

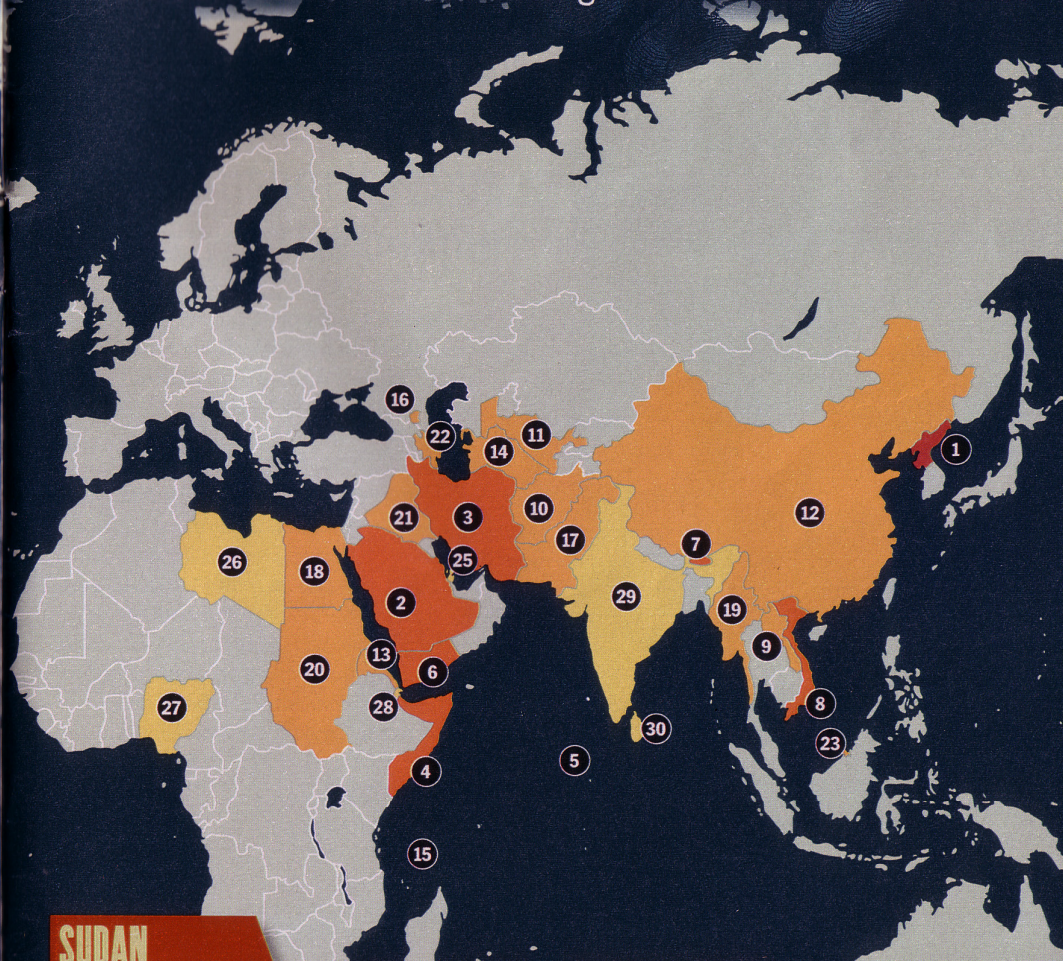
THE 30 WORST COUNTRIES

1 North Korea 2 Saudi Arabia 3 Iran
4 Somalia 5 Maldives 6 Yemen 7 Bhutan
8 Vietnam 9 Laos 10 Afghanistan 11 Uzbekistan
12 China 13 Eritrea 14 Turkmenistan
15 Comoros 16 Chechnya 17 Pakistan
18 Egypt 19 Myanmar (Burma) 20 Sudan (North)
21 Iraq 22 Azerbaijan 23 Brunei 24 Cuba
25 Qatar 26 Libya 27 Nigeria (North)
28 Djibouti 29 India 30 Sri Lanka

■ Severe persecution
■ Oppression
■ Severe limitations
■ Some limitations

GLOBAL PERSECUTION

The countries where the hounding of Christians is at its worst



NORTH KOREA



The world's worst. At least 50,000 Christians are currently held in work camps. Some are reported to have died after liquid metal was poured over them by guards in an iron foundry. They had refused to submit to the state ideology, which is rigorously enforced by the dictator, Kim Jong-il (left)

CHINA



Gong Shengliang (left) founded the South China Church, an illegal 'house' church. He was sentenced to death in 2001. This was dropped after a global outcry. He was tortured, then returned to prison

NIGERIA



Violence which has killed thousands afflicts the 32 Nigerian states that have imposed Islamic law over the past six years. Christians complain of a 'screaming strangulation' of their faith

SUDAN



MALDIVES

Even the Maldives appear in this year's list of countries where Christians are persecuted. Many of the 500,000 tourists are Christian, but the government requires citizens to be Muslims. Sharia law is enforced, and neither Christian work nor Christian literature is allowed

PAKISTAN



the dying light, it hovers brilliantly above the city.