

# EFI NEWS

## *Partial List of Major Incidents of Anti-Christian Violence In India, 2009.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

The persecution of Christians in India is as old as Christianity itself. St Thomas, a disciple of Christ, who came to India, was martyred in about AD 52 in South India. Even in the Sovereign, Socialist, Secular, Democratic, Republic of India, Christians became a political target in 1998 when India had its first coalition government led by the Hindu nationalist Bhartiya Janata Party which promotes Hindu cultural nationalism.

A report released on December 2009 by respected American thinktank Pew Research Centre has placed India second only to Iraq in social hostility and religious bias perpetrated by individuals and groups.

The first large-scale ruthless attack against Tribal Christians in Dangs district of Gujarat in December 1998. In March 2004, Tribal Christians in Jhabua district of Madhya Pradesh became the target of the second massive anti-Christian attacks. A series of brutal anti-Christian attacks began in Orissa's Kandhamal district began on 24<sup>th</sup> December 2007. In May 2008, the BJP installed its first government in Karnataka and ever since Christian community is the target of their attacks.

The most horrific attack against Christians in the history of the Church in India occurred in the wake of VHP leader Saraswati's death in Kandhamal, Orissa on the night of 23 August 2008. Though Maoists claimed responsibility for the murder, the VHP blamed local Christians for it. To revenge the death, large scale violence broke out against the Christian community, which lasted for over two months. About 75 Christians were killed, 4,600 houses and churches burned, and over 50,000 people were rendered homeless in the attacks.

**CHRISTIANS RESPONSE** to these attacks has been one of forgiveness and appeal to the government to protect the life and property of its citizens and punish the guilty according to the law of the land.

### LIST OF 152 INCIDENTS OF ANTI-CHRISTIAN VIOLENCE IN 2009

#### **KARNATAKA**

**Davengere:** On January 1, Hindu extremists burned a house church of Resurrected God's Ministry in Malai Bennur area; further threatening Pastor Gangadhar that they will burn his family alive if the matter is taken to higher authorities. One person identified as B. Gangadhar has been arrested under Section 436 of the Indian Penal Code for intend to destroy house with fire or explosive.

**Ramnagar :** On Jan. 4, Police arrested a pastor on a false complaint of forcible conversion by Hindu extremists in Kanakapura. The extremists stormed the worship meeting and beat up the members, dragging them to the police station. Police detained the Christians until about 7:30 p.m. A compromise was reached between the pastor and the assailants.

**Bangalore:** On January 5, police arrested three Christians on false charges of luring a man to convert into Christianity with monetary incentives and other benefits. The Christians were arrested under Section 448,153(A), 295 (A) read with 34 of the Indian Penal Code. The believers were released on bail.

**Mangalore:** On Jan 7, four suspected Hindu extremists on motorbikes beat James Victor Menezes; a teacher at St. Legory's School in Merlapadavu village .The protestors falsely accused the school teachers of distributing Bibles to Hindus. A complaint was lodged by the Christians at the Kankanady police station but no arrests were made.

**Belgaum:** On January 9, Karnataka police arrested Pastor Iswar Albannavar and Raju Kolar on charges of alleged forceful conversion in Gangavadi, disrupting the prayer service. The Christians were arrested under Section 153 (A) of the Indian Penal code (IPC) read with 34 IPC. The two Christians were sent to Belgaum central jail but were later released on bail.

**Tucker:** On January 11 in Tiptur area, Hindu extremists forced into the home of Christian converts and abused the four Christians, burned their Bibles and dragged them to the Honnavalli police station. A compromise was reached between the two parties.

**Bangalore:** On Jan. 27, Police arrested pastor G Kiran Kumar for alleged fraudulent conversion after Hindu extremists who assaulted him filed charges, accusing him of trying to convert children by luring them with free tuition and asserting that he had insulted Hindu deities .Police arrested the Christians under 503 and 153 (A) of the IPC. The pastor was released on bail on Jan. 31.

**Belgaum:** On Jan. 27 Hindu extremists accused pastor Tanaya Sunder Nayak of forceful conversion by allurements in Belgaum because he offered light refreshments at his house church on Christmas Day. Arrest warrant in hand, police went to the pastor's house while he was away. After an inquiry police realized there was no basis for the charges and dropped the case.

**Deralakatte:** On Feb 2, a group of Hindu extremists from the *Bajrang Dal* attacked Albert D' Souza with iron rods after he found them breaking the windshield of his Jeep and marring the Christian stickers on it. D'Souza received hospital treatment. Koneke police registered a case, saying the attack was communally motivated, and arrested three of the five persons believed to be responsible for the assault.

**Tumkur:** On Feb 3, Hindu extremists burned a Christian's house and threatened to build a Hindu temple on his land. The Christian refused, saying that his son legally owned the land, and the extremists asserted that there was no place for Christians in the area. Local Christian leaders filed a complaint, but police refused to register a case.

**Chikmagalur:** On Feb. 24 police detained two Christian women after Hindu extremists filed a complaint of forcible conversion based solely on the women welcoming two new converts into

their home .Police inquiry was made into the matter and the two women were released without charges after a warning not to undertake further evangelism.

**Bangalore:** On March 6, Hindu extremists from the *Vishwa Hindu Parishad* disrupted the new church inaugural meeting of Siloam Brethren Assembly and threatened to harm them if they met for Sunday worship meeting. Church leaders reported the matter and police protection was provided. Sunday worship service was not conducted on March 8, as police advised church leaders against it.

**Chamrajnagar:** On April 5, Hindu extremists attacked Pastor M. Abel as he was on his way to preach as a guest at the House of Salvation Church, accusing him of forceful conversion, warning them to stop with all Christian activities. No Christian worship was held on April 12 and April 19, as the landlord made them vacate the premises, and no one was willing to rent them a hall out of fear of the Hindu extremists.

