

NORTH KOREA: Over 75 percent of Christians persecuted in North Korea don't survive their punishments

By Czarina Ong

Christian Today (12.11.2016) – <http://bit.ly/2fBKxDq> – Christians don't fare very well in North Korea. Human rights groups are giving grim reports on the treatment of religious minorities in the East Asian country, saying that over 75 percent of those who are subjected to torture, imprisonment and all sorts of punishment do not live to tell their tales.

Reports obtained from the Database Center for North Korean Human Rights, a South Korean non-profit organisation, showed that over 65,000 people have already been persecuted for their faith in North Korea. From that number, close to 99 percent of the 11,370 defectors confirmed that there is absolutely no religious freedom under Kim Jong-un's leadership.

What's worse, over 75 percent of Christians persecuted from their faith do not survive their punishments, The Christian Post reported. This is why only 1.2 percent of the defectors engaged in secret religious activities while they were still in North Korea.

Meanwhile, the group Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW)

released a report called "Total Denial: Violations of Freedom of Religion or Belief in North Korea" in September revealing that members of religious minorities suspected of state crimes are "being hung on a cross over a fire, crushed under a steamroller, herded off bridges, and trampled underfoot."

As if the torture isn't bad enough, the North Korean government even goes a step further by punishing the relatives of these Christians and members of other religious groups.

"A policy of guilt by association applies, meaning that the relatives of Christians are also detained regardless of whether they share the Christian belief. Even North Koreans who have escaped to China, and who are or become Christians, are often repatriated and subsequently imprisoned in a political prison camp," the CSW report stated.

The report added that Kim Jong-un sees religious belief as a major threat to his leadership. Thus, he requires people to acknowledge him as their nation's "supreme leader."

As a result, North Koreans don't enjoy the freedom of expressing their religious beliefs. If they try to do so, they are subjected to discrimination, detention, and all sorts of inhumane treatment.