



“Battered and Bruised...”

Half Yearly Report – 2011 on the targeted violence against the Christian minority community in India.

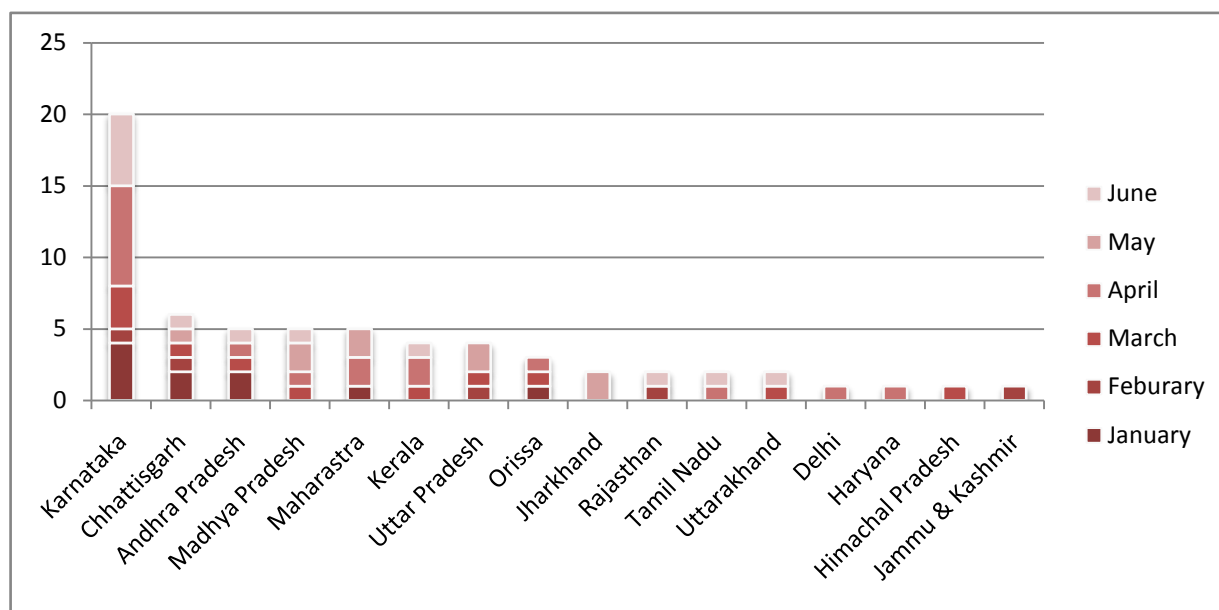
Christian Groups Susceptible to Violence in India

“With two – three incidents of violence against the community each week in 2011, Christians in India, continue to face the worst ever persecution in India.”

- Rev. Dr. Richard Howell, General Secretary, EFI

The Evangelical Fellowship of India is deeply concerned at the continued hostility against the Christian minority community in the country. EFI recorded 64 instances of violence coupled with several instances of false accusations against the community. (See Chart Below)

The southern state of Karnataka recorded the most number of attacks against the community with 20 instances of violence and hostility. The central Indian state of Chhattisgarh saw six instances of violence and the states of Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh recorded five incidents each.



In an outrageous attack against Christians in Jharkhand, the local villagers in the Palamu and Garwah district left several Christians, including one woman severely injured¹. One woman was abducted for a month by the attackers before she was finally released by the order of the local court.

The police failed to arrest even a single person in connection with the incidents, inspite of repeated appeals from both local and national human rights agencies and the appeals from the victims, themselves.

¹Mala Devi, received severe injuries requiring hospitalization. (cover page photograph)

Far from being an isolated incident, this is the norm, with several Christians being coerced by government agencies into accepting a compromise with the attackers and even submitting to demands such as leaving the village or area², or would not conduct worship services in their homes³ or paying a fine for practise their faith⁴.

In most of the instances, after the preliminary disruption of church or worship services, Christians including women were abused and physically assaulted. Later the Christians were arrested on the charges of “forcible conversions”.

The blatant disregard for the law by alleged Hindutva proponents, coupled with the inaction and often bias of the police in favour of the attackers, has left the community vulnerable and helpless in the onslaught of violence.