**Shimago:** On April 12, Hindu extremists beat Pastor Rajesh Kurdekar and falsely accused him of forceful conversion after disrupting worship in Sagar Taluk .Sagar City police station refused to accept Pastor Kurdekar's complaint and warned him against creating a "nuisance" by conducting prayer services. Worship service was not conducted on the following Sunday.

**Hassan:** On May 12 police arrested Christians in Chennarayapatna on trumped-up charges of fraudulent conversions after a group of Hindu extremists attacked them. Hindu extremists beat up the Christians, snatched Bibles and hymnals, piled them up and burned them. Chennarayapatna took the Christians to the police station, after Christian leaders' intervention the Christians were released without charges that night at 10:45 p.m.

**Davanagere:** On June 7, police disrupted a Sunday worship service and closed an Apostolic Church claiming that the church had an illegal license. The pastor said that he obtained the necessary permission from the village head but police subsequently disrupted the following Sunday worship meeting, ordering Christians to leave and locking up the church. The pastor appealed to police, who told him to take the matter up in the court.

**Krishnaraja Sagar:** On June 12 police detained Christians on a false complaint of conversion by allurement. A Church of Christ house church pastor, K. Nagaraj, had organized a fasting prayer service where Hindu extremists barged in, making baseless allegations of bribing people to convert to Christianity and took them to the police station. With area Christian leader's intervention, the Christians were released at 11:45 p.m. without charges.

**Hassan:** On July 10, Police issued arrest warrants against Pastor Godwin Nicholas and Charles Ravi Kumar on the basis of a complaint filed by Hindu extremists against them of forceful conversion and bribery. A First Information Report was registered against the Christians and arrest warrants were issued, but they were granted bail.

**Chitradurga:** On July 10, Hindu extremists beat a pastor and accused him and his wife of forceful conversion .The extremists assaulted the pastor's wife and took her to the police station claiming that the couple is indulging in forceful conversion. The Christians also lodged a police complaint. But no arrests had been made.

**Bangalore:** On July 18, police arrested four Christians on the basis of the complaint lodged by a Hindu extremist of forceful conversion. Barging into the Christian prayer meeting, the extremists beat the Christians and dragged them to the police station. The Christians were

arrested under Sections 295 (A) and 153 (B) of the Indian Penal Code and were released on bail the next day.

**Shimago:** On July 19, a mob of about 20 Hindu extremists attacked Pentecostal Mission prayer meeting and accused them of forceful conversion in Pillingiri area. Six Christians were arrested under Sections 143, 295 (a) to be read with 149 of the Indian Penal. The Christians were released the next day

**Davengere:** On July 20, the Karnataka High court continued the stay order against demolition of the Indian Apostle Church (IAC) building in Channagiri area. Pastor Prasanth and other Christians went to Channagiri police station to inform officials that they had obtained the license from the village head but police officers filed false charges against them for rioting and voluntarily causing hurt.

**Hassan district:** On July 26, about 10 Hindu extremists barged into St. Thomas Evangelical Church, assaulted pastor Basanth Kumar and destroyed church furniture. At about 6:00 p.m. the next day, the police summoned the pastor and arrested him under Section 107 of the Indian Penal Code for “abetment of a thing.” The pastor was later released on bail.

**Tumkur:** On August 4, Police detained two Christians for distributing pamphlets and conducting medical camp without taking permission from authorities. The police arrested pastor M Sivanand and Kumar under section 109 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CRPC) for ‘security for good behaviour from suspected persons’. The Christians were released on bail.

**Haveri:** On August 7 in Herekeru, a group of Hindu extremists allegedly from the Bajrang Dal attacked Pastor Ajit Kumar of Every Home Crusade and threatened to beat him up if he continues his ministry in the area. The pastor lodged a police complaint at Herekeru police station. A case was registered against the attackers. The church opened on Sunday (August 10) under police protection

**Kanwar:** On August 16, Hindu extremist allegedly from the *Vishwa Hindu Parishad* allegedly disrupted New Life Fellowship prayer meeting in Karwar, accused the pastor of forceful conversion and threatened him with violence if he continued Christian activities. The VHP filed a complaint against the pastor, and police ordered him to inform them about any future Christian activities.

**Hubli:** On August 17, Hindu extremists attacked the Mayer Memorial Church building and set fire to three vehicles belonging to Christians. The extremists were opposing a Christian rally organized by the church. The church cancelled the rally, and police provided protection to the Christian community.

**Gulbarga:** On August 9, Hindu extremists ordered 20 Christians to leave their home village of Gulbarga because they had put their trust in Christ. The village leaders in alliance with the Hindu extremists were reacting against a recent baptism service conducted by Pastor Sukruuth Raj. With area Christian leaders intervention the Christians did not relocated to another area.

**Gulbarga:** On August 9, Hindu hardliners disrupted the worship service of Indian Missionary Service; beat Pastor V. James in Gulbarga accusing him of forceful conversion. They dragged the pastor out to the street, kicking, chasing him, his wife and four children away from the village. The pastor has relocated to another area.

**Bangalore:** On September 10, suspected armed Hindu extremists attacked St. Francis De Sales Church near Hebbagudi, Bangalore early on the morning of Sept. 10. Damages were estimated at about 200,000 rupees. The church filed a complaint in Hebbagodi Police Station. But no arrests had been made.

**Tumkur:** On September 10, Hindu extremists attacked a pastor identified only as Ramanjaniah, accused him of cheating people and of forceful conversion, then beat him and paraded him on the street about one kilometer. The pastor received hospital treatment and police protection was provided to him.

**Bangalore Rural:** On Oct 4, Hindu extremists beat up pastor Prakash (60), verbally abused and accused him of cheating people. Police detained the pastor for the entire night in the station and questioned him about his ministry for about three hours. With the intervention of local Christian leaders, the pastor was released without charges.

**Dharwad:** On Oct. 10, police arrested workers from friends Missionary Prayer Band on false charges of forcible conversion in Gowdigere village. The police arrested the Christians with “punishment of criminal conspiracy,” among others. With local Christian leader’s intervention, the pastors were released on Oct. 12.

