

World Mission News

Samuel C. Y. Ling

Sri Lanka: Because of the growth of evangelical Christianity, extremist Buddhist leaders of the official religion of Sri Lanka are lobbying for anti-conversion laws and other political measures that would severely restrict Christian work in this island nation. Christian leaders appeal to believers for urgent prayers.

<Send!, www.gfa.org, winter/03>

Vietnamese: Vietnamese government granted permission last January to Evangelical Church of Vietnam (South) to open a class for training church leaders, 27 years after they shut down its seminary. This is seen as a small step for religious freedom. ECVN(S) is recognized by the government and represents more than half of the 1.2 million Protestants in the country.

<Christianity Today, 3/03>

Hong Kong: Christians in Hong Kong constitute 10% of its 7 million people. They operate more than 500 schools, 60% of the social agencies, and 25% of the hospitals. Less than 6 years after Britain handed it over to China with the promise of no change in personal freedom for 50 years, pending legislation could sharply curtail religious liberties there. It would outlaw subversion, sedition and other crimes against the state.

<Christianity Today, 3/03>

Iraq: Iraq has one of the oldest Christian communities in Middle East and has grown to about 1 million. They are allowed to practice their faith within the confine of church buildings while being monitored by secret police. Many Muslims are visiting churches in this time of uncertainty.

<Voice of the Martyrs, www.persecution.com, 3/03>

China: Many house church leaders in China report that the present persecution by the authorities is the worst for 20 years. More than 1,000 pastors are in prison suffering torture and humiliations. The officials forbid Christian activities outside the four walls of the government-sanctioned church.

<Asia Harvest, www.asiaharvest.org, 1/03>

Nepal: In Nepal, the church is growing despite the rise in Maoist rebel activity. Fighting has destroyed hundreds of post offices, yet amazingly a Bible correspondence ministry is reaching more Nepalis, even in remote areas.

<World Pulse, www.billygrahamcenter.org/emis, 3/7/03>

Germany: Both Protestant and Catholic churches in Germany have shrunk from 30 million members each in 1986 to 26.3 million Protestants and 26.7 million Catholics last year. The loss is due to Germany's falling birthrate and declining public confidence in churches.

<World Pulse, www.billygrahamcenter.org/emis, 3/7/03>

Russia: Against official state atheism of Russia, school officials in a district near Moscow have replaced teaching Lenin's Communist dogma with theology of Russian Orthodox Church. Though laws ban religion in schools, classes such as "The Fundamentals of Orthodox Culture" have become common across the nation.

<World Pulse, www.billygrahamcenter.org/emis, 3/7/03>

Namibia: Christians in Namibia have reached out into the neighboring Angola. Working with EHC, they have held services in 5 villages in the western desert with more than 50% of the population attending in most villages. People including witchdoctors are saved.

<Every Home for Christ, Prayer + Praise, 2/4/03>

Philippines: A Southern Baptist missionary Bill Hyde was killed March 4, 2003 in an apparent terrorist bombing at the Davao City airport in southern Philippines. Hyde and his wife served in the country since 1978, training Filipinos in evangelism, discipleship, and church planting. A native of Iowa, he had two sons, one a missionary in Cambodia.

<Dallas Morning News, 3/4/03>

USA: The Voice of Martyr in USA has partnered with nearby Oklahoma Wesleyan University in Bartlesville, Oklahoma to offer Bachelors degree, and a non-degree Certificate, in Persecuted Church Ministry. The fully accredited programs will start in June 2003 and focus on the theology and skills vital for such ministry.

<Voice of the Martyrs, www.persecution.com, 3/03>

Togo: People of the Ouatchi tribe in Togo consider twins not ordinary children but a blessing because they are gods. And the family should worship them and make special and expensive ceremonies for them. But a pastor and his wife in the tribe plan to dedicate their twins to the Lord during a service on a large open field presenting a Christian witness to the 500,000 Ouatchi tribesmen of the country.

<Every Home for Christ, Prayer + Praise, 2/18/03>

India: A Bible woman visited a family in a village of Tamil Nadu, the southern-most province of India. Fear and superstition haunted the family - their son had committed suicide recently. After hearing the gospel that could take away their fear and give them hope and peace, the whole family accepted Christ as Savior. A Sunday school for 40 was started and recently 22 villagers came to the Lord.

<Send!, www.gfa.org, winter/03>