

for a job in the judiciary, armed forces, civil services, and other government jobs also need to submit an affidavit declaring that Muhammad was the final prophet.

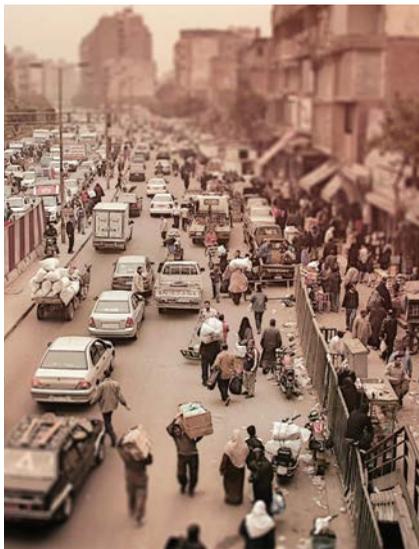
The majority of Pakistan's citizens are Sunni Muslim, with minority groups such as Christians and Ahmadi Muslims making up an estimated 20 percent of the population. Ahmadis in particular face discrimination because they are labeled "non-Muslims" by Pakistan's constitution; to call themselves Muslim or to refer to their faith as Islam is a punishable offense under the country's blasphemy's laws. Christians in Pakistan also face discrimination and oppression through misuse of these blasphemy laws.

A source for World Watch Monitor said the court has jurisdiction only in Islamabad, so the ruling could be primarily a "political stunt," but "it still sends a strong message how the debate about religion has gone deeper and deeper in Pakistan, and religious minorities, especially Christians, are being affected by this."

Egyptian Father Murdered after Refusing to Deny Christ (6)

Two young Coptic Christian boys have recounted the tale of how Muslim extremists in Egypt murdered their father after he refused to deny Christ and embrace Islam.

Ayad, a Coptic Christian, had planned to take his two boys on a trip to Saint Samuel to show them his work as a skilled laborer earlier this year. However, on their way to the monastery, a group of Muslim extremists attacked their bus full of Christian visitors.



The attackers pulled all of the men from the bus and told them to deny Christ and confess Islam as their religion. Those who refused, including Ayad, were shot.

The boys, who dove behind the benches when they heard the shouting, were then discovered by the terrorists. One of them shot at the boys but missed, and another attacker said, "No, let them live to tell the story." The boys found their father still alive, but he died shortly after.

At least 26 people were killed in the attack on the bus, with 23 others wounded. The two boys are now home with their mother and sister.

To check out books and other church resources, please visit www.Tyndale.com.

significant news for christians

Some news that's encouraging—some disturbing. Read with discernment. Watch and pray.

THE Church Around the WORLD

July 2018



Country in Focus: Gibraltar (7)

The country of Gibraltar, with a population of 32,000, is only 2.5 square miles, located on a rocky peninsula on the south coast of Spain. Most of the population is of Italian, Maltese, British, Jewish, or Portuguese descent.

Once largely dependent on a British dockyard and military presence, Gibraltar now has a self-sufficient economy balanced between shipping, offshore finance, and tourism. The local population steadfastly and overwhelmingly resist Spanish pleas, pressures, and blockades to restore the Rock (Gibraltar) to Spain.

Most of Gibraltar's population is Catholic, but a number of mainline denominations are represented, with a growing number of evangelical and charismatic churches. In 2000, there were only four evangelical groups; now there are more than 10, though the ministries of these groups to the majority of citizens can be difficult due to the predominance of the Catholic church. Most every home has some Christian literature, and the Christian bookstore sells many Bibles. The citizens of Gibraltar enjoy full religious freedom, yet there is need for unity among believers.

Pray for:

- Further evangelical growth and revival among the mainline majority churches;
- Outreach efforts—Gibraltar is well-placed for this since many tourists visit the country every year;
- Guest workers, mainly Moroccan laborers, to be reached with the gospel;
- Muslims working in or visiting Gibraltar to receive Christian material about Jesus; it is hoped that these visitors will find Christ and take their faith with them when they return to their native countries.

Interest in Bible Translation Has "Gone Viral"

The year 2018 is set to be a historic year for Bible translation, according to Wycliffe

Associates. Bruce Smith, the leader of the Bible-translating organization, said that interest in Bible translation has "gone viral" and that the organization is translating the Bible into more languages than ever before.