**Chikmagalur:** On Oct 21, Hindu nationalists forced an evangelist and other Christians to go to a police station on false charges of forcible conversion on Oct. 21 after barging into the church leader’s home, leveling charges after evangelist Kumar Nayak of the Assemblies of God refused to give a donation for the *Diwali* festival. The Christians were released later that night.

**Hubli:** On Oct 22, Hindu extremists from Sri Ram Sena on October 22 attacked Aadarsh Care Centre, accused the manager and staff of forceful conversion. The police asked the centre to stop functioning till a fresh permission is obtained.

**Kanwar:** On Oct 23, Hindu extremists claimed that a church building in Ankola was used as a center for forceful conversion. Due to extremist pressure, police forced Naik to shut down the building, threatening to arrest him if he opened it again. The Christians worship in the house of area pastor.

**Old Hubli:** On Oct 25, Hindu extremists attacked Assembly of God church, threatened the believers, burned up Bibles and Christian literature. Police took Pastor David Raj, his wife and two church members to old Hubli police station. With local Christian leaders’ intervention, the Christians were released at about 5 p.m. the same day.

**Mangalore:** On Nov 3, Nearly 20 Hindu nationalist extremist beat up a Christian identified only as Manjunath on the pretext of “forcible conversions” near an apartment complex in Attavar. Neighbors said they had no knowledge of any conversion activity at his apartment, and police arrived at the same conclusion after an investigation. .

**Shimago:** On November 6, Hindu extremists disrupted Faith Christ house church service, accusing a physically challenged Pastor Kannan Ramesh of forcible conversion and verbally abused him. Old Town police station interrogated and warned the pastor against using his house as a church. The Christian was released at about 11 p.m. without any charges.

**Attibele:** On Nov 10, About 20 Hindu extremists beat two Christians, verbally abused and beat them up, burning Bibles and gospel tracts. Police detained the victims rather than the

aggressors, holding the Christians at the police station until 11 p.m. and joining the extremists in warning them not to return to the village

**Shimoga:** On Nov 12, Hindu extremists falsely accused Pastor K. Manjunath of forceful conversion, verbally abused him and stopped construction of his church. Shimoga Development Authority issued a show-cause notice asking him to answer the complaint. After investigating, police allowed construction of the church building to Continue.

**Tumkur:** On Nov. 24, police detained three Christians from Operations Mobilization after Hindu extremists falsely accused them of forced conversion and confiscated Bibles, compact discs and gospel tracts and burned them. Madugere police detained the Christians till midnight and Christians were later pressured by the extremists to vacate the area.

**Kolar:** On Nov 24, based on a false complaint by Hindu extremists, police detained five pastors from Friends Missionary Prayer Band on baseless charges of forceful conversion. The Christians were released at about 8:30 p.m. after agreeing to give police prior notice of any worship services as a security measure.

**Bangalore Rural:** On Dec 6, Pastor C John Christopher, minister of the Grace Gospel Church was falsely accused of forceful conversion by local Hindu radicals and was warned by the Anekal police, asking him to submit his license for conducting worship meeting and documents of the church's land. The pastor submitted the required papers. No case was filed against the pastor but he was warned not to conduct future Christian meetings.

**Bangalore:** On Dec 12 Police detained a pastor and choir members of City St. Paul Methodist Church after Hindu extremists allegedly from the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh accused them of forceful conversion in Bangalore. Christians were questioned by police and were later released with local Christian leaders' intervention.

**Mysore:** On 14 Dec, police arrested Pastor H.T Manjunath and his wife after Hindu extremists lodged a complaint against them of forceful conversion, charging them under Section 295 & 295 A of the Indian Penal Code sent them to K.R Nagar Jail and Mysore jail respectively.

**Udupi:** On 15 Dec, a group of miscreants vandalized Sacred Heart Church damaging the main entrance of the door and glass windows. Church leaders lodged a complaint at Brahmavar police station and investigation is underway.

**Mandhya:** On 15 Dec, Police arrested a Christian identified only as Bhaskar under Section 153 of the Indian Penal Code after Hindu extremists filed a complaint against him of forceful conversion as they found him praying for a sick friend in a hospital. The Christian was released on bail on 17 Dec.

**Tumkur:** On Dec 20, police arrested eight Christians under Sections 295 A and 153 of the Indian Penal Code after Hindu extremists lodged a complaint against them of forceful conversion. The Christians were sent to Madugere sub- jail and were released on bail on the next day.

## **MADHYA PRADESH**

**Ambikapur:** On Feb 23, Hindu extremists disrupted a prayer meeting, accused the Christians of forceful conversion and beat them up. Police took 30 Christians to the police station and took their statements. With the intervention of the local and other leaders of EFI, the believers were released at around 11:30 p.m.

**Annurpur:** On Feb 25, Madhya Pradesh police arrested two pastors in connection with the sale of the book "Secularism and Hindutva" said to hurt the religious sentiments of the Hindus on February 25. The police took Pastor Kailash Masih of Dhanpuri area to Chachai police station at about 9 a.m. on February 20, arrested him under Section 295(A) of the IPC. He was sent to Shahdol Jail the same day. A case dairy was produced against Rev. Paulose Venkatarao, organizer of the Christian convention on Jan 16-18 where the book was said to have been sold. The pastor was arrested under Section 295 (A) of the Indian Penal Code. He was sent to Shahdol jail the same day. Bail was granted by Sessions Court, Shahdol on February 26. The pastor was released on bail on February 27.

**Narsingpur:** On May 7, Madhya Pradesh police arrested five Christians on the basis of the complaint filed by the Hindu extremists of alleged 'forceful conversion' on 7 May in Narsinghpur. The extremists barged into a prayer meeting and beat up the Christians. Both parties filed a police complaint but the Christians were arrested under Section 295(A) of the Indian Penal Code. The believers were granted bail at 3:15 p.m.

