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CHINA: Freedom of religion or belief: Special bimonthly FoRB digest (01-15.11.2021)

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General

11.11.2021 – Book deconstructs “sinicization” of religion

One of this year’s most important books about China has been published by Brill (Leiden) as The Sinicization of Chinese

Religions: From Above and Below. It is edited by Richard Madsen, who offers in the introduction a useful map to navigate through it and introduces the main issues. The book clarifies, with examples, what “Sinicization” of religion, or perhaps two “Sinicizations,” one imposed by the government “from above” and one the result of adaptive processes “from below,” are all about.

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08.11.2021 – China increases surveillance of pastors, tests loyalty to communist party

The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom has voiced concern about measures adopted by the Chinese government this year to further tighten state control over government-sanctioned churches, including requiring full support of the Chinese Communist Party and banning religious activity by house churches.

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09.11.2021 – China’s unrelenting efforts to abolish christianity continue with surveillance of clergy to ensure loyalty

A report issued by the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) outlines strict measures being taken by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), which aims to oppress religious minorities.

The measures, which went into effect on May 1, are a part of a series of newly issued regulations that add to the revised 2018 Regulations on Religious Affairs (RRA).

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Protestants

9.11.2021 – China shuts down Christian school in Beijing

Chinese authorities have closed a popular Christian school in Beijing, leaving the academic lives of more than 100 children in disarray.

Officials of Tongzhou district in Beijing shut down Golden Reed Kindergarten & Primary School Learning Center in September following an order to vacate the property and close the school, reported China Aid, a rights group led by Chinese exiles documenting human rights abuses and promoting religious freedom in China.

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05.11.2021 – Christians told to preach that business was invented in China

Sermons should introduce “Sinicized Christian social teaching,” claiming that the Shang Dynasty invented state-controlled agriculture and commerce.

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Buddhists

13.11.2021 – Guan Yin Citta: Leader dies, crackdown on Buddhist Movement continues

In 2019, Bitter Winter published a confidential document by Fujian province authorities whose title was “Notice on Conducting the Special Work of a Massive Investigation, Massive Purge, and Massive Research of Guan Yin Citta.” The

document noted the expansion in China of a Buddhist new religious movement headquartered in Australia, Guan Yin Citta, labeled it a xie jiao (i.e., a group banned for propagating “heterodox teachings”: the common translation “evil cult” is less accurate), and called for a crackdown, which extended to Shanxi and other provinces.

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08.11.2021 – Chinese Buddhist monks compelled to watch “red” movies

Driven by Xi Jinping’s campaign to “Sinicize” Buddhism, more and more Chinese Buddhist temples are imposing Chinese Communist Party (CCP) political propaganda on their monks. An example of this is the “Party movie class” at Huasheng Temple in Tianjin.

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Church of Almighty God

03.11.2021 – 600 Church of Almighty God Members sentenced in 2021

Since the CCP started carrying out a 3-year “Final Solution” plan against The Church of Almighty God (CAG) last September, the persecution has continuously strengthened. Even common CAG members have been sentenced to penalties as severe as seven years and six months in prison.

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Uyghur Muslims

14.11.2021 – The United Nations is giving the names of Uyghur dissidents to China | Opinion

The Chinese government's violent oppression of the primarily Uyghur Muslim population in Xinjiang is no longer a secret. From forced sterilization of Uyghur women to the internment of millions in prison camps to the eradication and destruction of religious institutions, the Chinese Communist Party's actions against the Uyghurs have been deemed worthy of the name genocide to many in the human rights community.

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Falun Gong

15.11.2021 – Deaths of 102 Falun Gong practitioners reported between January and October 2021

The deaths of 102 Falun Gong practitioners resulting from the persecution of their faith were confirmed between January and October 2021.

Falun Gong, also known as Falun Dafa, is a mind-body practice based on the principles of Truthfulness, Compassion, and Forbearance. Since its introduction to the public in 1992, countless people have been drawn to its profound principles and health benefits. Fearing its ever-growing popularity, the Chinese communist regime launched a nationwide campaign in July 1999, attempting to stamp out the practice.

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14.11.2021 – Shandong man sentenced to three years, 170K Yuan confiscated by Police

A Mengyin County, Shandong Province resident was recently

sentenced to three years in prison for practicing Falun Gong, a spiritual discipline that has been persecuted by the Chinese communist regime since 1999.

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Other religions

12.11.2021 – WeChat, grids mobilized for anti-religious propaganda

Bitter Winter has reported in the past about the grid system of surveillance, which consists in dividing cities and towns into 100×100 meter areas (there are rural grids too, which are larger). Each grid has a grid manager with assistants, a grid police officer, a grid supervisor, a grid Chinese Communist Party (CCP) secretary, a grid legal worker reporting to the local prosecutor, a grid firefighter, and since this year also a grid officer in charge of the surveillance and propaganda against “illegal religion” and the banned religious movements labeled as xie jiao.

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