Recommendations:

- EFI recommends that the State Governments, especially the government of Karnataka, take immediate steps to ensure the protection of the Christian minority community within the state
- EFI recommends the Government of Karnataka withdraw false and malicious cases registered against Christians in the state and direct the police to investigate the motive and *locus* of the complainant before registering any complaint against Sections 153, 295 and 295A of the Indian Penal Code.
- EFI recommends the Central Government enact the Prevention of Communal Violence Targeted Violence (Access to Justice and Reparations) Bill, 2011, after due consideration to the concerns raised by civil society.

Report prepared by
The Evangelical Fellowship of India
(August 4, 2011)

The Evangelical Fellowship of India is a national alliance of churches and Christian non-profit organisations. It represents the interests of over 35,000 churches across India and is a voice to the governments and media. Established in 1951, EFI is a charter member of the World Evangelical Alliance, a non-profit organisation with special consultative status with the United Nation.

For more details:
Evangelical Fellowship of India
805/92, Deepali Building, Nehru Place
New Delhi - 110019, India
Tel: +91.11.26431133
Fax: +91.11.26285350

²Bullet point No. 10, Karnataka

³Bullet point No. 2, Karnataka, Bullet Point 3 Uttar Pradesh

⁴Bullet point No. 13, Karnataka



LIST OF INCIDENTS RECORDED IN:

KARNATAKA

- **2 January** - In Davengere, alleged Hindu extremists attacked Pastor Isaac Samuel while he was conducting a prayer meeting and seriously injured him. The pastor was hospitalized and received dozen stitches to the wound.
- **23 January** - In Hirekerur, Haveri, alleged Hindu extremists stopped the worship meeting of Christ's Discipleship Prayer Fellowship Church, took Bibles and verbally abused the Church members. The police detained the Christians for three hours and forced them to put down in writing that that they will not conduct future worship meetings in the homes of the villagers to convert them into Christianity.
- **25 January** - In Kanakagiri, Koppal, alleged Hindu extremists accused Pastor (s) Harris and Ravi of forceful conversion, disrupted the prayer meeting, locked them inside a room and beat them up, seriously injuring them.
- **28 January** - In Gangavati, Koppal, alleged Hindu extremists locked up five Christians and mercilessly beat them. The extremists demanded that the Christians either convert to Hinduism or migrate to some other place.
- **17 February** - In Kammanahali, Bangalore, police arrested 50 Christians after they staged a protest against the attack on Jesus and Mary statue by area Hindu extremists. The Christians lodged a police complaint but to their surprise, 50 Christians were arrested.
- **6 March** – In Gubbi, Tumkur, police arrested Pastors(s) Mathew and Jose from 'Spirit Filled Church' for "forceful conversion" alleged Hindu extremists barged into the worship service, ransacked the church, took Bibles and other literature. The police detained the Christians in the station till about 9 p.m. and charged them under Sections 295A/296/505/298 and 298A of the Indian Penal Code.
- **9 March** – In Mangalore, Nitin Poojary along with alleged Hindu extremists filed a false complaint against Julian Lobo of trying to force Poojary to convert to Christianity. With the intervention of area Christian leaders, the Christian was released without formal charges being lodged.
- **26 March** - In Madikere, Bangalore Rural, police arrested four Christians after alleged Hindu extremists accused Evangelist A.J Diwakar from Christ Fellowship Church of forceful conversion and beat him up with three Christian's women. The Christians were sent to Mecera Jail and were later released on bail.
- **1 April** –In Kodihalli, Bangalore, Karnataka Police arrested five Christians after Hindu nationalists registered false complaints of "conversion" against them. The Christians were

“All the persons who were gathered there came by their own free will, we never forced anyone. They have been conducting such services for several years now and all the leprosy patients are happy to attend. The patients told the police they wanted to attend the programme, but the police refused to listen.”

- Henry Baptist Reuben, a victim of violence in
Karnataka

released on bail on April 3.