**Ratlam:** On May 14, Hindu extremists allegedly from the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and Bajrang Dal chanting "Jai Shri Ram" (praise lord Ram) barged into the worship service of Beersheba church and attacked the believers . They beat up the Christians and threatened them of dire consequences if they continue to worship .Pastor Kuldeep Singh lodged a complaint at Alkapuri police station. No arrests had been made.

**Dewas:** On May 24, Hindu extremist *Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh* attacked Pastor Ramesh Mandevey, leaving him unconscious. About 10 Hindu hardliners stopped the pastor as he was on his way back from visiting a Christian's home and assaulted him. The pastor was hospitalized and Local Christian leaders filed a police complaint at Dewas police station, but no arrests had been made. .

**Dhindoi:** On July 7, Hindu extremists allegedly from the Bajrang Dal damaged a Christian house and threatened to kill Rakesh Kumar as they accused him of building a church. Kumar claimed that the construction was not meant for a church but he personally builds it for his house. On July 12, Kumar received a letter from the extremists threatening to murder him.

**Bhopal:** On July 26, about 50 Hindu extremists from the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP or World Hindu Council) attacked the Sunday baptism worship service of Assembly of God Bethel Church accusing Pastor K.A George of forceful conversion and opposed the ongoing baptism ceremony. The police soon arrived at the spot and Kunti testified that she has decided to follow Jesus Christ of her own free will and has been seeking to be baptized for the past five years

**Jabalpur:** On July 26, a mob of about 40 Hindu extremists allegedly from Dharam Sena attacked Sneh Sadan Institute (Home of Love) run by the Christians on July 26. The extremists accused the institute manager, Lily Paul of forceful conversion and filed a complaint against her prior to the attack. After an enquiry, the police provided the Christians police protection.

**Rewa:** On August 2, Hindu extremists including a woman said to practice sorcery and witchcraft, burned down the home of a Christian. Raj Bahor accepted Christ and began attending the church of Pastor Heeralal Kushwaha, the Hindu woman in the neighborhood found the spells she cast on Bahor prior to his conversion had become ineffective. She and other Hindu extremists opposed to Bahor's new faith burned down his house, and local Christians filed a police complaint. An investigation is underway.

**Barwani:** On September 8, police arrested Gopi Krishnan for "preaching to forcefully convert people to Christianity" based on a complaint filed by the Hindu extremist *Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh*. He was granted bail on Sept. 10. Local Christian leaders maintained that preaching to "forcefully convert" a person does not take place in the area.

**Katni:** On September 12, Madhya Pradesh police arrested 8 Christians under 'Religious Freedom Act, Madhya Pradesh 1973' and 295 (A) to be read with 34 of the IPC. Christians including women were arrested on the railway platform while they were simply standing. The Christians were detained in the police station for about 20 hours and were released on bail.

**Dhar:** On September 27, radicals from the minority Jains religion attacked and threatened Pastor Mukesh Pal in Rajgarh area. About a dozen of the Jains, all members of the Hindu nationalist *Bharatiya Janata Party*, interrupted a worship service and accused Christians of fraudulent conversion, eating cow meat and mixing harmful chemicals into anointing oil used for prayers for the sick. A doctor was called on the spot to test the prayer oil, and he certified it as chemical-free. Nevertheless, police arrested Pastor Mukesh Pal and Ganpat Goyal. After calls from Christian friends, high-ranking officers ensured that police release the two Christians.

**Adhartal:** On September 28, Hindu hardliners broke into the house church meeting shouting "*Jai Sri Ram* [Hail to Lord Ram]" vandalized the church, threatening Pastor Peter Johnson with further attacks. Pastor Johnson filed a complaint with Adhartal police station in Jabalpur, and police have reportedly forwarded it to the City Superintendent of Police and Collector.

**Jhabua:** On Oct 4, a group of Hindu extremists in Madhya Pradesh, accused pastor Paasu Ninama of forceful conversion and beat him unconscious and chewed off part of his ear. The pastor received hospital treatment and police have registered a case against the extremists.

**Balaghat:** On November 24, Hindu extremists broke into the house of Purnima Dhuarey amid a prayer meeting and dragged pastor Ghanshyam Chowkse, beat him up and threaten to burn him alive. Police complaint was filed against the extremists but no arrest was made.

## **CHHATTISGARH**

**Dendewada:** On January 5, police arrested ten Christians on the basis of the complaint lodged by Hindu extremists in Kua Kunda police station Bastar for Christ (BFC) church was having a Christmas picnic in Phulpad on December 25. The waste plates and the leftovers from the picnic were taken to a Hindu temple by some miscreants and a picture was taken. On the basis of this photograph, police arrested ten Christians under Section 295 of the Indian Penal Code for defiling a place of worship. The Christians were released the same day on bail.

**Dendewada:** On January 18, about 1000 Hindu extremists opposing the Christians activities gathered in Palnad, claiming that they wanted to wipe out all the Christians and their

activities in the area. The police after several calls by the Christian leaders came to the spot and disperse the crowd.

**Ambikapur :** On Feb. 23, Hindu extremists disrupted a prayer service, accused the pastors of forceful conversion, beat them and damaged motorcycles. Police took about 30 Christians to the police station. Local Christian leaders intervened, and the Christians were released at about 11:30 p.m. after giving their statements. There were no serious injuries.

**Jagdapur:** On April 7, Hindu extremists assaulted Pastor Somnal Bhagal of Jehovah Pentecostal Mission on April 7, accusing him of staring a Hindu woman, verbally abused him for his faith and beat him up. The pastor filed a police complaint but no arrests had been made

**Pratap Chow:** On April 7, Police arrested Christian social workers on charges of forceful conversion on April 7 in Pratap Chow. Workers from the Hindu extremist *Bharatiya Janata Party* (BJP) accused the social workers travelling in election-duty vehicles of carrying Christian literature and anti-Hindu stickers. The Christians steadfastly denied the charges, maintaining that the extremists planted the books to falsely implicate them. Police detained the Christians for about eight hours and were released on bail.

