

Southeast Asia



Burma – Country of Particular Concern

Since the February 2021 coup, the military junta through the State Administration Council (SAC) has targeted religious minorities in its pursuit of a Buddhist nationalist vision for Burma. The SAC has made it a policy to target religious leaders as part of a crackdown on religious minorities, including by killing and detaining Christian pastors and priests.



Apollinaris Darmawan

RELIGION OR BELIEF:

Christian

ARRESTED: August 2020

SENTENCE:

5 Years' Imprisonment

REASON FOR PERSECUTION:

Accused of insulting the Prophet Muhammad and on social media



Hkalam Samson

RELIGION OR BELIEF:

Christian

ARRESTED: December 4, 2022

SENTENCE:

6 Years' Imprisonment

HEALTH CONCERNS: High Blood Pressure

REASON FOR PERSECUTION:

Religious leadership role

Malaysia – Special Watch List

Religious freedom conditions continue to stagnate. Federal and state governments protect a state-sponsored interpretation of Islam through a dual legal system that criminalizes blasphemy. Federal and state security services have targeted Muslim members of the LGBTQ+ community for detention as well as minority religious leaders suspected of preaching to Muslims.



Thian Lian Sang

RELIGION OR BELIEF:

Christian

ARRESTED: September 2021

SENTENCE:

23 Years' Imprisonment

REASON FOR PERSECUTION:

Religious leadership role



Raymond Koh

RELIGION OR BELIEF:

Christian

ARRESTED: February 13, 2017

CURRENT STATUS: Unknown

RELIGIOUS LEADER: Yes

REASON FOR PERSECUTION:

Unsubstantiated allegations of seeking converts from Islam

Indonesia – Special Watch List

In 2022, a violent state crackdown on protests in Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Province (GBO), where predominantly Ismaili Shi'a Muslim Pamiris reside, led to the arrest of more than 200 individuals on charges of "extremism" and association with banned groups. Some saw this as a state attempt to rein in religious and political opposition.



Amri Che Mat

RELIGION OR BELIEF:

Muslim

ARRESTED: November 24, 2016

CURRENT STATUS: Unknown

REASON FOR PERSECUTION:

Accused of spreading his religious beliefs



Muhammad Kece

RELIGION OR BELIEF:

Christian

ARRESTED: August 24, 2021

SENTENCE:

10 Years' Imprisonment

REASON FOR PERSECUTION:

Accused of insulting the Prophet Muhammad and Islam in YouTube videos

FoRB Victims List Stats 17 out of 2,125

Religion or Belief	# of Victims
Christian	8
Unspecified	4
Buddhist	3
Muslim	2
Total	17

Type of Abuse	# of Victims
Imprisoned	8
Detained	5
Disappeared	4
Total	17

Southeast Asia



Frank R. Wolf FoRB Victims List Background

The International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (IRFA), as amended by the Frank R. Wolf International Religious Freedom Act of 2016, requires USCIRF to:

make publicly available, to the extent practicable...lists of persons it determines are imprisoned or detained, have disappeared, been placed under house arrest, been tortured, or subjected to forced renunciation of faith for their religious activity or religious freedom advocacy by the government of a foreign country that the Commission recommends for designation as a country of particular concern [CPC]...or by a nonstate actor that the Commission recommends for designation as an entity of particular concern [EPC].

USCIRF developed the Frank R. Wolf Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) Victims List—an online public database—to implement this provision for countries USCIRF recommends for Country of Particular Concern (CPC) or Special Watch List (SWL) status. The list also includes such victims located in the de facto territories of nonstate actors that USCIRF recommends for Entity of Particular Concern (EPC) status, according to the same criteria.

Due to limited resources, USCIRF is unable to identify and document all victims that meet the statutory requirement to be included on the FoRB Victims List and generally relies on receiving submissions from outside individuals and organizations. As such, the information contained in the database does not reflect country, regional, or global trends. Furthermore, percentages highlighted in this section should not be used for extrapolation purposes nor interpreted as a particular group experiencing greater violations than another or a particular country committing violations at a greater rate than others. To support this project, USCIRF invites those with credible information on victims to submit information using the Victims List Intake Form at www.uscirtf.gov/form/uscirtf-victims-list-intake-form.

FoRB Victims List Stats Overall

Perpetrator	Victims Documented
Algeria	5
Azerbaijan	11
Burma	5
China	770
Cuba	11
Egypt	18
Eritrea	50
Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS)	2
Houthis	3
India	55
Indonesia	8
Iran	339
Iraq	2
Islamic State in West Africa Province (ISWAP)	1
Kazakhstan	15
Malaysia	4
Nicaragua	15
Nigeria	9
North Korea	9
Pakistan	90
Russia	449
Saudi Arabia	46
Sri Lanka	1
Tajikistan	13
Turkmenistan	30
Uzbekistan	87
Vietnam	77
Total	2,125

Religion or Belief	Victims Documented
Adivasi	1
Baha'i	163
Bon	1
Buddhist – Hoa Hao	6
Buddhist – Theravada	3
Buddhist – Tibetan	76
Buddhist – Unspecified/Other	28
Christian – Catholic	46
Christian – Church of Almighty God	236
Christian – Jehovah's Witness	258
Christian – Orthodox	17
Christian – Protestant	130
Christian – Unspecified/Other	66
Duong Van Minh	4
ECKist (Eckankar)	1
Erfan-e Halgheh Practitioner	2
Falun Gong	213
Hindu	10
Humanist	1
Jewish	1
Muslim – Ahmadiyya	23
Muslim – Qur'anist	1
Muslim – Shi'a	39
Muslim – Sufi	63
Muslim – Sunni	385
Muslim – Unspecified/Other	237
Santeria	5
Scientologist	1
Shaman	1
Sikh	1
Yarsani	37
Unknown/Unspecified	69
Total	2,125

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Burma: Not Released

Ashin Zero
Shwe Nya War
Ashin Sobitha
Hkalam Samson
Thian Lian Sang

Indonesia: Not Released

Cepdika Eka Rismana
Gratia Pello
Roy Suryo
Apollinaris Darmawan
Doni Irawan Malay
Indriyanto
Muhammad Kece

Malaysia: Unknown

Amri Che Mat
Joshua Hilmy
Raymond Koh
Ruth Sitepu

Indonesia: Unknown

Paruru Daeng Tau