

# U.S. State Department International Religious Freedom Report for 2013

## 1. Russian Federation

- Government restrictions targeted members of minority religious groups. Religious materials were banned and restrictions were placed on religious groups' right to assemble. There were detentions, raids, denial of official registration at the Ministry of Justice, denial of official building registration, denial of VISAs to religious workers.

## 2. Bahrain

- (Sunni) Islam is the state religion.
- "In Bahrain, members of the Shia community continued to face official discrimination, detention, excessive use of force, and alleged torture."
- When the Roman Catholic Vicariate of Northern Arabia moved to the country to land donated by the government, some clerics protested, saying that it was forbidden to build churches in the Arabian Peninsula. Seventy clerics signed a petition saying so.

## 3. Sri Lanka

- Attacks on religious minority groups occurred, despite official government protection.
- Intolerance and discrimination by Buddhists against Muslims.

## 4. Saudi Arabia

- Freedom of religion is neither protected nor recognized under the law. Conversion to another religion than Islam is deemed apostasy and may be punishable by death.

## 5. Egypt

- The government failed to prevent or adequately investigate

violence against Copt Christians.

- A non-Muslim woman who converts to Islam must divorce if her husband is not Muslim and he is unwilling to convert. Custody of children is then awarded to the mother.

## **6. Ethiopia**

- Muslims were responsible for a decline in the government's respect for religious freedom.

## **7. Malaysia**

- The government maintains a dual legal system, under which Sharia courts rule on religious, family, and some criminal issues involving Muslims and secular courts rule on other issues pertaining to both Muslims and the broader population.
- Non-Muslim family members, including spouses and children, lose all rights to inheritances in Sharia court in cases of conversion by one spouse to Islam.

## **8. Tunisia**

- The government occasionally prosecuted individuals for speech that it deemed blasphemous or "offensive to the country's Islamic norms."
- Salafists attacked targets they deemed "un-Islamic," such as a Russian Orthodox Church, synagogues, dozens of Sufi shrines, and events they associated with Shia Islam.

## **9. Hungary**

- Restrictions on religious minority groups.

## **10. Slovak Republic**

- Government-imposed restrictions affecting the members of minority religious groups.