**Bilaspur:** On April 15, a Christian identified as Gyan Singh was arrested by police on charges of forceful conversion in Chakarbhata. Singh was arrested under Section 153(a) and 295(a) of the Indian Penal Code. Local Christian leaders denied any attempted forceful conversion in the area.

**Durg:** On April 20, a group of people attacked a gospel meeting organized by Christian Community Church on April 20 in Dalli Rajhara. The attackers accused the Christians of forceful conversion, termed the four pastors as traitors of Sikhism, demanded their arrests and beat them up. Police arrived at the spot and escorted the four pastors to Balod area and were sent back to Delhi by train the same night.

**Raipur:** On April 30, about 50 Hindu extremists from the 'Chhattisgarh Sikh Youth Federation' accused Jaspal Saluja of forcibly converting Sikhs into Christianity and assaulted him on April 30 in Raipur. Saluja refused to file a police complaint as he chose to forgive the assailants.

**Bilaspur:** On May 3, Hindu extremists allegedly from the Bajrang Dal (Youth wing of World Hindu Council) attacked an afternoon prayer meeting, burned Bibles and Christian literatures, threatening the believers with serious consequences if they continue with Christian worship meetings in the area. The Christians filed a police complaint and First Information Report (FIR) has been registered in Koni police station. No arrests had been made.

**Bastar:** Hindu extremists from the *Vishwa Hindu Parishad* (VHP or World Hindu Council) and *Bajrang Dal* (Youth Wing of the VHP) put up three signboards sternly warning Christians not to preach in the area. The signboards, placed at three different sites, read, "Preaching about Jesus Christ is strictly prohibited in the area." was noticed by area Christians leaders on July. The signs include pictures of Hindu deities along with names of the extremists groups.

**Raipur:** On Oct 3, Hindu extremists in Raipur tried to pressure Motichandan Sahu's family into giving up their faith and also threatened to publicly dishonor Pastor Kamlakar Roa Bokade by filing charges of forcible conversion against him if he did not stop visiting the family of Modichandan Sahu. The Chhattisgarh Christian Forum has notified police of the harassment.

**Pendra:** On October 4, Hindu extremists allegedly from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) accused Markus Das of forceful conversion and of illegal trafficking. Members from the BJP apposed Markus Das for preaching and severely beat him up. The extremists planted a dozen teak woods in the pastor's jeep at midnight and informed the Chhattisgarh Forest Department. Preliminary

**Masturi:** On Oct 25, Suspected Hindu extremists with their faces covered attacked Pastor Pavithra Kumar of Beersheba Church of God on October 25 on baseless grounds. The Christians lodged a police complaint. No arrests had been made.

**Fukagirotta:** On November 1, Hindu extremists stormed the Sunday worship service accused the pastor of forceful conversion, severely beat him up and threw his infant son to the ground seriously injuring his ear. The police arrived took the pastor to the police station for safety measure. The pastor received hospital treatment.

## **ANDHRA PRADESH**

**Karimnagar:** On Jan 16 suspected Hindu extremists with their faces masked attacked pastor Jacob, shaved his head and burned his house, shouting that there should not be any Christian pastor in the village. The pastor filed a police complaint, and police at Potkapalli police station registered a case against the extremists.

**Kadiri District:** On Jan 26 Hindu extremists allegedly from the *Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh* attacked the nuns at St. Mary School. The extremists destroyed school facility and accused the school of not hoisting Indian flag on Republic day. The school principal reported that the students had not come to school as there was a solar eclipse, but that the flag had been hoisted inside the building

**Ranga Reddy:** On Feb 14, Hindu extremists attacked a Christian media team, accused them of forceful conversion and threatened to kill them in Kawadipally. The intolerant Hindus tore gospel tracts and damaged Christian's vehicle. A complaint was filed at Hayath Nagar police station, but no arrests had been made.

**Ranga Reddy:** On Feb 22, Hindu extremists barged into the Sunday worship meeting of true wine church, attacked Pastor K. Krupanamdham and demanded that he turn the property over to them. Two police men have been posted to protect the church, but no First Information Report was filed.

**Khammam:** On March 1, upper-caste Hindu extremists attacked the Sunday worship of a church, attacked Pastor Isaac Ravi, disconnected the power supply and beat the pastor and other Christians, including women and children. A police complaint was filed against the assailants, but no First Information Report has been registered.

**Medak:** On March 11, Hindu extremists allegedly from the *Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh* (RSS) assaulted pastor Ezra Krupanadam and seriously injured him in Pathur village. The pastor received treatment at Gandhi Hospital. The extremists were arrested under 341, 324, 153(a) to be read with 34 of the Indian Penal Code

**Chittoor:** On March 24 Hindu extremists burned Jesus Prayer House Church resulting in damages totaling Rs. 30,000. The pastor received several threats from the Hindu extremists, warning him not to lead worship meetings in the area. The pastor filed a police complaint at Renigunta police station, but no arrests had been made.

**Hyderabad:** On March 27 Hindu hardliners attacked Pastor Pramodam Joshua of Shalom Bible Church and members, accusing him of forceful conversion and beat him up. The pastor received hospital treatment for internal injuries. Local Christian leaders filed a police complaint at Amberbet police station, but no arrests had been made.

**Warrangal:** On March 28, a member of the Hindu extremist allegedly from the *Bajrang Dal*, youth wing barged into Pastor G. Timothy's house and threatened to kill him if he did not leave his village within 48 hours. The pastor filed a police complaint but no arrests had been made.

**Karimnagar:** On April 6 in Dharmapuri village, about 40 Hindu extremists shouting slogans broke into the house of a Christian, accused Pastor Prabhu Das and three women of forceful conversion and dragged them to the police station. First Information Report was registered against the Christians and were released on bail on April 9

**Warrangal:** On May 5, Suspected Hindu extremists set fire to the Holy Spirit God's Church, damaging church properties worth rupees 1 lakh. The church leader, Pastor Emaddi Clinton filed a police complaint. No arrest had been made.

