

# World Mission News

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**USA:** The number of short-term mission workers from USA has exploded from an estimated 22,000 in 1979 to over a million today. Responding to increasing criticisms of superficiality, cross-cultural ignorance, and poor stewardship of resources, a coalition of evangelistic and mission agencies has released a set of voluntary new "Standards of Excellence in STM" ([www.stmstandards.org](http://www.stmstandards.org)). The standards include God-centeredness, empowering partnerships, mutual design, comprehensive administration, qualified leadership, appropriate training, and thorough follow-up.

*<Christianity Today, October/03>*

**Sri Lanka:** Of the 19 million people in Sri Lanka, 75% are Sinhala (Buddhist), 17% Tamil (Hindu) and 7% Christians (1.5% evangelicals). There is now an uneasy peace after 20 years of fighting between the Sinhala and Tamil groups. The 11% annual growth rate of the evangelical Christians has aroused fierce opposition from Buddhists and Hindus. Besides mob violence against Christians, they also call for "anti-conversion" laws to be enacted.

*<Christianity Today, October/03>*

**Asia:** Church planters met for a conference in a SE Asian nation difficult for Westerners to enter. They learnt about the potential of a rapidly multiplying church planting movement and set a goal of planting six million house churches in the next decade. Of course only God can fulfill such a vision. Yet without vision people perish.

*<Dawn Report 51/2003, www.dawnministries.org>*

**China:** In response to Chinese house church leaders, Asia Harvest has published "Back to Jerusalem" (available on their website) telling the vision of sending 100,000 missionaries into the heartland of the Muslim, Buddhist and Hindu world. This vision dates back to the 1930s and has been renewed among the present generation of Chinese Christians.

*<Asia Harvest, www.asiaharvest.org, 11/03>*

**Christians:** In the last 40 years, the number of Christians in the non-western world increases from 370 millions to 1,172 millions, while in the western world it changes from 672 to 810 millions. Mission research expert Patrick Johnstone projects that these numbers will become 1,917 and 657 millions respectively 40 years from now. The Buddhist world (Southeast Asia and China) will be a major mission field in this period.

*<WEC International (HK), www.wec-int.org, 9-10/03>*

**India:** Last September, an Indian court found 13 Hindu extremists guilty of killing Australian missionary Graham Staines and sons (Philip 10, and Timothy, 8). The ring-leader got death, and the rest life sentences. The Staines were burnt to death in their vehicle in January 1999. Widow Gladys Staines continues to work with leprosy patients. The family has forgiven the killers and is opposed to death sentences.

*<Christianity Today, November/03>*

**UAE:** Chinese workers are very receptive to the ministry of a recent Chinese missionary couple from Canada to the United Arab Emirate. In their first 50 days there, they conducted 3 baptismal services (each for about ten candidates). They have gained access to some of the factory camps where they prepared new believers for baptism. They are seeking also permit to work among men in furniture factories in a city north of them.

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**Wales:** Three Christians in Cardiff, Wales seeking to bring the church into the market place inquired about it at the city's pubs. Astonished with mostly positive response, they finally chose one in the city center and rented its cellar for Sunday services naming the church Bar None. People are very receptive. Even the employees enjoy the atmosphere, take part in the discussion, and sometimes ask for prayers.

*<FridayFax, 11/7/03>*

**China:** there are growing income disparities among the people resulting in 100 million migrant laborers and officially 30 to 40 million urban poor. The situation is so severe that the government is asking private social sector and even reluctantly Christians (including westerners) to train new Chinese charity CEOs and workers. World Vision was the first international NGO on the torrential rain/flood scene in Shaanxi province last September delivering quilts, jackets, and shoes.

*<Christianity Today, November/03>*

**Ethiopia:** In 1992 a SIM missionary couple went to the remote Me'en people group in southern Ethiopia that is bonded by dark spirits. They learnt the language and taught God's Word. As the sick were healed and demon-possessed delivered all in the name of Jesus, thousands turned to Christ within a few months. Today 20,000 out of a total 74,000 Me'en gathered in 57 churches. A two-year Bible school trains workers to help believers resist the temptation to return to old tradition and to fight against the new legalism of monogamy/alcohol-abstinence while depreciating the grace of God.

*<Serving in Mission Together, www.sim.org, Fall/03>*

**Missionary:** It took a personal visit to front line missionaries for a mission pastor to realize the importance of "service workers." As he traveled with them by 4-wheeled drive for hours over roads full of pot holes, or arrived exhausted at a village at 11 PM after riding 14 hours on bicycles, and saw them spend countless hours purchasing supplies, repairing equipment/computers, maintaining water/solar systems, etc, he saw first hand the need for mission aviation and skilled workers to give missionaries more time for evangelism, translation, discipling, etc.

*<Serving in Mission Together, www.sim.org, Fall/03>*