- **3 April** - In Hosanagara, Shimoga, police took Pastor Abraham K.G and Eerappa from Jehovah Nizzi Prayer Hall to the police station and forced them to put down in writing that they will stop future prayer meetings and ordered them to vacate the house church immediately.
- **6 April** - In UttaraKannada, alleged Hindu extremists threaten a pastor of dire consequences if he continued to conduct worship meetings and burned down his field. Police advised the pastor not to file a police complaint for the Christian community's safety.
- **10 April** – In Mysore, Police arrested Pastor Vinod M.Chacko after alleged Hindu extremists barged into the worship meeting and attacked them. Some church property is also seized by the police.
- **11 April** – In Mysore, Bagarapete police detained Pastor (s) Timothy and Daniel Venkatappa after alleged Hindu extremists filed a complaint against them of forceful conversion. Later the Christians were released without charges after the police forced them to put down in writing that they will not conduct prayer meetings in future and imposed on them a fine of Rs 4000/- (rupees four thousand) which the Christians duly paid up.
- **22 April** - In Nandi Tavera, Davengere, alleged Hindu extremists attacked a pastor, tore Bibles and then locked the pastor in a room. The police rescued the pastor.
- **22 April** - In Bilagi, Bagalkot, Hindu extremists attacked a Good Friday worship meeting, torn Bibles, hymns books and beat up a physically challenged Pastor GurappaPowar, seriously injuring him and offer to give Rs. 10,000 if he leaves Christianity.
- **5 June** - In Bangalore, police disrupted the Indian Pentecostal Church Sunday worship service and detained Pastor Manjunath Naik after alleged Hindu extremists accused him of forceful conversion.
- **12 June** - In Bangalore, police arrested Henry Baptist Reuben from St. Rock Church and two leper patients after Hindu extremists verbally abused them and accused Reuben of forceful conversion.
- **21 June** - In Badragola, VirajpetTalukCoorg, police arrested four tribal Christians after the Hindu extremists accused them of forceful conversion.
- **28 June** - In Shimoga, the state authority verbally ordered the cancellation of a Christian school, “Good ShepherdCommunity” after alleged local Hindu extremists asked the concerned authorities to cancel the permission for the running of the school, alleging forceful conversion.
- **28 June** - In Heggere, Hubli, Karnataka, police arrested two Christians after Hindu extremists from the Bajrang Dal accused Pastor M. Sandeep and brother Isaac of forceful

conversion and attacked them as they were returning back home from a prayer meeting . The Christians were produced before the Magistrate and were later sent to Dharwad Jail.

CHHATTISGARH

- **12 January** - In Sirisguda, Jagdalpur, alleged Hindu extremists beat up a follower of Christ, ItuVeko from Obedient Life Church and seriously injured him for his faith in Christ.
- **16 January** - In Odisha, Konta, Hindu extremists allegedly from the Bajrang Dal beat up Christians amid their prayer meeting and seriously injured them. The members includes followers of Christ from Hindu and tribal backgrounds.
- **23 February** - In Murliguda, alleged Hindu extremists beat up BhadanHonta and MarkariSomal for following Christ. The extremists damaged Honda's ear drums, and Soma was beaten till he fell unconscious. The Christians filed a police complaint but no action was taken.
- **13 March** - In Raipur, alleged Hindu extremists try to stop the worship meeting conducted by Pastor Peter Singh from Church of Christ, accusing him of forceful conversion .The church members and the local people defended the pastor and chased the extremists away.
- **20 May** - In Jangir, Champa, alleged Hindu extremists attack a convert Christian Tarzan, beat him up and destroyed his house because of his faith in Christ. The Christian was also restricted from using the village pond.
- **19 June** - In Gurur, Durg, alleged Hindu extremists from the Bajrang Dal disrupted the worship meeting and threatened the Christians not to conduct future worship meetings or face harm. The Christians were also warned to leave the area.

ANDHRA PRADESH

- **14 January** - In Kamareddy, Nizamabad, suspected Hindu extremists beat Pastor Swamidas and several other Christians including his wife and other two believers as the Christians were returning back home from a prayer meeting. The Christians filed a police complaint but no case was registered.
- **26 January** - In Secunderabad, alleged Hindu extremists kidnapped Pastor Jonathan D and forced him to worship idols at a Hindu temple. However, the pastor was able to escape on 28th night while the assailants were fast asleep.
- **5 March** - In Gudur, Khammam, Koya tribal Christians were prevented by alleged Hindu extremists from burying a dead body. The Hindu extremists brutally attacked the Christians, seriously injuring three.
- **3 April** – In Nizamabad, Narendra Goud beat up Pastor Joseph Manda and his son Sunny Manda as Goud allegedly wanted to take back the land he donated to the church. Police were informed and took Narendra into custody with the charge of attempt to murder.

- **28 June** - In Bollepally, Bhongir Mandal, a 50 year old pastor, Rev. Johnny Lazarus, was beaten up by alleged Hindu extremist, Malla Reddy, who opposed to the ministry of the pastor and accused him of performing witchcrafts against him.