**Mahaboob:** On May 28, Police detained Christians after the Hindu extremists falsely accused them of forcible conversion for organizing a Vacation Bible School on May 25-31 for nearly 75 children. The Christians were held until evening and released them without charges, but the Vacation Bible School was stopped immediately.

**Hyderabad** -On June 7, Police arrested Pastor David Raju on a baseless complaint of forceful conversion from Hindu extremists as he was preaching in Mangalagiri church. A compromise was reached where the pastor was given permission to continue Christian meetings in the area and the Christians forgave the extremists

**Mahaboobnagar:** On July 1, Hindu extremists from the *Akhil Bhartiya Vidyarthi Parishad* (All India Student's Council), formed under the *Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh*, attacked St. Agnes School allegedly for punishing one Hindu student. The extremists destroyed furniture and other fixtures and threatened to harm school authorities. Both parties filed a police complaint. No arrests had been made.

**Tirupati:** On July 19, Police arrested a Christian woman identified only as Hemavathy on charges of "proselytization". The arrests were made on the basis of the complaint filed by a medical officer from Shri Venkateswara Ayurvedic College-Hospital, who accused her of distributing religious pamphlets on hospital premises The Christian woman was released on bail on July 21 at 6 p.m.

**Musheerabad:** On July 23, Hindu medical students at Gandhi Medical College under the influence of Hindu extremists beat Professor David and filed a complaint against three faculty members of forceful conversion. The colleges' form a committee to investigate and the panel reported that no religious conversions took place on the college premises

**Karimnagar:** On July 24, Karnataka police arrested Pastor Devadass based on the complaint filed by the Hindu extremists of forceful conversion in Vemulawada. Dragging the pastor to Vemulawada police station, the extremists accused him of distributing gospel tracts near the premises of Rajarajeshwar temple located at Vemulawada. The pastor was sent to district jail, Karimnagar.

**Mahaboobnagar:** On August 1, Hindu extremists allegedly from the *Vishwa Hindu Parishad* attacked pastor B.Y Das charging large-scale forceful conversion also forcing the Christians to wear tilak, a Hindu symbol on the forehead, and threatened to kill them if they went ahead with church construction.

**Mahasamudram:** On August 20, suspected Hindu extremists set aflame Best Friends Church, destroying. The Church was built with the permission of local authorities and was scheduled to be inaugurated. Pastor A. John filed a complaint at Bangarupalem police station. A police investigation is underway.

**Mudinepalli:** On August 30, Hindu extremists attacked Pastor Solomaom Raju, installed a microphone on the roof of the church building, and a Hindu idol in front it, as part of the Hindu Ganesh festival. Pastor Solomon Raju asked the extremists and a local official to move the mike to some other place, with the Hindu hardliners responding by disrupting the Sunday worship service and beating the pastor. He filed a police complaint. No arrests had been made.

**Warrangal:** On Sept 13, about 10 Hindu extremists attacked a worship meeting of Opier Ministries Evangelical Church, beating pastor Pilly Kumar and destroyed a signboard bearing the church's name. The pastor filed a police complaint, but officers refused to register a case.

**Ranga Reddy:** On Sept 25, Hindu extremists beat a Christian identified only as Abhishek, from Hebron Church, and accused him of forceful conversion in Ranga Reddy. The extremists accused Abhishek of organizing a study program to forcibly convert children to Christianity. Abhishek received hospital treatment Police complaint was filed against Abhishek and was forced to stop the Bible program.

**Hyderabad:** On Oct 1, Hindu extremists disrupted a prayer meeting and attacked Christians including a child and woman, seriously injuring one pastor on the left ear. The extremists later dragged Pastor Timothy to the police station and lodged a complaint against him, falsely accusing him of urinating at nearby temple idols. With the intervention of the local Christian leaders, a compromise was reached between the two parties.

**Nizamabad:** On Oct 13, Hindu extremists stopped the construction of a Methodist church building and verbally abused a pastor in Nizamabad. The pastor filed a police complaint charging harassment and contacted the district collector and superintendent of police, but no action had been taken. The pastor has stopped church construction to avoid further disturbances.

**Warrangal:** On Oct 22, suspected Hindu extremists set fire to India Mission Society Church, damaging more than half of the building. Pastor P. Kumarswamy contacted the fire department, which arrived after more than half of the building had been destroyed. Police registered a First Information Report, and an investigation is underway.

**Aliabad:** On November 24, Police detained an Australian Christian worker on the basis of the complaint lodged by the Hindu extremists allegedly from Bharatiya Janata Party of forceful conversion. The pastor was later released without charges.

**Karimnagar:** On December 8, Suspected Hindu extremists burned Jesus Manna Church destroying the main entrance of the church; the altar window panels, amplifier, service books and Bibles were burned to ashes. Police registered First Information Report.

**Mahaboobnagar:** On Dec 9, Hindu extremists accused Pastor Nidanapu Moses of forceful conversion and beat him up. The pastor received hospital treatment for internal injuries. Local Christian leaders are taking steps to file a police complaint against the extremists

**Nalgonda:** On Dec 20, Hindu extremists allegedly from the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh seriously injured a pastor and also beat up his wife on their way to a neighboring village. The pastor received hospital treatment with five stitches on his head. First Information Report was registered against the assailants.

## **MAHARASTRA**

**Nashik District:** On January 26, a group of 10 armed Hindu extremists disrupted a baptism service and beat Christians from the Navjivan Fellowship Church at Gangapur Dam. A complaint was filed with Nashik Taluk police, and a case of rioting was registered against the attackers.

