
Weekly Report of Studies in Inter-Religious Relations in Plural Societies (SRP) Programme

Religious Conflict

1. ‘Strong evidence of genocide against Rohingya’ – Yale University Law School

Yale University Law School upon assessing the evidence gathered by Al Jazeera and the advocacy group Fortify Rights has found “strong evidence” that suggests of a “genocidal process” in Myanmar. They believe the government is guilty of creating fear in the minds of the people of Myanmar about the Rohingya Muslims along with offering monetary support to Buddhist nationalist groups who lend support the government.

Keywords: Myanmar, Rohingya, Muslims, Buddhist, Genocide

2. Israel lifts restrictions on Muslims’ access to Temple Mount

Israel has lifted the age restrictions for attending the main weekly prayers at Jerusalem's Temple Mount compound, for the first time in weeks. After the recent surge in deadly violence this month, the Israeli government had limited entry into the compound.

Keywords: Israel, Palestine, Temple Mount, Prayers

Religious Controversies

1. Bomb attack on Saudi mosque claimed by ISIS

At least one person was killed and 16 others injured in a suicide bombing on a Shi’ite mosque in the southwestern city of Najran, near the Yemeni border on Monday. ISIS claimed responsibility for the attack in a statement posted on Twitter.

Keywords: Saudi Arabia, ISIS, Shia, Mosque

2. Abductions in Bangui following peace talks

Three men from the Union for Peace in Central Africa, a faction of the former Seleka alliance, were abducted in the capital Bangui, after attending peace talks convened by interim President Catherine Samba-Panza. The country has been embroiled in communal violence between the Christian and the Muslim militia. Earlier this year there were reports of ethnic cleansing and likelihood of genocide.

Keywords: Central African Republic, Bangui, Peace Talks, Union for Peace, Seleka alliance

3. Bombing at mosque in Pakistan kills 10 on eve of Shi'ite holy day

At least 10 people were killed in a suicide attack at a Shi'ite Muslim mosque in the Pakistani province of Baluchistan. The attack has raised fears of more sectarian attacks during the upcoming Shi'ite holiday of Ashura. Fears of violence have been heightened this year after Taliban splinter groups pledged allegiance to the Syria- and Iraq-based Islamic State, a Sunni militant group that has repeatedly targeted Shi'ites

Keywords: Pakistan, Shia, Muslim, Mosque, Bombing, Baluchistan, Ashura

Secularism, Religious Freedom and New Religious Movements

1. House of Lords debates bill to outlaw gender discrimination in UK sharia 'courts'

The House of Lords has passed the second reading of the Arbitration and Mediation Services (Equality) Bill. The Bill, introduced by Baroness Cox, would make it illegal for any arbitration tribunal, including Sharia councils to “do anything that constitutes discrimination, harassment or victimisation on grounds of sex”. While the bill received support from across the political spectrum, it has come under criticism for “demonizing” the Muslim community in the UK.

Keywords: Sharia, House of Lords, Gender Discrimination

Peace, Reconciliation and Interfaith Dialogue

1. An Indiana Imam and his non-Muslim friend want to fight ISIS with viral videos

Given the appeal of ISIS' videos and propaganda the Imam of the Islamic Society of Evansville, Indiana, has been creating a YouTube series to counter the group's vast media recruitment machine. The videos have been addressing the issue of Islam, jihad and the role of women, and have received nearly 10,000 hits.

Keywords: Indiana, Imam, Social media, videos, ISIS