MADHYA PRADESH

- **24 March** –In Jhabua, suspected Hindu extremists destroyed Catholic statues worth Rs.20,000/- and attack the driver and two people of the vehicle carrying the statues to Jhapadra.
- **7 April** – In Sagar, police arrested Pastor Phillip and his son Jason after alleged Hindu extremists disrupted their prayer meeting and accused them of forceful conversion and they were sent to the central jail.
- **4 May** – In Dhindori, police arrested ShivrajMaravi, based on the complaint filed by alleged Hindu extremists that he was constructing a house church. The Christian stopped the construction work and he was charged under Section 151 of Indian Penal Code.
- **28 May** - In Mahendikheda, Jhabua, police arrested evangelist KamleshTahed after the village filed a false complaint against him implicating him in murder which took place one year earlier in the village (2009).
- **8 June** - In Raghatgar, Sagar, police detained Pastor Daniel Masih after alleged Hindu extremists filed a case against him of forceful conversion and later told him to leave the area. The pastor refused to leave the area.

MAHARASTRA

- **6 January** - In Kolhapur, Pastor Thomas George and two evangelists received hospital treatment after they were beaten up by alleged Hindu extremists. The Christians also lost their bicycles, the essentials they bought for one month and their personal belongings.
- **21 April** - In Vasai, Palghar, police arrested six Christians arrested under Sections 295 A and 34 of the Indian Penal Code after Hindu extremists filed a police complaint against them of forceful conversion.
- **24 April** - In Dasturipada, Palgha, a group of alleged Hindu extremists barged into the Easter celebrations and attacked the Christians with sticks. The church was given police protection.
- **2 May** - In Manglidhar, KalwanTaluk, alleged Hindu extremists opposed the church construction of Manglidhar District Church and imposed a socio- economic boycott on Christians. The extremists ordered the Christians to leave the village and threatened them they will not allow the Christian children to study in the village school.
- **10 May** - In Parva, Parbhani, a team of young girls working with Operation Mobilisation were threatened by the Hindu extremists allegedly from the Shiv Sena, warning the Christians not to enter their village again.

KERALA

- **31 March** - In Kodungallur, alleged Hindu extremists attacked Pastor N. V.Eliya and Pastor Milton George of New India Church of God as they were returning home along with their families from a house dedication prayer service.Pastor N. V.Eliyas sustained injuries on his head and ear and was hospitalized.The police arrested 35 Hindu extremists allegedly belonging to the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh.
- **20 April** - In Mudakolly, alleged Hindu extremists verbally abused the Christians, beat them up and tore up their clothes for distributing New Testaments and gospel tracts.
- **30 April** - In Kakkunadu, two Christians were attacked by a group of Muslims radicals while showing a Christian film outdoors, warning them not to show gospel movies in the area again.
- **13 June** - In Thrikkunnappuzha, three U.S citizens, along with two unidentified men were detained by the Alappuzha police after alleged Hindu extremist group filed a complaint against them of forcible conversion. The Christians were released without charges.

UTTAR PRADESH

- **28 February** - In Diggalpur, Unnoa, alleged Hindu extremist from the Bajrang Dal barged into the prayer meeting conducted by Pastor Ganesh Kumar, ordered the Christians to stop the prayer meeting, abused them verbally and threatened them with dire consequences if they failed to obey their orders. The village head and local leaders arrived at the spot and explained to the extremists that the Christians are not involved in any illegal activity. After the talk, peace was restored between the two parties.
- **20 March** - In Lonianpurawa, Balrampur, alleged Hindu extremists barged into the threatening the Christians with dire consequences if they conduct future worship meetings.
- **8 May** - In Baskeria, Sonbhadra, alleged Hindu extremists from the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh threatened to beat a pastor if he conducts future worship meetings in the area. The police told the pastor to leave the area immediately and that if anything happen to him and his family, they will not be responsible.
- **19 May** - In Khopura, Sahidabad, alleged Hindu extremists threatened Pastor SanjuMahananda to stop constructing the pastor's quarter immediately or face harm. Thereafter, the pastor stopped the construction work.

ORISSA

- **11 January** - In Pakala, Kandhamal, the body of Saul Pradhan, a 45-year-old independent pastor whose house was burned by Hindu fundamentalists two years ago, was found dead near a pond. His body bore marks of assault but the police claimed that his death was due to cold.
- **29 March** - In Mayurbhanj, Orissa, 15 Christians including two pastors were arrested on

charge of forceful conversion. The two pastors, one tribal Christian, 12 newly convert Christians were produced before a court and were later sent to jail and later released on bail.

