

# Persecution Information on the Web

The Internet provides ample evidence that persecution of Christians is an extensive international tragedy. Google ([www.google.com](http://www.google.com)) yields some 200,000 hits from a search for “persecution of Christians” (with the quotes). Searching for websites dealing with persecution of Christians in a particular country, such as India or China, further demonstrates the scope of the problem: entering the words “persecution Christian India” (without the quotes) into Google results in nearly 400,000 hits; substituting China for India gives a similar result.

Wikipedia can often provide an initial introduction to an issue, its definition and context. Its article on “Persecution of Christians” ([en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Persecution\\_of\\_Christians](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Persecution_of_Christians)) includes an extensive historical overview, along with links to nearly two dozen related Wikipedia articles.

In this article we’ll highlight some of the key websites (in alphabetical order) that provide valuable online resources (see them all at [www.mislinks.org/practical/persecuted](http://www.mislinks.org/practical/persecuted)).



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htm). We group them into three categories: Christian organizations focused on ministering to the suffering church, Christian news and information sources focused on persecution, and major secular sites.

## Christian Organizations

Barnabas Fund ([www.barnabasfund.org](http://www.barnabasfund.org)) offers “hope and aid for the persecuted church” and promotes prayer and advocacy ministries. Focused primarily on the Muslim world, its website provides daily prayer points, a news archive and feature articles.

Christian Freedom International ([www.christianfreedom.org](http://www.christianfreedom.org)) is “an interdenominational human rights organization that combines advocacy with humanitarian assistance for persecuted Christians on the front lines.” The website offers news, Persecution Spotlight items, a few videos and practical ways to get directly involved.

Christian Solidarity Worldwide ([www.cswusa.com](http://www.cswusa.com)) is “called to stand with our persecuted brothers and sisters in Christ, giving voice to their cries of suffering and urging action on their behalf, by raising prayer support and emergency aid in partnership.” The website provides profiles of several dozen countries, a newsletter, a daily prayer calendar and government petitions.

Christians in Crisis ([www.christiansin-crisis.net](http://www.christiansin-crisis.net)), “a prayer advocacy ministry that prays for the persecuted church worldwide,” offers online devotionals and stories from the field. The ministry emphasizes the Islamic world, but the online news section covers persecution of Christians around the world.

International Christian Concern ([www.persecution.org](http://www.persecution.org)) is an interdenominational

human rights organization dedicated to providing assistance, advocacy and awareness for the suffering Church. The site includes prayer profiles of countries where Christians are persecuted, current news stories, a semi-monthly prayer bulletin and petitions to sign.

International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church ([idop.org](http://idop.org)), “a global day of intercession for persecuted Christians worldwide,” is scheduled next for November 9, 2008. The website provides a set of country-by-country “Critical Prayer Requests (CPR) for Strategic Nations” along with articles and other resources.

International Justice Mission ([www.ijm.org](http://www.ijm.org)) is “a human rights organization that rescues victims of violence, sexual exploitation, slavery and oppression. IJM documents and monitors conditions of abuse and oppression, educates the church and public about the abuses and mobilizes intervention on behalf of victims.” The website includes monthly in-depth “Justice Briefings” and valuable articles by IJM staff.

Open Doors International ([www.opendoors.org](http://www.opendoors.org)), the ministry founded by Brother Andrew, focuses on Bible delivery programs, leadership training in restricted areas and prayer mobilization. Its World Watch List, available free online, ranks countries according to a 50-question set of criteria related to religious freedom.

The Voice of the Martyrs ([www.persecution.com](http://www.persecution.com)), founded by Richard Wurmbrand, is “dedicated to assisting the persecuted church worldwide.” Sign up to access the audio/video media room, country profiles, weekly email updates and monthly newsletter.

The related PrisonerAlert.com site ([www.prisoneralert.com](http://www.prisoneralert.com))

*A. Scott Moreau and Mike O'Rear*

prisoneralert.com) profiles individual prisoners, encouraging the writing of letters to prisoners and sending email to government officials.

VOM's Persecution Blog ([www.persecutionblog.com](http://www.persecutionblog.com)) provides good insight, and their extensive blog roll will lead you to many related bloggers.

World Evangelical Alliance's Religious Liberty Commission ([www.worldevan-](http://www.worldevan-)

[gelificals.org/commissions/rlc](http://gelificals.org/commissions/rlc)) monitors the religious liberty situation in more than 100 nations, "defending persecuted Christians, informing the global church, challenging the Church to pray ([www.idop.org](http://www.idop.org)) and giving all possible assistance...." The website provides a weekly News & Prayer Bulletin.

### Christian News and Information Services

Assist News Service ([www.assistnews.com](http://www.assistnews.com)

[www.assistnews.com](http://www.assistnews.com)) provides "Aid to Special Saints in Strategic Times," produces multiple news articles on a daily basis, many of which deal with persecuted Christian communities. Use the search feature to find previous news items from Assist's extensive online database; for instance, searching for "Sudan" finds over 370 articles.

Christian Monitor ([www.christianmonitor.org](http://www.christianmonitor.org)) provides news headlines focused on persecution of Christians around the world,

## 11. K and Pramila Rajendran, India Mission Association, Leader National Mission Movement

*What policies and guidelines does your missions movement have when sending SHORT-TERM missionaries to dangerous contexts?*

Indian indigenous missions have sent most of their missionaries inside India as it has many distinct cultures and languages. Sending missionaries outside of India is a growing phenomenon. The sending of Indian missionaries by Indian missions is governed by a high sense of sacrifice.