Wycliffe has been able to make even

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Let the whole earth sing to the LORD! Each day proclaim the good news that he saves.

1 CHRONICLES 16:23

greater progress in Bible translation due to modern technology and methods. The organization has already translated the New Testament into 193 languages in the past three years, and this year they have received requests for 600 new translations, which they plan to launch soon.

Muslim Herdsmen and Terrorists Kill Eight Christians ⁽²⁾

Recent attacks on villages in north-central Nigeria that killed eight Christians were carried out by Muslim Fulani herdsmen aided by terrorists from Islamic extremist groups, according to a local pastor.

Reverend Sunday Gado Biri added that the assailants torched 50 houses belonging to Christians, including his own, and that his church building was partially burned in the attacks. "These attacks show that it is not only the herdsmen who are attacking Christian communities, as there are terrorists collaborating with them to carry out these attacks. And when the herdsmen were burning down houses, the soldiers could not stop them," he said.

Biri claimed the attacks have reduced the number of people attending his church

services. "Some of our members have been displaced, and church attendance has drastically dropped," he said. "Prior to these attacks, church attendance was at about 400 worshippers, but at the moment we hardly have about 200 worshippers during services on Sundays."

Navy Rejects Secular Humanist Chaplain ⁽³⁾

The United States Navy has Catholic chaplains and Protestant chaplains but has rejected a secular humanist's application to serve in the Navy Chaplain Corps., Rep. Doug Lamborn (R-CO) said in a prepared statement.

"The very definition of the chaplaincy was at stake here, so I am relieved to see the Navy's response," Lamborn said. "Appointing a secular-humanist or atheist chaplain would have gone against everything the chaplaincy was created to do. The installment of an atheist chaplain would inevitably open the door to a host of chaplains representing many other philosophical worldviews, thus eroding the distinct religious function of the chaplain corps to the detriment of service members."



Church Around the WORLD

Turkish Court Charges American Pastor ⁽⁴⁾

Andrew Brunson, an American pastor who's been locked in a Turkish jail since October 2016, could spend the rest of his life in prison.



Until now, Brunson has been held without charges, but recently, a Turkish court approved a 62-page indictment against him. The charges include membership in an armed terrorist organization and military espionage.

The American Center for Law and Justice (ACLJ), which is helping Brunson's Turkish

attorney, says the charges effectively make sharing the gospel an act of terrorism.

"Turkey has literally taken the position that Christianization is terrorism," ACLJ senior counsel Cece Heil said. "They have no specific evidence that Pastor Brunson has committed any crime. The fact that he is a Christian, and specifically a Christian pastor, is what they are equating as terrorism."

"President Erdogan basically had a purge getting rid of anyone he deemed was not on his side, which of course would include Christians when it's an entirely Muslim country," Heil explained. "Pastor Brunson was one of the Christians that was snatched up in this purge. Most of the Christian pastors had been deported and Pastor Brunson was not."

Court: Pakistani Citizens Must Reveal Religion ⁽⁵⁾

According to a recent ruling by Islamabad's high court, Pakistan's citizens must now declare their religion when applying for identity documents or if they want to work in government or register to vote.

Applicants who disguise their true religion defy the constitution and betray the state, the judge stated. Their true religion must now also be visible on birth certificates, ID cards, voters' lists, and passports. Those who apply

This month you can... Help Reach the Family of a Prisoner This Christmas

For 2.7 million children in the US, their Christmas story may be filled with the abandonment, loneliness, and shame that come from having a mom or dad in prison. Angel Tree, a program of Prison Fellowship, reaches out to the children of inmates with the love of Christ. This unique program gives volun-

teers an opportunity to share God's love by helping to meet the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of the families of prisoners.

Angel Tree connects parents in prison with their children through the delivery of Christmas gifts. Each child receives a minimum of one gift valued at approximately \$20. Gifts are

delivered on behalf of the parent in prison. When the gifts are delivered, a gospel presentation is made.

For more information on this program, here's how to contact Prison Ministries:

- 1-800-55-ANGEL (26435)
- Angel_Tree@pfm.org
- angeltree.org
- facebook.com/AngelTree