



World Mission News

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Eritrean: The Eritrean government ordered in late May the closure of all Christian churches that are not Orthodox, Roman Catholic, or Lutheran. This contradicts the constitution's mandate on freedom of religion. It appeared to be due to pressure from the dominant Orthodox Church and foreign Muslim groups. There have been a budding revival movement within the Orthodox Church and renewed evangelical fervor in the independent and charismatic churches.

<Christianity Today, 8/5/02>

Lesotho: A missionary couple of the China Evangelical Mission to South Africa have begun last April a mission in Lesotho, a nation twice the size of Hong Kong and completely surrounded by South Africa. There are about 500 Chinese in that nation, mostly in restaurant, food market, or clothing business. The fellowship now numbers 20 people meeting twice a week.

<中福快訊 CEM News, 6/02>

Saudi Arabia: Police in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, arrested 10 Christians from Eritrea and Ethiopia as they arrived at a weekly worship service on May 10. The incident is the third raid on Christian homes or meeting places since summer 2001. In addition, four other Christians, 3 from Sudan and one from Sri Lanka were jailed too.

<Voice of the Martyrs, www.persecution.com, 8/02>

North Korea: 15,000 copies of Bibles have been printed for delivery into North Korea. 5,000 are large-print editions targeting those saved before the communist takeover and having prayed for decades to own a Bible. There have been stories of Christians beaten to death when caught carrying Bibles into this tightly closed nation.

<Voice of the Martyrs, www.persecution.com, 8/02>

Russia: A ministry in Russia is tackling the nation's high rate of alcoholism. One Moscow group hosts 3 AA groups and an Al-Anon group each week. Seminars in Moscow and 9 other cities are training teams to start Christian treatment centers in cities where few recovery resources are available. More than 30,000 Russians die of acute alcohol poisoning each year, versus 300 to 400 such deaths in the US.

<World Pulse, 6/21/02>

United Kingdom: Loses churches so fast that no one knows how many have been demolished in recent years, but the number runs into the thousands. The trend is blamed partly on declining church attendance and partly on consolidation among nonconformist churches. The Methodist, for example, once had 14,000 chapels. Today they own 6,000 and dispose of 100 a year.

<World Pulse, 6/7/02>

West Bank and Gaza: There are several evangelical congregations and fellowships in the West Bank and Gaza (Palestinian Authority). The evangelical presence is very small in the midst of a larger nominal Christian minority. A far larger Muslim population surrounds them. The Jewish majority, by and large, considers all Arabs, whether Christian or not, to be troublemakers. Muslims generally consider evangelical and nominal Christians alike to be heretics who believe in more than one God.

<World Pulse, 5/24/02>

Ukraine: Under the umbrella of the Baptist Union (2,500 churches) in Ukraine, California-based Global Missions Partnership continues its mission in that nation. A multi-cultural short-term mission team of 40 members last summer ministered in an orphanage and hospital (evangelism, humanitarian, and music), churches (praise and evangelistic concerts), youth camps, seminars, gospel camps, and VBS, reaching many Ukrainians and Chinese. They also distributed care packages.

<GMP, www.globalmissionspartnership.org, Summer/02>

Burkina Faso: During a week of home-to-home campaign in April, Every Home For Christ workers in Burkina Faso saw 4,393 people expressing desire to receive Christ. Even in the most difficult village of Kaore (100% Muslim), which EHC workers usually skipped, at least 30 new converts came to prayer meetings each evening. Other churches had been mobilized for weeks for outreach also. Thousands of souls are giving themselves to Christ. A meningitis epidemic, however, is raging the country with more than 10,000 victims in April.

<Every Home for Christ, Prayer + Praise, 5/29/02>

Spain: Morocco and Saudi Arabia are giving huge sums of money for the construction of mosques in Spain. In the 80's there were only 10 Muslim associations in Spain. Today there are more than 200. In last several years, 30,000 Spaniards have been converted to Islam.

<Every Home for Christ, Prayer + Praise, 5/29/02>

China: The leaders of a large house church network in China reported kidnapped (WMN, 8/02) by the Eastern Lightning Cult have now been released. They are very grateful for the worldwide prayers for them in facing this hardship.

<Every Home for Christ, Prayer + Praise, 7/16/02>

Bulgaria: The ten-month outreach program of "Hope For the Balkans" across Bulgaria (WMN, 2/02) has successfully concluded beyond all expectations. The events reached more people than planned and touched people more deeply. They also drew unprecedented attention from both the secular media and municipal governments. The training seminars and conferences greatly impacted the Christians besides fostering a strong spirit of cooperation. Plans for "Hope For the Balkans 2003" are already on the table.

<Global Update, www.globalaction.nu, 7/02>

Philippines: Missionary Martin Burnham died and his wife, Gracia, escaped on June 7 during a rescue attempt in the Philippines after they were kidnapped by the terrorist Abu Sayyaf group and held hostage for 376 days. Also died was Ediborah Yap, a Filipino nurse kidnapped a year ago by the group to treat their wounded. According to some report, Yap had opportunity to escape at one point, but chose to stay and care for the Burnhams. Hundreds greeted her body at her hometown and both Christians and Muslims attended the funeral Mass. President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo said she "died in the line of duty." And she plans to name a hospital in Yap's honor.

<Christianity Today, 7/8/02>

Portugal: Has a population close to 10 million, over 50% Catholics and 3% evangelicals. The latter is growing 2.5% annually.

<Operation World, 2000>