Many Indian missionaries face more ill-health than martyrdom in some of the remote areas. Some local tribes may have inaccessibility to good water, food and sanitation and missionaries trying to become one with that local tribe [contextualization] may become affected in their health. Many become sick with malaria, typhoid, jaundice, brain-fever and other communicable and non-communicable deceases. Therefore, our dangerous situations are more connected with health issues than physical danger of attack, except in few cases in the recent past. Indian missions are slowly becoming aware of the health issues and are trying to handle such situations.

A few Indian missionaries, mostly with international organisations, have gone to some "closed" countries to be a part of international teams. Most indigenous Indian missions are not able to send workers outside of the country yet because of economical realities. Indian Missions are still coming to terms with recognizing and accepting the Indian Christian Diaspora as missionaries.

*What policies does your missions movement have when sending LONGER-TERM missionaries to dangerous contexts?*

Same as the above. There is very little difference between short-term and long-term workers. We find that there is less emphasis on short-term workers and instead workers are challenged to accept longer-terms.

*Do you have a written summary statement giving a Biblical theology of persecution or martyrdom?*

We do not have a written summary including the newer perspective of the context. Contrasting documents have been made between academics with less field experience and field practioners who emphasize more practical issues.

*What guidelines do you have in case a missionary, or a child of missionaries, is kidnapped?*

Guidelines are yet to be made, except the example of a missionary's child who was abducted and rescued by the mission leader after much negotiation with the thugs who abducted the child.

*What guidelines do you have regarding monetary ransom of a kidnapped missionary?*

Not much has been discussed in this matter by India Missions at large. Many of the abductors do tend to think that missionaries have a lot of funds at their disposal because of the amount of work Christians do for the society.

*What post-trauma care is given to your mission force family that has gone through a situation of violence, illness, death?*

Few mission organisations are beginning to adress this issue. Some missionary welfare

## GLOBAL VOICES

organizations started to address this, but it is a very small number compared to the volume of missionaries and the vast challenge of mission work in India. Furthermore, there are very little funds ear-marked or budgeted for the purposes of post-trauma care.

*What kind of pre-field missionary training do you give or encourage for contexts of danger, violence, persecution or martyrdom?*

Slowly, some awareness is being built and more has to be done to prepare people for the context of violence, persecution or martyrdom.

*What more ought we to be saying to our churches and future missionaries in this area?*

We must educate the churches, missions and the Bible institutions regarding this crucial topic.

### Final thoughts

The future of missions will be influenced by how we address some of these issues that accompany the radical teaching of carrying on the ministry of the Great Commission to the present world. Cross-cultural evangelization needs to be rethought in light of globalization, in which people mingle all over the world like a melting pot. The world is at the doorstep of all the churches across the world. As much as we need cross-cultural missionaries who will physically go across the world, we also need mission minded Christians in every church who mentally reach out to other cultures and build bridges to help them follow Christ.

along with related editorials, book reviews and interviews.

Christian Persecution Info ([www.christianpersecution.info](http://www.christianpersecution.info)), “a Christian news journal” provided by Worthy Ministries, specializes in tracking the latest news on Christian persecution. Regional tabs let you focus on recent news items in Africa, China, Russia, etc..

Compass Direct News ([www.compassdirect.org](http://www.compassdirect.org)) is a professional news service dedicated to providing “strategic news and information from the world’s most difficult areas.” Via an exclusive international network of news bureaus and correspondents, it provides paid subscribers with reports, interviews and analyses of persecuted Christians worldwide.

Project Open Book ([www.domini.org/openbook/home.htm](http://www.domini.org/openbook/home.htm)) focuses on “docu-

menting the persecution of Christians in the Islamic world.” It provides online access to papers and articles documenting specific incidents of persecution.

### Secular Organizations

Amnesty International ([www.amnesty.org](http://www.amnesty.org)) focuses on human rights in general and has multiple ongoing campaigns. You can search their extensive online library of over 50,000 items: newsletters, reports, appeals for action, video and audio clips, stories, etc.

Center for Religious Freedom ([crf.hudsonson.org](http://crf.hudsonson.org)), sponsored by the Hudson Institute, “promotes religious freedom as a component of U.S. foreign policy by working with a worldwide network of religious freedom experts...” The website provides online access to over 200 articles related to religious freedom.

Human Rights Watch ([www.hrw.org](http://www.hrw.org)) is “dedicated to protecting the human rights of people around the world.” The site provides an online list of substantial publications (including HRW’s annual World Report), a list of current campaigns, a set of photo galleries and an array of video clips.

The United Nations Refugee Agency ([www.unhcr.ch](http://www.unhcr.ch)) provides extensive textual information, statistics, databases and maps describing the world’s refugee population. The State of the World’s Refugees is available as a free download ([www.unhcr.org/static/publ/sowr2006/toceng.htm](http://www.unhcr.org/static/publ/sowr2006/toceng.htm)). You can search their massive online database, Refworld ([www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/refworld/rwmain](http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/refworld/rwmain)), a collection of reports as well as policy and legal documents from countries around the world. <<

