me over the years, I feel abundantly blessed, standing before rulers and commoners without fear of failing to deliver. The library I have built up is available also to church leaders and community leaders, plus many youths who are potential preachers. May the Chief Shepherd continue to look upon you with grace”.

Bridgeway

Where to for Syria?

The future of Christians in Syria calls for much prayer. Syria has traditionally had a large Christian minority, whose business and church activities once enjoyed a large amount of freedom. The civil war caused many Christians to flee, though some later returned. At present the leader of the group that overthrew the Assad regime has positioned himself as a moderate, but no one knows how long this will last or where the country might be headed. Pray wisdom for Christians currently living in Syria and those in exile who may be thinking of returning.

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Ethiopia

In the troubled region of Tigray, 300 audio Bibles have recently been distributed, mainly through the agencies of a church, a special needs school and a local women's ministry. Each audio Bible reaches at least 10 people, usually in a group of mixed background and age. *MegaVoice*

Colombian violence

Buenaventura, an important port in Columbia, is ranked among the world's most violent cities. With 39 criminal gangs fighting for control, its citizens live in such fear of extortion and violence that many fear to move about freely.

Churches and Christian groups feel intimidated and besieged by the armed groups that target anyone who opposes their illegal activities. Many believers, including church leaders, have left the region, which has weakened congregations and increased the workload on those who remain. One pastor's cry for help was, “This is not a matter of money, but of spiritual and emotional support.”

Open Doors

Nigeria's suffering ignored

It is a sad commentary on what is happening in northern Nigeria that, according to one church leader, “when there is an attack, or when a pastor is killed, or a church is destroyed, it's not news anymore, because it is just what we expected. These things have become so common.” Some estimates state that every two hours a Nigerian Christian is killed for his or her faith. Christians are targeted by Boko Haram, Islamic State and Fulani militants.

The sad fact is that the international community, even churches, have become numb to what is happening in Nigeria. More than 50,000 Christians have been killed in Nigeria since 2009, yet Western governments largely remain silent. Prayer is needed that the country might dramatically reverse the direction in which it is going. Last year more Christians died for their faith in Nigeria than in all the world's other countries combined.

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