



# World Mission News

Compiled by Samuel C. Y. Ling

**Brazil:** About 15% of Brazil's 173 million mostly Catholic people are Protestant. They have become more concerned with public policy and emerged as an influential political force during the election last fall. Now 60 of the 513 House members and 6 of 81 Senators are Protestants.

<Christianity Today, 12/9/02>

**India:** India has over 250 million Dalits, the "untouchables" persecuted and despised by the high-caste Brahmins. In recent years, many are leaving this oppressive Hinduism system for Buddhism and Christianity. More than 50,000 converted to Buddhism in a single event in 2000. Last August, 250 turned to Christ in one service in Tamil Nadu. In October, the Tamil Nadu state government passed an anti-conversion ordinance, banning conversions by "force, allurements, or fraudulent means." More than 3000 Christian institutions joined a protest rally at the state's largest city and the Christian council will challenge the law in court. 20 of the 30 million Indian Christians have Dalit roots.

<Christianity Today, 12/9/02>

**Lebanon:** An US Operation Mobilization missionary serving as nurse's aid at a Baptist clinic was shot to death in Sidon, Lebanon last November. The clinic had been involved in public dispute for "proselytizing Christianity to young Muslims" for some months. When told she might be vulnerable to insults or even being hit, she said she would consider it an honor. She and her husband came to the country 2 years ago.

<Dallas Morning News, 11/22/02>

**Southern Africa:** World Vision warns that an estimated 13 million people in Southern Africa face famine and starvation by early this year. The countries involved include Malawi, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Lesotho, Swaziland, Mozambique and Angola. Factors contributing to this disaster are complex and interwoven: drought and floods, AIDS, war, governance, structural reform mandated by IMF/World Bank, fear of genetically modified food, etc. In some countries 1 to 3 of every five persons are at risk and in others 7 out of 10. Christian groups like World Vision need support to respond to the crisis.

<ABC Newsletter, 11/02>

**USA:** An analysis based on the US Congregational Life Survey showed that between 20.2 to 22.5% of Americans over the age of 5 go to services on an average weekend. The survey counted the worshippers in 2,000 chosen congregations on a weekend in April 2001. Another survey showed that kids who once attended 15% more often than their parents no longer do so. The change began during the 60s.

<Dallas Morning News, 11/30/02>

**Mongolia:** A new law in Mongolia may curtail much of the work and ministry of foreign groups there. The law restricts the non-Mongolian staff of any organization or company to less than 5%. It seems to aim at not giving jobs to Chinese immigrants amidst high unemployment.

<Go! InterServe, www.interserve.org, 2nd Issue/2002>

**Bulgaria:** Building on 2002 ministry in Bulgaria, the Hope For the Balkans will continue in 2003. So far 6 teams of at least 15 people each will serve there from March through July. The ministry incorporates discipleship training, humanitarian assistance, and youth, adult and elder gospel outreach. Groups are invited to organize more teams to join the effort (1-888-725-3707).

<Global Update, www.globalaction.nu, 10/2002>

**Britain:** Successive surveys of church life across Britain show decreasing church attendance and particular difficulties in reaching children, young people and GenXers. Since 2000 there have been signs of hope after the Evangelical Alliance began a Movement for Change aiming to release Christians as agents for change in societal transformation. Along with the ALPHA Course, inner city ministries, and biblical teaching of evangelicals, the Facevalues program provided an opportunity for churches to participate in holistic mission in society, evangelism and community, using resources of over 80 partner mission agencies. An advertising campaign around the theme of forgiveness, Say Sorry Sunday services, and National Forgiveness Day even caught attention from public media and political party functions. Research on benefits (eg drop of crime rate) of Christian action in society will be conducted.

<Evangelical Alliance, www.eauk.org, 10/4/02>

**Israel:** Despite the current climate of conflict and violence, Messianic Jews and Arab evangelical Christians have maintained fellowship in Israel sometimes under strenuous conditions. They organized Women Conferences, travel groups through Sinai or Negev Desert, and leadership meetings in foreign lands. As friendship and mutual trust grows, they have had pulpit exchanges, entire congregations visiting each other, joint services, sending of aid and food supplies, numerous phone and e-mail exchanges, etc. 5-6,000 Messianic Jews live in Israel. Many Arab Protestants have left the region, leaving maybe 10,000 behind.

<World Pulse, www.wheaton.edu/bge/emis, 9/20/02>

**Bible Voice Broadcasting Network:** In view of the ripening harvest field on the internet, Bible Voice Broadcasting Network/High Adventure has partnered with Christian in Crisis in starting an internet gospel broadcast. While short wave broadcast is effective particularly in rural communities, internet will reach hundreds of millions in the cities. It is projected that by 2006 computer usage will increase over 400%. China will have 130 million computers, Japan 80 million, India 35 million, Indonesia 24 million, etc.

<High Adventure Gospel Communication Min., 10/22/02>

**Former Soviet Union:** In Central Asian republics of former Soviet Union, evangelical Christians faced persecution from many sides. There are the old-guard communists who hate and distrust religion; the growing tide of radical Islam infiltrating from Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan; and Russian Orthodox Church trying to hold on to primacy. Though predominantly Muslim, most people of the region are nominal Muslims and very open to gospel. One pastor came upon a funeral in a village in Azerbaijan. He began talking to the two presiding mullahs and asked them about spiritual things and death. When they could not give definitive answers, they challenged him to speak at the funeral. He spoke to 150 people, the Mullahs and the village policemen for two hours about the hope and eternity in Jesus Christ. The village elders kissed him at the end and invited him to return. He has and has shown the Jesus film.

<Voice of the Martyrs, www.persecution.com, 10/02>