

Web version of oral evidence report given to the Bishop of Truro's Review Team, April 2019; mapping of social media.

Harod Associates maps crime issues around the world focused on either problem issues or large groups of people acting in common purpose. We do not hack, interfere or communicate with any account. Our systems are language agnostic and so the reach is extensive. We gather information and intelligence for mapping purposes.

The immediate obvious question when faced with an issue of this magnitude is how do we get to understand the extent and scale of the problem? The answer is through mapping of social media sources around the world. In other words, we can demonstrate what is happening on the ground without having to be there.

To assist the Review, we undertook a level of mapping of the problem in the form of what we call a 48 hour flash assessment. This is an introduction to what is out there now and how it impacts and leads to the persecution of Christians. The problems of social media being utilised to carry messages that can circulate way beyond the numbers of people, allowing local messaging to increase and trend globally, are well known.

The criteria for our assessment was focused on countries with strong social media messaging being allowed to spread and influence others in postings spread by individuals, extremist groups, political parties and government bodies. We focused on messaging posted in the past and found examples of each category, including the circulation of disturbing pictures of Christians murdered in the past few days.

It will be no surprise that these examples were identified in Northern Nigeria and Pakistan. We evidenced hate posting in India, but we must point out that these death threats were aimed at both those of Christian and Muslim faith. There was no exclusivity in the use of social media.

A recent examination of a stream of Pakistan posts used a well-known hashtag which has been in use since 2015. However, we confined our search to March 2019 where, in one month alone, this hashtag has spread to over 93,000 accounts in the first instance.

Turning to Nigeria, recent massacres of Christians in Kaduna State are said to have reached 300 people in February and March. That is at least 300 since the start of this Review was announced. In the aftermath of these attacks, we have seen discussion amongst almost 320,000 accounts. This contains a mix of local community as well as supporters of the perpetrators.

In India, active postings state that, by 2021, every Muslim and Christian will be annihilated in India. In recent days (early April 2019) posts have emerged blaming Christians for the attacks in Christchurch, New Zealand. These are gaining traction in Pakistan.

This was the result of a flash assessment or introduction of the situation. This is an area where we can see wider areas of concern and, certainly, the matter has not been fully mapped, but is indicative of the activity and diaspora out there. We found evidence of anti-Christian messaging being spread by individuals, political and extremist groups, and even government bodies.

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