

China Bans Fasting by Muslims During Ramadan



Sunni Muslim Turkic Uyghurs in Urumqi Xinjiang Province Northwest China

The Chinese government has issued directives banning daytime fasting during Ramadan affecting 20 million Uyghurs and Hui Muslims. The Uyghurs constitute the majority in Xinjiang Province while the Hui are concentrated in [Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region](#). The Beijing central government has also ordered Muslim shopkeepers to sell alcohol during the month long observance of the Muslim holy period. This may further inflame the Uyghur fundamentalism that has been the subject of counter terrorism actions against sectarian Muslim irredentism in China's resource rich northwestern Xinjiang province contending with this Turkic speaking minority. *The Daily Caller* [reported](#):

According to [published advisories](#) to "not engage in fasting, vigils or other religious activities," and instructing students: "do not fast, do not enter mosques ... and do not attend religious activities." One county government cited a 90-year-old man who said that "to consciously resist religious and superstitious ideas," he would avoid fasting and visiting mosques.

Likewise, restaurants will be required to stay open during the day, and those who do not comply face the threat of increased food-safety inspections.

China claims its restrictive policies toward religious expression are meant to curb "religious extremism." Public terrorist attacks by Uyghur separatists have increased in recent years, and officials have responded in various parts of Xinjiang by increasing security and restricting

various forms of Muslim cultural expression.

The country also severely restricts and controls free expression of Christianity, Buddhism and various new religious movements.

Egypt's Al-Azhar University, the thousand-year-old scholarly institution of Sunni Islam,