- **13 April** – In Kandhamal alleged Hindu extremists held Christian families captive and ostracized them for helping their Christian neighbors in rebuilding their houses which were burned in the 2008 anti-Christians violence. The extremists imposed fine to shopkeepers who sold wares to them and truck owners refused to ferry goods for Christians for fear of the extremists' attacks.

JHARKHAND

- **28 May** - In Laherbanjari, Palamu, Hindu extremists beat up five Christian families for their faith in Christ. One woman, Mala Devi suffered internal injuries and was hospitalized in Sadar Hospital. Kalavati Devi, a mother of three was abducted for a month. The Christians fled from their homes in fear. No arrest was made by the police.
- **30 May** - In Korwadih, Garwah, Jharkhand, alleged Hindu extremists threatened two convert Christian families to stop following Christ or face severe harm. The extremists threatened to take the Christians to the Hindu holy river, Ganges in Banaras city to reconvert them to Hinduism.

RAJASTHAN

- **1 Feb** - In PeepalKhoont, alleged Hindu extremists attacked evangelist Harish Ninama (65) while he was praying for a sick girl, stripped him of his clothes and paraded him naked in a procession.
- **8 June** - In Panthol, PeepalKhoont,,Pratapgarh, alleged Hindu extremists attacked Pastor ShantilalNinama and his family for their faith in Christ, beat up his 65 year old father till he fell unconscious.

TAMIL NADU

- **17 April** - In Agastheswaram, Kanyakumari, alleged Hindu extremists barged into the worship service of Grace Good News Church, filed a complaint against the pastor of forceful conversion and burn down his church.
- **12 June** - In Karaikal, Puducherry, Pastor Robinson and members from Church of Jesus were threatened by alleged armed Hindu extremists not to conduct future worship meetings or face harm.

UTTARAKHAND

- **28 March** - In Phullaiya, Khatima, alleged Hindu extremists barged into the Believer's Church, "Community Development Programme" inaugural meeting, accused the Christians of forceful conversion and beat them up.
- **12 June** – On 12 June in Bellparao,Nainital, an angry mob barged into the marriage reception of a follower of Christ from a Sikh background, Suresh Chand, accused him

and his family of not following Sikh rituals and damaged properties worth about rupees 60,000/-.

DELHI

- **9 April** - In Bhajanpura, East Delhi, an angry mob of about 150 Hindu extremists attack a Christian worship meeting "Festival of Deliverance", indiscriminately beat up Christians including children and women, destroyed furniture and vehicles. Two Christians sustained head injuries and received hospital treatment. Police registered an First Information Report (FIR) against the attackers and two extremists were arrested.

HARYANA

- **April 17**-In Gandhi Colony, Samalkha, Haryana, alleged Hindu extremists accused Pastor Satyam from Sacred Assembly Fellowship of luring people to convert to Christianity, summoned him out from the church and threatened him to close the church or face harm.

"They grasped my arm, shook me and accused me of luring people to convert to Christianity but the church members told them in unequivocal term that there is no case of allurements."

*- Pastor Satyam, victim of communal violence
in Haryana*

HIMACHAL PRADESH

- **17 March** - In Rekonpoo, Kinnur, alleged Hindu extremists boycotted Christians in using public road, collecting drinking water, and visiting local forest for their faith in Christ.

JAMMU & KASHMIR

- **19 February** - In Srinagar, alleged Hindu extremists burned a Christian school, damaging eight class rooms which worth about Rs.60 lakhs. Prior to the incident, the Principal of the school, Grace Paljor was threatened verbally a number of times by some group of people for being a Christian.

Acknowledgement

This report was written by Mahruaii Sailo David, Associate Editor, EFINEWS and Tehmina Arora, Advocacy Director, EFI and is based on desk and field research conducted by the authors supported by various EFI staff Akhilesh Edgar, Noel Kotian, Subhash Dongardive, Madhusudan Das, Smeeta Pramanik, Issac Dutta, James Kaiser and Deepak Narula. The authors acknowledge the valuable research assistance provided by Amitabha Sarkar, Administrative Assistant, Advocacy Desk.

Evangelical Fellowship of India would like to thank the local activists and organizations who facilitated our research and for their untiring pursuit for justice. In particular, we thank All India Christian Council, Global Council of Indian Christians, and Gospel Echo Missionary Society, Rev Prakash Puthussery and Ashish Parida