**Nagpur District :** On April 19, a mob of about 25 Hindu extremists allegedly from the Bajrang Dal shouting ‘Jai Shri Ram’ disrupted a Sunday worship meeting of Douglas Memorial Church and attacked the Christians . The Savner police arrested seven extremists under Sections 141, 142, 147, 149, 427 and 295 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC)

**Mumbai:** On May 5, about 30 Hindu extremist allegedly from the Swami Narendra Maharaj attacked ‘Vasai Taluka Christian Pastors Association’ revival meeting, injuring 10 believers including a five-year-old girl. Five extremists were arrested and charged under Section 147, 148, 326, 323, 427 of the Indian Penal Code and Section 7 of Criminal Law Amendment Act respectively.

**Maharashtra:** On Aug 8, about 45 Hindu extremists attacked two Gospel for Asia Christian workers screening Jesus film, accused them of luring people to convert to Christianity and took them to the police station in an undisclosed area. The two Christian workers were released the next morning and their film equipment was returned to them after police confirmed that the allegations were false.

**Mumbai:** On November 28, Christian workers from Ashirwad prayer centre were pelted with stones in Bhuigaon village in Mumbai. A group of people try to stop Sebastian Martin, director of the “Ashirwad Prayer Centre” from conducting a prayer meeting or face dire consequences and hurled stones at the ministry jeep heading towards the prayer hall accusing the Christians of disturbing the neighborhood with the sound of the vehicle.

**Kankavli:** On Dec 20, a mob of about 70 Hindu extremists allegedly from the Shiv Sena barged into the Sunday worship meeting of New Life Ministry, accused Pastor Atul Bhore of forceful conversion, beat him up and his wife, destroyed church furniture and musical instruments. Police registered First Information Report against the attackers.

## **ASSAM**

**Jorhat:** On January 24, a group of 600 Hindu extremists assaulted Christians on in Majuli Island as they are coming back from an ordination ceremony. First Information Reported (FIR) was registered in Kamalabari and Jarmukh police stations. No arrests had been made.

**Jorhat:** On May 8, Police arrested and beat Pastor Tarun Gogoi for alleged forceful conversion, suspicion of having links with Naga rebel militants and receiving donations from them for construction of their church building. The pastor was released on May 9 after church intervention. After an inquiry, local officials said there were no evidence of forceful conversion and allowed the Christians to resume the church construction.

**Jorhat:** On May 31, Hindu extremists from the *Vishwa Hindu Parishad* vandalized a Baptist church in Jorhat and threatened two Christian girls, daughters of a pastor who was arrested on May 8 by Assam police on false charges of forcible conversion also demanding 5,000 rupees (US\$100) from the girls. Police complaint was lodged and the demands of the extremists were not met.

## **KERALA**

**Wayand:** On January 22, Hindu extremists allegedly from the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) assaulted a pastor for distributing gospel tracts, beat and left him unconscious on the road. The pastor received hospital treatment. No police complaint was lodged as the pastor chooses to forgive the extremists.

**Malapuram:** On March 15, about 10 Hindu hardliners attacked Tribal Mission evangelist O.J. Andrews as he was leading a worship service, accused him of forceful conversion and dragged him about 30 kilometers (19 miles) in the street and beat him. Complaint was lodged and Police gave the hard-line BJP members a stern warning not to disturb the Christians again.

**Pullad:** On Aug 7, Hindu extremists armed with swords barged into the prayer hall of the Full Gospel Church for God, beat pastor Joe Kaithavana and Deepu and vandalized the facility. The Christians sustained injuries and received hospital treatment. Koipram police have registered a case against the assailants

**Wayanad:** On Aug. 12, police arrested Christians based on false allegations of destroying Hindu holy books in Vythiri. Amma filed a complaint against the Christians for destroying Hindu holy books and articles used in rituals. The Christians claimed that no Hindu books were destroyed. The Christians were charged with promoting communal disharmony, house trespass, and damaging property.

## **NEW DELHI**

On March 8, about 12 Hindu extremists armed with rods and hockey sticks assaulted Pastor A.K Wilson and his family, took 15,000 rupees and threatened to murder them in India's capital. The pastor filed a police complaint with Uttam Nagar police .No arrests had been made.

## UTTAR PRADESH

**Unnao:** On March 8 in Unnao, Hindu extremists accused pastor K .K Vimal of forceful conversion and threatened to destroy his church building. After an enquiry, police found the accusations against the pastor were baseless. The Pastor had relocated to another area for security measure.

**Lucknow:** On September 19, Hindu extremists accused Pastor Bechu Azah Chhedi of forceful conversion and chased him into hiding in Lucknow. The pastor has relocated for safety.

**Pratapgarh:** On October 15, Hindu extremists from the *Vishwa Hindu Parishad* accused Pastor Sunil Singh of the Full Gospel Church of fraudulent conversion, lodged a complaint against him and threatened to kill him if his church continues its worship services. Police summoned the pastor to the police station for questioning, and an investigation was underway.

## ORISSA

**Sambalpur** - The Rev. S.P. Lima of Cross International Ministries, operator of Agape Manor International Residential School, has been arrested and imprisoned since January 2008 in Baragarh and Sambalpur after Hindu extremists falsely accused him of raping a schoolgirl. The Additional District Session Court on June 12 of this year imposed a fine of 10,000 rupees and sentenced Rev. Lima to 10 years in prison; he was transferred to Sambalpur Prison.

**Kandhamal:** On September 3, suspected Hindu extremists armed with country pistols and swords on Sept. 3 attacked Pastor Isaac Digal of Good Shepherd Community Church for holding a worship service in his house. Police arrived at the scene, and the pastor filed a complaint. No arrests had been made.

## UTTARAKHAND

**Dehradun:** On March 1, Police beat Sanjay Verma after detaining him in Dehradun. The Christians filed a police complaint after Hindu extremists had repeatedly disturbed church meetings by playing high-volume music during services the past few months but police took Verma to the station, questioned and beat him up. The church moved worship services to another venue.

**Rudrapur:** On October 25, Hindu extremists allegedly from the *Bajrang Dal* accused Pastor Victor Massey of forceful conversion, tore Bibles and threatening to attack the church if the congregation continued to meet for worship, adding that they would force Hindu rituals on them. Christian leaders have asked local authorities to provide police protection.

