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

Religious Conflict

1. Chinese authorities under fire for forced demolitions at Buddhist institute

The International Campaign for Tibet (ICT) has called for Chinese authorities to stop forced demolitions of homes of Buddhist monks and nuns at the Larung Gar Buddhist Institute situated in the ethnically Tibetan area of Serthar. A Chinese official revealed that the plans called for the destruction of more than 100 buildings.

Keywords: China, Tibet, Buddhism

2. State inquiry reveals army responsible for the killing of Muslims

An inquiry commission set up by the Kaduna state government of Nigeria has found the Nigerian Army guilty of killing hundreds of Shiite Muslims in December last year. However, security analyst Kabir Adamu opined that prosecution of those responsible will be “highly unlikely” and called for credible retraining of the army to improve civil-military relationships.

Keywords: Nigeria, Military, Sunni, Shia

Religious Controversies

1. Two Muslim women beaten up by vigilante group for allegedly carrying beef

In the Indian state of Madhya Pradesh, two Muslim women were beaten up and arrested by cow protection vigilantes for allegedly carrying beef, an offence in many parts of the country. The six people who were arrested for the attack have been released on bail. The ruling Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) government in India has come under increasing pressure from Hindu hardliners to protect cows. The government responded with strong cow protection laws, which led to the oppression of Dalits, whose work involves skinning dead animals including cows, and Muslims, who eat beef.

Keywords: India, Hindutva, Hindu Fundamentalism, Dalits

2. South African tribe chief's conversion to Islam sparks disquiet among tribe leaders

Mvezo tribe chief, Mandla Mandela, is believed to have converted to Islam in order to marry a Muslim. The Congress of Traditional Leaders in South Africa has expressed concern that being Muslim could affect Mandela's ability to uphold tribal traditions. However, in his wedding ceremony, Mandela said their union reflected their shared identity as South Africans despite being raised in different religious traditions.

Keywords: South Africa, Tradition, Conversion, Mvezo, Marriage

Secularism, Religious Freedom and New Religious Movements

1. French foundation to administer and build mosques to stop radicalisation

The French Muslim Council has plans to establish a new foundation to help finance the construction and administration of mosques in France to help keep out radical benefactors. French Interior Minister, Bernard Cazeneuve, confirmed that the foundation would guarantee total transparency in financing of mosques with "rigorous respect for secular principles".

Keywords: France, Islam, radicalisation

Peace, Reconciliation and Interfaith Dialogue

1. Malaysia calls for interfaith studies to be taught in schools

Suggestions to introduce interfaith studies as a formal subject in school and universities to strengthen national unity and harmony were mooted at Malaysia's 2016 Interfaith Forum. The proposal has been well-received by representatives of the various faiths.

Keywords: Malaysia, Interfaith

2. Muslims and Christians come together in memory of slain French priest

In the wake of French priest Father Jacques Hamel's murder, carried out by ISIS fanatics, Muslim and Christian communities around France came together to show solidarity by attending each other's religious services in churches and mosques.

Keywords: France, Interfaith, Peacebuilding