## HIMACHAL PRADESH

**Damtal:** On Feb 26, Hindu extremists armed with sticks assaulted Joginder Masih, opposing construction of a church building that Masih and other Christians had begun. Police complaint was made but no First Information Report has been registered.

**Himachal Pradesh:** On March 14, Hindu extremists beat two Gospel For Asia missionaries in an undisclosed village. Police detained the Christians in the station for safety measure. A Compromise was reached as the extremists agreed not to attack the Christians again if the Christians agreed to drop charges.

**Subathu:** On May 1 In Salon, Hindu hardliners accused pastor Suresh Masih Bhatti of forceful conversion, attacked and threatened further harm if he conducted future Christian meetings. Police registered a First Information Report against the attackers and the extremist Sunil Sheena made a public apology to the pastor.

## **RAJASTHAN**

**Udaipur:** On March 21, Hindu extremists attacked Bible students and staff members distributing gospel tracts and demanded 10,000 rupees from them. The Christians later reached an agreement with the extremists without bowing to their demands to cease evangelistic activity.

**Banswada:** On September 2, about 30 Hindu extremists assaulted two Christian workers from Gospel for Asia and chased them into the jungle near Banswada, viciously beating and verbally abusing them. The Christians fled and hid in the nearby forest. A Christian search team found the duo at midnight and gave them shelter.

## **PUNJAB**

**Ludhiana:** On March 15, Hindu extremists from the *Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh* accused pastor Tiwari of forceful conversion, beating 6 Christians as they distributed gospel tracts. Police protection was provided to the Christians.

**Samrala Chowk:** On Oct 6 in Samrala Chowk, Ludhiana, Hindu extremists abducted and beat up Vijay Kumar, releasing him only the next day. A complaint was filed at Shingar police station, but no arrests had been made.

## **MANIPUR**

**Manipur:** Suspected Hindu extremists burned two church buildings in Phumlou and Phayeng on May 10 and another in Taolong on May 11, damaging church buildings and furniture, pulpits, curtains, mats, microphones and sound system speakers. Police registered a First Information Report but no arrests had been made.

## **JAMMU & KASHMIR**

**Bashi Nagar:** On April 8, Pastor A.K. Samuel was arrested after a flurry of false accusations, from kidnapping to fraudulent conversion. With police ordering him to halt his evangelistic efforts, Samuel was released on bail on May 14 on the condition that he leaves Jammu.

**Plaura:** On May 10, police in Plaura on May 10 stopped Sunday worship, baselessly accused the Christians of harassing people and arrested Pastor Virender Joseph under section 109 of the Police. The Christians were released on bail the next day.

**Hira Nagar:** On September 17, Police detained Pastor Salamat Masih and three others on false charges of forceful conversion in Hira Nagar, falsely accusing Masih of offering 10,000 rupees to each of three converts from Hinduism about to be baptized. No case was filed against the pastor after Christian leaders' intervention.

## **TAMIL NADU**

**Krishnagiri:** On May 6, apposing his faith, Hindu extremists in Krishnagiri attacked Pastor Paul Chinnaswamy on May 6, seriously injuring him. The pastor filed a police complaint at Uddinapally, but no arrests were made.

**Erode:** On May 8 members of the Hindu extremist *Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh* interrupted a Good Shepherd Community Church screening of the "Jesus Film" and accused Pastor Kandha Swamy of forceful conversion in Erode district. A compromise was reached between the two parties.

**Erode:** On July 22, Hindu extremists assaulted Young Men's Evangelical Fellowship media team, accused them of forceful conversion, burned gospel literature and forced the Christians to lie down and pay homage to idols. Police rescued the Christians but no case was registered against the extremists.

**Nagercoil:** On Nov 29, suspected Hindu extremists attacked a church in Nagercoil damaging the church wall.

**Coimbatore:** On Nov 30, a group of miscreants damaged glass panes of four windows of a church near Coimbatore were found broken and in another area on the same day, a group of people pelted stones at the church, breaking the doors and stoned the church. Church leaders approached police officials for protection.

## **BIHAR**

**Rohtas:** On March 8, a church in Rohtas district was attacked with bombs and bullets during the Sunday mass service on March 8, seriously injuring a pastor and four believers. Rajesh Singh had been arrested and the police seized a country-made pistol and four live cartridges from him.

## **GUJARAT**

**Dahod:** On July 6, suspected Hindu extremists attacked St. Stephen High School, as teachers requested some female students with henna designs on their arms to wash them off in accordance with school rules. On hearing the incident, Hindu extremists barged into the school started beating the principal and desecrated Christian statues at the school. The school remained closed the following day as a sign of protest against the incident.

## **HARYANA**

**Ambala:** On July 19, Hindu extremists attacked a children's educational center in Ambala, accusing Pastor Daniel Kamaraj and staff members of forceful conversion, ordering everyone to vacate the premises.. The learning center had been relocated to the pastor's home.

## **WEST BENGAL**

**Pedong:** On April 25, a group of miscreants attacked the statue of Jesus Christ installed in the historical place of Pedong, and damaged it severely in Kalimpong. The church did not file a police complaint.

**Bishnupur:** On August 20, armed Hindu hardliners have again attacked the Christian community in Bishnupur and threatened to kill them if they continue to practice their faith.

**Ambala:** On August 20, Hindu extremists from the *Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh* attacked two Christians. Eight extremists accused two unidentified Christians of forceful conversion and filed a police complaint against them after forcing villagers to sign a letter of complaint. Christian leaders have taken the matter to authorities, and a police investigation is underway.

## **JHARKHAND**

**West Singhbhum:** On October 27, Hindu extremists pressured Christians to recant their faith and convert back to Hinduism and also damaging the water pump of the Christians in West Singhbhum, Jharkhand. Police refused to register a First Information Report on the incident but assured the Christians that they would investigate.

*Issued By:*

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